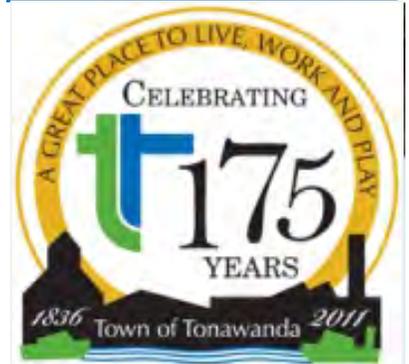




**TOWN OF TONAWANDA
2014 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

Job No. 2655.1

January 2015



**TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE AND
GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
OCTOBER 2014**

**TOWN OF TONAWANDA
ERIE COUNTY, NEW YORK
Job No. 2655.1**

**LEAD AGENCY:
TONAWANDA TOWN BOARD
2919 DELAWARE AVE.
KENMORE, NY 14217
716-877-8800**

**PREPARED BY:
URS CORPORATION
257 WEST GENESEE STREET
BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14202**

DATE ACCEPTED BY LEAD AGENCY:

PUBLIC HEARING:

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared for the residents of the
Town of Tonawanda through the efforts of:

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee:

Kenneth Swanekamp, Chairman
Councilman John A. Bargnesi, Jr.
Anthony Day
Robert Dimmig
Councilman Joseph Emminger
Fred Frank
James Hartz
James Jones
Michael Kaiser
Dawn Mirand
Mark Mondanaro
Robert Morris
Denis Uminski
Daniel Wiles
Mark Roundtree, ECDEP

Town of Tonawanda Town Board
Anthony F. Caruana, Supervisor

Project Consultant Team

URS

WWS Planning

Gordon Strategic Planning

Additional data, help and invaluable assistance were also contributed by employees of
the Town, Erie County, GBNRTC, NFTA and State Departments and
Residents participating in public meetings and hearings

Our thanks to all who participated in the creation of this document

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Intent

The Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for managing and adapting to change in the foreseeable future. The Comprehensive Plan serves as the basis for the Town’s land use and zoning decisions.

According to §272-a New York State Law, *“among the most important powers and duties granted to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens”*. New York State does not dictate what form a comprehensive plan must take, but suggests it consist of written and graphic materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles and standards the Town wishes to set forth for its immediate and long-term protection, enhancement, growth and development.

The Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2005. The 2005 plan replaced the previous plan that was completed in 1955 (and updated in 1960), which helped establish the location of parks, schools and other community facilities in a Town that was growing and developing, and provided excellent guidance for the Town during its significant years of growth.

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update revisits the 2005 plan in order to modify it based on current trends and changes in the community since its adoption. It also encompasses other planning studies that have been completed since 2005; rolling those efforts into one authoritative guide. Since 2005, the Town has actively implemented numerous studies, strategic plans and projects.

Since 2005, and as noted in Section I – Introduction, recommendations from the previous plan have been completed for strategic study areas such as Old Towne and Delaware Avenue, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Area, and the Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area. The Youth, Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan was prepared, as well as the Waterfront Land Use Plan Update, Waterfront Corridor Landscape Project and zoning studies for solar power installations, adult uses, and various commercial corridors. These studies and zoning updates are integrated by reference into the Comprehensive Plan

Tonawanda is one of the most desirable communities in Western New York. The Town continues to face challenges due to changing demographics, reduced industrial footprint and changing market forces.

The Steering Committee sees continued potential in the Town. This Comprehensive Plan Update will help guide positive changes in the community.

Update, which incorporates many of the recommendations from these individual plans and studies directly in the renewed implementation strategy (Section V).

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update recognizes the need for new guidelines and standards to provide guidance for new challenges and opportunities. The emphasis of the Update is the protection and enhancement of the Town. It is clear from the planning process that residents of the Town of Tonawanda appreciate a high quality of life and high quality services, but that there are opportunities for improvement, as well as efficiency. The goal of this plan is to help the Town ensure it remains a great place to live, work and play.

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update will serve as the new basis for land use decisions, community projects and public and private investment in the Town. This document will guide decision making in order to maintain those features that the community values highly, while mitigating any potential impacts of future change. The 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update recognizes what is important about the Town. It provides a clear assessment of where the Town is now, a vision for the future based on where residents would like to be, and concrete recommendations and strategies to help get there.

Regional and Local Setting

The Town of Tonawanda is a first-ring suburb located north of the City of Buffalo in Erie County, New York. The third largest Town in Erie County, Tonawanda is an attractive community of approximately 73,567 residents, including the Village of Kenmore. The 2010 population represents an approximate 6% decrease from 2000. As a community, the Town and Village are often referred to as “Ken-Ton” and in many areas their common borders are indistinguishable.

Visioning and Goals

Section II of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update presents the Vision, Goals and Objectives. Based on input from the public and local stakeholders, the Steering Committee revisited the goals and objectives established in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan. The vision statement was refined and abbreviated as follows:

“To improve quality of life and create a vibrant and sustainable community in which the environmental, social, economic, built and human capital collectively make the Town one of the most attractive suburbs in Erie County and New

It became clear over the course of the planning effort that people in the Town of Tonawanda are generally satisfied with the community, and do not seek major change.

York State, through strategic improvements to natural resources, neighborhoods and housing, commercial and industrial buildings and sites, and essential infrastructure, services and amenities”.

Development of the Goals and Objectives was influenced by the themes outlined in the Vision and supported by data from the Inventory of Existing Conditions (Section III). The Goals and Objectives were refined further through input gathered from stakeholders and the public at meetings conducted early in the planning process.

Goal 1 – Maintain the safety, high quality of life, public health and sustainability of our community

Goal 2 – Support the preservation of environmental resources and the continued remediation of former waste sites

Goal 3 – Maintain and enhance the vitality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and retain a diverse stock of residential properties that meets the needs of all residents

Goal 4 – Promote smart, sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities

Goal 5 – Promote a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system

Goal 6 – Ensure coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective facilities and services that are required by residents and businesses in a sustainable community

Goal 7 – Enhance the efficiency and efficacy of Town government and planning and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies.

Public Participation

The 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared with, and influenced by public input. A variety of methods were utilized to solicit input, including public meetings, stakeholders’ focus meetings with representatives from agencies and organizations, comment forms for the submittal of written comments, an internet website, and news articles and press releases. Materials used for public and stakeholder outreach, as well as the results of key meetings are found in Appendix A.

Stakeholders' Focus Meetings

In November 2013, the Town conducted three focus meetings with stakeholders centered on economic development, transportation and community facilities. These meetings gathered input from Town officials, County and State agencies and community representatives. Meeting participants used workbooks that were designed to identify issues and opportunities, as well as ways for the Town to improve cooperation and coordination with these agencies and organizations to improve quality of life and strengthen its position in the region.

Public Information Meeting

A public information meeting was held on November 26, 2013. The consulting team provided a brief overview of the project, the reasoning behind it, and understanding of how the updated Comprehensive Plan would be developed. Initial findings related to demographic and land use changes were presented, followed by breakout discussions on important issues and opportunities that were designed to generate discussion. Meeting participants utilized workbooks and maps of the Town to discuss and analyze priority issues.

Public Focus Meeting

A second public meeting was on April 22, 2014. The purpose of this interactive meeting was to allow residents and others to actively participate in the review and clarification of the goals and draft recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The draft goals and recommendations and a revised Vision Map for the community were presented for comments and critique. Meeting participants were divided into smaller groups to discuss and confirm the vision and specific recommendations in greater detail. The input from this meeting was used to strengthen and finalize the findings and recommendations.

Inventory of Existing Conditions

An essential component of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update is the review and analysis of the existing conditions. Before the Steering Committee can chart where the Town should be in the future, it is useful to start with a complete understanding of where the Town is today. Section III – Inventory of Existing Conditions provides a comprehensive description of the current physical and programmatic features of the Town, identifying significant changes from 2005. The Inventory of Existing Conditions includes subsections on:

The overall land use pattern has not substantially changed since 2005.

Land Use: This subsection describes in narrative and mapping the land use patterns that have developed in the Town since 2005, including residential, commercial, industrial/manufacturing, institutional, and public uses.

The current land use pattern includes a mix of these uses. With regard to the built environment, the Town consists of two regions. The eastern part of the Town, which is located generally east of Military Road, is considered the “Residential/Retail” region. This region is comprised primarily of homes, apartments, churches, schools, and retail establishments. The eastern region is essentially built out, and is the subject of maintenance, revitalization, and redevelopment, with an emphasis on neighborhoods. The region to the west of Military Road can be described as the “Industrial/Waterfront” region. It boasts many industrial plants and facilities, together with waterfront parcels along the Niagara River. It is this region where many underutilized, vacant and brownfield sites provide significant opportunity for growth, development, and repurposing.

Land Use Controls: This subsection focuses on a detailed review of the existing zoning ordinance. It describes recent proposed amendments (Waterfront Land Use Plan and Commercial Corridors Zoning Studies) that will effect how and where new development should occur.

The primary means of regulating land uses in the Town of Tonawanda is through the Town's Zoning ordinance, set forth in Chapter 215 of the Town Code. The Zoning ordinance establishes separate geographic districts for residential, business, industrial and waterfront districts. The plan summarizes the existing zoning districts, as well as proposed changes in districting and regulation.

Demographics: This subsection describes the Town’s demographic characteristics, including population and household trends, age distribution, income characteristics, and occupation. The Town Census Designated Place (CDP) lost approximately 3,585 residents between 2000 and 2010; 5.8 percent of the Town’s total population. Despite population losses, the number of households in the Tonawanda CDP has grown to 27,303 units in 2010, reversing a downward trend between 1990 and 2000. 2040 projections for the Town, including the Village of Kenmore, indicate a total population of 80,580 or an increase of approximately 8.8% over 2010 figures.

Housing and Neighborhoods: This section describes of housing characteristics and statistics, the number of units, vacancy rates, homeownership rates, housing types, and trends in home values.

The GBNRTC projects a 2040 population of 63,350 for the Tonawanda and 17,230 for the Village of Kenmore.

There were 27,303 housing units in the Town outside the Village in 2010, representing a slight increase from 27,175 in 2000. The housing stock in the Town is predominately owner-occupied with a 72.6% homeownership rate in 2010; a decline from 74.6% in 2000. Housing prices in Tonawanda are affordable with a median value of \$113,500 for owner-occupied homes in 2012.

The Town of Tonawanda is characterized by numerous neighborhoods, each having a particular image and sense of identity. The Village of Kenmore helps contribute to local identity, offering an atmosphere of densely populated traditional neighborhoods with a walkable retail business district that serves the wider Tonawanda region.

Natural and Cultural Resources: This subsection describes in narrative and mapping the terrestrial and water features that make up and surround the Town of Tonawanda. Environmental considerations regarding floodplains, wetlands and legacy industrial contamination are identified along with the identification of their applicable regulatory applications.

The predominant water resource in the Town is the Niagara River, which is a part of a significant environmental ecosystem of international importance. Its tributaries in Tonawanda include: Tonawanda Creek, Ellicott Creek, Two Mile Creek and Rattlesnake Creek. Portions of the Town are located within FEMA-regulated floodplains and known mapped wetland areas. Floodplains and wetlands are important natural resources to consider in the planning and design of redevelopment projects.

Some former industrial sites in the western region of the Town are characterized as brownfields or as inactive hazardous waste sites. Several sites have been remediated under very specific regulations and are again suitable for development and reuse.

Infrastructure: This subsection provides updated information on public utilities and the Town's infrastructure systems for public water service, wastewater collection and disposal, stormwater management, and street lighting, as well as an update on recent studies and projects.

The public water supply system serves approximately 23,660 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the Town of Tonawanda and the Village of Kenmore. The Town Wastewater Treatment Facility (WTF) provides treatment for wastewater flows from the Town, the Village of Kenmore and the City of Tonawanda. The WTF currently handles an average dry weather wastewater flow of approximately 20 million gallons per day (MGD) and is

The Town provides services that are essential to a healthy and vibrant community, including: water resources (potable water, wastewater and stormwater management).

capable of treating up to 75 MGD. Through a Long Term Control Plan, the Town is currently undertaking a series of projects to address issues of inflow and infiltration that result from excess stormwater and sanitary sewer overflows.

Transportation: This subsection describes in narrative and mapping the various transportation networks and systems, including road and highway networks, rail, public transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and the system of multi-use paths that link the Town to surrounding communities. Where available, updated traffic and roadway statistics and long-range planning are provided.

Community Facilities: This subsection presents narrative and mapped information on public facilities and programs that serve Town residents and support the local government, including municipal buildings, parks and recreation, senior services, libraries, schools, emergency services and cemeteries.

Economic Development: This subsection presents a picture of the existing economic base in terms of industrial and commercial employers and trends since 2005. Recent business development activities are also described.

Findings, Issues and Recommendations

Findings and Issues

Section IV presents both the findings and recommendations. Findings were developed from an analysis of the inventory of existing conditions and the results of the public participation efforts; both of which shed light on a number of issues facing the Town. This subsection of the report highlights major findings and issues, which have been organized to correspond with the central themes established in the goals and objectives.

Recommendations

This subsection outlines specific recommendations that are designed to help the Town achieve its stated vision for the future. It is organized around the themes established in the goals and objectives. The recommendations correspond with and build upon the Findings, with a specific recommendation developed for each issue or circumstance. Some key recommendations are briefly summarized here, but presented in more detail in Section IV.

Central Themes

- *Our Sense of Community*
- *How We Live*
- *Stewardship of the Environment*
- *Our Work Force*
- *How We Move*
- *Services We Need to Live, Work and Play*
- *Public Policies and Cooperation*

Our Sense of Community – Demographics, Land Use, Zoning:

- Adopt the Zoning amendments proposed in Waterfront Land Use Plan and Commercial Corridor Zoning study.
- Conduct a comprehensive review and revision of the entire Zoning Code.
- Implement the land use recommendations in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan.

How We Live – Neighborhoods and Housing:

- Reevaluate the Town's zoning structure to consider greater opportunities for mixed uses and non-residential uses in residential districts and neighborhood commercial nodes.
- Collaborate with owners of key neighborhood assets (schools, churches, institutions, etc.) to ensure the viability of neighborhoods.
- Plan for neighborhood walkability with special focus on safe access to key neighborhood focal points.

Stewardship of the Environment:

- Complete the BOA Step Two Nomination Study.
- Update Chapter 92 of the Town Code (Flood Damage Prevention Law) once the updated FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps become effective.
- Work with private owners, responsible parties and regulatory agencies to investigate and remediate privately-owned properties that have contamination issues.

Our Workforce, Business Environment and Economic Base:

- Continue a positive relationship with the developers of the Riverview Solar Technology Park and the Colvin Woods Business Park to ensure full build out.
- Continue efforts to build out the North Youngmann Commerce Center
- Ensure that neighborhood business centers and activity rates stay vital through specific actions identified in the Recommendations.
- Implement the 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan and LWRP to provide a cohesive development pattern for the waterfront.
- Seek remediation of brownfields, hazardous waste sites and other contaminated sites to enable appropriate reuse.

How We Move – Transportation (including Connectivity and Complete Streets):

- Prepare a capital improvements plan for reconstruction and repairs on local roads and sidewalks, including infrastructure improvements within the right-of-way.
- Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy.
- Encourage the regional entities to undertake improvements identified in the GBNRTC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan, including area-wide signalization upgrades and intersection improvements.
- Complete the planning and design of loops and gaps in the multi-use trail system.
- Coordinate with the NYSDOT to achieve implementation of a “road diet” plan for sections of Sheridan Drive and River Road.

Services We Need to Live, Work and Play:

- Provide programs that are flexible and suited to the changing demographic needs and demands of the Town.
- Continue planning for the re-use of the Town landfill as a recreational amenity.
- Determine at a policy level, if the operating and maintenance costs of Town facilities are covered by fees and other facility revenues, and how capital improvement costs for these facilities should be funded.
- Continue to fund and implement the recommendations of the Long Term Control Plan to mitigate sanitary sewer overflows in concert with stormwater management and complete streets improvements.
- Undertake an asset assessment and needs analysis to address capacity, operations, maintenance and management of Town departments, services and programs.

Public Policies and Cooperation:

- Explore opportunities for shared or consolidated services and coordination with other communities, including the Village of Kenmore.
- Coordinate with the Village of Kenmore to continue its implementation of the Elmwood Avenue Corridor improvements into the Town.
- Follow and respond to the recommendations set forth in the Regional Economic Development Council’s strategic plan, the Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan and One Region Forward initiatives.

Section V of the Plan outlines a strategy for accomplishing the recommendations.

Implementation Strategy

Updating the Comprehensive Plan is only one step in the planning process. Equally important is the implementation of the ideas and recommendations identified in the Plan. An Implementation Table is provided that summarizes and prioritizes the recommendations using the same themes outlined in earlier chapters. The action items for each topic area have been assigned potential impact and cost ratings of high, medium or low. The type of action needed, responsible entities for implementation, and potential funding sources to help bring implementation efforts to fruition are also identified in the Table.

This section also provides the procedural steps that must occur in order to adopt the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update and commence implementation of identified actions items.

Annual Review

Section VI presents the rationale and responsibilities for annual review of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Plan will only remain useful as long as it reflects current conditions. Change is constant and unpredictable. It is important to continue to monitor conditions and assess whether the actions recommended in the plan remain valid. It is recommended that the Town Board charge the Town Planning Board with conducting an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the plan remains an up-to-date and useful document. Representatives from the Town Departments that are familiar with, and responsible for, the various recommendations and implementation action items should assist the Planning Board, as needed.

SEQR

According to §272-a.8 of New York State Town Law, a town comprehensive plan and its amendments are subject to the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). To meet the SEQRA content requirements, the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update is drafted to serve as a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS). Section VII of the Plan describes the SEQR process, assesses potential environmental impacts, and evaluates alternatives to the proposed action.

The Inventory of Existing Conditions (Section III) of this Plan provides an updated description of the environmental setting of the Town as it exists now. Table III-1 links required SEQR content to the corresponding location in the comprehensive plan.

The SEQR review for the Comprehensive Plan Update considers the potential significant adverse impacts that may result from the implementation of the Plan.

Potential impacts that may result through the implementation of the Plan that are assessed in this Section include: land, water, air quality, plants and animals, aesthetic and cultural resources, open space and recreation, transportation, noise, odor and light, human health, and community character. Alternatives to achieve the Town Vision were evaluated, and the recommendations in the Plan represent the actions that are considered the most effective means to best express the goals and objectives, as presented in Section II. Section VII also discusses how implementing the recommendations will help mitigate the potential impacts of future growth.

Subsequent development actions taking place after the adoption of the plan, including those recommended in this document, will be subject to SEQR on a project-specific basis. Preparation of this Plan as a Generic EIS will facilitate the future assessment of those planned actions.

Section I

Introduction



SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

"town comprehensive plan" means the materials, written and/or graphic, including but not limited to maps, charts, studies, resolutions, reports and other descriptive material that identify the goals, objectives, principles, guidelines, policies, standards, devices and instruments for the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development of the town located outside the limits of any incorporated village or city.

New York State Town Law § 272-a

According to §272-a New York State Law, "among the most important powers and duties granted to a town government is the authority and responsibility to undertake town comprehensive planning and to regulate land use for the purpose of protecting the public health, safety and general welfare of its citizens". Having an up-to-date Comprehensive Plan provides a town with the guidelines and policies to support its decisions "affecting the immediate and long-range protection, enhancement, growth and development" of the municipality.

The Town of Tonawanda undertook a new comprehensive planning effort in 2003. The Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2005. The 2005 plan replaced the previous plan completed in 1955 (and updated in 1960) which helped establish the location of parks, schools and other community facilities in a Town that was growing and developing, and provided excellent guidance for the Town during its years of growth.

Since 2005, the Town has actively and aggressively implemented numerous studies, strategic plans and projects recommended in the existing Comprehensive Plan, now 10+ years old. This update of the Town Comprehensive Plan considers several major changes in circumstances that have occurred since 2005.

- Completion of several zoning studies and proposed amendments to facilitate redevelopment of the waterfront and commercial corridors.
- Completion of the Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Step 1 Pre-nomination Study.
- Continued redevelopment of former industrial sites such as Niagara River World sites.
- Continued development of North Youngman Commerce Center and Riverview Solar Technology Park as business parks.
- The continued movement towards incorporating pedestrian/bicycle accommodations in transportation planning and "complete streets," and the subtle shift away from roads that only move vehicles.
- Changing trends in household size and the related changes in residential demands in terms of housing size, style, and mix.

New guidelines and standards are needed to provide guidance for new challenges and opportunities. The emphasis of the current planning document focuses on the protection and enhancement of the Town. It is clear from the planning process that residents of the Town of Tonawanda appreciate a high quality of life and high quality services, but that there are opportunities for improvement. The goal of this document is to help the Town ensure it remains a great place to live, work and play.

Regional and Local Setting

The Town of Tonawanda is a first-ring suburb that borders the City of Buffalo. The Town is located in the northwest corner of Erie County and is generally bounded by the Niagara River to the west, the City of Tonawanda to the north, Town of Amherst to the east and City of Buffalo to the south. The third largest Town in Erie County, Tonawanda is an attractive community of approximately 73,567 residents, including 15,423 residents in the Village of Kenmore. The 2010 population represents an approximate 6% decrease from 2000. As a community, the Town and Village are often referred to as “Ken-Ton” and in many areas their common borders are not distinguishable. Map 1 presents an aerial photography image of the Town.



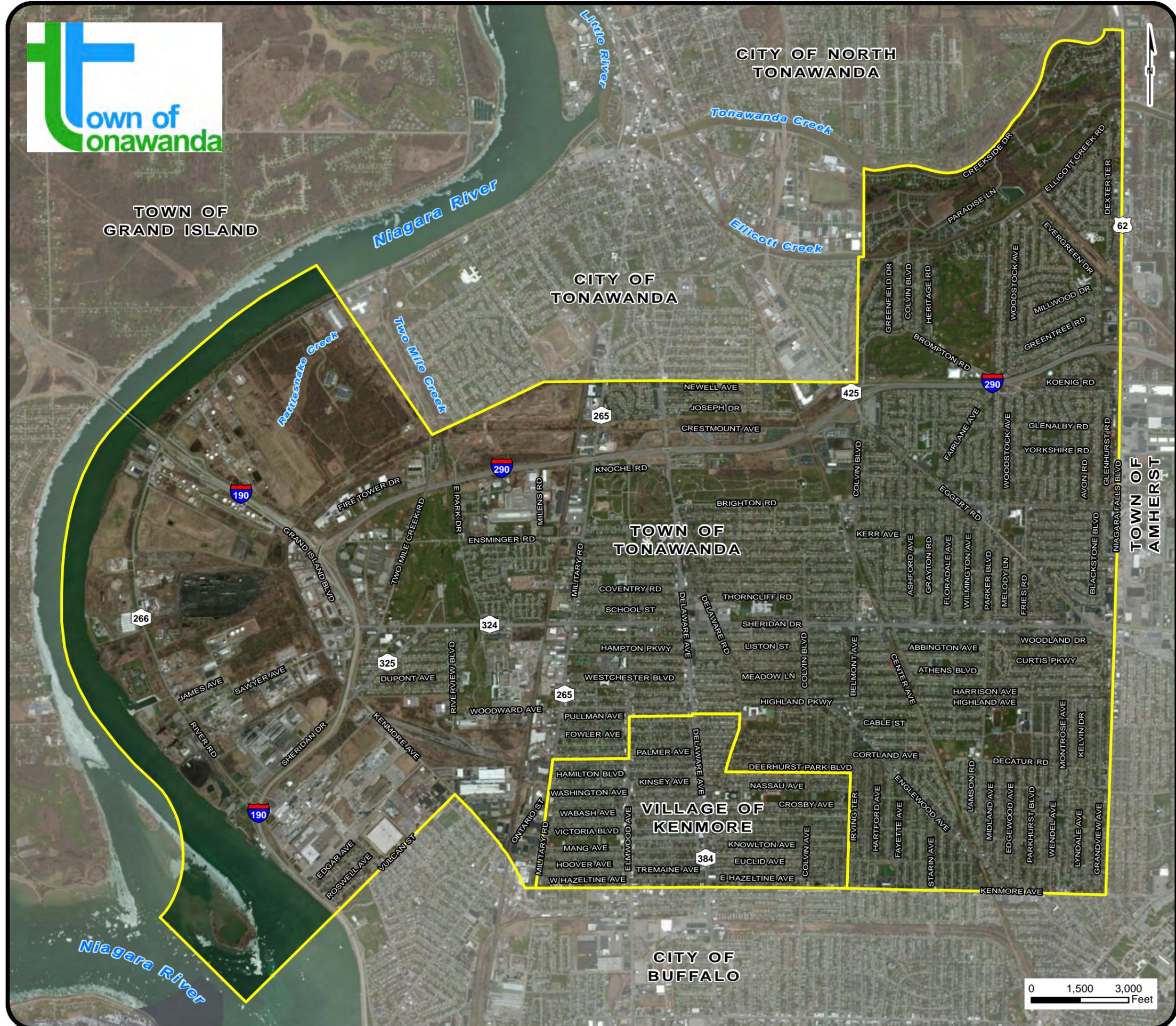
Figure I-1. Tonawanda’s geographic context within Western New York

Figure I-1 Location Map



**MAP 1
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**
TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

Legend
 Municipal Boundary



NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:
 Project No. 2655.1
 Sources:
 - ESRI World Imagery
 - Town of Tonawanda
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Earliest settlement of the Town focused in the northern portion of the Community, where Tonawanda Creek (later part of the Erie Canal) provided excellent access. Beginning in the 1890's, the establishment of streetcar lines led to the development of the Village of Kenmore, which was one of the first suburban communities in the Buffalo area. Most of the remainder of the Town remained rural in character well into the 20th century.

The Town of Tonawanda is typical of early suburban communities, with attractive, tree-lined streets, sidewalks, strong identifiable neighborhoods. Tonawanda has higher residential density and more varied mix of uses than newer suburban towns. However, as a typical "first ring suburb" there are influences from changing land uses, economics and demographics that challenge the continued vitality of the Town. It is important for the Town to plan for its future to ensure its continued attractiveness and prosperity.

Purpose for the Comprehensive Plan

The primary purpose of this document is to guide redevelopment in the Town in order to enhance the quality of life and ensure that the Town of Tonawanda remains a desirable place to live by promoting appropriate land uses and avoiding significant adverse environment impacts in the community. The origins of the Comprehensive Plan were established approximately 60 years ago, during a time when the Town was experiencing substantial growth. While it was a useful document to guide the development of the Town at that time, the Town now operates under very different circumstances and concerns. Most of the Town of Tonawanda is built out. The 2005 Plan recognized these changing circumstances and the current focus continues to be less on growth and new development, and more on enhancement and redevelopment. The largest area of undeveloped land, the waterfront, remains a high priority for the community and has been the focus of several planning initiatives since 2005.

With regard to its development status, the Town may be considered to consist of two regions. The eastern part of the town may be considered the "Residential/Retail" region, which lies generally east of Military Road. This region encompasses primarily homes, apartments, churches, schools, and retail establishments. This region is essentially built out, and is the subject of maintenance, revitalization, and redevelopment with an emphasis on neighborhood features. The region to the west of Military Road can be described as the "Industrial/Waterfront" region. It boasts many industrial plants and facilities, together with waterfront parcels along the Niagara River. It is this region where many undeveloped/underutilized, vacant and brownfield sites, consisting of several hundred acres, provide an opportunity for growth, development, and/or repurposing. This document will present recommendations and development strategies for both of these regions.

The Town of Tonawanda is now facing unique challenges. The Town's pattern of development was characterized by explosive growth during the post-World War II period. While Tonawanda has been one of the premier communities in Western New York, it continues to face concerns due to changing demographics and changing market forces. We see the continued potential of the Town, and this document seeks to help guide efforts that will reinforce positive change in the Town.

New York State does not dictate what form a comprehensive plan must take, but suggests that it consist of written and graphic materials that identify the goals, objectives, principles and standards that the Town wishes to set forth for its immediate and long-term protection, enhancement, growth and development.

There are many reasons for having an adopted Town Comprehensive Plan. A municipality's Comprehensive Plan is the legal foundation for all zoning and land use regulations and decisions made in the Town. While municipalities are given the power to regulate land uses within the community, it is understood that these decisions should be based on sound planning principles, and not be arbitrary or capricious. A municipal Comprehensive Plan, developed with public support and input, helps ensure that the Town's land use regulations are built on a solid foundation and represent a consensus on the part of the Town's residents.

"All town land use regulations must be in accordance with a comprehensive plan..."

New York State Town Law § 272-a.11(b)

Modern comprehensive plans go beyond zoning and land use issues. A Comprehensive Plan provides guidance toward the priorities and concepts of local residents regarding what they consider important to their quality of life. It establishes goals and objectives that reflect those priorities, and provides a set of recommendations and actions to help the Town achieve those goals. While there are recommendations that pertain to land use and zoning, other actions and priorities related to schools, housing, transportation, recreation and community programs are also articulated.

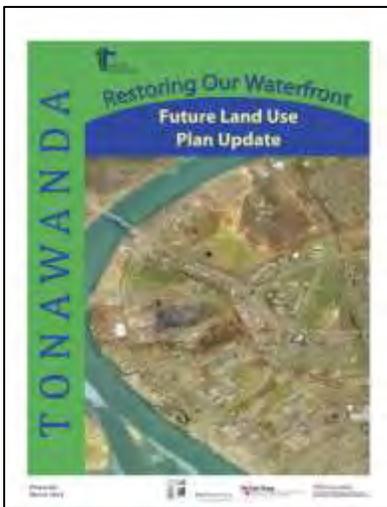
Another important purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to put the community's vision for its future on the record. Any development proposal or action, whether private or public, should take into consideration the Town's vision as expressed in the Plan, and attempt to be consistent with these stated priorities. An adopted Comprehensive Plan provides an accessible and clear guide for entities seeking to undertake or fund a project in the community. It provides them with a better understanding of what the Town is likely to approve and the types of actions that are preferred. It also provides the Town with greater leverage to have an effect on planning activities and programs instituted by other governmental authorities, such as the County or New York State agencies, who are required to take local plans into consideration. An adopted

Comprehensive Plan shows a commitment on the part of the community toward a shared vision for its future. This commitment can be helpful in seeking governmental assistance for projects that help move the community toward that vision through the forms of grants.

Finally, a Comprehensive Plan helps the community recognize what is important about the Town. It identifies what is important to protect, support and encourage, and what elements of the Town residents would like to see improved. It provides a clear assessment of where the Town is now, vision on where residents would like to be, and concrete recommendations and strategies to help them get there. Not all elements included in the plan will be achieved, but the Plan contains a source of potential solutions to problems or issues that may arise in the future.

It became clear over the course of this effort that people in the Town of Tonawanda are generally satisfied with the Town, and residents do not seek major changes. Much of the focus of this document, therefore, is on retaining and improving the Town. The updated Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan will provide guidance for local actions, with an emphasis on guiding redevelopment. It will serve as a basis for land use regulation, community projects, and public and private investment in the Town. It is the intent of this document that it will help guide decision making in the Town of Tonawanda into the future in a manner that helps maintain those features that the community values so highly, while mitigating any potential impacts of future change.

Summary of Recent Plans



- **Waterfront Land Use Plan (2014):** The Waterfront Land Use Plan was issued in March 2014. The plan focuses on the Town’s goal of balancing its past industrial heritage and existing industrial enterprises with evolving economic and community development preferences. The goal of the plan was to develop a framework and recommendations to encourage the growth of sustainable, low-impact development on the waterfront, protect and enhance natural and cultural resources, enhance community character, and foster long-term viability. The plan includes an overview of the waterfront’s physical, natural, and economic conditions and outline opportunities to achieve its development goals. The Plan proposes a single mixed-use zoning district (the Waterfront Priority District) and provides example text.
- **Commercial Corridors Zoning Studies (2010 and 2014):** The Town undertook two zoning studies to update the land use controls along existing commercial corridors. In 2010 the Planning Board conducted a study of the Delaware Avenue commercial corridor. The primary purpose of the study was to identify actions under the Town’s jurisdiction that would guide positive reinvestment and encourage

redevelopment appropriate to the Delaware commercial corridor. Specific areas of concern included zoning (uses and dimensional requirements), lot layout and orientation, landscaping, general building design, parking and access. The resulting amendments to the Zoning Code established a new zoning district (Neighborhood Business) along Delaware Avenue between the Village of Kenmore and the Youngmann Expressway.

In 2014, the Town of Tonawanda Planning Board reviewed several commercial corridors and drafted several proposed zoning amendments to guide proposed redevelopment of commercial sites along Military Road, Kenmore Avenue, Highland Parkway/Englewood Avenue and Elmwood Avenue. The focus of the zoning review and proposed zoning amendments was to enhance landscaping and site design standards; as well as to establish appropriate land uses. The proposed amendments included creation of two new zoning districts: C-2 Commercial District and the TND – Traditional Neighborhood Design District and various zoning map amendments.



- ***Town of Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) (Amended April 2008)***: The Town of Tonawanda originally prepared and adopted a LWRP in 1996 encompassing all of the lands along the Niagara River waterfront and 1,000 feet east of River Road. The updated LWRP decreases the inland distance to 500 feet east of River Road as the relocation of River Road, the impetus for the 1,000 foot distance, was not realized. This change is proposed to help concentrate waterfront protection policies and resources and provide greater flexibility for development outside of the boundary. In general, the intent of the LWRP is to seek balance in development of the area, including industrial and commercial, with recreational uses and public access opportunities in and along the waterfront. The plan discusses several areas of environmental concern and policies and recommendations are included to address development / redevelopment, fish and wildlife protection, flooding and erosion control, public access, historic and scenic resource protection and enhancement, energy and ice management, and water and air resource protection.
- ***Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area Pre-nomination Study (November 2012)***: The study is the first of a three step process to develop a State-sponsored strategic plan to revitalize brownfield sites. The study identified 8 parcels as potential brownfield sites, and 21 parcels as either underutilized/abandoned properties or undeveloped/vacant properties. These parcels make up approximately 46 percent of the total waterfront land area. The remaining two steps of the brownfield opportunity area (BOA) process will go into more

detailed analysis of and potential available on the sites and develop strategies for remediation and redevelopment. An application for funding the BOA Step 2 Nomination Study was awarded by the NYS DOS.

- **Old Town Neighborhood Plan (July 2010):** “Old Town” Tonawanda is a small waterfront neighborhood that is located in the southwestern corner of the Town. Old Town is the only neighborhood in Tonawanda with a view of the waterfront. This plan was developed to provide a framework to revitalize the area and included recommendations to improve community aesthetics, infrastructure, safety, building rehabilitation, commercial development, and improved connectivity.



- **Tonawanda Community Air Quality Study (2007-2009):** The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) conducted an air quality monitoring study from 2007 to 2009 in response to citizen concerns regarding potentially elevated emission levels in the Town. Monitoring stations were set up in four locations to measure pollution concentrations and evaluate potential public health risks. As a result of the study, emissions compliance monitoring and facility inspection has increased and has already been observed to result in decreased emissions.
- **Critical Water System Master Plan (2007):** A study was performed to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the water treatment and

- distribution system conditions and operational issues. The study included a regulatory review to assess current and anticipated water quality regulations and the Town’s compliance status. As a result of the study, a ten-year plan was developed to address water treatment and distribution system management and operation needs.
- **Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan (December 2005):** Prior to 2005, the Town’s last comprehensive plan was completed in 1955. The 1955 guided the community during a period of strong growth and development. In 2005, the community updated their plan to reflect the physical and demographic changes that had occurred in the Town and consolidated goal recommendations from several recent studies into one guiding document. The plan included specific recommendations for the waterfront including the encouragement of new industrial parks, redevelopment of vacant lands, improving recreational trail connectivity with other local and regional systems, continued implementation of the LWRP and continued cleanup of contaminated sites.
- **Sheridan Parkside Village Courts Redevelopment Plan (September 2003):** An analysis of the Parkside Village neighborhood was conducted in the spring of 2003 for the Office of Community Development. This neighborhood has been the location for significant reinvestment, with older, substandard homes being demolished and replaced with new homes for qualified moderate-income buyers. The Sheridan Parkside Plan provides a new conceptual site plan for the neighborhood that would facilitate redevelopment, with new circulation patterns, landscaping standards, and recommendations for phasing and housing types.



FIGURE 10

- ***Tonawanda Waterfront Rezoning Study (April 2002):*** A waterfront land use and rezoning plan was developed to examine the waterfront area and determine a new direction for redevelopment for the area north of Sawyer Road, between the River and Interstate I-190 and I-290. The land use plan developed specific zoning language for new districts within the waterfront study area that more closely aligned with the Town’s most recent Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan and established greater conformance with waterfront-related uses. The Town adopted some, but not all, of the new zoning districts proposed in the plan.
- ***Waterfront Master Plan (1992):*** The 1992 Waterfront Region Master Plan built upon earlier recommendations provided by the Horizons Commission for the waterfront. The plan outlined a new vision for the Tonawanda waterfront and included an assessment of conditions and created a land use plan for the region as a whole. This document, due to its age, has since been replaced by subsequent documents and development in the area. However, many of the general goals and land use patterns have been incorporated into other more recent plans.
- ***Long Term Wet Weather Control Plan:*** Long Term Control Plans (LTCPs) are required under the Environmental Protection Agency's combined sewer overflow (CSO) Control Policy and part of NYSDEC's CSO control strategy to reduce the frequency, duration, and intensity of CSO events. The most recent revision of the LTCP recommended a five-phase plan to address the problems with aging infrastructure and inflow and infiltration that result in the overflows. In cooperation with the NYSDEC the Town has implemented the first 3 of 4 phases of work to address 92 locations where SSOs occur.

Section II

VISIONING AND GOALS



SECTION II: VISIONING AND GOALS

This section of the Comprehensive Plan Update presents the Vision, Goals and Objectives that have been developed for the Town of Tonawanda, with the assistance of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee. The goals and objectives have been influenced by data from the inventory and analysis and input gathered from stakeholders and the public at meetings that were conducted throughout the planning process, as noted in Section 2.3.

The vision and the goals and objectives are focused on major issues and opportunities identified by the Steering Committee and the public. They are designed to help guide future growth and development in the Town. The recommendations that are included in Section IV of this Plan include more specific actions that can be implemented to achieve the community's vision for the future.

A. COMMUNITY VISION

A vision statement for the Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update was created using input from the public, stakeholders and Steering Committee. The action strategies included in this Plan are designed to achieve the following:

“To improve quality of life and create a vibrant and sustainable community in which the environmental, social, economic, built and human capital collectively make the Town one of the most attractive suburbs in Erie County and New York State, through strategic improvements to natural resources, neighborhoods and housing, commercial and industrial buildings and sites, and essential infrastructure, services and amenities”.

This vision is founded on the following themes, which inform the goals and objectives:

Physical Environment

- Environmental protection and sustainability
- Environmental restoration and enhancement
- Locations for economic development
- Locations for public access to waterfront resources and recreation

- Improving connectivity of businesses, highways and shoreline recreational amenities

Neighborhoods and Housing

- Maintaining and enhancing quality of life and sense of place
- Revitalization through strategic investment
- Strong, diverse, market-rate housing stock to address the needs of younger and older residents
- Community pride and investment
- Public safety
- Strong schools

Economic Development

- Ensuring goods, services and jobs for residents
- Maintaining a healthy, sustainable tax base
- Revitalization of local business districts and neighborhood shopping areas
- Strong regional shopping destinations
- Growth and investment in well planned commercial development
- Improving aesthetics to enhance the overall image of commercial areas and corridors
- Supporting sustainable commercial and industrial business retention and new development
- Ensuring sufficient utility services to support business development

Traffic, Transportation and Connectivity

- Reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality
- Managing roadway access to improve traffic safety and efficiency
- Improving pedestrian travel and accessibility
- Creating/improving multi-modal connections and access to services and amenities
- Creating complete streets and improving the aesthetics and functionality of local roadways

Essential Services and Amenities

- Providing high quality, cost effective public facilities and systems
- Offering a variety of quality public services and amenities, particularly for youth and older residents
- Improving inter-municipal and interagency cooperation and coordination

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives represent a framework for the Town of Tonawanda’s vision for the future. They establish guidance for the development of recommendations and action strategies aimed at achieving this vision. The goals and objectives have been devised using input from the general public, stakeholders and Town representatives, combined with the findings of an analysis of the inventory of existing conditions. The goals are general in nature so that they can be utilized to guide decision making in the Town across a broad range of issues. The recommendations and implementation strategies found in Sections IV and V of this Plan include more specific actions that the Town can undertake to achieve the intent of these goals and objectives. The Town has identified seven goals, as follows.

1. Building a Sustainable Community



The motto of the Town of Tonawanda is “**A Great Place to Live, Work and Play**”. Natural resources, residential and economic activity, transportation, and public services are all key elements for building a strong, vibrant community, as envisioned in this motto, and for improving quality of life.

Goal 1 – Maintain the safety, high quality of life, public health and sustainability of our community

Objectives:

Physical Environment

- Maintain high standards of service and maintenance at neighborhood parks and other public facilities.
- Encourage the maintenance and upkeep of privately owned property.
- Improve strategies and policies for managing and maintaining open and public spaces.

- Improve connectivity throughout the Town, particularly to and along the waterfront.
- Improve public access to waterfront asset

Public Services

- Maintain the high quality of Town services, including highways, waste management, water delivery, recreational amenities and programs, senior and youth services, police protection, libraries and other public services.
- Integrate quality of life issues consciously in Town decision-making actions, looking at potential impacts on local residents and businesses, as well as on the built and natural environment.
- Promote regular coordination with school districts to keep abreast of changes and to help maintain the high quality of the educational system and local schools.
- Encourage the continued use of schools as neighborhood centers and a source of community identity and pride.

Citizen Participation

- Promote the continuance of volunteer citizen support groups and activities, and public involvement with quality of life issues, the planning of public projects and the establishment of broad public goals.

"A livable community is one that preserves resources for the next generation."

(Cornell Cooperative Extension)

2. Stewardship of the Environment



Natural resources contribute to the character of the Town and provide important environmental benefits. The creeks, river and riverfront, parks and other open space areas and natural features merit protection as irreplaceable and essential assets. The remediation of contaminated lands is also vital to community revitalization and environmental quality and sustainability.

Goal 2 – Support the preservation of environmental resources and the continued remediation of former waste sites

Objectives:**Preservation of Natural Resources**

- Provide for the preservation of waterways in the Town, including the Niagara River, Ellicott Creek, Tonawanda Creek, Two Mile Creek and Rattlesnake Creek, and maintain and undertake actions to improve their water quality and habitat.
- Recognize the value of remaining open space, including wetlands and floodplains, as wildlife habitat and a community resource.
- Provide attractive public parks, trails, streetscapes, linear parks and waterfront amenities that take advantage of the environmental features in the Town, and improve public access to these assets.

Reduce Impacts to Natural Resources

- Support and encourage continued progress with the remediation of brownfields and former waste sites, and their appropriate reuse.
- Promote efforts that recognize the importance and benefits of environmental protection and sustainability, such as recycling and re-use, clean energy, reduced emissions, etc.
- Continue to incorporate sustainable practices into Town government and services.

3. How We Live

The high quality neighborhoods in Tonawanda contribute to community character and quality of life for residents. The housing stock is generally in good condition and offers opportunities for individuals, young families and empty nesters.

Goal 3 – Maintain and enhance the vitality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and retain a diverse stock of residential properties that meets the needs of all residents

Objectives:**Housing**

- Encourage investment in existing homes, buildings and neighborhoods to maintain their value and quality.

- Promote redevelopment and infill development that provides a variety of housing types, styles and sizes.
- Ensure the availability of housing that addresses the needs of seniors and empty nesters.
- Encourage the establishment of programs to plan and finance the revitalization, sustainability and redevelopment of residential and business properties.
- Promote walkability and connectivity between neighborhoods and economic centers.

Neighborhood Services

- Guide commercial redevelopment to support neighborhoods with a better mix and scale of uses.
- Encourage activities and actions that make neighborhood shops more attractive and accessible places for local residents.
- Guide commercial investment to improve aesthetics with enhanced landscaping and exterior design.
- Establish tax incentive districts to help revitalize distressed commercial properties, i.e., façade improvements, landscaping, maintenance/repairs, etc.
- Support private and public actions to improve the function and appearance of the Town through investment in landscaping and infrastructure, such as sidewalks, utilities, drainage and roadways.

4. Where We Work



Economic development is important to meet the needs of residents for goods and services, offer a range of employment opportunities, generate tax revenues to support public services and otherwise contribute to a prosperous, vibrant and sustainable community. The Town has a large supply of available land for new light industrial and commercial development and redevelopment. Ensuring that existing developed areas remain attractive places to do business is also a Town priority.

Goal 4 – Promote smart, sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities

Objectives:**Physical Environment**

- Identify and promote investment in key geographic areas for targeted business activities (e.g., neighborhood nodes, retail and commercial corridors, office and industrial parks).
- Promote a supply of real estate options (e.g., vacant land, existing buildings) to meet the physical needs of target businesses.
- Encourage the productive re-use of challenged real estate (e.g., functionally obsolete or abandoned lands and brownfields).
- Encourage high design standards to ensure that business areas remain safe and attractive places for commerce.
- Ensure that land use controls and infrastructure are consistent with requirements of target businesses, and that municipal review processes are clear, responsive and streamlined.
- Ensure that target businesses have convenient access for employees and access to raw materials and markets through multiple modes of transportation.
- Keep neighborhood business districts vital, active and attractive locations for shopping and leisure.

Public Services

- Ensure that the Town's tax structure and rate is sustainable for desired and required services (e.g., police protection, highway, water resources, etc.).
- Promote public transportation and pedestrian connections to increase the ability of residents to access goods and services and employment opportunities throughout the community.

5. How We Move

Transportation issues impact economic development, quality of life and community revitalization. Transportation improvements are needed in certain locations to alleviate traffic congestion or unsafe conditions. There is also support for alternatives to automobile travel, including walking, bicycling and improved public transit opportunities.

Goal 5 – Promote a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system

Objectives:**Character of Streets**

- Promote “complete streets” policies when undertaking public improvements, capital projects and other transportation improvements.
- Address the need for pedestrian safety improvements at critical locations.

Connectivity

- Promote connectivity between neighborhoods and commercial centers, including pedestrian and bicycle accommodations.
- Support sidewalk maintenance and fill gaps in the sidewalk network in the Town.
- Enhance existing levels of public transportation service and expand transit opportunities, where feasible.

Access Management

- Institute access management measures, where appropriate, to improve traffic flow and public safety.
- Support traffic improvements that reduce congestion and promote efficiency, mobility and safety.

Planning

- Coordinate transportation improvements with surrounding communities, Erie County, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA), the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), and the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC).
- Continue roadway maintenance programs, including pavement rehabilitation, curbs, sidewalks and stormwater management systems, where necessary, to ensure the quality and efficacy of the highway system.

6. Services We Need to Live, Work and Play



Public facilities and infrastructure enable life-dependent services in the community and require continued investment and maintenance to remain effective. Excellent facilities and services have been a hallmark of the Town and one reason why it remains a desirable location to live, work and play.

Goal 6 – Ensure coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective facilities and services that are required by residents and businesses in a sustainable community

Objectives:

Water Resources

- Maintain and revitalize infrastructure, including systems and facilities for water treatment and distribution, wastewater recovery and stormwater management.
- Ensure new water and sewer lines and treatment facilities incorporate provisions for future expansion to support increased economic development in appropriate locations.
- Improve coordination and planning between public service providers in the Town.

Public Safety

- Maintain an enabled police force that is capable of reacting and responding to known and unknown concerns.
- Promote public involvement and awareness.
- Promote and maintain fire and paramedic response capabilities to ensure efficient and dependable services.
- Continue to balance quality of life and safety initiatives.

7. Public Policies



Inter-municipal and regional coordination and cooperation is becoming increasingly important. There are public policies that are common to all goals and objectives, including best management practices for efficient and effective outcomes for economic development, transportation, housing, environmental protection and community services. The Town influences, and is influenced by,

other communities and their actions and planning, as well as those of school districts and other governmental agencies. The Town's interrelationship with these entities is constrained at times, but there are opportunities for improved planning and cooperation.

Goal 7 – Enhance the efficiency and efficacy of Town government and planning and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies.

Objectives:

Holistic Planning

- Identify policies and adopt best management practices to engender a holistic approach to building and maintaining a safe, prosperous and sustainable community.
- Address and coordinate infrastructure construction projects in a holistic manner rather than one utility at a time on a given street.
- Make provisions for strategic and cost effective maintenance and replacement of facilities and equipment.
- Install systems and programs that support public health and welfare.
- Keep abreast of, and be responsive to, Federal and State regulations and grant opportunities.
- Recognize and promote regional influence and participate in regional planning efforts to ensure that Town goals and objectives recognize and reflect regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Inter-municipal and Governmental Planning and Coordination

- Continue shared facility usage and investigate areas where shared services and/or costs between two or more communities are appropriate to encourage joint efforts in these areas.
- Explore the potential for joint public service activities (with the Village of Kenmore), and participate where benefits would result.
- Work with State and County agencies on economic development efforts to increase opportunities in the Town.
- Maintain a high level of collaboration and coordination of efforts with the school districts, adjacent communities and other levels of government.
- Stay involved in regional planning efforts, working with local, county, state and federal agencies on issues and initiatives, such as the Niagara River.

C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION OVERVIEW

The Town of Tonawanda is committed to the idea that a critical element of the planning process is effective public participation. The Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared with and influenced by public input. A variety of methods were utilized to solicit input, including public meetings, stakeholders’ meetings with representatives from agencies and organizations, comment forms for the submittal of written comments, an internet website, and news articles and press releases. In addition, the entire planning process was closely overseen by the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, which was established by the Town Board and comprised of Town representatives with a range of interests in the community. The Committee met on a regular basis to provide guidance and insight to ensure that the views and concerns of the community were effectively addressed. Meeting summaries from the public and stakeholders’ meetings are contained in Appendix A.

Stakeholders’ Focus Meetings

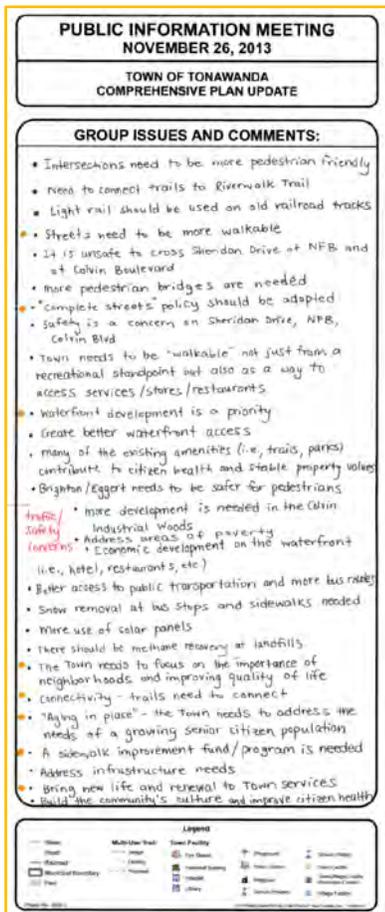
The Town conducted a series of three focus meetings with stakeholders that were centered on economic development, transportation and community facilities. These meetings were held on November 12, 2013 to gather input from State and local agencies and community representatives to help advance the Comprehensive Plan Update. Meeting participants used workbooks that were designed to identify issues and opportunities, as well as ways for the Town to improve cooperation and coordination with these agencies and organizations to improve quality of life and strengthen its position in the region.

Public Information Meeting

At the onset of the project, a public information meeting was held at the Brounshilde VFW Post on November 26, 2013. This meeting was designed to introduce the public to the planning consultants (Project Team), the Steering Committee and the project. A brief overview of the project, the reasoning behind it, and understanding of how the updated



Comprehensive Plan would be developed, was provided. This was followed by breakout discussions on important issues and opportunities designed to generate input. Meeting participants utilized workbooks to discuss and analyze priority issues. The goal of this meeting was to gather as much public input as possible regarding concerns and key opportunities for improving the Town and



residents' quality of life. Based on the input gathered at this meeting, a preliminary draft of the goals and objectives was developed. The summary ideas and mapping from this meeting were posted on the Town's website.

Results of November 26, 2013 Public Meeting

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING
NOVEMBER 26, 2013

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

GROUP ISSUES AND COMMENTS:

- Intersections need to be more pedestrian friendly
- Need to connect trails to Riverwalk Trail
- Light rail should be used on old railroad tracks
- Streets need to be more walkable
- It is unsafe to cross Sheridan Drive at HFB and at Cable Boulevard
- More pedestrian bridges are needed
- ... should be studied

Responses from each Table: TOP THREE ISSUES				
1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherry Farm Park - develop for recreation • Rails to Trails - walk/bike/extend light rail • Close Tonawanda Coke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete streets • Aging in Place • Town services - new life into programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better utilize the waterfront • transportation/complete streets/mass transit • connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • importance of neighborhoods/walkability • complete streets/connect Sheridan to the waterfront • Cherry Farm Park/waterfront connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to be more pedestrian friendly • need new/more grocery stores • waterfront

Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan
Public Information Meeting
11/26/13

Public Focus Meeting

A second meeting was held with public on April 22, 2014. The purpose of this interactive meeting was to allow residents and others to actively participate in the review and clarification of the goals and draft recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The draft goals and recommendations and a Vision Map for the community, which were developed by the Project Team and the Steering Committee, were presented for comments and critique. Citizens were divided into smaller groups to confirm the vision and specific recommendations in greater detail. The input from this meeting was used to strengthen and finalize the recommendations and vision for the Plan. The results of this meeting were posted on the Town's website. Table II-1 summarizes meeting participants comments on the draft goals.

Public Hearing

A public hearing is required to provide an additional opportunity for the public to review the proposed 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update and offer final input prior to Town Board consideration of the Plan for adoption. This hearing also satisfies SEQR review requirements.

Table II-1 Public Comments on Vision and Goals – April 22, 2014 Public Focus Meeting

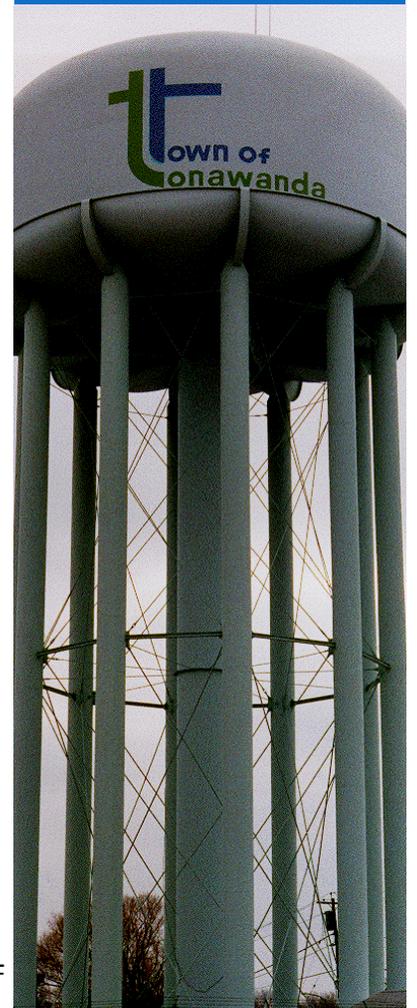
<i>Community Vision / Goals</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<i>Community Vision</i> - “To improve quality of life and create a vibrant and sustainable community in which the environmental, social, economic, built and human capital collectively make the Town one of the most attractive suburbs in Erie County and New York State, through strategic improvements to natural resources, neighborhoods and housing, commercial and industrial buildings and sites, and essential infrastructure, services and amenities”.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with the community vision (5) • Community vision is too general, not specific enough • Community vision should comment on Town population and housing units
<i>Goal 1</i> – Maintain the safety, high quality of life, public health and sustainability of our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 1 (7) • Public safety is the #1 priority in our low to moderate income neighborhoods • Maintain green space and biking amenities • Green space, particularly south of Brighton/Sheridan
<i>Goal 2</i> – Support the preservation of environmental features and the continued remediation of former waste sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 2 (7) • Goal 2 is important because the former waste sites have large footprints and are a significant potential source of job creation. • Support redevelopment of the waterfront
<i>Goal 3</i> – Maintain and enhance the vitality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and retain a diverse stock of residential properties that meets the needs of all residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 3 (7) • The Town should be encouraging/promoting more housing that is low-maintenance and affordable for seniors and the disabled. • Key in enhancing neighborhoods is the town’s role in streets and ground services – which are excellent. • Create parks or schools available to the public
<i>Goal 4</i> – Promote smart, sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 4 (7) • Promote brownfield development and IDA marketing • Make the Town more attractive to jobs creation • The Town needs to become less industrial
<i>Goal 5</i> – Promote a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 5 (7) • Continue repurposing existing rails, trails, etc. for bicyclists and pedestrians

<i>Community Vision / Goals</i>	<i>Participant Responses</i>
<p>Goal 6 – <i>Ensure coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective facilities and services that are required by residents and businesses in a sustainable community</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 6 (7) • Concerns about the school district’s plan to sell public emergency shelters. The Town needs to revisit its Emergency plan. • More public amenities lead to a greater quality of life for Town citizens.
<p>Goal 7 – <i>Institute best management practices to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of Town government and planning, and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 7 (7) • Politics can get in the way of achieving Town goals
<p>Additional Comments</p>	<p>Additional Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original development in the town was centered on planned school sites/neighborhoods. With the recent trend in consolidation of schools, the Town needs to focus on defining objectives to acquire open spaces and recreational opportunities and maintain neighborhood centers. Open spaces/green areas are a precious resource that cannot be replaced if they disappear. • Creating more affordable senior transportation should be a priority • There should be road diets on Colvin Blvd and Eggert Road and bike paths provided on the streets • There needs to be more affordable and low maintenance senior housing • There needs to be a better connection between Military Road and the Parkside neighborhood • Brownfield and low income housing around Parkside Community Center needs to be addressed

Note: () indicates number of duplicate/similar responses

Section III

Inventory of Existing Conditions



SECTION III: INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. EXISTING LAND USE PATTERNS

The Town of Tonawanda is a densely built-up first ring suburb of Buffalo. The current land use mix is diverse, including residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public uses (Map 2 – Existing Land Use).

Distinct and Significant Influences on Land Use Patterns

It is important to highlight two distinct and significant dynamics that have strongly influenced current land use patterns in the Town of Tonawanda: (1) access to natural resources that fueled an industrial ‘boom’ in the early 1900s, and; (2) demand for new housing that fueled a residential ‘boom’ in the post-World War II era. By recognizing and understanding the impact of these dynamics on the community, it is possible to chart a course for the future - from housing, jobs and infrastructure to recreation and education.

EXISTING LAND USE	
1 & 2 Family Residential	3,891.68 acres
Multiple-Family Residential	191.71 acres
Institutional Parks	734.74 acres
Commercial	1,160.15 acres
Recreational & Entertainment	56.70 acres
Industrial	1,195.90 acres
Infrastructure / Transportation	1,207.32 acres
Vacant	714.14 acres
Other Uses	76.36 acres

Distinct Geographic Areas

The first historic influence on current land use patterns is that the community is divided into two very distinct areas, west and east of Military Road.

- Western Sector – Lands west of Military Road were first used for farming in the early 1800s, drawn by access to the Niagara River and the Erie Canal. A significant transformation began in the early 1900s, as farming was replaced by industries that were drawn by the same natural resources, and limited housing was introduced to meet the needs of employees. A third transformation began in the late 1900s, as industries have closed, relocated or altered the way they interact with the land, and there has been increased demand for recreation and mixed uses along the Niagara River. Industry continues to dominate land use, characterized by companies that occupy large tracts of land, and infrastructure required to support industrial activities (i.e. – highway, rail, transmission lines, pipelines, docks).
- Eastern Sector – Lands east of Military Road were also first used for timber then as farmland in the early 1800s, forming around specific settlements and extending outward from the City of Buffalo. The density of residential development increased over the next several decades, first with establishment of the Village of Kenmore, and later with post-World War II development. A mix of commercial properties developed along major transportation routes to serve residents and facilitate access to employment. Public uses and parks were scattered throughout the eastern portion of the Town to meet the demand for services. There are only a few, scattered industrial uses in the eastern part of Town.



TOWN OF GRAND ISLAND

CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA

CITY OF TONAWANDA

CITY OF BUFFALO

TOWN OF AMHERST

MAP 2 EXISTING LAND USE TOWN OF TONAWANDA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014 OCTOBER 2014

Legend

- Water
- Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundary
- Land Use Classification:**
- Single & Two-Family Residential
- Apartments/Multiple-Family Residential
- Institutional (Government/Public/Schools/Cemeteries/Religious)
- Park/Recreation
- Commercial
- Commercial Recreation & Entertainment
- Industrial
- Utilities/Infrastructure/Transportation
- Vacant
- Other Uses

NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
 Sources:
 - Erie County Real Property Tax Services
 - Town of Tonawanda Waterfront Land Use Plan Update, 2014
 - Town of Tonawanda

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Rapid Post-War Growth

The second historic influence on current land use patterns is that there was a rapid growth of residential development in the post-World War II era to serve the needs of returning veterans, migration from the City of Buffalo and workers in the expanding industrial area.

The majority of the housing stock in the Town outside the Village was built between 1940 and 1959. Residential growth over this period was explosive: the Town outside the village grew by nearly 21,700 residents between 1940 and 1950, and by an additional 48,600 new residents between 1950 and 1960.

Current Inventory of Land Use Patterns

Residential



Residential land use in the Town is characteristic of a first-ring suburb. Along the City of Buffalo line, the age, style and construction of housing is similar to housing in the adjacent City neighborhoods. This includes the Village of Kenmore, the traditional core of the Town and the location of its earliest development. Residential areas adjacent to the Village of Kenmore tend to be older, more established neighborhoods, with a mix of housing types and small lots.



The age, style and construction of housing in the eastern and northern part of the Town reflect the post-World War II era. Many neighborhoods retain the name designated by the original builder. The housing stock consists primarily of post-war single-family homes, typically small three-bedroom homes on narrow lots. In later decades, a limited number of four-bedroom homes were constructed in neighborhoods such as Willowgrove.

Apartment complexes on Kenmore Avenue, Sheridan Drive and Raintree Island were constructed to meet a demand for rental properties. In the Sheridan-Parkside neighborhood, duplex and multi-unit structures were converted from housing for workers in nearby industries to rental properties. Additional duplex units were constructed in the Lincoln Park neighborhood.



In recent years, a market has developed for new senior housing products, including assisted living facilities. The supply of senior housing has been limited by a lack of vacant land for new development. Successful projects have focused on opportunities for in-fill development, including former school buildings.

New homes for an affordable housing market are being developed under the auspices of the Community Development Department in the Sheridan-Parkside, Kenilworth and Old Town neighborhoods. Potential purchasers of these homes must meet income guidelines. Other new housing is scattered infill development on existing lots.

Commercial

Commercial land use in the Town of Tonawanda developed along primary transportation routes that moved people and goods into and out of the City of Buffalo, including Military Road, Elmwood Avenue, Delaware Avenue, Niagara Falls Boulevard, and Kenmore Avenue. As more routes were added to serve the growing population, corridors such as Sheridan Drive were also developed, as well as pockets of neighborhood services along such routes as Englewood Avenue, Brighton Road, Eggert Road, and Colvin Boulevard.

Commercial Corridors

- *Niagara Falls Boulevard* – Niagara Falls Boulevard is a major north-south corridor that forms the eastern boundary of the Town of Tonawanda, shared with the Town of Amherst. Driven by residential and commercial growth in both towns, Niagara Falls Boulevard has developed into one of the major commercial centers in the Buffalo metropolitan area. A major site is the Boulevard Mall at Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road in the Town of Amherst. North of Sheridan Drive, land use on the Town of Tonawanda side of Niagara Falls Boulevard is commercial in nature and does not have sidewalks. Uses include numerous chain restaurants, retail plazas, motels, and other less connected commercial uses. Older plazas tend to be smaller in scale than is typical on the Amherst side of the roadway, configured in traditional strips of small storefronts, with one or two rows of parking in the front. Newer developments along the Boulevard in Tonawanda are more likely to be larger, stand-alone commercial uses. South of Sheridan Drive, commercial development continues along Niagara Falls Boulevard for a few blocks, then transitions to a mix of neighborhood-oriented businesses and residential properties.
- *Sheridan Drive* – Sheridan Drive is a major east-west corridor from the Town of Amherst to the Niagara River. Commercial patterns are similar along Sheridan Drive, with strip plazas and individual commercial uses lining both sides of the roadway. Uses include small restaurants, bars, retail stores, drug stores, and offices. The Town's largest plaza is located on Sheridan Drive at Delaware Avenue. There are also a number of apartment complexes, single-family dwellings, churches and other uses mixed in with the commercial strip development on Sheridan Drive.
- *Delaware Avenue* – Delaware Avenue is a major north-south corridor that runs from the City of Tonawanda to the City of Buffalo. It offers a shopping district in the Village of Kenmore, with a traditional Village core of shops, restaurants and other services built at a pedestrian scale. Commercial development in the Town outside of Kenmore along Delaware Avenue includes a mix of office and retail uses, designed at a larger scale and more oriented toward automobile usage than the walkable Village center.



- *Elmwood Avenue* – Elmwood Avenue is a major north-south corridor that runs from the City of Buffalo to Interstate 290 (I-290). Commercial development on Elmwood Avenue, outside of Kenmore, is concentrated south of Sheridan Drive. It includes a mix of small businesses and restaurants.
- *Kenmore Avenue* – Kenmore Avenue is a major east-west corridor that forms most of the southern boundary of the Town, shared with the City of Buffalo. Apartment and residential properties are mixed in with commercial development. On Kenmore Avenue, the two sides of the street exhibit similar land use patterns.
- *Military Road* – Military Road is a major north-south route that runs from the City of Buffalo to the City of Tonawanda. The west side of Military Road is predominantly industrial, with public services that include a major NFTA bus garage, a Sheridan Park Fire Station, a Ken-Ton School bus garage and an Erie County Highway garage. The east side of Military Road is a mix of commercial and lighter industrial uses south of Sheridan Drive, and primarily commercial north of Sheridan Drive.

Commerce Parks

In recent years, commercial land use has developed on larger sites, creating a supply of land and buildings that meet the real estate needs of offices and technology companies.



- *Praxair Technology Campus* – Occupied entirely by Praxair, the 110-acre site was partially transformed in practice into a technology campus by the company in the late 1980's to support research and development and global logistics operations in a beautiful setting. The campus is located between Sheridan Drive and Woodward Avenue, bounded by the CSX railroad mainline and residential development.
- *Colvin Woods Business Park* – In 2003, the Colvin Woods Business Park was opened on land leased from Elmlawn Cemetery, located along the south side of the I-290, with access from Colvin Boulevard. The 40-acre office park hosts J.W. Danforth, United Healthcare and the U.S. Border Patrol in modern facilities. Colvin Woods has approximately 14 acres remaining for development.
- *Riverview Solar Technology Park* – The Riverview Solar Technology Park ('Riverview') was opened on approximately 100 acres of vacant land along River Road, near the City of Tonawanda border. The park, which has since expanded to 180 acres, has retained the natural features of the landscape and offers on-site solar facilities to meet all or a portion of the energy needs of building tenants. Currently, there are three existing multi-tenant buildings. The site has approval and plans to construct over 1,000,000

square feet of usable space. Near term plans include solar installations to generate the power for the common areas of two existing multi-tenant buildings within the park.

- *North Youngmann Commerce Center* – The North Youngmann Commerce Centre is an approximately 80-acre, town-owned parcel located immediately north of the I-290, between Military Road and Two Mile Creek. It is anticipated that 65 acres of the site can be developed into an office and commerce park, the remaining area will be reserved for environmental conservation. Construction of infrastructure began in 2013.

Industrial/Manufacturing

Nearly all industrial and manufacturing land uses in the Town of Tonawanda are located west of Military Road.

- *Waterfront - South and Central* – Starting in the early 1900s, heavy industrial uses concentrated in the southern and central sectors of the waterfront area, including River Road (south of the Grand Island bridges), Sawyer Avenue, Grand Island Boulevard, Sheridan Drive (western end) and Kenmore Avenue (north of Sheridan Drive). The area hosts companies such as General Motors, DuPont, Goodyear-Dunlop, PeroxyChem (FMC), 3M, Tonawanda Coke and NRG Energy. The companies typically occupy large structures built on large sites, served by extensive infrastructure (i.e. – highway, rail, pipelines, and transmission lines). The NRG Energy facility - known as the ‘Huntley Station’ – is a coal-fired electric-generating plant that is a dominant feature in the waterfront area. Other uses include gas and oil storage, electric transmission, distribution of chemicals, recycling operations, a junkyard and landfills. The area is increasingly characterized by structures (both residential and commercial), sites and infrastructure that are functionally obsolete or simply abandoned, requiring strategies and policies that promote sustainable reuse.



Institutional Uses and Public Facilities

In order to provide services demanded by residents in the Town, numerous institutional uses and public facilities are located throughout the community.

- *Government Facilities* – Town-owned facilities constitute the principal government uses in the Town of Tonawanda. The Municipal Building in the Village of Kenmore houses Town and Village administrative offices. Other facilities and departmental offices are located throughout the Town, including Highway-Sanitation, Water Resources, Police Headquarters, the Senior Citizen Center, the Community Center and fire stations. The Town of Tonawanda also operates a large inventory of recreation facilities including neighborhood parks and playgrounds, two 18-hole golf courses, two ice skating facilities, pools, and boat launch and mooring facilities. Erie County maintains the Riverwalk, Two Mile Creek and Sherwood Greenway trails along the Niagara River, Ellicott Creek Park, a maintenance garage on Military Road, and a water treatment plant on River Road that serves neighboring communities. The New York State Department of Transportation operates a maintenance garage on Knoche Road near Military Road.
- *Educational Facilities* – The Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda (Ken-Ton) Union Free School District is a significant property owner, with 12 schools and an administrative building located throughout Tonawanda and Kenmore. The Sweet Home School District operates one school, in the northeast portion of the Town of Tonawanda. There are eight private and parochial schools in Tonawanda, including St. Joseph’s Collegiate Institute on Kenmore Avenue, Mount St. Mary Academy on Delaware Avenue, and Cardinal O’Hara High School near Delaware Avenue, which are Catholic high schools that attract students throughout the region.
- *Healthcare* – Kenmore Mercy Hospital has made significant investments to its facility on Elmwood Avenue to meet the needs of the community for quality health care. Several urgent care facilities have located in commercial areas, such as Sheridan Drive, to meet the demands for less intensive, immediate health needs. Nursing homes and senior housing facilities are also located in commercial areas of the Town to serve that population.
- *Religious* – There are approximately 40 churches and places of worship in the community.

Vacant Land, Open Space

As a first-ring suburb of the City of Buffalo, most lands in the Town of Tonawanda have been developed by nearly two hundred years of residential, commercial and industrial land use.

Open space is primarily characterized by a network of town and county parklands, including Sheridan Park, Brighton Park, Ellicott Creek Park, Isle View Park and several neighborhood parks. Opportunities to increase the supply of open space include development of 'Cherry Farm Park' along the shores of the Niagara River, re-use of closed landfills and targeted environmental projects (e.g. – Rattlesnake Creek and Riverfront Park). School District properties provide an additional source of open space available to the public. Although not formal parks, "school yards" offer a site for recreation.

Vacant lands are located primarily in the northern sector of the waterfront region, including Riverview and the North Youngmann Commerce Center. Vacant lands may become available in the southern and central sectors, but these heavy industrial properties are typically characterized by environmental or ownership concerns that limit re-use and require public intervention to achieve 'shovel ready' status. The Town has completed Step 1 (Pre-Nomination Study) of the NYSDOS Brownfield Opportunity Area program which will ultimately result in redevelopment strategies for vacant, underutilized and/or abandoned sites. Innovative re-use of properties (e.g. - closed landfills to host solar energy farms) represent potential strategies.

Vacant lands east of Military Road are primarily small, isolated parcels in developed neighborhoods that offer potential for infill development.

B. LAND USE CONTROLS

Zoning

The primary means of regulating land uses in the Town of Tonawanda is through the Town's Zoning ordinance (conventional Euclidian), set forth in Chapter 215 of the Town Code. The Zoning ordinance establishes separate geographic districts for residential, business, industrial and waterfront districts. In addition, there are certain lands, occupied by schools, parks or cemeteries, which while have a geographic designation, do not have corresponding zoning regulations and essentially are un-zoned. The Map 3 - Existing Zoning depicts the current zoning districts.

Residential Districts

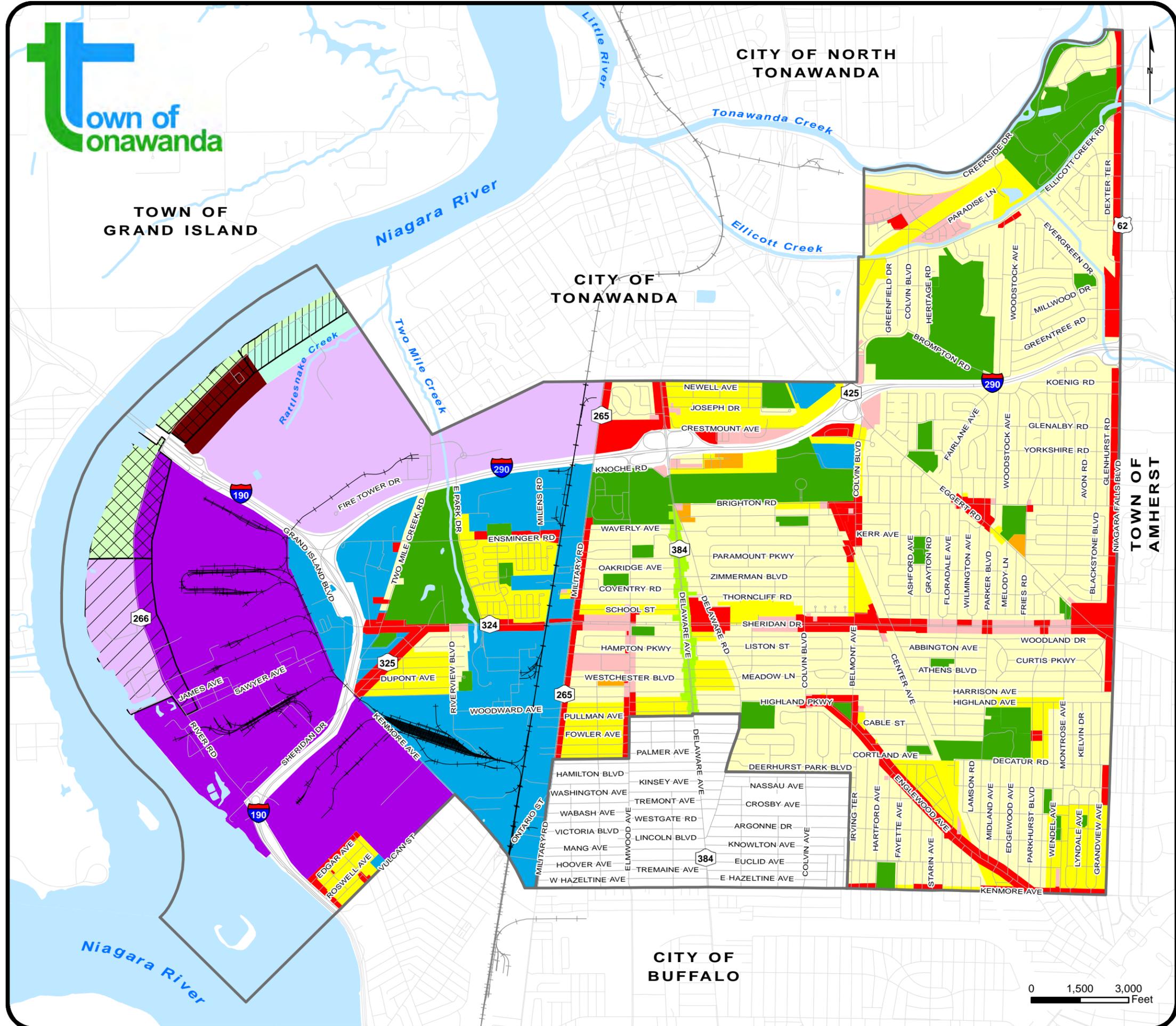
There are three residential zoning districts in the Town of Tonawanda. The A First Residential District (A) allows one family homes; rooming for up to two boarders in owner occupied homes; churches; primary and secondary schools; municipal buildings and libraries. Auxiliary housing units, defined as semi-independent units for use by elderly or disabled members of the family, are allowed with a special use permit. The B Second Residential District (B) allows all uses in the First Residential District, plus two-family homes; recreational and community centers; public museums; memorial buildings; public parks; public buildings and grounds; and philanthropic institutions. Cemeteries are also



**MAP 3
EXISTING ZONING**
TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

Legend

- Water
- Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundary
- Existing Zoning Classification:**
 - A - First Residential District
 - B - Second Residential District
 - MF - Multi-Family Dwelling District
 - C1 - Restricted Business District
 - C - General Business District
 - NB - Neighborhood Business District
 - PS - Performance Standards Use District
 - G1 - General Industrial District
 - WMU - Waterfront Mixed Use District
 - RHC - Retail Highway Commerce District
 - WB - Waterfront Business District
 - WID - Waterfront Industrial District
 - School/Park/Cemetery
- Existing Zoning Sub Area Classification:**
 - Business Transition Area
 - Light Industrial Corridor Area
 - Thruway Impact Area



NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
Sources:
- Town of Tonawanda

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allowed, with the permission of the Town Board. Both the First and Second Residential Districts are governed by the same regulations concerning accessory uses and structures, yards (front, side and rear), building lines, fences, maximum lot coverage and floor area. The third residential district is M-F Multifamily Dwelling District (M-F). The only uses allowed in this district are residential dwelling units for one or more families, accessory garages, and recreational facilities for the use of residents. Non-residential uses, such as schools, parks and churches that are allowed in the First and Second Residential Districts are not allowed in the Multifamily Dwelling district. One- and two- family residences must conform to the requirements of the A and B residential districts. The ordinance distinguishes between standard multifamily dwelling units (less than three stories), mid-rise (three to six stories of occupied floor levels) and high-rise (seven occupied stories or higher). It sets forth requirements for yards, lot area per dwelling unit, required parking and minimum living area per unit for each type of multifamily dwelling. Homeowners' associations are allowed, but require application to the Town Board and review by the Town Attorney.

Commercial Districts

The Town's Zoning Code has three adopted commercial districts and two proposed districts recommended by the Planning Board for adoption by the Town Board. C-1 Restricted Business District (C-1) allows any use allowed in the A or B residential districts, plus a range of business and commercial uses including business and professional offices. In the C General Business District (C), allowed uses include all uses allowed in any of residential districts or the C-1 Restricted district, plus retail sales, restaurants, hotel/motel, theatre and automobile dealers. In the NB Neighborhood Business District (NB), adopted since the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, the intent is to allow a range of commercial uses similar to the C District but tailored for the Delaware Avenue commercial corridor extending out from the Village of Kenmore. The NB district establishes site design, architectural guidelines and enhanced landscape regulations that guide private (re)development along the corridor.

In 2014 two new commercial districts were proposed by the Planning Board. The proposed C-2 Commercial District (C-2) District is intended to encourage the establishment of land uses compatible with both the surrounding uses primarily along Military Road. Allowed uses in the C-2 District are similar to those in the C District, plus Automotive uses, Gasoline Stations, Stand-alone Used Vehicle Sales, light manufacturing/industry, and wholesale and warehousing businesses. The proposed TND-Traditional Neighborhood Design District (TND) is intended to encourage a mix of commercial establishments and consumer services that serve the immediate residential neighborhood; fitting into the context of the existing neighborhood in terms of scale, architectural style, and size of lots and structures. The allowed uses in the TND District are similar to those in the C District, however a larger number are only allowed with a Special Use Permit enabling the Town to better consider how a specific proposed use "fits" in a specific location.

All the business districts include regulations governing yards, maximum lot coverage, and landscaping. Table III-1 compares the Permitted and Special Permit uses in the current and proposed commercial zoning districts.

Performance Standards District

As stated in the zoning code, the Performance Standards Use District (PS) is intended "...to encourage and allow the most appropriate use of the land. . . [for] commercial and industrial uses, unhampered by restrictive categorizing. . . ". The Town Board has the authority to determine that a use is appropriate, as long as it meets performance standards set forth in the code, and is not expressly forbidden. Junkyards, waste transfer, land mining, stockyards and most residential uses are not permitted. All uses require a performance standards use permit, unless a waiver is obtained, as specified in Section 215-118 of the code. The code specifies required setbacks (yards) and building line setbacks, and landscaping standards. It also establishes the procedure required to obtain a performance standards use permit. A site and development plan must be submitted with the request for the permit. The performance standards that must be met pertain to noise, odor, dust, smoke, gases, vibrations and glare.

General Industrial District

The G-I General Industrial District (G-I) is another industrial district in the Town of Tonawanda. The ordinance only specifies the uses that are not allowed in the G-I district, and notes that any other use shall be permitted, as long as it does not violate any law or regulation. All residential uses are excluded. The Town may require a Performance Standards Use Permit for any proposed use or operation in a G-I district, if deemed to be in the best interests of the Town. Specific design standards are provided for properties fronting on Grand Island Boulevard and River Road within the regulations of the G-I district.

Table 3-1 COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS COMPARISON*

EXISTING COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS			PROPOSED COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS (as of April 2014)	
C-General Business	C-1 Restricted Business District	NB - Neighborhood Business	C2-Commercial District	TND-Traditional Neighborhood
PERMITTED USES				
Public and Private Schools (K-12) Municipal buildings Libraries Church Single-Family Rooming and Boarding Two-family Dwelling Recreation and Community Center Public Museum Memorials Public Parks Public Buildings Philanthropic Institutions Multi-Family Dwellings Hospital General office Non-profit Institutions Clubs/Lodge/Fraternal Financial Institutions Medical Building or Clinic Computer Services Mortuary Nursing Home Retail Sales and Service of Merchandise Restaurant Hotel/Motel Theater Automotive Dealers and ancillary uses	Public and Private Schools (K-12) Municipal buildings Libraries Church Single-Family Rooming and Boarding Two-family Dwelling Recreation and Community Center Public Museum Memorials Public Parks Public Buildings Philanthropic Institutions Multi-Family Dwellings Hospital General office Non-profit Institutions Clubs/Lodge/Fraternal Financial Institutions Medical Building or Clinic Computer Services Mortuary Nursing Home Retail Sales and Service of Merchandise Restaurant Hotel/Motel Theater Automotive Dealers and ancillary uses	Public and Private Schools (K-12) Municipal buildings Libraries Church Single-Family Rooming and Boarding Two-family Dwelling Recreation and Community Center Public Museum Memorials Public Parks Public Buildings Philanthropic Institutions Multi-Family Dwellings Hospital General office Non-profit Institutions Clubs/Lodge/Fraternal Financial Institutions Medical Building or Clinic Computer Services Mortuary Nursing Home Retail Sales and Service of Merchandise Restaurant Hotel/Motel Theater Automotive Dealers and ancillary uses	K-12 Educational Institutions Municipal buildings Libraries Church Single-Family Two-family Dwelling Recreation and Community Center Public Museum Memorials Public Parks Public Buildings Philanthropic Institutions Multi-Family (1-3 stories) Business offices or medical professional offices/buildings Non-profit Institutions Clubs/Lodge/Fraternal Financial Institutions Medical Office or Clinic Computer Services Retail Sales of Merchandise Restaurant Seasonal Outdoor Dining Convenience Stores (w/out Gasoline) Service or Repair Business Mixed Occupancy Building Mixed Use (residential/commercial)	K-12 Educational Institutions Municipal buildings Libraries Church Single-Family Two-family Dwelling Recreation and Community Center Public Museum Memorials Public Parks Public Buildings Philanthropic Institutions Multi-Family (1-3 stories) Business offices or medical professional offices/buildings Non-profit Institutions Clubs/Lodge/Fraternal Financial Institutions Medical Office or Clinic Computer Services Retail Sales of Merchandise Restaurant Seasonal Outdoor Dining Convenience Stores (w/out Gasoline) Service or Repair Business Mixed Occupancy Building Mixed Use (residential/commercial)
SPECIAL USE PERMIT				
			Hospital and institutional uses Commercial Laundry New vehicle storage	Hospital and institutional uses Dry Cleaner and Commercial Laundry New vehicle storage

Table 3-1 COMMERCIAL ZONING DISTRICTS COMPARISON*

SPECIAL USE PERMIT			
<p>Cemeteries Seasonal Outdoor Dining</p>	<p>Seasonal Outdoor Dining</p>	<p>Self-Storage Light Manufacturing, Fabrication and Assembly Wholesale business and storage Warehousing and storage of goods for distribution Bottling Plant Boat/automobile storage facility Light Industry</p>	<p>Self-Storage Light Manufacturing, Fabrication and Assembly Wholesale business and storage Nursing Home Public Utility Substation Multi-family Dwellings (mid- and high-rise) Mortuary and Funeral Home (excluding crematory) Hotel / Motel Theater Research Facilities Service/Repair of industrial nature Automotive Uses Car Wash Gasoline Station and Convenience Stores (w/ Gasoline) Stand-alone Used Vehicle Sales Lot</p>

* This table is for comparative uses only and is not intended to provide the complete definition of each use. Refer to §215 of the Town Code.

Waterfront Districts

There are four existing waterfront districts in the Town of Tonawanda. These districts were created in 2003 as a result of a 2002 land use study conducted for the waterfront region which developed specific zoning language for the new districts within the waterfront area that more closely aligned with the Town's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. The waterfront districts contain design and landscaping standards, intended to assure the visual quality of the area, and support the goals and policies of the local waterfront revitalization program. The W-MU - Waterfront Mixed Use District (W-MU) allows parklands; boat launching facilities; marinas; boatyards and boat storage areas; commercial excursion and charter fishing boat facilities; visitor center; a motel; and retail stores with size restrictions.

The WB -Waterfront Business (WB) district allows parkland and recreation areas; offices; laboratories for testing and research; research and development; and assembly of component parts. Specially permitted uses include retail, restaurant and lodging; in-service training schools incidental to primary uses; day care for employees in the district; and limited warehousing and distribution facilities.

The RHC- Retail Highway Commercial District (RHC) allows restaurants, gasoline stations, retail stores and motels and hotels. Truck stops and travel plazas are allowed as specially permitted uses.

The WID -Waterfront Industrial District (WID) is another light industrial district that allows parks; boat storage; light industry; assembly of component parts; wholesale businesses and storage; warehousing; public utilities; research facilities and business or medical offices. Specially permitted uses include industrial service or repair; retail sales; nursery schools for employees in the district; commercial laundry plants and bottling plants.

In addition, a River Road Overlay district provides additional standards for properties fronting River Road to a depth of 500 feet.

The 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan updates the 2003 study and proposes a new unified approach to zoning along the waterfront. Rather than an overlay zone with multiple sub areas, the properties located within the proposed Waterfront Priority District area should be contained within a single zoning district (the Waterfront Priority District), similar to the Waterfront Mixed Use District.

Other Land Use Regulations

Several other sections of the Town Code address land use issues that impact the construction, operation or maintenance of property in the Town. These include:

- Chapter 73: Drainage Control;
- Chapter 76: Environmental Quality Review;
- Chapter 77: Excavations;
- Chapter 92: Flood Damage Prevention;
- Chapter 121: Junk;
- Chapter 129: Local Water Revitalization;
- Chapter 140: Parking Areas (Off-street);
- Chapter 165: Sewers;
- Chapter 179: Excavation,
- Removal and Storage of Materials;
- Chapter 181: Solid Waste Management;
- Chapter 185: Subdivision of Land;
- Chapter 195: Trailer Parks and Camps;
- Chapter 197: Trees and shrubs;
- Chapter 203: Abandoned Vehicles (outdoor storage of); and
- Chapter 207: Abandoned Vehicles.

C. DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Overview

The Town of Tonawanda is currently the fourth largest municipality in Erie County, exceeded only by the City of Buffalo and the Towns of Amherst and Cheektowaga. The population of the Town outside the Village, or the Tonawanda CDP¹, was 58,144 in 2010. The population of the Town including the Village of Kenmore was 73,567.

The Town is also one of the most densely populated municipalities in Erie County. The Village of Kenmore is the most densely developed municipality in the County, with a population density that exceeds that of the City of Buffalo. The Town including the Village is the sixth most densely populated community in Erie County, and the Town outside the Village ranks ninth, with an average of 3,361 persons and 1,629 housing units per square mile.

The Town CDP lost approximately 3,585 residents between 2000 and 2010, or 5.8 percent of the Town's total population. Population was lost at a greater rate within the Village; Village population declined by 1,003 residents, or 6.1% of the Village's total population.

Table III-2: Population Trends, 2000-2010

	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	
			Number	Percent
Tonawanda CDP (Town outside Village)	61,729	58,144	-3,585	-5.81%
Village of Kenmore	16,426	15,423	-1,003	-6.1%
Town and Village	78,155	73,567	-4,588	-5.87%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000 and 2010

Population Trends and Projections

Population projections for all municipalities in Erie and Niagara County are prepared and updated regularly by the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC). The most recent projections are included in their 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan update. The Council prepares several regional growth scenarios, and a Study Review Team selected the most appropriate forecast for each community based on an assessment of regional growth trends, constraints and attitudes in each community. The studies are traditionally prepared for transportation planning purposes and tend to be optimistic to ensure adequate future capacity.

2040 projections for the Town of Tonawanda including the Village of Kenmore indicate a total population of 80,580 or an increase of approximately 8.8% over 2010 figures. Separately, GBNRTC projects a 2040 population of 63,350 for the Tonawanda CDP and 17,230 for the Village of Kenmore. The projections indicate that GBNRTC no longer anticipates population losses and has begun predicting gains in the Erie-Niagara population.

The following chart illustrates population trends in the Town and the Village of Kenmore between 1940 and 2040 GBNRTC population projections. The chart illustrates that population peaked in both the Town and Village in the 1960’s and declined through 2010. GBNRTC projections predict an end to the decline after 2010; growth projections are indicated through 2040.

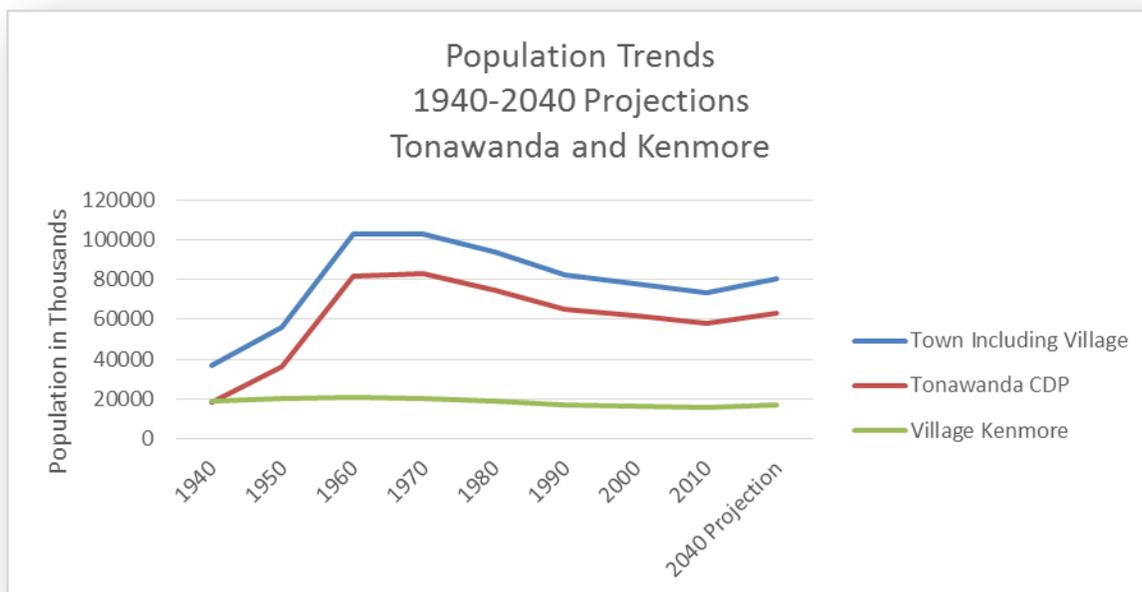


Figure III-2: Population Trends, 1940 – 2045 Projections

Source: US Bureau of the Census and Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council

¹The Town of Tonawanda outside the Village of Kenmore is a CDP, or “Census Designated Place”. For ease of reference, this discussion uses the term Tonawanda CDP to refer to the Town not including the Village. Because this report is a Town document, the focus of the discussion is on the CDP.

Households

Despite population losses, the number of households in the Tonawanda CDP has grown to 27,303 units in 2010, reversing a downward trend between 1990 and 2000. As shown in Table III-3, households in the CDP have increased in number from 26,207 to 27,303 between 2000 and 2010; an increase of 4%. The growth is likely due to a trend toward both smaller household sizes and an increase in the number of one-person households.

Table III-3: Household Trends, 2000-2010

	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	
			Number	% Change
Tonawanda CDP (Town outside Village)	26,207	27,303	1,096	4.18%
Village of Kenmore	7,071	7,387	316	4.47%
Town and Village	33,278	34,690	1,412	4.24%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000

Household Composition

Traditional family households (related persons living together) remain the most common household type, yet this number has fallen nearly 4% since 2000. Approximately 15,193 households (60%) of all households in the Tonawanda CDP are categorized as traditional family households. Families are getting smaller. In 2010, approximately 44% of families consisted of two persons, most of which are married couples without children living at home. Of all family households, only 22% of these include children under the age of 18 living at home.

The non-family component of the Tonawanda CDP has grown since 2000 to include over 40% of the population or 10,284 households. Of these, nearly 34% of householders report living alone. Of these solo householders, over 14% are over the age of 65. Single-person households now comprise more than 40% of all households in the Tonawanda CDP, compared to 34 percent in 1990. The size of the average household in the Tonawanda CDP decreased from 2.33 persons in 2000 to 2.27 in 2010.

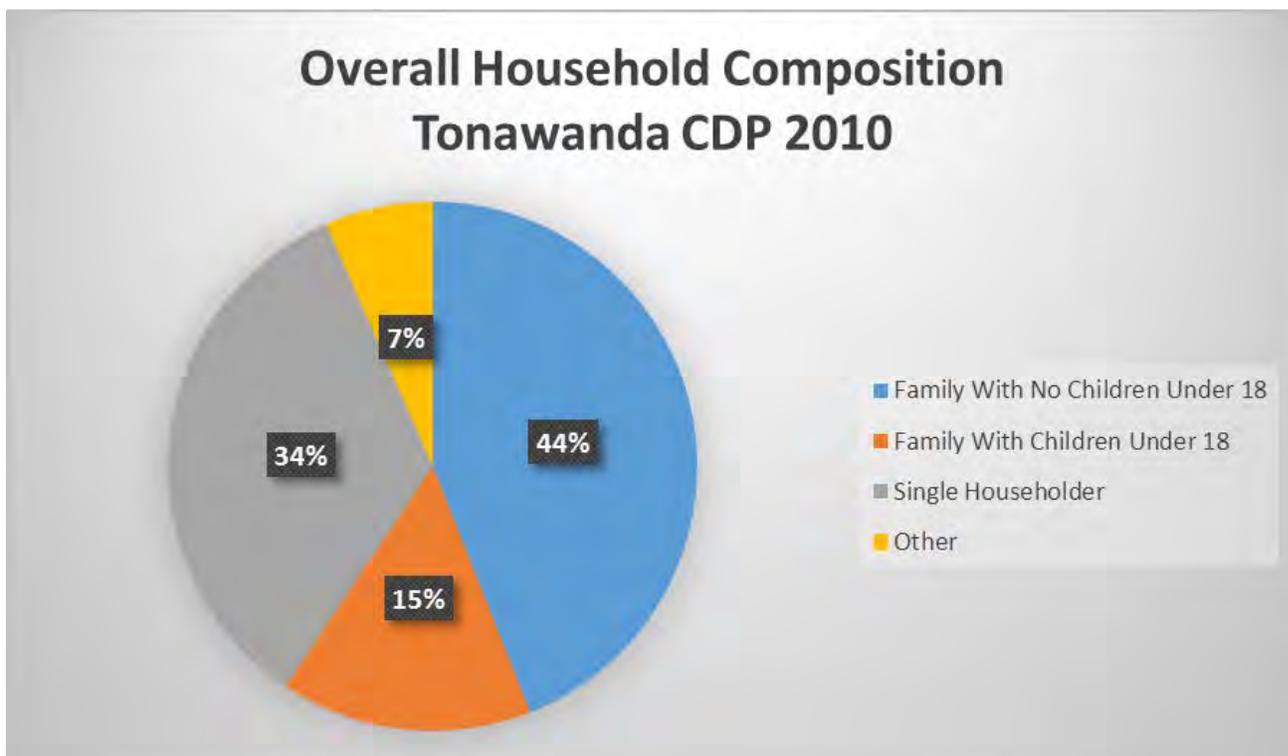


Figure III-3: Overall Household Composition

Age Distribution

The age distribution of the CDP population has shifted over the last decade. Population loss in the CDP is now occurring primarily among the senior adult population and the population of residents under the age of 18, reversing a trend toward increasing senior and youth populations between 1990 and 2000. Seniors aged 65 and older now comprise 20 percent of the 2010 CDP population, compared to 22 percent in 2000. Children under the age of 18 currently represent 19% of the total population, compared to 21.5% in 2000. The proportion of non-elderly adults (age 18 to 64) in the CDP increased to 62% from 56% in 2000. Median age has increased from 41.8 in 2000 to 43.1 in 2010.

Tonawanda CDP and Comparison Communities

Basic demographic information for a number of communities in Erie County has been collected in order to assess the Town of Tonawanda in relation to surrounding municipalities. These communities include the Town of Amherst and the Town of Grand Island because they border the Town of Tonawanda. The Towns of Cheektowaga and West Seneca, as Towns that border the City of Buffalo, were also included. Erie County, as a whole, was also included in the comparison. These statistics are illustrated in Table III-4.

Population Age

The Tonawanda CDP has an older population than the Erie County average; the CDP had a median age of 43.1 years in the year 2010, compared with an average of 40.4 in Erie County. The number of residents over the age of 65 actually dropped in the CDP between 2000 and 2010. Approximately 19% of CDP residents were over age 65 in 2010; this number has fallen from 22% in the year 2000. Erie County's population over age 65 was 15.7% in 2010. This figure remains consistent with the Erie County rate of 15.9% in 2000.

The average household size (2.27 persons) in the Tonawanda CDP is among the smallest in Erie County. The Village of Kenmore and the Town of Cheektowaga are slightly smaller at 2.19 and 2.20, respectively. The average household size countywide is 2.32 persons.

Income and Poverty Rate

Median household income in the Tonawanda CDP was \$52,399 in 2009. Levels in the Town outside the Village were very similar, at \$51,809. These income levels were approximately 4% percent higher than the Erie County median income (\$49,977). These income levels are characteristic of inner ring suburban communities, where incomes are higher than income levels in cities (Buffalo or Tonawanda), but generally lower than median household income levels in second ring suburbs, such as Amherst (\$68,018), Grand Island (\$80,180), and West Seneca (\$56,170).

Erie County, as a whole, has experienced an increased poverty rate during the past decade; the overall rate has increased from 12.2% in 2000 to 14.2% in 2010. The poverty rate in the Tonawanda CDP has increased more substantially than comparison communities: between 2000 and 2010 the CDP poverty rate increased from 7.3% to 10.7%. While the Towns of Amherst, Cheektowaga, Grand Island and West Seneca have all increased in a manner consistent with the County, the Tonawanda CDP has exceeded the County average growth in the poverty rate.

Occupation and Industry

Residents of the Town of Tonawanda exhibit a mix of occupational backgrounds. Approximately 36% of employed residents aged 16 or older are occupied in managerial, professional or related occupations, while 31% work in sales or office occupations. Approximately 10% are employed in production or transportation, and 17% work in service occupations. Meaningful changes between 2000 and 2010 include a 3% drop in overall production and transportation employment, a 5% drop in sales and office occupations, and a 4% gain in service sector employment.

In terms of the industry, the largest proportion of Town residents are employed in the education, health and social services sector at 26%. Approximately 9% of employed residents work in the manufacturing sector, and another 14% work in retail trade. Employment is split among the remaining sectors of the economy, with no other sector employing a significant proportion of the workforce in the Town of Tonawanda. Meaningful changes between 2000 and 2010 include a 4% drop in total manufacturing industry employment. All other industry type allocations remain consistent with 2000 figures.

D. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Housing Statistics

There were 27,303 housing units in the Town of Tonawanda CDP³ (“CDP” refers to the portion of the Town that is outside the Village) in 2010. This figure represents a slight increase from the 2000 figure of 27,175. The Census reports the construction of 42 new units in the CDP in 2010. There are an additional 7,387 housing units in the Village of Kenmore, for a total of 34,690 units town-wide. These figures include both occupied and vacant units. As a community with little developable land, limited housing growth can be expected. There has been some new building, particularly in the neighborhoods targeted by the Town Department of Community Development, such as Sheridan-Parkside, Old Town and Kenilworth. Community Development is building affordable homes

for first-time homebuyers in these targeted areas. New patio home development has also occurred since 2000, most notably the Center Court Commons development.

The housing vacancy rate is relatively low in the Town of Tonawanda. In the CDP, approximately 4.0% of units in the Town were vacant and unoccupied in 2010; this figure has increased from 3.6% in 2000. Typically, a vacancy rate of around 5% is considered “normal”. Normal vacancy includes units that are temporarily vacant because they are for sale or for rent, or have been sold or rented but are not yet occupied. Rates that are higher than normal are an indicator of problems with the housing market, and often reflect the presence of undesirable or dilapidated structures that are difficult to sell or rent. The Town’s low vacancy rate suggests a healthy housing market, without being so low as to indicate housing shortages.

In the Tonawanda CDP, the market is particularly strong for homeownership units. According to the Census, only 1.1 percent of owner-occupied units were vacant in 2010. Because homeowners tend to live in the same unit for a longer period, typical vacancy rates for owner-occupied units is around 2 percent. Rental units, which experience greater turnover, typically have a higher vacancy rate, and a rate of around 6 percent is considered normal. In the Town of Tonawanda CDP, vacancy among rental units was 5.8 percent in 2010, which is an acceptable rate.

Vacancy rates are higher in the Village. In 2010, 5.9% of housing units in the Village of Kenmore were vacant. Homeowner vacancy, at 1.1 percent, was only slightly higher than the Town’s rate. Rental vacancy in the Village was 6.8 percent. These rates are still within the normal range.

Table III-4: Comparable Communities-Demographic Profile 2010

	Tonawanda CDP (outside the Village)	Village of Kenmore	Town of Amherst	Town of Cheektowaga	Town of Grand Island	Town of West Seneca	Erie County
Population	58,144	15,423	122,366	94,019	20,374	44,711	919,040
Median Age	43.1	39.7	40.2	43.2	42.8	44.7	40.4
% under 18	19.1	20.7	19.8	18.6	23	19.5	21.6
% 65 or older	19.0	14.5	17.8	19.7	14.3	19.8	15.7
Households	25,477	7,036	48,894	39,325	7,936	19,151	383,164
Average HH Size	2.27	2.19	2.33	2.2	2.55	2.31	2.32
Housing Units	27,303	7,387	51,179	41,892	8,273	19,972	419,974
Vacancy Rate	4.0%	5.9%	4.4%	6.1%	4.0%	4.1%	8.76%
% Owner-occupied	72.6%	64.6%	68.0%	67.0%	81.0%	76.1%	64.8%
% Renter-occupied	27.4%	35.4%	32.0%	33.0%	19.0%	23.9%	35.2%
Median HH Income	\$ 52,398	\$51,809	\$68,018	\$47,360	\$80,180	\$56,170	\$49,977
Per Capita Income	\$ 27,709	\$28,659	\$35,614	\$24,699	\$34,054	\$27,794	\$27,700
Percent of Persons Under Poverty Line	10.7%	5.2%	8.1%	9.3%	5.7%	6.4%	14.2%

Notes:

- 1) Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2010
- 2) Town figures include Villages within the Towns unless noted
- 3) The 2010 Census data shows the amount earned in the previous year (2009)

Table III-5: Housing Stock Trends, 2000-2010

	Town of Tonawanda		Village of Kenmore		Tonawanda CDP	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
All Housing Units	34,634	34,690	7,459	7,387	27,175	27,303
Occupied Units	33,278	33,165	7,071	6,951	26,207	26,214
Vacant Units	1,356	1,251	388	436	978	1,089
Vacancy Rate	3.9%	3.6%	5.2%	5.9%	3.6%	4.0%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000 and 2010

Housing Type

The housing stock in the Tonawanda CDP is predominately owner-occupied with a 72.6% homeownership rate in 2010; this figure has declined from 74.6% in 2000. Homeownership is lower in the Kenmore Village, where 64.6% of all units are reported as owner-occupied. Overall owner-occupancy for the Town including the Village is 71.6%.

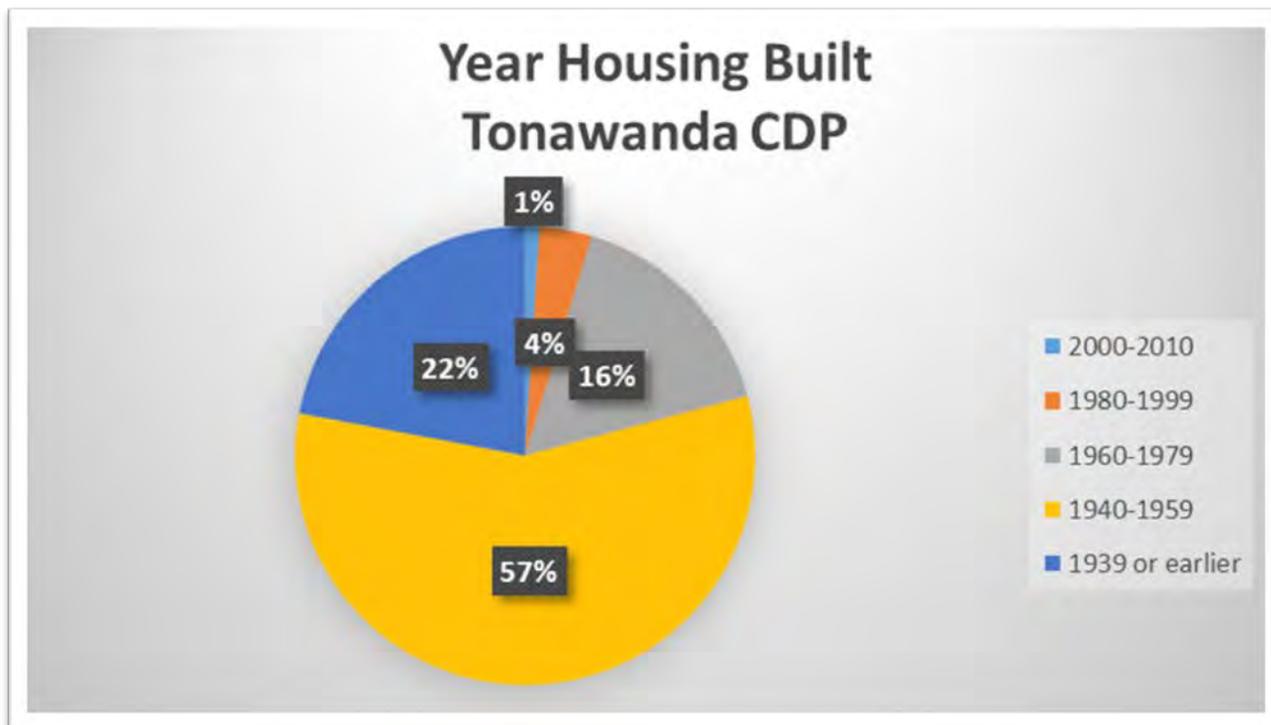
Most of the housing stock in the Tonawanda CDP is comprised of single-family dwellings; these figures include mobile homes, which total less than half of one percent. Two-family homes make up 11 percent of the housing stock, and the remaining housing stock is in buildings housing three or more units. Most apartment buildings are small, with only 2.5 percent of the housing stock in structures with 20 units or more. The housing make-up in the Village is more diverse. Just under 59 percent of units are in single-family homes. Nearly 29 percent of units are in two-family homes, and 12 percent are in structures with three or more apartments. Seven percent of units in the Village are in large apartment buildings with over 20 units. Many of the larger apartment buildings in the Village are designated for senior citizens.

Housing Age

A significant characteristic of the housing in the Town of Tonawanda is its age. Most of the housing stock in the Town was built over a relatively short time period. According to Census statistics, approximately 56.9% of the housing stock in the Town CDP was built between 1940 and 1959. 12.8% percent of the housing stock in the Town CDP was built prior to 1939, and 11.9 percent was built between 1960 and 1969. The remaining housing stock (approximately 12 percent) was built after 1969. Median year built for residential housing stock in the Town CDP Village is 1955. Housing in the Village is older than in the Town CDP. Over half of the homes in the Village (53.4 percent) were built before 1939, and 87 percent of the village housing stock was built over 40 years ago. Less than 8 percent of the Village's housing stock was built after 1969. For the

Town including the Village, approximately 80 percent of the housing stock is over 40 years old.

Figure III-4: Year Housing Built



Length of Tenure

Residents of the Town of Tonawanda CDP are typically long-term residents. According to mobility statistics from the 2010 Census, over half (52.1 percent) of residents had lived at their current address for more than 10 years. Over one-quarter (25.5 percent) had lived at the same address for over 30 years.

Housing Price

Housing prices in the Town of Tonawanda are affordable. According to the Census, the median value of owner-occupied homes in the Tonawanda CDP was \$113,500.00 in 2012¹. In comparison, the median value of owner-occupied homes in Erie County was \$123,400.00 in 2012. Compared to other suburban communities in Erie County, the Town of Tonawanda has an affordable housing market. For example, median home values in neighboring Amherst were reported to be \$164,174.00. Sales data from the Greater Buffalo Board of Realtors support the figures from the Census.

Based on actual sales data through the Multiple Listing Service, the average sale price of housing in the Town of Tonawanda in 2013 was \$120,405.00, including homes in Kenmore. A total of 779 homes were sold (closed sale or rented) in the Town in 2013. By comparison, the average sale price across the Multiple Listing System in the Buffalo-Niagara region was \$143,027 based on a total of 7,963 closed sales².

Table III-6: Town of Tonawanda - Single Family Homes – Closed Sale or Rented (2012-2013)

<u>2013</u>	# sold	# Beds	# Baths	Square Footage	List Price	LP/Square Foot	Sale Price	Days on Market
High	779	6	3	3,449	\$354,900	\$137.35	\$353,700	451
Low		2	1	864	\$39,900	\$22.47	\$32,500	0
Average		3	1	1,514	\$124,188	\$82.74	\$121,537	41
Median		3	1	1,433	\$121,000	\$83.73	\$120,405	21
<u>2012</u>								
High	806	6	3	2,850	\$339,900	\$136.27	\$310,000	353
Low		2	1	768	\$35,100	\$24.54	\$950	0
Average		3	1	1,506	\$121,921	\$81.28	\$118,572	53
Median		3	1	1,445	\$117,900	\$80.48	\$115,000	30

Source: Multiple Listing Services (MLS), 2014

Building Condition

The majority of homes in the Town of Tonawanda are in good condition and well maintained. Based on building permit records, residents invested \$9.45 million in housing improvements in 2013 and an average of \$9.74 million per year in the four years between 2010 and 2013. These figures include only renovations that would require building permits, such as new additions. It is evident from observation that much more than that was invested by residents in siding, painting, landscaping and other improvements that do not require town permits.

Current Housing Overview: Needs, Issues, Observations from Local Realtors

The process of data gathering for the Plan involved informal and anecdotal conversations with local and regional professionals that could offer specific expertise in relevant subject areas. Local realtors were contacted and asked to present their observations about Tonawanda’s real estate market.

¹ American Factfinder 2008-2012 Estimates

² The MLS area covers seven counties of Western New York, but the vast majority of sales are in Erie and Niagara Counties.

These realtors concurred that Tonawanda is a top residential “draw” in the Buffalo Niagara Region and has held this status for several decades. The general affordability, reasonable taxes, and overall quality of services, including schools, are Tonawanda’s top “draws”. The Town tends to attract the first-time buyer seeking homes in the \$130,000 to \$160,000 range. These first-time buyers tend to remain in the Town long term.

Issues arise for the “move-up” client seeking a larger, pricier home with more amenities. Realtors noted the Willowgrove and Deerhurst Park neighborhoods as especially coveted for the move-up buyer. Realtors cited the demand for “higher-end” homes, particularly ranch-style homes, far exceeds the supply. The Green Acres neighborhood (which features ranch-style homes) was cited specifically as a popular neighborhood where housing might be placed on the market and sold within one day. When questioned about the success of the new patio-style homes at the Center Court commons development, responses were mixed. Some realtors feel the homes are too pricey for the value they offer. Others also noted that the development took more than two years to be absorbed by the market and question the real “success” of the initiative. The most pressing issue cited by realtors questioned is the continuing decline in the Town’s school rankings. Where the schools once attracted the first-time and “move-up” clients with children alike, the trend points now toward the “move-up” client leaving Tonawanda for communities including Amherst and Williamsville that offer schools perceived as higher quality.

Tonawanda Neighborhood Overview

The Town of Tonawanda is characterized by a number of strong neighborhoods. Areas such as Parkview Triangle, Kenilworth, Deerhurst Park and other local neighborhoods have a particular image and sense of identity. The Village of Kenmore also helps contribute to local identity, offering an atmospheric and densely populated traditional neighborhood with a walkable retail business district that serves the wider Tonawanda region. Several retail and public uses are also located on Sheridan Drive, with the Sheridan Delaware Plaza, the Aquatic Center, the Town Court and Police Department providing a central focus of activity, and a number of other public and retail uses located nearby.

Unlike many suburban areas, the Town of Tonawanda offers a variety of unique neighborhoods with specific character. These neighborhoods do not always have exact boundaries, however Map 4 provides a general depiction of where different neighborhoods in Town are located. Several of these neighborhoods have a community organization that sponsors activities and programs. Others are more informal in nature. Many have a historic identity, and may have been more organized in the past, but current neighborhood interaction is informal.

The Town also operates a strong neighborhood watch system offering neighborhood patrols to monitor suspicious activity and help support neighborhood identity. There are nine neighborhood watch organizations across the Town. Strengthening the activities and efforts of the neighborhood watch organizations is the Crime Resistance Executive Board, which provides coordination and networking opportunities between these organizations. The Crime Resistance Executive Board also oversees the Mobile Eye Patrol. This volunteer program helps supplement police efforts by identifying suspicious activities and maintaining patrols to enhance safety in the Town. The Town of Tonawanda Police Department helps support the sense of neighborhood in the Town.

The Community Policing Program is offered in the Sheridan Parkside Village Courts, Old Town, Kenilworth and Lincoln Park neighborhoods. The goal of this program is to foster community and police interaction in order to reduce crime and foster a high quality of life. Events and neighborhood functions are sponsored by the Police Department to help achieve this goal. Satellite Police offices are maintained at Lincoln Park and Sheridan Parkside Village Courts. Tonawanda has a neighborhood park system, with playgrounds and parks distributed throughout the Town. Similarly, neighborhood schools and churches are located throughout the Town and offer a community gathering place, playfields and other activities. Most residents live within easy walking distance of a park, playground and/or a schoolyard. Another factor contributing to the quality of neighborhoods in the Town of Tonawanda is the presence of small, neighborhood business districts. These provide important services to local residents and help promote local identity.

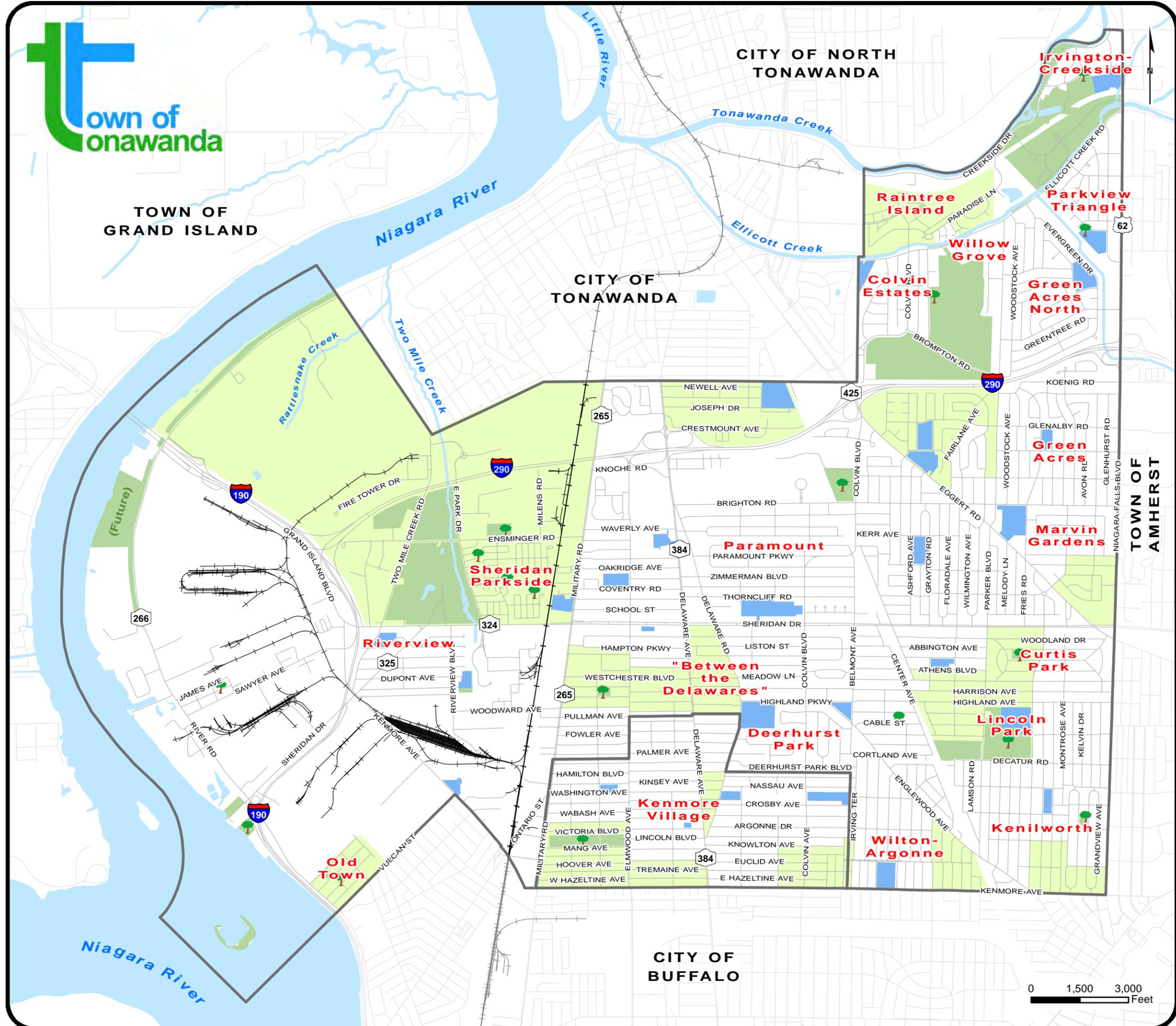


MAP 4 NEIGHBORHOODS & PARKS

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

Legend

- Playground
- Water
- Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundary
- CDBG Eligible Areas (FY2015-2019)
- Park/Recreation
- School Grounds



NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
Sources:
- Town of Tonawanda

J:\Projects\11177008\GIS\MAPS\04 Neighborhoods & Parks.mxd 12/15/2014



Community Development

The Town of Tonawanda has a Department of Community Development that focuses on neighborhoods where income levels or other factors make them eligible for community development block grant (CDBG) investment. Most suburban municipalities in Erie County receive CDBG funded through the Erie County consortium. However, because the Town of Tonawanda has a population over 50,000 residents, it is eligible to receive CDBG funds directly from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The primary national objective of the CDBG program is to revitalize neighborhoods, increase employment opportunities or improve community facilities and services, with a priority on programs and projects that benefit low-to moderate-income residents. Activities that address slums or blight or urgent needs that threaten health or welfare of the community are also eligible.

A range of activities may be undertaken with community development block grant funds. In the Town of Tonawanda, several areas are designated as eligible, based on income levels of existing residents, for community development activities. These include the Sheridan Parkside Village Courts area, Old Town, and portions of Kenilworth, Lincoln Park and the Village of Kenmore. The areas eligible for community development block grant funding in the Town of Tonawanda are shown on Map 4 – Neighborhoods and Parks.

Activities sponsored by the Town of Tonawanda Department of Community Development include new home construction, home repair, and a first-time home ownership program. The Department also offers a range of services, such as housing counseling, a weatherization program, and community building programs. The Department also is responsible for housing activities under the HOME program, through a Consortium with the Towns of Amherst and Cheektowaga.

Homeownership is a primary focus of Community Development activity. Over the last decade, the Town has used federal and state funds to construct 107 new homes for first-time homebuyers in the Kenilworth, Sheridan-Parkside and Old Town neighborhoods. This program is being continued, and has started transforming the character of these neighborhoods.

In the Sheridan-Parkside neighborhood, the transition is dramatic, as multi-family row housing is being replaced with single-family homes. It is a goal of the Town's Community Development program to create a more diverse, attractive neighborhood in the Sheridan-Parkside area. This neighborhood is characterized by low incomes, high turnover, and a high percentage of substandard rental housing. The Town has been investing in infrastructure, acquisition of dilapidated buildings and selective demolitions in order to diversify the housing stock and support a higher proportion of homeownership in the neighborhood. A concept plan for the transformation of the neighborhood has been prepared, which is being used to guide reinvestment in the neighborhood, targeting areas for different housing types, green space and other amenities. Eventually, improvements will include new lot configurations, new street circulation patterns to facilitate access, and public improvements to upgrade the appearance and image of the neighborhood.

The Town also promotes home improvements, with a deferred payment loan program for home repair. For residents who meet eligibility criteria, the money is at 0% interest and payments are deferred until the loan recipient sells or moves out of the property. Almost one in 12 homes town-wide have received a CD loan for home repair since the program began in 1980.

E. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Stewardship of natural resources is a priority for any sustainable community. This role takes on additional importance in the Town of Tonawanda, which touches a resource of international significance – the Niagara River and its environment. Map 5 depicts the major environmental features of the Town.

1. Water Resources

Watersheds



Niagara River view to the south near the Town boat launch and water treatment plant

The Town of Tonawanda falls within the Niagara River/Lake Erie Basin. All Town discharges flow into the Niagara River, either directly or via Tonawanda Creek, Two Mile Creek or Ellicott Creek. The Niagara River/ Lake Erie basin drains an area of 2,300 square miles, incorporating all of Erie County, and significant portions of the entire Western New York region. In addition, the Niagara River receives waters from four Great Lakes that are upstream of the River (Lakes Erie, Michigan, Superior, and Huron).

- *Niagara River* – The largest waterway in Town is the Niagara River, which is a part of a significant environmental ecosystem of international importance. Tonawanda Channel of the Niagara River forms the western land edge of the Town, and the Town boundary is located in the Niagara River. The western portion of the Town falls within the State Coastal Management Zone, and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Boundary. The Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) guides development in the waterfront area and was most recently updated in 2008. There is approximately 6 miles of Niagara River shoreline in the Town of Tonawanda. The river is a major source of drinking water.
 - The Niagara River is classified as Class A – Special Waters.
- *Tributaries* – Tonawanda Creek (Erie Canal System segment) and Ellicott Creek flow parallel to each other in the northeastern corner of the Town. The area between these two waterways is known as Raintree Island. The eastern portion of Raintree Island falls within the Town of Tonawanda, while the western end is in the City of Tonawanda. Two Mile Creek also flows through the Town of Tonawanda, northerly through Sheridan Park. Rattlesnake Creek is a small stream that flows into Two Mile Creek in the waterfront region of the Town. These four waterways all flow from the Town of Tonawanda through the City of Tonawanda, where they terminate at the Niagara River.
 - Tonawanda Creek is classified as a Class C - Standard C stream.
 - Ellicott Creek is classified as a Class B – Standard B stream.
 - Two Mile Creek is classified as a Class B – Standard B stream.
 - Rattlesnake Creek is classified as a Class B – Standard B stream.

Floodplains

Regulated floodplains are areas that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has determined would experience 0.1% chance of flooding during what is known as a 100-year storm, when excessive precipitation would lead to creeks and rivers overflowing their banks.

- *Regulatory Authority* – Floodplains, or Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA), are areas that have been designated by FEMA. Since 1982, the Town of Tonawanda has been a participating community in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) by adopting and enforcing a floodplain management local law to reduce future flood damage. In exchange, the NFIP makes federally backed flood insurance available to homeowners, renters and business owners in these communities.
- *Current Delineation* – Floodplains are depicted on the 1981 series of FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), which are currently in effect:
- *Niagara River*. According to the 1981 FIRM maps, the largest area of what FEMA designates as the SFHA is associated with the Niagara River. Much of the shoreline along the River has been designated floodplain. The bands of floodplain are widest in the central sector of the waterfront, in the vicinity of the Grand Island Bridges. There are narrower bands of floodplain in the southern and northern portions of the waterfront area, as well as a few specific locations where the designated flood zone encroaches further inland south of the bridges.
- *Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek*. There are also smaller areas of floodplain associated with Ellicott Creek, and some areas of floodplain along Tonawanda Creek. These areas are shown on Map 5 - Environmental Features.
- *Proposed Revisions* – In 2009, FEMA prepared an update to the FIRM maps for Erie County, including the Town of Tonawanda. The new maps included an expansion of the flood hazard areas. These updates are still in process and are not yet in effect. In January 2011, the Town of Tonawanda filed an appeal with FEMA to contest the conditions of the expanded flood hazard area, particularly the discharge calculations for Ellicott Creek and the delineation of the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) south of Ellicott Creek. According to the Town, FEMA has accepted the town's protest regarding the boundary of the preliminary SFHA and has further modified the preliminary maps to reflect a reduced area of the SFHA. The Town will use the new FIRM maps along with updating local laws when they go into effect.

“Wetlands provide critical flood and stormwater control functions. They absorb, store, and slow down the movement of rain and melt water, minimizing flooding and stabilizing flow.”

NYSDEC website

Wetlands

There are areas of both federal and state designated freshwater wetlands located in the Town of Tonawanda. Wetlands are low-lying areas where water is retained, and groundwater can be found at or near the surface of the soil for extended periods of time. In New York, wetlands are regulated at the state and federal level.

- *Regulatory Authority* – A wetland can be regulated by New York State and the federal government concurrently. Regulating authority is determined individually by the state and federal government based upon the specific regulations that define the criteria by which a wetland is identified. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is the federal entity and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is the state entity regulating wetlands. The definition of what is classified as a wetland differs between these two entities.
 - *Federal Wetlands*. Federal wetlands are delineated based on the hydrologic condition of the land, the presence of hydric soils, wetland vegetation, and have a clear surface water connection or ecological continuum. There are areas along Sawyer Avenue, River Road, Ellicott Creek, Two-Mile Creek, and I-290 that have been designated as federal wetlands by the US Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory. Small areas of federal wetlands can also be found in scattered locations west of Military Road. Federal policy is evolving in regard to federal wetlands, particularly smaller isolated areas not associated with navigable waters of the United States. Most of the federal wetlands in the Town of Tonawanda fall into this category. It is still the case, however, that persons seeking to develop within any federal wetland need to obtain a permit from the USACE. A federal wetland does not need to be on the National Wetland Inventory Map in order to be regulated by USACE, and determinations of regulatory jurisdiction are typically made by this agency through field investigation.
 - *New York State*. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) identifies freshwater wetlands by a number of factors, primarily by the types of vegetation that are found in the area. Plants found in State designated wetlands prefer wet soils or flooding conditions. By definition, a State regulated freshwater wetland must be 12.4 acres in size or greater, unless it has been determined by the NYSDEC Commissioner to have unusual local importance (See 6 NYCRR Part 663.2(p)). In the Town of

Tonawanda, there are three areas designated as wetlands by New York State. The largest area of state wetlands is located in the industrial area of Town, north of Sawyer Road. These wetlands run adjacent to a rail corridor, on industrial lands that are primarily vacant. A second area of State wetlands is located on a 57-acre parcel known as Cherry Farm. This vacant parcel is a privately owned, former landfill and hazardous waste site that has been remediated. The wetland is concentrated on an 18-acre strip along the eastern edge of the parcel. There are conceptual plans in place to transfer the land to public ownership and develop the parcel as a park and recreational area. The wetlands on the site have been incorporated into the conceptual design of the park as a positive environmental and educational feature along a proposed nature trail system. A third area of State wetlands is located on Raintree Island. The majority of this wetland falls within the City of Tonawanda, but the eastern portion extends into the Town. A permit from the NYSDEC is required prior to disturbance of any State-designated wetland or the one hundred-foot area adjacent to the wetland.

Water Usage and Management

In the Town of Tonawanda, water is drawn from the Niagara River for personal use (e.g. - drinking, recreation and household activities) and industrial use (e.g. – raw material, cooling). The river surface is used for public recreation and commercial transportation. Water is returned to the river, either as treated wastewater or untreated non-point source discharges (i.e., runoff).



- *Water Withdrawal* – There are several intakes in the Niagara River that serve a variety of purposes in the Town of Tonawanda and surrounding communities. The NYSDEC provides regulatory oversight of permits for the removal of water from the Niagara River.
 - *Non-Contact Uses.* Several industrial facilities remove water directly from the Niagara River for use in cooling processes. NRG Energy (Huntley Station) is one of the largest users of river water. Other companies with intakes include General Motors, DuPont, Goodyear-Dunlop and PeroxyChem (FMC).
 - *Potable Uses.* The Town of Tonawanda and the Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) both withdraw water from the Niagara River and operate facilities on River Road to produce potable water. The treated water is distributed to their respective customers.

- *Water Return* – Water is returned to the Niagara River through a variety of sources. The NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) requires State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permits for all discharges into the River.
 - *Non-Contact Water*. Companies that withdraw river water for non-contact uses are permitted to return the water directly to the Niagara River.
 - *Wastewater*. The Town of Tonawanda Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) provides treatment for wastewater flows from the Town, the Village of Kenmore and the City of Tonawanda and discharged treated effluent to the Niagara River.
 - *Stormwater*. Stormwater runoff is collected through the Town’s stormwater drainage system and discharged, untreated, to the Niagara River. Stormwater discharges typically contain non-point source pollutants, including pesticides and herbicides from lawns, petroleum products from roadways, pet wastes, etc.
 - *Unregulated sources*. Water may return directly to the river from unregulated sources or runoff.
- *Surface Usage* – The surface of the Niagara River is used for a variety of personal and commercial purposes.
 - *Personal Surface Use*. The Niagara River supports an extensive recreational boating industry. The Town of Tonawanda operates a marina that offers services for recreational boaters, as well as public launch facilities at Aqua Lane Park. A second launch site is at Isle View Park is operated by Erie County. River waters are also a popular location for recreational fishing, whether from boats or from the shoreline.
 - *Commercial Surface Use*. Several industries in the Town of Tonawanda use the Niagara River to transport raw materials and finished products. Suit-Kote uses docking facilities at the Niagara River World property to receive shipments of asphalt. A seawall at Niagara River World has occasionally been used to ship special machinery. NOCO operates docking facilities, which are located south of the Grand Island Bridge, for shipments of asphalt and other products. United Refining maintains a docking structure (no longer in use) north of the Grand Island Bridge.

Water Quality

All waters of the state including lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers are provided a class and standard designation based on existing or expected best usage of each water or waterway segment.

- The classification AA or A is assigned to waters used as a source of drinking water.
- Classification B indicates a best usage for swimming and other contact recreation, but not for drinking water.
- Classification C is for waters supporting fisheries and suitable for non – contact activities.
- The lowest classification and standard is D.

Waters with classifications A, B, and C may also have a standard of (T), indicating that it may support a trout population, or (TS), indicating that it may support trout spawning (TS). Streams classified as A, B, C(T) or C(TS) are protected streams under New York State’s Protection of Waters Program. According to the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR), the waters within the Town of Tonawanda have the following classifications:

Table III-7: Stream Classifications

Surface Water	Classification
Niagara River	Class A – Special (international boundary waters)
Two Mile Creek	Class B
Rattlesnake Creek (tributary to Two Mile Creek):	Class B
Tonawanda Creek	Class C
Ellicott Creek	Class C

Source: NYSDEC website:

Water quality is a concern in the Niagara River. The Great Lakes area, including the Town of Tonawanda waterfront, is heavily industrialized. Historical municipal and industrial discharges and waste disposal sites have been a source of contaminants to the Niagara River. Pollutants in the River are generated both locally and by cities and industries located upstream.

- *Area of Concern* – The Niagara River has been designated an Area of Concern (AOC) by the International Joint Commission (IJC), the bi-national organization that oversees the management of the Great Lakes Basin. The Niagara River Area of Concern (AOC) is located in Erie and Niagara counties in western New York and extends from Smokes Creek, near the southern end of the Buffalo Harbor, north to the mouth of the Niagara River at Lake Ontario. Designation as an Area of Concern indicates that the level of pollutants impairs the “beneficial use” of a water body, resulting in

restrictions on activities that can take place. In the case of the Niagara River, there are restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption and dredging activities. There are also problems relating to fish deformities, loss of habitat, and contamination in sediments (degradation of benthos).

- *Remedial Action Plan* – In order to address these concerns, a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) for the Niagara River was completed in 1994, with an updated Status Report published in 2000. The RAP identifies issues and pollutants affecting the River, and sets forth recommendations to address the problems. Priorities outlined in the Niagara River RAP include strategies to address stream water quality, contaminated river sediments, inactive hazardous waste sites, point source pollution (pollution from specific sources), and fish and wildlife habitat improvements. In 1987, four environmental agencies, Environment Canada (EC), USEPA, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and NYSDEC, signed a Declaration of Intent to significantly reduce toxic chemical pollutants in the Niagara River. The Niagara River Toxics Management Plan (NRTMP) is a progress report and work plan which targets 18 priority toxics for reduction. The progress report and work plan was most recently updated in 2007, and status reports are prepared annually.
- In 2010, the Town received a grant from the NY State Department of State, with funds provided under Title 11 of the Environmental Protection Fund, to study and document environmental influences on the Niagara River. The grant has helped fund two projects: the development of a Niagara River watershed plan and the Waterfront Land Use Plan update (accepted by the Planning Board on March 5, 2014). The Niagara River watershed plan (Healthy Niagara) development is being led by the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper, in partnership with the Town and Erie County. The goal of the plan is to provide citizens with current information on the health of the river and document successes and improvement. This project aims to advance the protection and restoration of water quality and ensure compatible land use development, while helping the river's natural resources.
- A broad range of interest groups, including environmental, industrial, academic, recreational, community and governmental representatives were involved in the Remedial Advisory Committee (RAC) that prepared the RAP. Additional public outreach included public meetings, reports, brochures,

displays and an informational video. Accomplishments that have been achieved in regard to the Niagara River RAP include the following:

- Progress in hazardous waste site remediation,
- Removal of contaminated river sediments in several locations,
- Decrease in amount of point source pollution discharged into the River,
- Implementation of strategies to address non-point source pollution (pollution, such as road run-off, that cannot be traced back to a single source),
- On-going assessment of impacts on fish and wildlife, and
- On-going research into fish consumption advisory status and long-term trends

Remediation activities for the Niagara River are an on-going process, and there are continued monitoring of problems, activities and achievements. The RAC meets on a regular basis, and future monitoring and research will continue, with the long-term goal of restoring an improved quality of life for the ecosystem of the Niagara River and its watershed.

2. Significant Habitats

The Strawberry Island – Motor Island Shallows are located in the Tonawanda Channel of the Niagara River, which flows between the Towns of Tonawanda

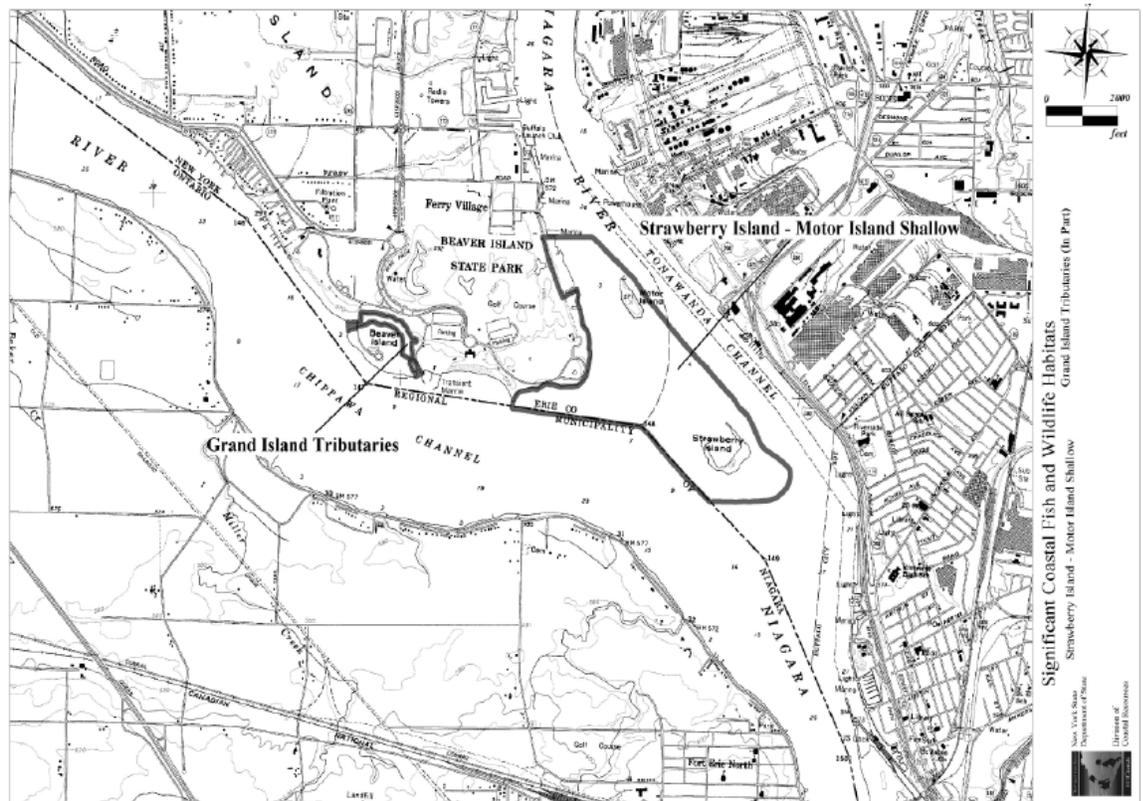


Figure III-5
Strawberry Island - Motor Island Shallow are designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats. Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, 2008

and Grand Island. Strawberry Island falls within the municipal boundaries of the Town of Tonawanda, while Motor Island is within the boundaries of the Town of Grand Island. The Shallows is officially designated as a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat by New York State. The area is the largest area of riverine littoral zone in the Niagara River, a rare type of ecosystem. The Strawberry Island – Motor Shoals Shallows area is a very important fish spawning area in the upper Niagara River that is nationally recognized as a spawning ground for muskellunge. The area is also an important bird habitat. The National Audubon Society has designated the entire upper Niagara River corridor as an “Important Bird Area of International Significance,” and Strawberry Island is a significant location for waterfowl, used for feeding, wintering and resting during migrations. In 1998, the State of New York allocated over \$700,000 to an aquatic habitat restoration project on Strawberry Island. The Strawberry Island Phase III Erosion Control and Wetland Habitat Restoration project was completed in 2001 and restored three acres of wetlands and installed features to stabilize the Island against further erosion. This project was recommended in the Niagara River RAP, and funding of this project represents progress toward remediation and enhancement efforts.

Frog Island is a shallow shoal in the Niagara River – Tonawanda Channel located within the larger Strawberry Island – Motor Island Shallows. The shoal area is currently devoid of emergent vegetation or submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). Frog Island previously was an island, and in 1938 encompassed approximately 4 acres. By 1951, the island’s area was greatly reduced, and by 1985, it was no longer visible in aerial photographs. The island’s disappearance is attributed to several factors including gravel mining activities in the Niagara River, changing Lake Erie water levels and corresponding Niagara River flows, and high flows, wave action, overtopping, and ice scour, resulting in significant erosion. The New York Power Authority (NYPA) has undertaken the Frog Island Habitat Improvement Project (HIP) as one of their commitments under the 2007 federal relicensing of the Niagara hydroelectric plant. The objective of the project is to re-create and establish emergent marsh and submerged aquatic vegetation habitat at Frog Island. In 2010, NYPA issued the “Frog Island Design Report Draft” which was used to design the recreated habitat. In May 2013, a \$4.17 million construction contract was awarded for the first phase of habitat restoration for the 3.9-acre site. The first phase of work for the project includes the initial dredging and excavation, reconfiguring of the river bottom, installation of substrate materials to support growth of desirable aquatic plants; placing of submerged boulders, floating logs and other natural elements to attract wildlife; and installing stone berms to enclose and protect the new habitat. The construction is anticipated to continue through the end of 2014.

3. Soil Resources

Most of the Town of Tonawanda has been developed, and surface soils have been excavated, built on and disturbed. Throughout the Town, most soils are categorized as urban land. In areas of vacant land, particularly within the waterfront area, most of the soils that are not urban land are various forms of silt loams. There are areas of clay soils throughout the Town.

Another indicator of soil condition is the presence of hydric and potentially hydric soils. Hydric soils are lands where the water table is near the surface, and the possibility exists for seasonal wetness (standing or ponded water conditions). Hydric soils are associated with wetlands. Potentially hydric soils are soils that have a high likelihood of containing pockets or areas of hydric soils. In the Town of Tonawanda, the majority of the soils are non-hydric. There are areas of potentially hydric soils spread throughout the Town. There are only a few small areas where hydric soils are found, mostly corresponding to creek corridors or wetland areas.

Solid Waste Disposal – Landfills

There are three sites in the Town of Tonawanda that are current or former solid waste disposal sites:

- The **Seaway Landfill** is a 100-acre landfill that operated from 1930 to 1993 and accepted municipal, commercial, construction, and industrial wastes. After ceasing operations, most of the landfill was capped. Materials containing low levels of residual radioactivity were disposed of on the adjacent property leased by the federal government, and as a result, the site has undergone remediation (refer to the Brownfields/Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites section of this report section). Refer to the “FUSRAP – Radioactive Residue Sites” section below
- The **Town of Tonawanda Landfill** is located off Military Road, near the border with the City of Tonawanda. This 45-acre landfill operated from the 1930's until 1989 and was primarily used for the disposal of household wastes, garbage, incinerator ash from sewage sludge, incinerator by-pass waste, construction and demolition debris, and yard wastes. As the result of a radiological survey performed in 1991 by the Department of Energy, a portion of the landfill site and a parcel located to the south, the North Youngmann Commerce Center, were designated together as a FUSRAP (Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program) site. Refer to the “FUSRAP – Radioactive Residue Sites” section below for further information. The landfill is now inactive and the US Army Corps of

Engineers is in the process of preparing a Feasibility Study to develop and evaluate remedial alternatives for the site. Future use of the Landfill will be determined by the Town and subject to NYSDEC review and approval.

- The **NRG Energy - Huntley Landfill** is the only active landfill in the Town. It is an 80-acre site located on River Road south of the Grand Island bridges. The front 30-acre portion of this site has been closed. It is screened from the roadway with a planted berm. The landfill is used for disposal of industrial and commercial wastes, mainly fly ash generated by the Huntley power station, which is a coal-fired electric generating plant.

Soil Contamination - Brownfields/Inactive Hazardous Waste Sites

New York State Registry – The Town of Tonawanda has twelve sites that are classified under the DEC's "Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites in New York State," and are under their jurisdiction. New York State established the Inactive Hazardous Waste Site Remediation Program in 1979 as part of the Superfund Initiative, to identify, evaluate and remediate inactive hazardous waste sites that may have a significant impact on human health or the environment. The designation of a hazardous waste site under this program is subject to very specific regulations, and there is a standard process that must be followed to remediate, or clean up these sites.

Under the State Hazardous Waste Site program, sites are classified as Class 1 through 5. Class 1 is the most serious category. Sites in this category represent an immediate or imminent threat and emergency action is required to protect the public health or the environment. None of the sites in the Town of Tonawanda are Class 1 sites. Class 5 sites are sites that have been completely remediated, to the point where no further monitoring or maintenance is required. The twelve registry sites in the Town of Tonawanda are summarized in Table III-8.

- **Class 4 Sites (Closed).** Six of the sites in the Town of Tonawanda are classified as Class 4, which means they have been successfully remediated of hazardous wastes, and are considered “closed”. These sites however, require continued site management consisting of operation, maintenance and/or monitoring.
 - The Cherry Farm site was successfully remediated and there are plans are to develop a park on the site.
 - Goodyear-Dunlop Tire and O-Cell-O have also been successfully remediated, and continue in operation as industrial uses. At these locations, on-going monitoring has confirmed that there have been no further environmental concerns.
 - The former Roblin Steel (Wickwire Spencer) site, now Niagara River World, was successfully remediated and a long-term groundwater monitoring program is in place.
 - The Seaway Landfill has been closed, but because radioactive material from the Manhattan Project was stored on-site in the past, this site is subject to more intensive investigation by the Army Corps of Engineers.
 - The 4100 River Road site has been remediated, capped and on-site wastes contained. Groundwater quality samples, and surface water samples, if available, are collected annually and site management is ongoing.

Figure III-6
Brownfield locations depicted in Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area Step I – Pre-Nomination Study, 2012



Table III-8: Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites

Site Name	Address	Owner Listed	NYSDEC Site Class	Approx. Acres
Ashland Tank 75	4625 River Road	Ashland Petroleum	03	1.25
Bisonite Paint Co.	2268 Military Road	2251 Military Road Associates	03	0.03
Goodyear - Dunlop Tire and Rubber	Sheridan Drive & River Road	Goodyear - Dunlop Tires North America	04	25
Polymer Applications	3445 River Road	Buffalo and Erie County Industrial Land Development Corporation	02	6.7
Tonawanda Coke	3875 River Road	Tonawanda Coke Corp.	02	160
Robin Steel (formerly Wickwire Spencer)	4000 River Road	Niagara River World	04	62
Cherry Farm	4290 River Road	National Grid	04	56
River Road	4100 River Road	4100 Properties LLC	04	23
Seaway/Niagara Landfill, Inc.	4825 River Road	Seaway Industrial Park Development Co. Inc.	04	100
3M O-Cel-O Sponge Plant	305 Sawyer Avenue	O-Cel-O Sponge Co. Div. of Gen. Mil	04	1
5565 River Road	5565 River Road	Magliarditti, Nick	02	24
Tonawanda Forge Site	2390 Kenmore Avenue	Lewis Brothers LLC	02	33.2

Sources: NYSDEC Environmental Site Remediation Database (December 2013); Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area Pre-nomination Study (November 2012); and Erie County Office of Geographic Information Systems (September 2014)

- *Class 3 Sites (No threat).* Two sites in the Town area are classified as Class 3. Class 3 sites have some remaining hazardous wastes, but these wastes are contained and do not present a threat to public health or the environment. In the case of Tonawanda, the contamination on the two Class 3 sites is confined to a very localized portion of the site.
 - At the Bisonite Paint site on Military Road, most of the site has been remediated and remaining contamination is contained in a former settling lagoon. The remainder of the site has been redeveloped.
 - Contamination at the Ashland Tank site is similarly contained in a storage tank. The tank is located in a relatively remote area with regulated site access and security fencing, so the NYSDEC deems that public exposure to contaminated soils and sludge is deemed unlikely.

- *Class 2 sites (Active).* The remaining four sites in the Town of Tonawanda are considered Class 2 sites, where there is a significant threat to the public health of environment. Remediation is required at these sites, although not on an urgent basis.
 - Remediation work at the Tonawanda Coke site is ongoing. Public access to the site is deterred by fencing and 24-hour security.
 - Site remediation of the Polymer Applications site was completed in 2011 and long term site management is ongoing. Prior to remediation, the primary contaminants of concern were volatile organic chemicals and semi-volatile organic compounds in groundwater and soil. Contaminated soil has been excavated and removed from the site. The site is completely fenced, which restricts public access. This site was removed from the NYSDEC registry in 2014 and is expected to be reclassified from a Class 2 site.
 - The 5565 River Road site is an undeveloped, vacant industrial site with the presence of industrial fill. A collection of 55-gallon drums were observed on the site, many of which were empty, rusted and in poor condition. According to the NYSDEC, the Preliminary Site Assessment documented the presence of PCBs and metals in surface soils; PAHs, PCBs and metals in subsurface industrial fill; and VOCs, PCBs and metals in drum waste at concentrations that exceeded the NYSDEC commercial soil cleanup objectives. The site was placed on the registry in 2010, and a remedial investigation of the site is expected to be completed in 2014.
 - The fourth Class 2 site is an inactive site zoned for heavy industrial use. The site was originally part of the General Motors - Tonawanda Engine Plant facility that borders the site. The property was sold in 2008 and during demolition of the existing building and superstructure, petroleum contamination was observed and improper removal of a PCB transformer resulted in a release of PCB oil within the facility. The majority the contamination has been addressed, however, the site surface water continues to exhibit elevated levels of PCBs and several areas of the site also exhibit PCB concentration above the regulatory criteria for a hazardous waste.

- *Non-Registry Sites* – In addition to the twelve registry sites, there are 29 non-registry sites in the Town of Tonawanda. The non-registry sites are classified as either “A (active)”, “C (completed)”, “P (potential)”, or “N (no further action at this time).”
 - Nineteen (19) of the 29 sites have a classification of N (no further action at this time).
 - Five of the sites have a classification of C (completed) indicating that all remediation, active operation, maintenance, and/or monitoring requirements have been satisfactorily completed under a remedial program.
 - Four of the sites are classified as A (active) indicating that work on the site is underway (under a Brownfield Cleanup Program, Environmental Restoration Program, Voluntary Cleanup Program or RCRA Corrective action Program sites) and not yet complete. Active site classification may be used for Manufactured Gas Plant sites or those being remediated under a USEPA Cooperative Agreement.
 - One site has a classification of P (Potential), and preliminary information indicates that the site may have contamination that makes it eligible for consideration for placement on the Registry of Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Sites.

- **FUSRAP – Radioactive Residue Sites**

There are some locations in the Town of Tonawanda where radioactive residue is (or was) an issue. These sites exist due to Linde’s involvement in the Manhattan Atomic Bomb project during World War II. The clean-up of these sites is under the jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), under FUSRAP (Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program). The sites are two parcels owned by Ashland, located on either side of the Seaway Landfill, the Seaway Landfill, the Town of Tonawanda Landfill, and the former Linde property, currently owned by Praxair.

Two Ashland sites have been fully remediated. As a result of the remediation work at the Ashland sites, areas of radioactive contamination were observed at the adjacent Seaway Landfill site. In 2008, the Department of Energy performed a feasibility study addendum and the USACE concluded “that [Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act] action is necessary for site soils to be protective of human health and the environment considering future industrial/commercial users.” As of a 2011 bulletin by USACE, “remediation of the Seaway Site is projected to begin pending the completion of currently

ongoing cleanups at other FUSRAP sites and the availability of program funding.” The site is privately owned, and redevelopment is unlikely in the near future. The EPA currently supports redevelopment of the site into a solar farm.

The Tonawanda Landfill Vicinity Property (approximately 170 acres) consists of two parcels owned by the Town of Tonawanda: the Town of Tonawanda Landfill and the Mudflats. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) completed a Remedial Investigation of the site in 2005. Sampling and testing of soil, surface water, sediment, and groundwater indicated small, isolated locations within the vicinity property were found with levels of uranium, radium and thorium above background levels. The levels were determined to be within the acceptable limits of risks to human health, for the current and reasonable future site uses. As a result of 2007 public comment period, the USACE divided the vicinity property into two Operable Units: the Landfill Operable Unit and the Mudflats Operable Unit.

The USACE signed a Record of Decision in 2008 for the Mudflats Operable Unit, indicating that no action was warranted because the risks from FUSRAP-related material were within the acceptable risk limits. The USACE also agreed to conduct additional sampling to confirm the nature and extent of FUSRAP-related material in the Landfill Operable Unit. Additional soil, groundwater, sediment and surface water sampling occurred on the property from 2009 through 2011. The USACE updated the Baseline Risk Assessment in 2012 and concluded that for “the current use of the Landfill Operable Unit, as it is currently configured, risks to human health from potential exposures to FUSRAP-related material are within the acceptable limits.” It was also concluded that “if the surface of the landfill is not maintained and is allowed to erode over time, exposing FUSRAP-related material that is currently buried, then risks to trespassers or other users on the site could increase above the... acceptable risk range within the 1,000-year evaluation period.” The USACE is in the process of preparing a Feasibility Study (expected in 2014) to develop and evaluate remedial alternatives which would be appropriate to mitigate potential future unacceptable risks from exposure to the buried FUSRAP-related material in the Landfill Operable Unit.

F. INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

The Town provides services that are essential to a healthy and vibrant community, including: water resources (potable water, wastewater and stormwater); access to energy resources and; access to communications. These systems, as well as private utilities located in the Town, are described in this section.

1. Potable Water

Customer Base

The public water supply system serves approximately 23,660 residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the Town of Tonawanda and the Village of Kenmore. Most of the Town's customers receive water through a metered connection. The Town organizes its customers into nine different classifications. The classifications and approximate metered water usage by class are indicated (as of 2007) as follows: apartments (5.69%), churches (0.06%), commercial (6.3%), hospital (1.05%), industrial (19.24%), residential (45.33%), schools (1.03%), town accounts (1.07%), and the Village of Kenmore (20.22%). The Town also permits authorized unmetered water usage for water treatment plant process water, firefighting and training, street cleaning, water main flushing, maintenance and irrigation of the Kenney Field athletic fields, and police department usage.



The Town Water Treatment Plant is located on Aqua Lane.

Facilities

The Water Treatment Division of the Town of Tonawanda Water Resources Department operates and maintains a water treatment plant, two pumping stations, and two water storage tanks. The water treatment plant, located on Aqua Lane, was built in 1956; an addition was added in 1962 to increase the plant's operating capacity. The Town's water supply is drawn (gravity fed) from the Niagara River through a seven-foot wide horseshoe-shaped intake. The plant has the capacity to treat 24 million gallons a day (mgd) of potable water and uses conventional water treatment techniques, which include disinfection (chlorine), coagulation, flocculation, sedimentation and filtration. After treatment, the water is pumped into the system for distribution.

The Erie County Water Authority operates and maintains a water treatment plant and transmission pipelines in the Town to serve residents of nearby communities. The Van de Water Treatment Plant is located on 3750 River Road.

Storage and Distribution

The Water and Sewer Maintenance Division of the Town of Tonawanda Water Resources Department maintains the underground infrastructure for the water distribution network, including 375 miles of transmission and distribution water mains, valves, hydrants, meters, and backflow prevention. Water Treatment Plant personnel also operate and maintain two elevated storage tanks at Lincoln Park and Parker Boulevard and Sheridan Drive and Two Mile Creek Road, each with a storage capacity of 1 million gallons (MG). An elevated storage tank located on Green Acres Road was recently removed from service by the Town. The water distribution system also has several interconnections with neighboring systems (i.e., the Erie County Water Authority and the Buffalo Water Authority) from which an emergency or temporary water supply can be provided.

Strategic Planning

In 2007, the Town undertook a study referred to as the “Critical Water System Master Plan” to perform a comprehensive evaluation of water treatment and distribution system conditions and operational issues (CRA Infrastructure & Engineering, Inc., 2007). The study included a regulatory review to assess current and anticipated water quality regulations and the Town’s compliance status. As a result of that study, a ten-year plan was developed to address system management and operation needs.

Major findings of the study included identification of high priority rehabilitation and replacement work for above ground and below ground assets, and significant fire flow improvements needed within the system. The study also estimated a system water loss of 13% and an estimated non-metered (non-revenue) water usage of 13%. Overall, the study concluded that the Town’s system is operated and maintained “generally above industry norms” and provides exceptional performance including: “low rates of water service disruptions, low cost residential water supply, low debt to asset ratios, and low treatment costs.” Areas for improvement identified by the study included: “the number of days lost by Town staff due to work-related illness or injury, water loss ratios, and water main breaks per 100 miles of pipe.” The Town has been performing systematic maintenance and repair projects on a yearly basis based on the deficiencies identified in the 2007 study.

According to the Town, there are no major capacity issues within the water distribution system. The treatment and distribution system is capable of meeting current Town and Village needs, as well as future development needs. Due to the age of the system, the Town performed a water supply study in 2014 to consider the long term viability of the existing water plant. The study focused on the cost to repair and/or replace deficiencies in the current system, as compared to the alternative of purchasing water from another municipal system, such as the Erie County Water Authority or the City of Buffalo.

2. Wastewater

Treatment Facilities and Collection System

The Town of Tonawanda Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) provides treatment for wastewater flows from the Town, the Village of Kenmore and the City of Tonawanda. The plant is owned and operated by the Town and is located on Two Mile Creek Road. The plant is capable of treating up to 75 million gallons per day of residential and industrial wastewater. Local industries are required to pre-treat their wastewater prior to discharge to the collection system.

The Wastewater Treatment Facility was built in the early 1970's. The Tonawanda WWTF is a pure oxygen activated sludge tertiary treatment facility that currently handles an average dry weather wastewater flow of approximately 20 mgd and is capable of treating up to 75 mgd. The treatment processes include:

- Preliminary treatment, including mechanically cleaned bar screens and aerated grit removal;
- Secondary biological treatment using high purity oxygen reactors (UNOX), bio-clarifiers and solids contact clarifiers (currently used as additional clarifiers to support the bio-clarifiers);
- Tertiary treatment using monomedia filters;
- Disinfection using chlorine; and
- Solids handling consisting of sludge thickening and dewatering using centrifuges.

The Wastewater Treatment Facility currently hauls wet sludge produced in the treatment process to the Buffalo Sewer Authority (BSA) or to Modern Disposal for incineration and/or disposal. The facility's on-site sludge incineration facilities are no longer in use.



The Town also owns, operates and maintains the sanitary sewer collection system and eight sewage pumping stations. There are no major dry-weather capacity issues within the sanitary sewer system. The existing treatment and sewer line capacity are capable of meeting the current Town, Village, and City needs. Adequate capacity is also available for future development, such as in the developable western end of Town. The Town performs capacity studies and modeling of the existing system, and replacements within the system are sometimes based on the model recommendations. The Town has a regular cleaning, inspection, and maintenance program in place for the collection system.

However, wet weather flows can peak as high as 80 mgd, causing infiltration and inflow as well as sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) during significant rainfall events. This continues to be an issue, and the Town is undertaking efforts to address the problems with aging infrastructure and inflow and infiltration that result in the overflows as part of a Long Term Control Plan with the NYSDEC. The Town has undertaken the first 3 of 4 phases of work which are addressing the 92 locations where SSOs occur. Construction costs of the complete project are estimated at \$80 million.

3. Stormwater

Facilities

The Town operates a separate stormwater sewer system. Under USEPA regulations, instituted in 2003, the Town of Tonawanda is subject to the Phase II Stormwater regulations, and is required to have a plan for management of stormwater in the community. The Town has adopted a Stormwater Model Law and incorporated it into the Town Code. The Town has also designated a Stormwater Management Officer (SMO). The Water and Sewer Maintenance Division of the Town of Tonawanda Water Resources Department maintains the pipe network of the storm sewer collection system and is responsible for approximately 65 outfalls. The Town Highway Department maintains the catch basins and receivers. Many houses have an underdrain or bubbler system to drain residential stormwater to curb underdrains which lead to the catch basins.

Stormwater Management Planning

Generally, the stormwater collection system was installed in the late 1940's or early 1950's. The system is reportedly in relatively good condition with large diameter pipelines and sufficient capacity. There are no plans to increase the system or perform major work on the system in the near future. The Town performs routine maintenance and upkeep on the system.

The Town recently completed some capital improvement projects at a problem area in the system at Two Mile Creek Road, at DuPont Avenue. Other problem areas are Sheridan Drive and Brighton near Niagara Falls Boulevard which are subject to localized flooding in very strong rain events. The Town believes it has an adequate system in place to move stormwater out of the road during heavy rain events and that the occasional flooding is not a deterrent to future development in the Town.

Another problem area is the ditch north of Evergreen Drive, which discharges to Ellicott Creek and its tributary to the east. The ditch is problematic during large storm events, and the Town sees the need to monitor the depth and flow in the ditch.

4. Street Lighting

Historically, residential lighting districts have been in operation in the Town since 1928. Over the years, new districts were added as the population grew and neighborhoods and areas developed. In the 1980s, a number of districts were consolidated to ease the administrative burden and cost, and a renovation program was undertaken by the Town, with National Grid, to upgrade the quality of lighting and reduce energy costs. In 1999, further consolidation of residential districts took place. Today, there are two residential lighting districts, Consolidated, and Kenilworth:

- Kenilworth - This residential district is bounded by Niagara Falls Boulevard, Kenmore Avenue, Montrose Avenue and Chalmers Avenue. It contains about 40 street lights and is owned by the Town.
- Consolidated Districts – Formerly 114 residential districts, except Kenilworth, these were merged in 1999. Street light costs are borne by each district. These districts contain about 3,600 street lights. The street lighting was recently upgraded through a grant and is maintained by National Grid.

There is also a General Highway (Boulevard) District, which includes all main thoroughfares in various areas of the town such as Sheridan Drive, Colvin Boulevard, Delaware Avenue, Military Avenue, and Niagara Falls Boulevard. Street light costs are borne by all town residents. This district contains about 1,400 street lights and is also maintained by National Grid.

5. Energy Resources

Electricity

A legacy of the town's industrial heritage is that it hosts a broad range of infrastructure to generate and distribute electricity. Energy deregulation now provides an opportunity for customers to purchase electricity from several suppliers. Some industrial companies in the Town also receive hydropower allocations from the New York State Power Authority (NYPA).

Distribution assets are owned and maintained by National Grid. There are a range of assets to distribute electricity throughout the Town of Tonawanda, ranging from multiple high-capacity transmission lines to smaller capacity lines that provide residential service. There is capacity available for future development projects.

NRG Energy's Huntley Station, a coal-burning energy generation facility, is located within the Town of Tonawanda on River Road, immediately adjacent to the town's industrial core. Transmission lines of various capacities branch throughout the industrial sector, and there is capacity available for future development projects. The Indeck-Yerkes plant, located on Sheridan Drive, uses natural gas to generate electricity.

There are also an increasing number of residential, commercial and industrial facilities that use solar energy to generate electricity, offsetting the use of fossil fuels. The Town has revised its Zoning regulations to encourage increased usage of solar energy in all sectors, from small-scale to utility-scale. The Riverview Solar Technology Park has become a leading site for companies that seek to use solar energy.

Natural Gas

Energy deregulation now provides an opportunity for residential, commercial and industrial customers to purchase natural gas from several suppliers. Natural gas is distributed in the Town of Tonawanda by National Fuel Gas. Natural gas service is available to all residential, commercial and industrial properties in Town. Large capacity lines are located in close proximity to existing and planned industrial properties, and there is capacity available for future development projects.

Other Energy Resources

Residential, commercial and industrial customers are able to purchase other energy resources, including oil and gasoline from several suppliers. Oil and gasoline are delivered to the Town through a network that includes pipelines, rail, trucks and ship. The largest storage and distribution facility is operated by NOCO Energy on Grand Island Boulevard. A nearby facility on River Road is operated by United Refining. Distribution is either direct to customers (e.g. – home heating oil, industrial use) or through retail locations (i.e. – gas stations) is primarily by truck.

In the 1990's the Town built and operated a compressed natural gas (CNG) facility for approximately 10 years. Although there are no facilities in Town today, there may be increased interest in CNG in the future as a cleaner option to fossil fuels for both passenger and commercial vehicles.

6. Other Utilities

Telecommunications

The Town also has access to an excellent telecommunications infrastructure. Telephone services are provided by Verizon and Time Warner Cable. Both Verizon and Time Warner Cable provide television and high-speed internet service by way of franchise agreements with the Town which require periodic renewal.

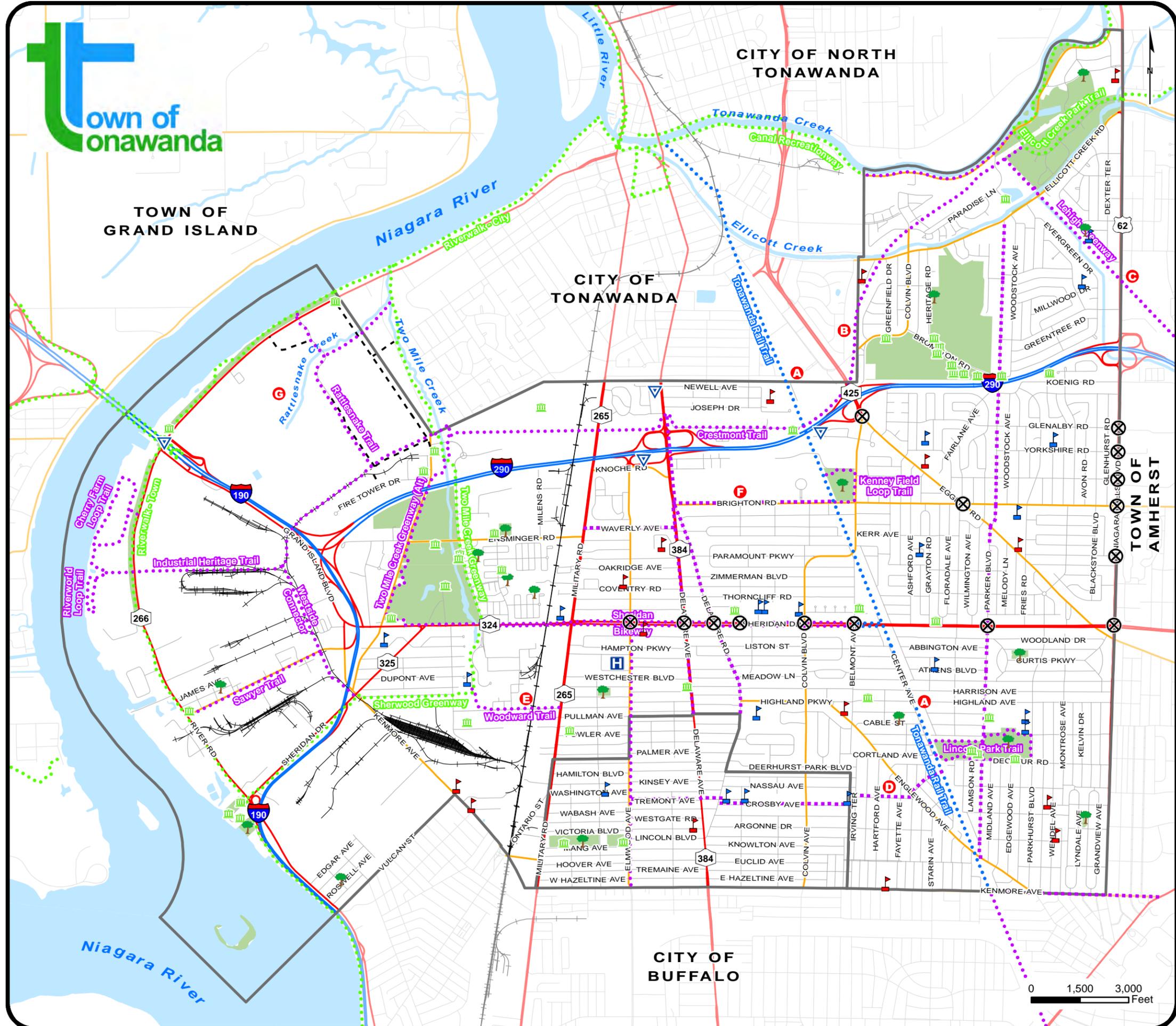
G. TRANSPORTATION

1. Roadway Network

The Town of Tonawanda has a roadway network system that includes State, County and Town roadways. This roadway system provides good access throughout the Town, and excellent connectivity between the Town, the wider Western New York region, the Interstate Highway System and Canada. Map 6 – Transportation Alternatives and Connectivity Plan and Table III-9 describe the existing transportation network.



MAP 6
TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES
AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN
 TOWN OF TONAWANDA
 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
 OCTOBER 2014



Legend

- ⊗ Improved Pedestrian Crossing
 - ▽ Proposed Park n' Ride Lot
 - Water
 - - - Proposed New Road
 - Interstate
 - Federal/State Highway
 - County Road
 - Local Road
 - Railroad
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Park
- Multi-Use Path:**
- Design - Off Road
 - Existing - Off Road
 - Proposed - Off Road
 - Proposed - Bike Lane
- Town Facility:**
- Hospital
 - Playground
 - School (Private)
 - School (Public)
 - Town Facility
- Recommendations:**
- A** Tonawanda Rail Trail along NFTA right-of-way: connects Lincoln Park, YMCA, Kenney Field, retail centers, and Erie Canalway system
 - B** Connector: Tonawanda Rail Trail to Brighton Park and Ellicott Creek Park
 - C** Trail along former Lehigh Valley Rail line
 - D** East-west connector from Lincoln Park through Kenmore to Mang Park
 - E** Woodward connector trail from Kenmore to Sherwood Greenway
 - F** East-west trail from Kenney field west along Brighton Road/Waverly Avenue
 - G** Additional trails in waterfront area
 - H** Continue to invest in sidewalks
 - I** Continue maintenance and improvements to existing off-road and on-road bicycle lanes

NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
 Sources:
 - Town of Tonawanda
 J:\Projects\11177008\GIS\MAPS\06 Transportation Alts & Connectivity.mxd 1/5/2015



Interstate Expressways

- *Interchanges.* There are two limited access, interstate routes that run through the Town, Route I-190 and Route I-290.
 - *I-190.* Route I-190 is an extension of the New York State Thruway system (2-3 lanes) that extends from NYS Interstate 90 (east of the City of Buffalo) and across Grand Island to the City of Niagara Falls and Niagara County. It is also referred to as the Niagara Section of the Thruway. A portion of the I-190 runs parallel to the Niagara River, from the City of Buffalo, north through the Town of Tonawanda, to the South Grand Island Bridges. Highway exits on the I-190 in the Town of Tonawanda include Sheridan Drive, Kenmore Avenue, Sawyer Avenue, the I-290, and River Road. This roadway provides very good regional interstate access to the industrial waterfront portion of the Town and provides international access to Canada. River Road, Grand Island Boulevard, and Sheridan Drive are bridged by the I-190. The I-190 – I-290 interchange was reconstructed in 2012.
 - *I-290.* Route I-290 is a six-lane, divided highway that runs east-west through the northern part of the Town, connecting the I-90 with the I-190. Route I-290, also known as the Elmer G. H. Youngmann Memorial Highway, or the Youngmann Expressway, has three major interchanges in the Town of Tonawanda, located at Niagara Falls Boulevard, Colvin Boulevard and Delaware Avenue. There is also an eastbound on/off-ramp at Knoche Road. The western terminus of Route I-290, where it merges with Route I-190 is located in the waterfront area of the Town. The eastern terminus of Route I-290 is in the adjacent Town of Amherst, where it connects to the main line of the New York State Thruway (I-90). This excellent access to the federal interstate highway system has attracted several truck terminals to locate in the Town of Tonawanda. Two Mile Creek Road, East Park Drive, Military Road, Delaware Avenue, Colvin Boulevard, Parker Boulevard, and Niagara Falls Boulevard are bridged by the I-290.
- *Capacity* – Volumes are very high on Routes I-190 and I-290 and are monitored by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). Volumes on these roads can be as high as 107,083 per day (average annual daily traffic - AADT), as recorded for the segment extending between the Niagara Falls Boulevard and Colvin Boulevard exits.



The South Grand Island Bridges on I-190 links the Town to Grand Island, Niagara Falls, and Canada.

Source: Kenwood Studies

Principal and Minor Arterials

- There are several principal and minor arterials roadways that are under the jurisdiction of New York State and Erie County.
 - New York State roadways include Niagara Falls Boulevard (Route 62), Delaware Avenue (Route 384), Military Road (Route 265) and River Road (Route 266). Sheridan Drive is also a State highway and is designated as Route 324 from the eastern border of the Town to its intersection with Grand Island Boulevard. At that point, Grand Island Boulevard becomes Route 324 and Sheridan Drive becomes Route 325 to its terminus at River Road. All the State roadways in the Town of Tonawanda are classified as principal arterials, with the exception of River Road and the Route 325 section of Sheridan Drive, which are classified as minor arterials.
 - Erie County roadways include Ellicott Creek Road, Creekside Drive, Colvin Boulevard, Eggert Road, Brighton Road, Englewood Avenue, Elmwood Avenue, Kenmore Avenue, Ensminger Road, Knoche Road, Highland Parkway, and Two Mile Creek Road. Kenmore Avenue (County Road 307) is a principal arterial. Most of the other County roads are minor arterials, with the exception of Sawyer Avenue and Ensminger Road, which are classified as collector roads.

Local Roads

- All other roads in the Town are local roads (over 167 miles), under the jurisdiction of the Town. Traffic counts are not generally taken on local roads, which have a relatively low traffic volume.



Source: Kenwood Studies

Table III-9: Roadways by Jurisdiction

New York State Thruway Authority		Length (Miles)
Interstate 190	Niagara Extension of the NYS Thruway	3.6
Interstate 190	Grand Island Bridges	2.37
New York State		
Interstate 290	Youngmann Expressway	4.84
Route 62	Niagara Falls Boulevard (NFB)	5.4
Route 384	Delaware Avenue	2.97
Route 265	Military Road	2.53
Route 266	River Road	4.47
Route 324	Sheridan Drive (east of Grand Island Boulevard)	3.55
Route 325	Sheridan Drive (west of Grand Island Boulevard)	1.42
Erie County		
CR 196	Brighton Road	2.59
CR 118	Colvin Boulevard	3.74
CR 130	Eggert Road	2.46
CR 580	Ellicott Creek Road	1.84
CR 119	Elmwood Avenue	2.45
CR 129	Englewood	1.66
CR 542	Ensminger	1.03
CR 307	Kenmore Avenue (Military to NFB) (northern lane only, southern lane is City of Buffalo)	1.84
CR 189	Kenmore Avenue (Military to Grand Island Boulevard)	3.31
CR 306	Knoche Road (Military Road to Delaware Avenue)	0.47
CR 170	Sawyer Avenue	1.01
CR 524	Two Mile Creek Road (Kenmore Ave to Tonawanda City line)	1.59

Source: GBNRTC

2. Road Classifications

In Erie and Niagara Counties, the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Planning Council (GBNRTC) has categorized roadways as to their primary function and classification. The roadway classifications are summarized in Table III-10. Roadway classification is a hierarchical method of categorizing roads, and assists in balancing these priorities. It is also a useful tool for planning purposes, in terms of addressing and prioritizing issues such as traffic calming measures, access management issues and accommodations for non-motorized traffic.

Traffic operations, safety and needs of residents create different demands on roadways, which sometimes are in conflict with each other. For example, slower speeds may impede traffic flow, but may also improve safety. With a growing emphasis on accommodating other types of traffic in addition to motorized vehicles, these conflicts are increasingly common.

Roadways are classified as expressways, principal arterials, minor arterials, collectors or local roads. Expressways, including the interstate highways, are intended to facilitate smooth vehicular-only traffic flow throughout the wider region. These roadways are generally limited access, multi-lane roads, with higher posted speed limits. They are designed to carry high volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds and do not provide direct access to the adjacent land uses.

At the other end of the spectrum, local streets are intended to primarily provide access to the homes, businesses and other properties in the surrounding area. Their primary role is to facilitate connectivity and access to and between local services and amenities. Traffic speeds on local roadways are low, and the priority is placed on needs of the local residents, not just traffic efficiency.

In between these two types of roadway are arterial roadways that accommodate relatively high traffic volumes and speeds, but also allow for access to the properties along their route. Principal arterials are generally higher volume roads and roads that are important links between different areas of the region. Minor arterials are not as important to the regional transportation network, but also accommodate larger volumes of traffic.

Collector streets are intended to “collect” and distribute traffic between local streets and arterials. They are the intermediate link between the local roadway network and the regional arterial system.

Each street is given a designation, as defined by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), based on the type of service it is designed to provide. The higher the level of traffic, the more likely speed limits, lane widths and road widths will be increased. Also, the higher the level of traffic, the greater the potential for conflict between motorized traffic and other non-motorized modes of travel (parked cars, pedestrians and bicyclists). Traffic volumes on arterials and collectors vary greatly, depending on location. Minor arterials, collectors and local roadways are narrower, with lower travel speeds. Public transportation is usually most appropriately located along arterials, as part of the regional transportation system.

3. Traffic Volumes and Roadway Conditions

The GBNRTC has studied capacity issues for the regional roadway network. In the Town of Tonawanda, there are a few areas where capacity issues are expected over the next twenty years, primarily along the interstate routes. The GBNRTC analyzed existing conditions (as of 2014), and projected two scenarios for the year 2035. The “Null Network” represents an extension of current conditions, and the “Long- Range Plan Network” shows the impact of proposed improvements on the roadway system. Although the proposed improvements do not address all capacity issues, they would correct many deficiencies, and the Long-Range scenario is preferred to the Null Network scenario, where level of service (LOS) deteriorates in a number of areas.

Table III-11 summarizes roadway volumes (as identified by annual average daily traffic (AADT) counts) by roadway classification. Table III-12 summarizes areas in the Town of Tonawanda where LOS problems are indicated under each scenario. A LOS of C or better suggests that there are not any serious capacity problems along the roadway. LOS D represents a potential need for improvement. LOS E or F indicates deficiencies. According to the GBNRTC analysis, the Town of Tonawanda will have seven roadway segments with serious deficiencies under the Long-Range Plan scenario.

Table III-10: Roadways by Classification

Interstate/Expressway	
I-190	Niagara Thruway
I-190	Grand Island Bridge
I-290	Youngmann Expressway
Principal Arterial	
62	Niagara Falls Boulevard (Kenmore Avenue to Creekside Drive)
265	Military Road (Buffalo City line to City of Tonawanda line)
324	Grand Island Boulevard (River Road to Sheridan Drive)
324	Sheridan Drive (Sheridan split at GI Blvd. to Niagara Falls Boulevard)
384	Delaware Avenue (Kenmore Avenue to Tonawanda City line)
CR 307	Kenmore Avenue (Military Road to Niagara Falls Boulevard)
Minor Arterial	
266	River Road (Buffalo City line to Tonawanda City line)
325	Sheridan Drive (I-190 to Grand Island Boulevard)
CR 118	Colvin Boulevard (Kenmore Avenue to Eggert Road)
CR 119	Elmwood Avenue (Kenmore Avenue to Knoche Road)
CR 129	Englewood Avenue (Highland Parkway to Kenmore Avenue), Highland Parkway (Delaware Avenue to Englewood)
CR 130	Eggert Road (Niagara Falls Boulevard to Colvin Boulevard)
CR 189	Kenmore Avenue (Vulcan to Grand Island Boulevard)
CR 196	Brighton Road (Delaware Avenue to Niagara Falls Boulevard)
CR 306	Knoche Road (Military Road to Delaware Avenue)
CR 524	Two Mile Creek Road (Kenmore Avenue to Tonawanda City line)
CR 580	Ellicott Creek Road (Tonawanda City line to Niagara Falls Boulevard) Vulcan Street (Kenmore Avenue to River Road) Delaware Road (Delaware Avenue at Brighton to Delaware Avenue at Lincoln Blvd)
Collector	
CR 170	Sawyer Avenue (River Road to Kenmore Avenue)
CR 542	Ensminger (Two Mile Creek Road to Military Road) Belmont Avenue (Colvin Boulevard to Englewood Avenue) Parker Boulevard (Englewood Avenue to Eggert Road)
Local Roads	
All other roads found in residential neighborhoods or other areas in the Town are local roads	

Source: GBNRTC

Table III-11: Traffic Counts by Classification

Route Name	Segment	Lanes	Count (AADT)	Year
INTERSTATES				
NIAGARA THRUWAY	INT 15 SB RT 324 OLAP TO INT 16 I-290	4	67,100	2008
NIAGARA THRUWAY	I-290 (N16) TO RIVER RD (N17)	6	73,500	2008
NIAGARA THRUWAY	ONTARIO/VULCAN (N14) TO BUFFALO N CITY LINE	4	72,800	2008
NIAGARA THRUWAY	BUFFALO N CITY LN TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR (N15)	4	72,800	2008
S GRAND ISLAND BRG	RIVER RD (N17) TO GRAND ISLAND TN LN (N18A)	4	71,000	2008
YOUNGMANN EXPWY	I-190 TO RT 384 DELAWARE AVE	6	71,100	2008
YOUNGMANN EXPWY	RT 384 DELAWARE AV RT 425 TO COLVIN BLVD	6	93,900	2008
YOUNGMANN EXPWY	RT 425 COLVIN BLVD TO RT 62 NF BLVD	6	98,300	2008
PRINCIPAL ARTERIALS				
NIAGARA FALLS BLVD	I-290 YOUNGMANN EXPWY TO WILLOW RIDGE DR	6	53,025	2009
MILITARY RD	BUFFALO CITY LN TO KENMORE AVE	4	15,400	2008
MILITARY RD	KENMORE AV TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	4	19,100	2009
NIAGARA FALLS BLVD	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO MAPLE RD	6	28,685	2010
NIAGARA FALLS BLVD	MAPLE RD TO I-290 YOUNGMANN EXPWY	6	34,425	2010
NIAGARA FALLS BLVD	ELLCOTT CREEK RD TO E ROBINSON RD	5	36,815	2010
MILITARY RD	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO I-290 YOUNGMANN EXPY	4	19,275	2009
MAIN ST	I-290 YOUNGMANN EXPY TO TONAWANDA CITY LN	4	15,225	2010
SHERIDAN DR	RT 265 MILITARY RD TO ELMWOOD AVE	8	17,900	2008
SHERIDAN DR	ELMWOOD AV TO RT 384 DELAWARE AVE	8	22,300	2008
DELAWARE AVE	KENMORE AV TO DELAWARE RD	4	17,900	2008
DELAWARE AVE	DELAWARE RD TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	5	20,675	2009
DELAWARE AVE	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO BRIGHTON RD	5	21,500	2008
DELAWARE AVE	BRIGHTON RD TO I-290 YOUNGMANN EXPWY	5	29,215	2010
DELAWARE AVE	I-290 YOUNGMANN EXPY TO TONAWANDA CITY LN	5	17,025	2009
NIAGARA FALLS BLVD	KENMORE AV TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	4	22,025	2009
SHERIDAN DR	RT 325 SHERIDAN DR TO RT 265 MILITARY RD	6	15,050	2008
KENMORE AVE	RT 265 MILITARY RD TO ELMWOOD AVE	2	6,700	2008
KENMORE AVE	ELMWOOD AV TO RT 384 DELAWARE AVE	2	7,900	2011
KENMORE AVE	RT 384 DELAWARE AV TO COLVIN BLVD	2	11,550	2011
KENMORE AVE	PARKER BLVD TO ENGLEWOOD AVE	3	16,000	2010
KENMORE AVE	COLVIN BLVD TO STARIN AVE	2	12,575	2010
KENMORE AVE	STARIN AV TO PARKER BLVD	3	15,350	2009
KENMORE AVE	ENGLEWOOD AV TO NF BLVD	3	16,600	2011
NIAGARA FALLS BLVD	WILLOW RIDGE DR TO ELLCOTT CREEK RD	5	35,775	2010
SHERIDAN DR	RT 384 DELAWARE AV TO COLVIN BLVD	8	29,900	2008
SHERIDAN DR	COLVIN BLVD TO PARKER BLVD	7	30,450	2008

Route Name	Segment	Lanes	Count	Year
SHERIDAN DR	PARKER BLVD TO START OLAP RT 62 NF BLVD	7	25,540	2010
MINOR ARTERIALS				
EGGERT RD	NF BLVD TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	4	7,975	2009
ENGLEWOOD	HIGHLAND AV TO STARIN AVE	2	8,700	2011
ENGLEWOOD	STARIN AV TO PARKER AVE	2	7,500	2011
KENMORE AVE	RT 325 SHERIDAN DR TO VULCAN ST	4	5,100	2009
RIVER RD	VULCAN ST TO RT 325 SHERIDAN DR	4	8,800	2005
RIVER RD	RT 325 SHERIDAN DR TO I-190 GRAND ISLAND BR	2	6,365	2010
RIVER RD	I-190 GRAND ISLAND BR TO TWO MILE CREEK RD	4	10,325	2010
GRAND IS BLVD	END I-190 OLAP TO ACC I-190	2	16,360	2009
GRAND IS BLVD	ACC I-190 TO RT 325 SHERIDAN DR	4	9,200	2007
BRIGHTON RD	COLVIN BLVD TO EGGERT RD	4	6,775	2011
BRIGHTON RD	EGGERT RD TO PARKER BLVD	4	11,425	2011
BRIGHTON RD	PARKER BLVD TO RT 62 NF BLVD	4	10,250	2009
COLVIN BLVD	HIGHLAND PKWY TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	4	14,275	2011
DELAWARE RD	DELAWARE AVE TO KENMORE N VILL LN	2	9,300	2008
DELAWARE RD	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO BRIGHTON RD	2	8,175	2011
ELMWOOD AVE	KENMORE AV TO KENMORE VILL LN	4	11,750	2009
ELMWOOD AVE	KENMORE VILL LN TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	4	11,900	2009
ENGLEWOOD	PARKER AV TO KENMORE AV	2	6,650	2011
KENMORE AVE	RT 324 GRAND ISLAND BLVD TO SAWYER AVE	2	6,775	2009
KENMORE AVE	SAWYER AVE TO RT 325 SHERIDAN DR	2	5,550	2009
KENMORE AVE	VULCAN ST TO ONTARIO ST	4	5,400	2009
VULCAN ST	TONAWANDA ST TO KENMORE AV	2	4,900	2011
STARIN AVE	PARKSIDE AV TO KENMORE AV	2	10,125	2010
GRAND ISLAND BLVD	RIVER RD TO ACC TO I-190	2	1,275	2009
BRIGHTON RD	RT 384 DELAWARE AV TO COLVIN BLVD	2	7,800	2011
COLVIN BLVD	KENMORE AV TO KENMORE VILL LN	4	12,700	2008
COLVIN BLVD	KENMORE VILL LN TO HIGHLAND PKWY	4	12,575	2011
DELAWARE RD	KENMORE N VILL LN TO HIGHLAND PKWY	2	10,075	2011
DELAWARE RD	HIGHLAND PKWY TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	2	10,385	2011
EGGERT RD	RT 62 BAILEY AV TO NF BLVD	4	8,000	2010
EGGERT RD	PARKER BLVD TO BRIGHTON RD	4	7,900	2010
ELMWOOD AVE	RT 324 SHERIDAN AV TO KNOCHE RD	4	6,950	2011
HIGHLAND PKWY	COLVIN BLVD TO ENGLEWOOD AV	2	7,760	2009
KENMORE AVE	ONTARIO ST TO RT 265 MILITARY RD	4	6,850	2009
KNOCHE RD	RT 265 MILITARY RD TO ELMWOOD AV	4	12,150	2010
KNOCHE RD	ELMWOOD AV TO RT 384 DELAWARE AV	2	9,825	2010

Route Name	Segment	Lanes	Count	Year
TWO MILE CK RD	KENMORE AV TO RT 324 GRAND ISLAND BLVD	2	3,600	2007
SHERIDAN DR	I-190 TO KENMORE AV	4	7,000	2008
SHERIDAN DR	KENMORE AV TO RT 324 GRAND IS BLVD	4	7,900	2010
COLVIN BLVD	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO BRIGHTON RD	4	18,700	2011
EGGERT RD	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO PARKER BLVD	4	6,175	2009
EGGERT RD	BRIGHTON RD TO COLVIN BLVD	4	10,475	2009
ELLICOTT CRK RD	COLVIN BLVD TO PARKER BLVD	2	8,025	2010
ELLICOTT CRK RD	PARKER BLVD TO RT 62 NF BLVD	2	8,525	2009
HIGHLAND PKWY	DELAWARE RD TO COLVIN BLVD	4	6,250	2009
TWO MILE CK RD	RT 324 GRAND ISLAND BLVD TO ENSMINGER RD	2	2,500	2007
TWO MILE CK RD	ENSMINGER RD TO TONAWANDA CITY LN	2	2,550	2010
VULCAN ST	RT 266 NIAGARA ST TO TONAWANDA ST	2	3,400	2008
COLVIN BLVD	BRIGHTON RD TO TONAWANDA EAST CITY LINE	4	4,975	2009
ELLICOTT CRK RD	TONAWANDA CITY LN TO COLVIN BLVD	2	4,300	2009
COLLECTORS				
PARKER BLVD	BRIGHTON RD TO BROMPTON RD	2	5,675	2009
PARKER BLVD	BROMPTON RD TO ELLICOTT CREEK RD	2	3,500	2009
SAWYER RD	RT 266 RIVER RD TO KENMORE AV	2	2,025	2009
BELMONT AVE	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO COLVIN BLVD	2	6,585	2011
E NIAGARA ST	RT 384 DELAWARE AV TO TONAWANDA CITY LINE	2	2,300	2008
STARIN AVE	KENMORE AV TO ENGLEWOOD AV	2	3,750	2008
BELMONT AVE	ENGLEWOOD AV TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	2	7,125	2011
PARKER BLVD	ENGLEWOOD AV TO DECATUR RD	2	4,700	2011
PARKER BLVD	DECATUR RD TO RT 324 SHERIDAN DR	2	6,300	2009
COLVIN BLVD	TONAWANDA EAST CITY LN TO ELLICOTT CREEK RD	2	5,525	2009
CREEKSIDE DR	TONAWANDA CITY LN TO RT 62 NF BLVD	2	2,100	2009
ENSMINGER	TWO MILE CREEK RD TO E PARK DR	2	2,200	2008
ENSMINGER	E PARK DR TO MILENS RD	2	5,975	2009
ENSMINGER	MILENS RD TO RT 265 MILITARY RD	2	6,800	2008
PARKER BLVD	RT 324 SHERIDAN DR TO EGGERT RD	2	5,150	2009
PARKER BLVD	EGGERT RD TO BRIGHTON RD	2	4,125	2009

Source: GBNRTC, 2013

Table III-12: Projected Traffic Deficiencies, Town of Tonawanda

Highway Segment	Current Conditions	Null Network 2035	Long-Range Plan 2035
South Grand Island Bridge	LOS E or F	LOS E or F	LOS E or F
Rte. I-190: I-290 to Vulcan	LOS E or F	LOS E or F	LOS E or F
Rte. I-190: Grand Island Bridge to I-290	LOS C or Better	LOS D	LOS D
Rte. I-290: I-190 to Delaware	LOS C or Better	LOS D	LOS D
Rte. I-290: Delaware to Eggert	LOS E or F	LOS E or F	LOS E or F
Rte. I-290: Eggert to NFB	LOS E or F	LOS E or F	LOS E or F
Delaware Ave: I-290 to Brighton	LOS C or Better	LOS D	LOS D
NFB: I-290 to Willowridge	LOS D	LOS E or F	LOS E or F
NFB: Willowridge to Creekside	LOS E or F	LOS E or F	LOS E or F
Twin Cities Hwy, Colvin to I-290	LOS E or F	LOS E or F	LOS E or F

Source: GBNRTC, 2014

The GBNRTC has rated County, State and federal roadways in the region on a scale of 1 to 10 according to their condition, with a rank of 9 or better being excellent (see Table III-13). A total of 46 roadway segments in the Town of Tonawanda were rated in the current listing, totaling approximately 24 miles of roadway.

Table III-13: Town of Tonawanda Roadway Condition Ratings

		Segments	Lane Miles
Ratings 9-10:	Excellent	5%	8%
Rating 7-8:	Good	55%	60%
Rating 6:	Fair	16%	12%
Ratings of 1 to 5:	Poor	20%	15%
Under Construction	--	5%	5%

(GBNRTC, 2011)

According to the data available, most state and county roadways in the Town of Tonawanda (60%) are in good condition. Erie County has a program of renovating roads under their jurisdiction. A total of 46 roadway segments in the Town of Tonawanda are included in the previous listing, totaling approximately 24 miles of roadway. Over \$63 million in road work improvements are proposed in Erie County. This included an estimated \$3.5 million for proposed roadway improvements in the Town of Tonawanda.

Local roads are not rated, but the Town has a systematic program of resurfacing local roads. These roadways are prioritized and repaved to the extent that funds are available, although the number of roads that need resurfacing generally

exceeds available funds. The Highway Department also maintains curbs and sidewalks damaged by tree roots, where needed.

4. Pedestrian Facilities

Sidewalks

The Town of Tonawanda, unlike many suburban communities, has sidewalks in most areas. It is estimated that at least 80% of the Town's roads have sidewalks, most of which are set back from the curb, with a "tree lawn" (all or partially within the right-of-way) between the sidewalk and the roadway. This provides additional greenspace, making it more attractive and pleasant to walk, provides added safety for pedestrians, and functions as a snow storage area during the winter months.

- *Condition* – Many of the existing sidewalks were installed in the 1950's and are in disrepair. It is noted by the Town that many people avoid the sidewalks in need of repair and walk in the streets. Issues with vertical clearing over the sidewalks have also been noted as an issue. There are no additional standards to keep continuity throughout the town.
- *Maintenance* – Per Section 183-5 of the Town Code, maintenance and repair of sidewalks is the responsibility of the property owner, unless the damage is caused by Town-owned trees. The Town Code should include standards for American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance for handicap accessibility. Under existing Code requirements, maintenance of existing ramps is not being addressed. Tree pruning over sidewalks is also not addressed in the Code.
- *Enforcement* – Enforcement of sidewalk maintenance is handled through the Police Department, in conjunction with the Town's Technical Support Department. They receive regular complaints about the condition of the sidewalks.

Intersections/Pedestrian Crossings

While the Town has a relatively good network of sidewalks, there are areas where crosswalks are needed or require improvement. Major thoroughfares, such as Sheridan Drive, are cited by residents as difficult to cross. To make the Town a more pedestrian friendly and walkable place, particularly in and around neighborhood shopping districts, crosswalks and similar improvements are important.

- *Pedestrian Bridges* – There is a pedestrian bridge over Sheridan Drive, between Delaware Road and Colvin Boulevard. The bridge provides pedestrian access across the eight lanes of Sheridan Drive. According to an engineering evaluation conducted for the Town in 2013, this pedestrian bridge (BIN 2045870) is not ADA compliant and is in need of repairs and improvements. The bridge was originally constructed to help pedestrians cross Sheridan Drive to access the Delaware Pool, which is no longer there. Herbert Hoover Middle School is now located on the north side of Sheridan Drive across from the pedestrian bridge. A traffic count conducted in May of 2013 indicated that an average of 30 people crossed in the bridge in the morning and an average 17 people crossed it in the afternoon hours.

The bridge was evaluated in July 2013 and was rated based on the NYSDOT rating system for bridges (a “1” to “7” scale, where “1” represents totally deteriorated or in failing condition and “7” represents “new condition or no deterioration”). Over the past three inspection cycles, the bridge was determined as 4.509 (2008), 4.200 (2010), and 4.200 (2012). This is below the general recommendation of “5” (satisfactory) for this structure. The railings/parapets and portions of the decking were observed to be in poor to fair condition. The paint system was also rated as poor to fair and extensive corrosion and deterioration were observed throughout the structure. Proposed options considered for the structure include extensive maintenance and repairs (estimated at \$424,000), structure demolition (estimated at \$115,000), and structure replacement (estimated at \$1.8 million).

Additional pedestrian crossings or accommodations (i.e., bridges or at-grade) on Sheridan Drive should be considered to address pedestrian safety along this busy roadway. Bridges are more expensive to construct and maintain than at-grade crossings, but offer additional safety advantages.

- *Intersection Improvement Projects* – The NYSDOT is in the process of performing intersection improvements throughout the region, including in the Town. Every State-operated traffic signal is required to have walk/don’t walk indicators (i.e., timers) and every federally funded transportation project must include ADA compliant ramps. While most NYSDOT roads have sidewalks, not all signals have the required pedestrian features. These improvements were recently completed on Sheridan Drive.

- *Signal Coordination* – According to the GBNRTC, there are signal coordination plans for Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard. The plans are prepared but have not yet been implemented. The project involves upgrades of signals for pre-empting with a button. Upon completion of the project, when a button is pressed, the pedestrian phase will be extended longer (the pedestrian pushbutton will allow for sufficient time to cross the roadway). After being pressed, the signal will reset itself to its regular functioning mode. The coordination would be dovetailed with the intersection signal improvements noted above.

5. Bicycle and Multi-use Facilities

Off-road Multi-use Paths

The Town has designated off-road multi-use paths in various locations. Map 6 – Transportation Alternatives and Connectivity Plan depicts existing and proposed multi-use paths.



A portion of the Riverwalk through Isle View Park
Source: Kenwood Studios

- *The Shoreline Trail (Riverwalk)* – The Shoreline Trail is a multi-use trail that accommodates a range of users (e.g. - bicyclists, runners/walkers and rollerbladers). This trail runs through Isle View Park and extends along the entire waterfront in the Town, generally parallel to River Road, from the City of Tonawanda to the City of Buffalo. The Shoreline Trail, which is used by a regional population base, connects Fort Niagara to Chautauqua County, including to the Erie Canalway Trail, Niagara Falls, and Canalside in the City of Buffalo.
- *Other Waterfront Improvements* – The Niagara River Greenway Commission is encouraging projects along the Town of Tonawanda waterfront as a means of establishing a “world class” facility for the region. The Greenway System is a subset of the Shoreline Trail and includes trails between Fort Niagara and Buffalo’s Gallagher Beach. Additional waterfront corridor landscaping and Shoreline Trail improvements are desired by the Town and the Commission.
- *Two Mile Creek Greenway* – The Two Mile Creek Greenway Trail runs parallel with Two Mile Creek, from its intersection with the Shoreline Trail in the City of Tonawanda, south to Sheridan Park. Erie County has recently completed construction of a new connecting route, called the Sherwood Greenway, which connects Two Mile Creek Greenway Trail at Sheridan and East Park. The trail continues south through the Praxair property, along

Woodward Avenue, then west to Sheridan Drive, connecting with the Shoreline Trail at the foot of Sheridan Drive. This extension creates a loop connecting a number of recreational assets in the Town. The trail connects Fort Niagara with Gallagher Beach, and the GBNRTC is working with the Niagara River Greenway Commission to fill the existing gaps in the trail.

- *Erie Canalway Trail* – There is a multi-use recreational trail in the northern portion of the Town, which runs through Ellicott Creek Park to Tonawanda Creek Road, and along the route of the Erie Canal to the City of Tonawanda. This trail is part of the Erie Canalway and connects to a trail system that runs east into the Town of Amherst. In 2008, construction of the Tonawanda to Amherst segment of the Canalway Trail was completed. This project provided additional extensions of this trail system from the City of Tonawanda to the Town of Amherst along the Erie Canal route. A portion of the trail remains on-road along Creekside Drive. The Erie Canalway Trail is a statewide trail system that follows the route of the Erie Canal and connecting canal systems. Efforts are underway to complete missing portions of the Canalway, and create a 524-mile continuous trail across the State. One such missing piece is the connection between Amherst and Lockport. The design will be completed in 2014 and construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 2015.
- *Rails to Trails* – The proposed Tonawanda Rail Trail will consist of 12-foot wide paved asphalt recreational trail along the right-of-way of an unused railroad corridor extending from Kenmore Avenue to State Street in the City of Tonawanda. Refer to “Strategic Planning - Transportation Improvements” in this section. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2015.

On-Street Bicycle Routes

In addition to off-street multi-use trails, certain local streets have been selected for bicycle usage by the GBNRTC. In order to assist bicyclists to understand how comfortable they might feel riding along one of the suggested routes, the GBNRTC rates bicycle routes with a Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS). These ratings are based on a quantitative formula that takes into account a number of factors including the surface condition of the road, the width of the shoulder, posted speed, percentage trucks, existence of parked cars, frequently of sewer grates and the adjacent land use (e.g. commercial vs. residential). The ratings are an average for the section analyzed, and if a section contains marked designated bicycle lanes then these sections are not calculated with a BLOS. The formula generates an A to F rating system where A indicates the route is a “ride

in the park” and F indicates the riding the route will “feel that your life is in danger”. Table III-14 illustrates the ratings, as follows:

Table III-14: Bicycle Level of Service	
A	Suitable
B	Caution Advised
C	Caution Advised
D	Caution Advised
E	Extreme Caution - Experienced cyclists
F	Extreme Caution - Experienced cyclists

The existing bike routes along Military Road, Ensminger Road, Kenmore Avenue, Parker Boulevard, Ellicott Creek Road and the northern portion of Colvin Boulevard (in the vicinity of Brighton Park) were rated by the GBNRTC in 2009 and are all classified as “caution advised”. These routes are included on a two-county “Bicycle Route Guide” map issued by the Greater Buffalo- Niagara Regional Transportation Council to encourage greater bicycle usage in the region. There are currently no plans to assess which routes could be improved to make bicycling more comfortable within the town.

6. Public Transportation

Transit services in the Town of Tonawanda are provided by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), which offers a number of bus routes throughout the community. The Town is relatively well served by bus routes that provide access to downtown Buffalo, and has more transit access than most suburban communities. However, there is a shortage of east-west oriented routes. While there is no light rail service directly located in the Town, Tonawanda benefits from service between downtown Buffalo and the University at Buffalo South Campus, from which continuation bus service is available. In addition, the NFTA owns the rail right-of-way (location of the proposed Tonawanda Rail Trail), which traverses the Town connecting the City of Buffalo and the City of Tonawanda. Table III-15 summarizes the existing bus routes in the Town of Tonawanda.

In 2013 the NFTA commenced an alternatives analysis and draft environmental impact statement exploring transit options to enhance transit service between the SUNY University at Buffalo (UB) Main Street Campus and the Cross Point development complex, in the Town of Amherst. While still in the early stages of

the project, it is understood that the only study alternative located in the Town of Tonawanda will be bus rapid transit (BRT) along a route following Niagara Falls Boulevard at the Town’s eastern border.

Table III-15: NFTA Bus Routes Serving Town of Tonawanda

Route 5 – Niagara	The route operates between downtown Buffalo and University Metro Rail Station via Kenmore Ave and Niagara Street. The route provides service along Kenmore Avenue.
Route 11 – Colvin	In the Town of Tonawanda, route runs along Colvin Boulevard, with a loop to Paramount Parkway, and to downtown City of Buffalo. The “D” bus continues north to Tonawanda Industrial Park.
Route 20 – Elmwood	In the Town of Tonawanda, route generally runs along Elmwood Avenue. At Sheridan Dr. the route makes a right turn and a left onto Delaware Road to the Orchard Loop.
Route 25 – Delaware	In the Town of Tonawanda, routes generally run along Delaware Avenue. Route operates between downtown Buffalo and the Main and Niagara Transit Center in the City of Tonawanda.
Route 35- Sheridan	In the Town and City of Tonawanda, route runs along Sheridan Drive and Military Road, and extends to the Riverside neighborhood in Buffalo. To the East, this route provides service to the UB North Campus, Flint Circle and Coventry Road.
Route 34- Niagara Falls Boulevard	In the Town of Tonawanda, route runs along Niagara Falls Boulevard and extends to East Robinson Road in Amherst on the north, with a loop east to Sweet Home Rd and the Audubon Industrial Park. Another loop provides access to the Boulevard Mall and Northtown Plaza in Amherst. Southern terminus is the University Metro Rail Station.
Route 61-N – Tonawanda Express	A commuter route that operates from the City of Tonawanda, at Main and Niagara Streets, continuing south on Delaware Avenue to the Youngmann Expressway (I-290) to downtown Buffalo.
Route 79 – Tonawanda Express	A commuter route that runs along Knoche Road and Elmwood Avenue in the Town of Tonawanda. Northern terminus is in North Tonawanda. Express service south of Amherst Street to downtown Buffalo.

Source: NFTA, 2013

7. Rail

Rail access in the Town of Tonawanda is superior to that of most suburban communities. All active rail lines are located in the western portion of the Town, serving industrial businesses and Amtrak.

A CSX mainline runs along Military Road from the City of Buffalo to the City of Tonawanda, with several overhead and two public and one private at-grade crossings in the Town. CSX operates the Kenmore rail yard, which is located between Kenmore Avenue and Woodward Avenue. Numerous rail spurs extend west from the CSX mainline into the industrial waterfront area of the Town. Several industrial users have rail sidings and use rail to ship products or



supplies. Rail corridors in the eastern portion of the Town are no longer active, including the future Tonawanda Rail Trail corridor.

8. Strategic Planning - Transportation Improvements

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), in cooperation with the NYSDOT, establishes the transportation improvement program, or “TIP” for all communities in the two-county region. As part of the GBNRTC’s long-range planning mandate, the TIP includes all federally funded transportation projects being considered for implementation over a five-year period. The current TIP covers Federal Fiscal Years 2014-2018 and includes 260 transportation projects totaling \$680 million.

- *Rails to Trails* – The Tonawanda Rail Trail project (575684) is underway by the Erie County and the NFTA. The project involves the construction of a 12-foot wide paved asphalt recreational trail on the former rail bed of an unused railroad corridor. The existing rail path to be converted to the trail extends from Kenmore Avenue to State Street in the City of Tonawanda. The proposed trail will connect with the North Buffalo Rails to Trail project (575683) south of the Town, and extend through the City of Tonawanda to connect to the Erie Canalway Trail, which links to the Shoreline Trail. The Tonawanda portion of the trail will create a recreational loop in the Town, complete gaps in the local trails network, and link to other town recreation spots such as Lincoln Park, Kenney Field, the Ken-Ton YMCA and Cardinal O’Hara High School. Design was completed in 2014 and construction is anticipated to start in the spring of 2015.
- *Kenmore Avenue Reconstruction* – Design for the Kenmore Avenue project (575718) is underway through an Intermunicipal/Shared Cost Agreement between Erie County and the City of Buffalo. The City of Buffalo is the project lead. The project was originally intended to reconstruct Kenmore Avenue between Main Street and Elmwood Avenue with the primary goals of upgrading the infrastructure, improving upon the safety and operation of vehicular and pedestrian facilities, and streetscaping improvements to revitalize the corridor. However, due to a reduction in federal aid available to the region, the project scope of work was reduced. The western

terminus was moved to Fairfield Avenue and the project will combine both full reconstruction in sections and mill and overlay in others. As a result of the change in scope, in 2013, Erie County completed overlay of both sides of Kenmore Avenue between Fairfield Avenue and Colvin Boulevard, and the City of Buffalo completed the overlay between Colvin Boulevard and Elmwood Avenue in 2014.

- *I-290 Bridge Reconstruction projects* (combined 558044 and 558045) – Multiple bridges on I-290 Expressway within the Town of Tonawanda are scheduled for replacement. The first two planned bridge projects involve the bridges over Military Road and Delaware Avenue. Although the current TIP lists the Delaware Avenue and Military Road bridge projects separately, it is understood that they have since been combined into one project. This work is anticipated to cause traffic congestion during the construction phase, as lanes will have to be closed and traffic re-routed during the work. Construction is estimated to start in 2015. The NYSDOT is also proposing reconstruction of the bridges over Parker Road and the NFTA right-of-way.

The NYSDOT plans to repave every State highway within the 10-year planning horizon. Table III-16 illustrates proposed projects on the TIP within the Town of Tonawanda through 2018. The Town of Tonawanda should coordinate its desired improvements with the NYSDOT efforts in order to maximize the potential for the NYSDOT include appropriate amenities or changes in lane markings.

Table III-16: Proposed Transportation Projects, 2014-2018

Project Location	Project Type	Project Number	Construction Cost (Est.)	Est. Start Date	Agency
Tonawanda Rail Trails	Trail construction	575684	\$2.695 million	Spring 2015	Erie Co., NFTA
Kenmore Avenue (Starin Avenue to Main Street)	Roadway infrastructure, maintenance	575718	\$7.26 million	Spring 2015	City of Buffalo, Erie Co.
I-290 over RT 265 (Military Road)	Bridge reconstruction	558044	\$7.4 Million	Winter 2014	NYSDOT
I-290 Bridges over RT 384 (Delaware Road)	Bridge reconstruction	558045	\$6.935	Spring 2015	NYSDOT

Source: GBNRTC "Transportation Improvement Program" (May 2013)

9. Strategic Planning – Long-range Planning

The GBNRTC has approved a 2035 Long-range Plan and is finalizing a 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update anticipated for mid-2014. Goals guiding long-term transportation planning by the GBNRTC focus on preserving the existing roadway network, improving mobility and accessibility, and supporting economic development. Overall, approximately 70% of funds will be dedicated to maintaining existing infrastructure in Erie and Niagara Counties.

The GBNRTC 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan outlines major proposed transportation projects for the next 25 years. Two of the proposed projects are located in, or may have a direct impact on, the transportation network in the Town of Tonawanda. In support of transit expansion, the agency proposes both the “Buffalo-Amherst Corridor Transit Enhancements” project (approximately \$200 million) and a “Tonawanda Corridor High Transit Enhancements” project (approximately \$59 million). As discussed above, the NFTA is currently focused on an alternatives analysis of transit options in the Buffalo to Amherst corridor. The Tonawanda Corridor is envisioned from the LaSalle Station to the City of Tonawanda using the existing right-of-way along the former rail corridor in the Town of Tonawanda (which is currently proposed for the Tonawanda Rail Trail project). There are no immediate plans to evaluate transit alternatives in this corridor, and no funding has been secured for this project at this time. According to discussions with the GBNRTC, there is a possibility that the Tonawanda Corridor may be dropped from the 2040 MTP Update before it is finalized. The agency also proposes the “South Grand Island Bridge” project, which would involve the construction of a new six-lane bridge to address congestion issues, at an estimated cost of \$400 million. Other projects that may have an impact on the Town of Tonawanda include:

- Area wide Signalization upgrades (estimated at \$27.5 million throughout the region), and
- Intersection Improvements (estimated at \$22 million).

H. COMMUNITY FACILITIES and CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Town of Tonawanda has a variety of community facilities and cultural resources. These facilities and resources contribute to the quality of life of the community. This section of the inventory provides a brief listing of these assets. Key municipal facilities are shown on Map 7 - Existing Public Facilities. Parks and school grounds that provide neighborhood open space are shown on Map 4 – Neighborhoods and Parks.



MAP 7 EXISTING PUBLIC FACILITIES

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

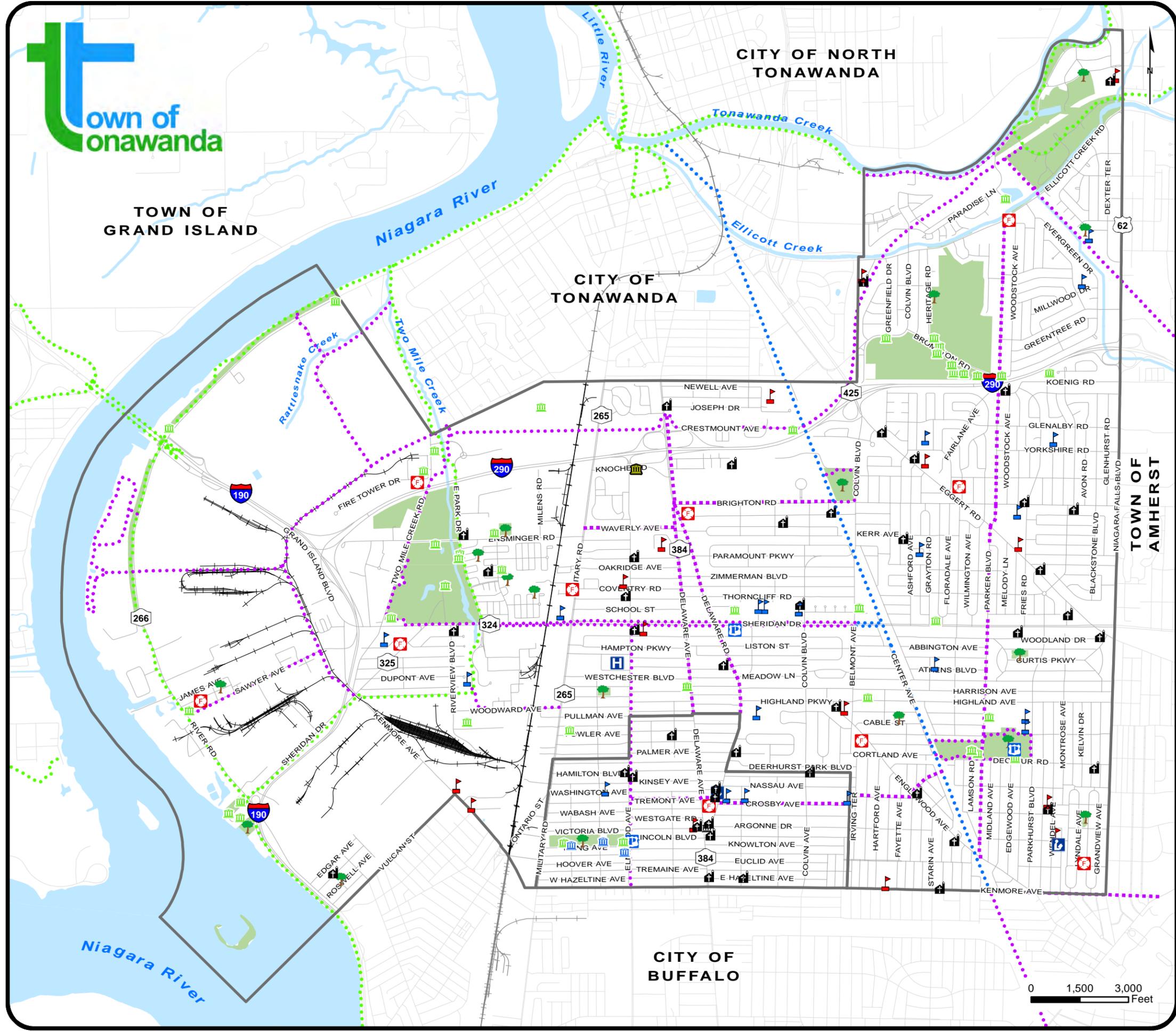
Legend

- Water
- Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundary
- Park
- Multi-Use Path:**
 - Design - Off Road
 - Existing - Off Road
 - Proposed - Off Road
 - Proposed - Bike Lane
- Town Facility:**
 - Fire Station
 - Historical Building
 - Hospital
 - Library
 - Playground
 - Police Station
 - Religious
 - School (Private)
 - School (Public)
 - Town Facility
 - Town/Village Facility (Municipal Center)
 - Village Facility

NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
Sources:
- Town of Tonawanda

J:\Projects\11177008\GIS\MAPS\07 Existing Public Facilities.mxd 12/15/2014



1. Municipal Buildings

The Town of Tonawanda operates a variety of public facilities to deliver services to residents, including:



Municipal Center



Police Headquarters

- The Municipal Center, 2919 Delaware Avenue, houses Town and Village administrative functions, including the Supervisor, Assessor, Town Clerk, Comptroller, Town Attorney, and Technical Support Departments.
- The Sheridan-Parkside Community Center, 169 Sheridan Parkside Drive, houses the Department of Community Development, the Town of Tonawanda Development Corporation, Meals-on-Wheels operations, a Police satellite office, a Youth Center, a Head Start program, and large auditorium and meeting rooms.
- Police Headquarters, 1835 Sheridan Drive, houses the Police Department and Paramedics, the Fire Alarm Headquarters, Justice Court, and Animal Control.
- Highway-Sanitation/Recycling-Forestry Department, located at 450 Woodward Avenue. This facility includes a garage and offices, and small tree nursery.
- Building Inspector and Permits facility, 525 Belmont Avenue
- Youth, Parks and Recreation facility, 299 Decatur
- Historical Society and Museum, 100 Knoche Road
- Senior Citizen Center, Ensminger Road.
- Water Treatment Plant, 218 Aqua Ln
- Water and Sewer Maintenance Division, 525 Belmont Ave.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant, 779 Two Mile Creek Rd
- Memorial Hall, 3354 Delaware Avenue, Kenmore.

2. Parks and Recreation

The Town of Tonawanda is noted for its excellent recreational amenities. The Town maintains a neighborhood-based park system, with parks dispersed throughout the community. Including local and county facilities, there are over 700 acres of parkland in the Town. Parks and recreational facilities operated and maintained by the Town of Tonawanda include:

- Aquatic and Fitness Center, 1 Pool Plaza - an indoor aquatic center with an indoor 50-meter pool, a wading pool, fitness room and support facilities, such as locker rooms and a sauna
- Batting Cages: Brighton Park Batting Cages, Brompton Road



Two Mile Creek through Sheridan
Park Golf Course

- Disc Golf Course: Lincoln Park 12-hole Disc Golf Course
- Fields, Parks, and Playgrounds:
 - Aqua Lane Park, Aqua Lane
 - Brighton Park, Brompton Road
 - Curtis Park, Curtis Parkway
 - Dexter Terrace Playground, Dexter Terrace
 - Ellicott Creek Park, Ellicott Creek Road (Erie County)
 - Ellwood Park, Stoneleigh Avenue
 - Ensminger Park, Ensminger Road
 - Expressway Park, Ensminger Road
 - Glendale School Playground, Glendale School, Glendale Avenue
 - Holmes School Playground, Holmes School, DuPont Avenue
 - Irvington Park, Irvington Terrace
 - Isle View Park, River Road (Erie County)
 - Kaufman Playground, James Avenue
 - Kenilworth Park, Ford and Hawthorne Avenues
 - Kenney Field, Brighton Road and Colvin
 - Lincoln Park, Decatur Avenue
 - Mang Park, Mang Avenue (Village of Kenmore)
 - Old Town Park, Grove Place and Roswell Avenue
 - Sheridan-Parkside Community Center, Sheridan Parkside Drive
 - Spray Park at Sheridan Parkside
 - Sheridan Park, Sheridan Drive
 - Thurston Park, Thurston Avenue
- Golf Courses and Driving Ranges:
 - Brighton Park Golf Course and Driving Range, Brompton Road
 - Sheridan Park Golf Course, Sheridan Drive
 - Paddock Chevrolet Golf Dome, Brompton Road. The golf dome has an indoor driving range, a practice putting green, and an 18-hole indoor miniature golf course
- Ice Skating Arenas:
 - Brighton Arena, 251 Brompton Rd.
 - Lincoln Arena, 1200 Parker Blvd.
- Picnic Shelters/Pavilions: The Town has a total of 48 facilities (i.e., picnic shelters, pavilions) available for rental at Aqua Lane Park, Lincoln Park, Mang Park and Sheridan Park. Shelters range in size, with the smallest accommodating groups of about 15, and the largest able to house up to 200. The facilities are available for rental from Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day. The Donald F. Kunzelman Pavilion located in Lincoln Park includes a kitchenette and is available by reservation for resident's events. The NOCO pavilion at Sheridan Park has a full kitchen and can accommodate 135 persons.



- Pools:
 - Outdoor swimming pools: Brighton Big Pool, Lincoln Big Pool, and Kenmore Big Pool
 - Wading pools: Brighton Wading Pool, Lincoln Wading Pool, and Mang Wading Pool
- Boating Facilities (Boat launch, mooring)
 - Tonawanda Small Boat Harbor, Sheridan Drive and River Road
- Youth Centers
 - Kenmore Youth Center, 135 Wilber Ave.
 - Sheridan Youth Center, 169 Sheridan Parkside Dr.

The Town coordinates an extensive recreational program offering programs for youth and adults in baseball, hockey, soccer, football, basketball, and competitive swimming among other sports and activities. The Town also runs a summer recreational playground program at thirteen playgrounds throughout the Town, with supervised programs running from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday at most locations.

There are additional recreational facilities operated by the County in the Town. Erie County operates Ellicott Creek Island Park, located between Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek, and Isle View Park, which is located along the Niagara River. These regional parks have trails, picnic areas, waterfront access and other amenities. New York State is responsible for Strawberry Island, an island in the Niagara River that has been preserved as open space due to its significance as a wildlife habitat and fish spawning area. The island is only accessible by boat.

As discussed in the section on off-road multi-use paths (Section G.5), the Shoreline Trail operates as a linear park, linking recreational sites in the community. The Two Mile Creek and Sherwood Greenway trails also provide recreational opportunities and a connection between the Niagara River and Sheridan Park. Other potential trails facilities in the Town are being studied. These are discussed in greater detail in Section G and depicted on Map 6.

3. Senior Services

The Town of Tonawanda operates a Senior Citizen Center on Ensminger Road, with senior services open to residents over 60 years of age. This facility is open for use Monday through Friday. Two other facilities offer senior programs and services, including:

- Kenmore Mang Park Branch, Mang Avenue (open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays)
- Ellwood Branch, Ellwood Fire Hall, Englewood Avenue (open Tuesdays)



There are over 4,000 members who participate in over 75 activities and programs for seniors, including exercise and wellness programs, dances, trips, a lounge and a library. Van service for shopping, doctor's appointments, and errands within the Town, Village, and surrounding areas, is provided by reservation and a \$5 fee through the Senior Citizen Center. The van service is an increasingly popular service within the Town, and the vans are often filled to their capacity during operational hours.

The Town provides nutrition services, in cooperation with Erie County. Lunches are available each weekday at the Ensminger Senior Citizen Center and the Mang Community Center for a small, voluntary donation. A Ken-Ton Meals-on-Wheels program offers home delivery of meals for homebound elderly.

4. Libraries

The Town of Tonawanda has two branch libraries of the Buffalo and Erie County Library Public Library System, including one within the Village of Kenmore. These branches are:

- Kenilworth Library, 318 Montrose Avenue
- Kenmore Library, 160 Delaware Road

The libraries offer services such as summer reading programs, free tax preparation, blood drives, access to the internet, databases, and eBooks. Three County library branches were closed in 2005 including: Brighton Library (999 Brighton Road), Greenhaven Library (350 Greenhaven Terrace), and Parkside Village Library (169 Sheridan Parkside Drive).

5. Schools

Most of the Town of Tonawanda is in the Kenmore-Tonawanda Union Free School District, also known as the Ken-Ton School District. Ken-Ton serves all of the Village of Kenmore, and all but the northeastern corner of the Town of Tonawanda, which falls within the Sweet Home School District.

The Ken-Ton District operates seven elementary schools, three middle schools and two high schools. Ken-Ton is one of the largest school districts in New York

State, with average enrollment of approximately 7,000 students in grades Kindergarten through 12. The 2014-15 budget was approximately \$152 million. Public Schools in the Ken-Ton District include the following:

Elementary Schools:

- Alexander Hamilton Elementary School, 44 Westfall Drive
- Ben Franklin Elementary School, 500 Parkhurst Boulevard
- Charles A. Lindbergh Elementary School, 184 Irving Terrace
- Herbert Hoover Elementary School, 199 Thorncliff Road
- Holmes Elementary School, 365 DuPont Avenue
- Theodore Roosevelt Elementary School, 283 Washington Avenue
- Thomas A. Edison Elementary School, 236 Grayton Road

Middle Schools:

- Ben Franklin Middle School, 540 Parkhurst Boulevard
- Herbert Hoover Middle School, 199 Thorncliff Road
- Kenmore Middle School, 155 Delaware Road

High Schools:

- Kenmore East Senior High School, 350 Fries Road
- Kenmore West Senior High School, 33 Highland Parkway

In April 2014 the Ken-Ton School Board identified three schools for potential closure in 2016. They include: the Theodore Roosevelt and Alexander Hamilton Elementary Schools. The Kenmore Middle School will close and be merged into the High Schools. Thomas Jefferson Elementary School on 230 Athens Boulevard was closed at the end of the 2012-2013 school year. The building is available for re-purposing.

The Sweet Home School District, which also serves a portion of the Town of Amherst, has one school located within the Town of Tonawanda. Glendale Elementary School is located on 101 Glendale Drive. Enrollment at Glendale Elementary has dropped in recent years due to housing in the neighborhood not turning over and several university (student) housing complexes are being built in the neighborhood that do not contribute to the district's student population. Current enrollment is at approximately 370 students, with average class sizes of about 17 students. The school district also operates three additional elementary schools, a middle school and a high school, which are located in the Town of Amherst. Total enrollment in the Sweet Home School District is approximately 3,600 students. The annual school budget is approximately \$68 million.



Saint Joseph's Collegiate Institute
on Kenmore Avenue

Private and Parochial Schools:

In addition to these public schools, there are a number of private, parochial schools in the Town of Tonawanda. Private Schools in the Town of Tonawanda and Village of Kenmore include:

- Cardinal O'Hara High School (grades 9-12), 39 O'Hara Road
- Charter School for Applied Technologies (K-6), 2303 Kenmore Avenue
- Covenant Academy (pre-K – 8), 345 McConkey Drive
- Mount Saint Mary Academy (9 – 12), 3746 Delaware Avenue
- Saint Amelia School (pre-K – 8), 2999 Eggert Road
- Saint Andrew Country Day School (pre-K – 8), 1545 Sheridan Drive
- Saint Christopher's School (pre-K – 8), 2660 Niagara Falls Boulevard
- Saint John the Baptist School (pre-K – 8), Belmont Avenue
- Saint Joseph's Collegiate Institute (grades 9-12), 845 Kenmore Avenue

The Stanley G. Falk School, located at 1 Cambridge Street in Buffalo, provides an alternative educational program for special educational students, from Kindergarten through High School. Their focus is on behavioral, special learning, social and emotional disabilities.

6. Child Care Facilities

There are several child-care facilities located within the Town, including new facilities that have opened in recent years. There are facilities located on Delaware Avenue, Sheridan Drive, Niagara Falls Boulevard, Military Road, Wendel Avenue, Yorkshire Road, Englewood Avenue and University Avenue.

7. Emergency Services

Fire Protection

Fire protection in the Town of Tonawanda is provided by a number of independent fire districts, staffed by volunteer fire fighters. Within the Town of Tonawanda, there are both Fire districts and Fire Protection districts. Fire Protection districts do not have a fire company within their boundary. Thus, the Town of Tonawanda contracts with the established Fire districts for the protection of these areas. Dispatch for the fire departments is coordinated through Public Safety Communications, centrally located in the Police headquarters building on Sheridan Drive. Fire protection facilities include:



Fire Districts

- Ellwood - Fire District 1, 1000 Englewood Avenue (1 station)
- Kenilworth - Fire District 2, 84 Hawthorne Avenue (1 station)
- River Road - Fire District 3, 59 Kaufman Avenue (1 station)
- Sheridan Park - District 4 (2 stations)
 - Station #2, 744 Sheridan Drive
 - Station #4, 1708 Military Road
- Brighton - Fire District 5 (3 stations)
 - Station #1, 50 Jamaica Road
 - Station #2, 26 McConkey Drive
 - Station #3, Ellicott Creek Road

Fire Protection Districts

- Industrial - Fire Protection District 1
- North Delaware (Kenmore Village) - Fire Protection District 2, 16 Nash Road
- Ellicott Creek (Amherst) - Fire Protection District 3
- Deerhurst Park (Kenmore) - Fire Protection District 4

A small portion of the Town of Tonawanda, north of Ellicott Creek, falls within the Ellicott Creek Fire District. This fire district and its firehouse are based in the Town of Amherst; it has no fire houses in the Town of Tonawanda.

Police

The Town of Tonawanda Police Department is located at 1835 Sheridan Drive. The Department has over 100 police officers and approximately 50 civilian employees. The Police Headquarters operates a centralized dispatch system for all emergency services, including police, fire and paramedics. The Department's operations include crime prevention, traffic enforcement, patrols and criminal investigations.

- *Community Outreach* – In addition, the Police Department conducts extensive community outreach activities, with Satellite Stations at the Sheridan-Parkside Community Center and the Lincoln Park/Kenilworth neighborhood. The Police Department coordinates a strong Neighborhood Watch/Crime Watch program in the Town, which has nine organized volunteer Neighborhood Watch groups and Citizen's Mobile Eye patrols by approximately 50 volunteers. The Police Department also participates in the Drug Awareness and Resistance Education (DARE) program, and has jurisdiction over animal control. The Town has two animal control officers. A Citizens' Police Academy trains over 50 volunteers per year.

- *Training Facilities* – The Town has a Public Safety Training Center located on Fire Tower Road off of Two Mile Creek Road. The Town provides Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training at the facility through both academic and hands-on instruction.
- *Emergency Operations Center* – the emergency operations center is located in the Town Police Department facilities on Sheridan Drive

Medical

- *Emergency Medical* – Medical emergency service is provided by the Town of Tonawanda Paramedic Department, one of few municipal service providers in New York State. This department operates out of Police Headquarters. All paramedics are certified Emergency Medical Technicians.
- *Hospital Services* – Kenmore Mercy Hospital, located at 2950 Elmwood Avenue, is a full-service hospital affiliated with the Catholic Health System. It offers a range of in-patient and out-patient services, including emergency room services. The hospital is noted for orthopedic care. Additional hospitals in the Buffalo region are easily accessible to residents of Tonawanda.
- *Non-emergency Services* – Western New York Immediate Care, located at 2497 Delaware Avenue, and MASH Urgent Care, located at 1751 Sheridan Drive, provide health care services for non-life-threatening illnesses and injuries.

8. Cemeteries

There are seven historic cemeteries located within the Town of Tonawanda. St. Christopher's Cemetery is an old burial ground and is believed to be the oldest in the town. Elmlawn Cemetery is the town's largest cemetery with 166 acres of land.

- Elmlawn Cemetery, 3939 Delaware Ave.
- Faling Cemetery, Delaware Rd. and Willowbreeze Rd.
- Mount Olivet Cemetery, 4000 Elmwood Ave.
- North Bush Cemetery, Englewood Ave. and Belmont Ave.
- St. Christopher's Cemetery, 2660 Niagara Falls Blvd.
- St. Peter's German Cemetery, 100 Knoche Rd.
- Werkley Cemetery, 2390 Eggert Rd.



Faling Cemetery on Delaware Road

Faling, St Peter's and Werkley cemeteries are maintained by the Town. Salem Cemetery on Military Road is now within the city limits of Tonawanda, however, it was at one time was located with the boundaries of the town. Many of the Town's early settlers were buried at Salem Cemetery.

9. Cultural Resources

Archeological Resources

According to the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) – GIS-Public Access website, archeologically sensitive areas are located in the Town of Tonawanda generally parallel to the bounds of the Niagara River and Ellicott and Tonawanda Creeks. Archeologically sensitive areas define areas where the discovery of archeological sites is predicted. These areas may also contain the locations of known sites that are included in the SHPO Archeological Site files and the New York State Museum Archeological Site files. There are no known significant archeological sites located in the Town of Tonawanda. The extent of land development in the community has likely resulted in substantial disturbance of existing artifacts or resources related to prior native habitation.

The 2008 update of the Town's LWRP indicated that "An archeological site (UB 235) has been identified as lying on the mainland opposite Strawberry Island. Its potential significance is unknown and it may presently be located beneath the Chevrolet Plant." However, subsequent investigations were unable to locate any archeological finds. An archeological resource assessment conducted as part of the SEQRA review for the expansion of the General Motors plant indicated a low archeological sensitivity of the site, due to extensive prior disturbance. Most of the lands in the Town have experienced prior disturbance.

Historic Resources

The oldest building in the Town of Tonawanda is the Tonawanda-Kenmore Historical Society Museum, located at 100 Knoche Road. The building was built in 1849, as St. Peter's Church, a German Evangelical Church that was operated until 1967. The building was converted into a museum in 1976. The museum has undergone several renovations over the years and has a number of exhibits and artifacts on display. Historical presentations are also offered on a regular basis. The museum building also offers public meeting space.



The former church is now home of the Tonawanda-Kenmore Historical Society.

A segment of the original Erie Canal, which opened in 1825, extended through the Town adjacent to what is now River Road. This resource has been restored to its original configuration, including the exact tow path and an official historic marker.

There are two structures in the Village of Kenmore that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Eberhardt Mansion, located at 2746 Delaware Avenue, was placed on the National Register in 1983. The Victorian structure was built in 1893 and is currently being used as a retail building. The Tonawanda Municipal Building was added to the registry in 2013. The Tonawanda Municipal Building was constructed in 1936 as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project and is an example of late Art Deco design and 1930s civic architecture.

There are numerous other buildings in the Town and Village that are of local historic importance, or that contribute to the character of the area. These properties are privately owned and many 50 years or older may be eligible of listing on the State or National Registers of Historic Places.

10. Scenic Vistas/ Visual Resources

The Town of Tonawanda is bordered on its western boundary by the Niagara River. There are several locations along the River where scenic views of the water are available, including the Town Boat Launch, Aqua Lane Park, and at locations along the Shoreline Trail. Scenic vistas are also available from Ellicott Creek Park, where Ellicott creek provides an aesthetic backdrop. A portion of the Town's northern border also fronts on the Erie Canal. The Town's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) identifies scenic vistas and addresses the preservation of these visual resources.

I. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Overview

Tonawanda has a historically strong economic base; the community offers residents the opportunity to experience a variety of living and working options complemented by a comprehensive retail base. Unlike many suburban Towns, a significant proportion of Town residents are able to find work in Tonawanda. The Town ranks fifth in Erie County for the number of residents who work in their Town of residence. Nearly one-quarter (22.6%) of Town residents who are in the work force worked in their own community in 2010. Map 8 presents the business parks and large employers within the Town.

The Town is renowned for its traditional manufacturing base highlighted by major manufacturers, like Praxair, Goodyear-Dunlop Tire, and the General

Motors Powertrain plant. While overall manufacturing employment has fallen from 13% of Town workers in 2000 to 9% of Town workers in 2010, local manufacturing remains a significant contributor to the tax base. Local manufacturers are making meaningful investments in their facilities. General Motors, for example, continues to reinvest in plant improvements supporting its commitment to manufacturing in Tonawanda. Praxair has recently undertaken approximately \$38 million in improvements. Companies, including, but not limited to, Praxair, Unifrax and 3M, retain excellent relations with Town leaders and express a high comfort level with their existing status as major employers. Locations of key employers, industrial locations and business parks are depicted on Map 8 – Economic Development.

Town of Tonawanda Major Employers	Number of Employees in 2014
Praxair	1159
Goodyear-Dunlop Tire	1159
General Motors – Powertrain	1009
Kenmore Mercy Hospital	907
FedEx Trade Networks	687
E.I. DuPont de Nemours	660
JW Danforth	640
United Health Care	496
3M Tonawanda	385
Ronco Communications	279
White Directory	350
Schofield Residence	235
Frey Electric	231
NOCO Energy	223
Great Lakes Orthodontics	200
Unifrax	378
Hebeler	158
Coca-Cola	141

Source: Town of Tonawanda Development Corporation

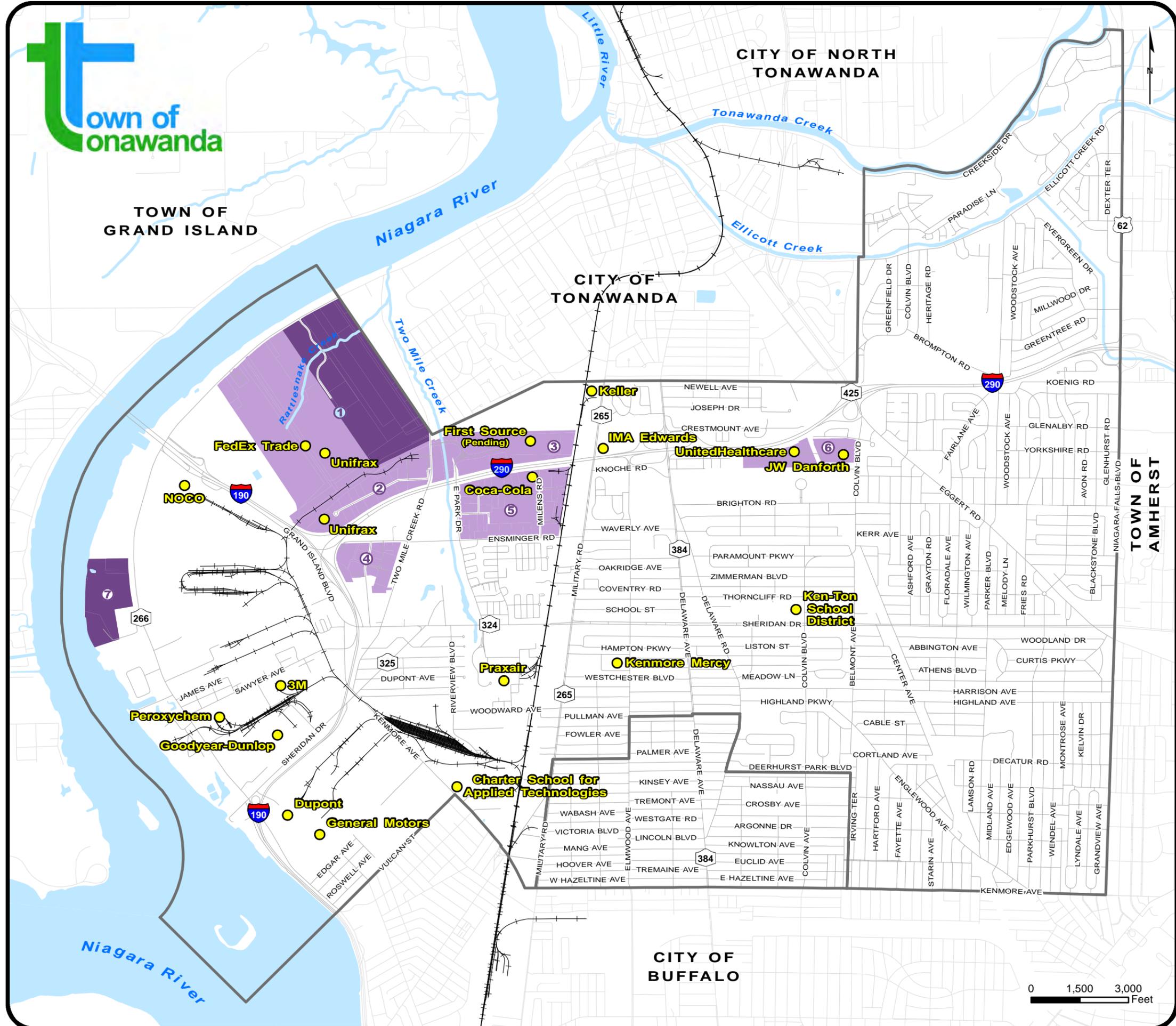


MAP 8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

Legend

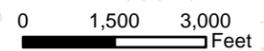
- Major Employer
 - Water
 - Road
 - Railroad
 - Municipal Boundary
 - Business Park (Existing)
 - Business Park (Planned)
- Business Park Key:**
- ① Riverview Solar Technology Park
 - ② Fire Tower Industrial Park
 - ③ North Youngmann Commerce Center
 - ④ Interstate Commerce Center
 - ⑤ Pearce Industrial Park
 - ⑥ Colvin Woods Business Park
 - ⑦ Niagara River World (Wickwire)



NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1

J:\Projects\11177008\GIS\MAPS\08 Economic Development.mxd 10/29/2014





Tonawanda Commerce Center on Kenmore Ave is an example of a multi-tenant facility that offer flexible configuration for leased space.

Photo credit: Uniland website

2. Town Economic Development

In recent years, the Town has successfully attracted less intensive industry including distribution, warehousing and light industrial tenants. Newer development in areas including the Interstate Commerce Center and Colvin Woods are diversifying the overall economic base of the community. Commercial and industrial uses are concentrated in the western section of the Town. Commercial and industrial properties in the Town of Tonawanda experience a range of conditions. There are many modern, well-maintained business properties. There are also areas within the Town where commercial and industrial properties are under-utilized or are in need of improvements.

Multi-tenant facilities

The Interstate Commerce Center (ICC) and the Tonawanda Commerce Center (TCC) are multi-tenant facilities operated by the Uniland Development Company. Both properties offer flexible space for lease by small businesses requiring a combination of office and warehouse activities. The ICC and TCC are particularly popular for regional distribution operations, based on close proximity to the I-190 and I-290 interchange. Smaller, 'stand-alone' buildings are also located along Military Road and Cooper Avenue, providing an option for companies to purchase their own properties.

Growth-stage companies

There are two existing industrial parks located in the Town of Tonawanda – the Fire Tower Industrial Park and the Pearce Industrial Park – which provide opportunities for small and mid-sized companies requiring larger, 'stand-alone' facilities. However, most of these facilities are built out, and there is a shortage of serviced industrial properties to accommodate the current demand for such property in the Town of Tonawanda. Several local companies have been forced to relocate outside the Town due to a lack of available expansion opportunities. There is a very strong desire for new industrial parcels, which have access to services and utilities, to accommodate growth and attract new investment.

Recent developments within business parks include Unifrax in the Riverview Solar Technology Park. First Source and additional Unifrax facilities are planned to locate in the North Youngmann Commerce Center.

Large industries

The real estate needs of the Town's larger industries tend to focus on the re-use existing or demolition of outdated structures and improvements to infrastructure that produce more efficient operations. These needs have been primarily met through cooperative efforts with town, county and state agencies, as well as elected officials from those jurisdictions. The Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) was a major partner in the creation of the assistance package assembled to retain the General Motors Powertrain Plant for the long term.

3. Town Business Development Services

The Town of Tonawanda, in conjunction with public and private development partners, has developed a comprehensive network of business development programs and services to meet the needs of businesses in the Town. These include the following.

Town of Tonawanda Development Corporation

Until December 2014 the Town of Tonawanda Development Corporation (TTDC) served as the focal point for provision of these services, spearheading economic development efforts in the community. The TTDC served the Town's business community since 1963. The organization, a 501-C6 designated non-profit, was governed by a board of directors that included representatives from major corporations, local government, and experts in the field of education, banking, utilities, law and health care.

The TTDC took the lead in the identification of local economic priorities and projects, while coordinating its activities with county, regional and state agencies. The Town played an important role in the development of the cooperative agreement that resulted in GEICO, a major national company, to locate in Western New York. In exchange for extending Tonawanda Empire Zone benefits to a location in Amherst, the Town was able to receive funds to develop the North Youngmann Commerce Center and priority consideration for the new jobs being created by GEICO.

Inquiries received by the Town suggest that there continues to be a strong demand for commercial and industrial property in the Town of Tonawanda, but expansion has been hindered by a lack of "Shovel-ready" space. Most of the industrial parks constructed over the past few decades are largely built-out and occupied. The Colvin Woods, Riverview Solar Technology and North Youngmann Commerce Center projects will help accommodate some of the demand for new space for business and industrial development.



Technical Assistance

Technical assistance varies depending on the needs of the company. Start-up and small businesses, including Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE-WBEs), generally require assistance in the basic mechanics of starting and operating a business, such as the formation of the business entity, financial planning, product development, and marketing. The Town works with partners, including the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Buffalo State College, the Small Business Administration (SBA), and the Service Corporation of Retired Executives (SCORE) to provide counseling services. For larger, more established companies, access to available resources to facilitate investment and growth is a greater issue.

Financial assistance

Adequate financial resources are perhaps the most critical element in the formation of a new business or in laying plans for growth. The Town provides direct financial assistance through the Town of Tonawanda Business Incentive Fund (TTBIF) and coordinates with public and private lending sources, including local banks, the SBA the ECIDA and the Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC).

Workforce

The need to recruit and train a skilled workforce is the most important issue facing companies located throughout Western New York. There are training funds available through the Workforce Investment Consortium and the ESDC for training new workers and retraining existing workers.

Infrastructure

Many of the companies in Tonawanda are very sensitive to transportation—getting supplies to the facility and sending finished product to the end-user, and it is important to ensure that infrastructure, including road and rail access, remains capable of meeting businesses’ needs. As noted above, the Town has been successful in obtaining State assistance to improve infrastructure access for several large employers.

Marketing Services

The Town has maintained a database of information about available land and buildings. The Town participates with State economic development efforts, including websites that market available properties and sites across New York State. The Town also actively supports and participates in regional marketing activities, such as the Buffalo-Niagara Enterprise (BNE), which are designed to attract investment from outside the Buffalo-Niagara region.



Other services

The Kenmore-Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce is an active business organization that provides a range of vital services to the small business community. These include access to group health care insurance, advocacy and technical assistance through membership in state and national organizations, monthly meetings and seminars, and special events such as trade shows.

Section IV

Findings, Issues and
Recommendations



SECTION IV: FINDINGS, ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**“A Great Place
to Live, Work,
and Play.”**
Town Motto

ISSUES AND FINDINGS

An analysis of the inventory of existing conditions (Section III) and the results of the public participation efforts shed light on a number of findings and issues facing the Town. Public participation included public meetings, focus meetings with stakeholders, input from Town officials and department heads, and comments gathered on the Town’s website. Some are new and some were identified in the 2005 Comprehensive Plan that require longer term solutions. This section of the report highlights major findings and issues, which have been organized to correspond with the central themes established in the goals and objectives (Section II).

A. OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The motto of the Town of Tonawanda is “A Great Place to Live, Work and Play”. Comprised of a variety of neighborhoods, shopping areas, parks and places of industry and commerce, Tonawanda has lived up to this motto and established itself as a stable and prosperous suburban community with a lot to offer. It has a long expanse of waterfront that supports industry and provides opportunities for continued growth, as well as public access. The availability of high quality services is a major reason why people choose to live in the Town. In light of this, it is important to maintain the high quality of life that currently exists in the Town.

1. Demographics – Who We Are

A review of the demographic data reveals the following:

- The Tonawanda Census Designated Place (CDP) lost approximately five percent of its population between 1990 and 2000, and another 5.8% between 2000 and 2010. However, 2040 population projections completed by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Corporation (GBNRTC) predict an end to Town population declines. A cursory analysis of the trends indicates that a reversal in the population decline, from decreasing to increasing, may occur around year 2025. A recovery in Town population of 8.9% is indicated by the year 2040. However, it is not anticipated that population increases will result in increased demands on Town services greater than existing capacity.
- The overall number of households in the Town has increased from 26,207 in 2000 to 27,303 in 2010; an increase of 4%. This trend is due to

an increase in the number of one-person households (nearly one-third), which represents a significant shift in the demographic composition of the Town. Additionally, the average household size has decreased from 2.33 persons in 2000 to 2.27 persons in 2010. The increasing number of single-family households is comprised primarily of non-family households, led by single persons. However, the Town of Tonawanda remains a family community, as nearly 60% of all households are families (people living together who are related by blood or marriage). The most common family type in the Town is a married couple with no children under the age of 18. Only 22% of family households reporting have children under 18 living at home.

- Data indicate that the number of households and median income are increasing, while the overall population and household size are decreasing. This indicates that the Town is faring well in consideration of national and regional economic difficulties. This is also contrary to data that shows the poverty level increasing in the Town, above Erie County levels.
- Reversing a long rising trend, the senior population of the Town is in a slight decline. In 2010, 20% of households reported being headed by a senior (age 65 or older), falling from 22% in 2000. However, the median age of the population of the Town has increased from 41.8 in 2000 to 43.1 years of age. The Erie County median age is 40.4 years. The age distribution in the Town continues to be fairly stable, with children under 18 decreasing from 21.5% to 19.5% of the population and non-elderly (18 to 64 years old) increasing from 56% to 62% in 2010.

The Village of Kenmore continues to serve as the Center of Town

2. Land Use

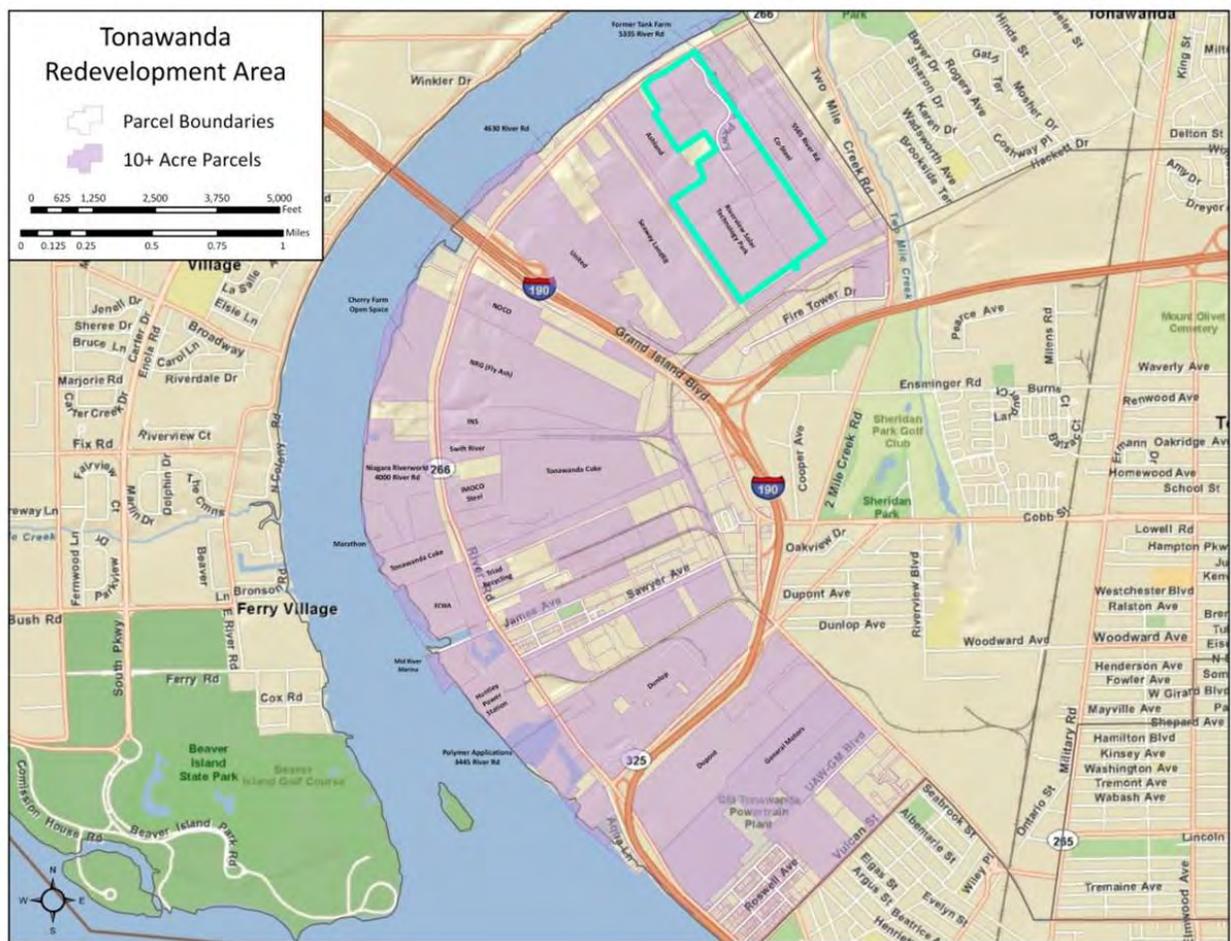
The Town of Tonawanda is a densely built out first-ring suburb that offers a mix of residential, commercial, industrial and public uses. Zoning supports land use in the Town and provides the basis for how development and redevelopment should occur. The western portion of Town is defined by both industrial uses and recreation/mixed uses along the waterfront. The eastern sector of Town primarily consists of residential and commercial uses, public facilities, and parks. The southern sector of Town is the most densely developed, with density decreasing to the north. An analysis of existing land use and zoning in the Town offers the following findings.

- The Village of Kenmore has traditionally been the center or business core of the Town and is anticipated to remain so. However, commercial and retail uses have expanded along roadways and in other areas of the community. Much of the commercial and retail development has taken the form of strip development along major thoroughfares, such as Niagara Falls Blvd., Sheridan Drive, Kenmore Avenue, Englewood Avenue, Military Road, Delaware Avenue and Elmwood Avenue. Recent studies of several of these

commercial corridors resulted in proposed zoning amendments to better define appropriate land uses and design standards (size, layout, landscaping and buffering).

Transformation of land uses in the Western sector of the Town represents both challenges and opportunities.

- There are smaller nodes of business activity that serve localized markets and provide benefits to surrounding neighborhoods. These exist in the Colvin Boulevard - Eggert Road area, the Brighton Road - Eggert Road area, the Kenmore Avenue - Englewood Avenue area, and the Highland - Colvin-Englewood areas. Future land use in these areas needs to be flexible to allow similar types of development that serve the neighborhoods. A number of these business districts warrant revitalization and reinvestment.
- The eastern portion of the Town is well developed with residential uses, which are found in a variety of neighborhoods that are intermixed with retail and commercial uses. As an older, first ring suburb, development densities are relatively higher than that found in new, second ring suburbs. The higher development densities provide a greater opportunity for an



Source: Reimagining the Tonawandas

enhanced sense of community and walkability, which makes these areas more sustainable. Greater development density, however, offers limited opportunities and available land for new building activity. Therefore, redevelopment or infill opportunities exist for commercial and residential development throughout the eastern portion of the Town. Unlike the large-scale transformation of land use underway in the western sector of the Town, land use in the eastern sector is stable. The eastern portion of the Town is increasingly characterized by structures (both residential and commercial), sites and infrastructure that are older and in need of upgrade, requiring strategies and policies that also promote sustainability.

- The western portion of the Town has historically supported industrial development, which capitalized on the waterfront resources for processing and access to rail and highway facilities for shipping. The easterly section of this area has suffered the effects of this industrial heritage, which has left large sections degraded and subject to investigation and remediation. Once remediated, former industrial properties offer opportunities for reuse and redevelopment with new light industrial or office uses, and the ability to strengthen the tax base. Additional efforts are needed before all of this area is fully shovel ready for new development. Transportation improvements are also required to improve access to the area.
- The transformation of land use in the western sector of Town represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is an area increasingly characterized by buildings and sites that are underutilized, vacant or brownfields (in various states of remediation). The opportunity is to re-define the future of the area by promoting land uses that are sustainable – economically and environmentally. Many industrial properties in this area have already been remediated or are in the process of being remediated, providing an opportunity for reuse and redevelopment.
- The industrial area located west of the Grand Island bridges includes many stable industrial operations, as well as opportunities for infill development with uses suited to this area. Opportunities for the redevelopment of light industrial and office uses also exist along Military Road.
- There are a number of properties located west of Military Road, bounded by Sheridan Drive to the north and the railroad corridor to the west, that are underutilized and/or contain functionally obsolete structures. These properties provide opportunities for industrial reuse and revitalization. The Town needs to gain a better understanding of the vitality, ongoing concerns and the environmental conditions in this area to determine the potential for redevelopment. Development on the east side of Military Road is more commercial in nature and on smaller properties.
- Demographic changes have resulted in the need to close local schools. Typically, the strategic location of a school in the heart of a residential neighborhood makes it an ideal location for re-use with a combination of

multi-family residential, small scale commercial, institutional and/or recreational use.

- The Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan promotes goals and objectives to protect and enhance natural resources in the region and achieve a more sustainable future. The Town can follow the plan or adapt its recommendations into the Town planning initiatives.

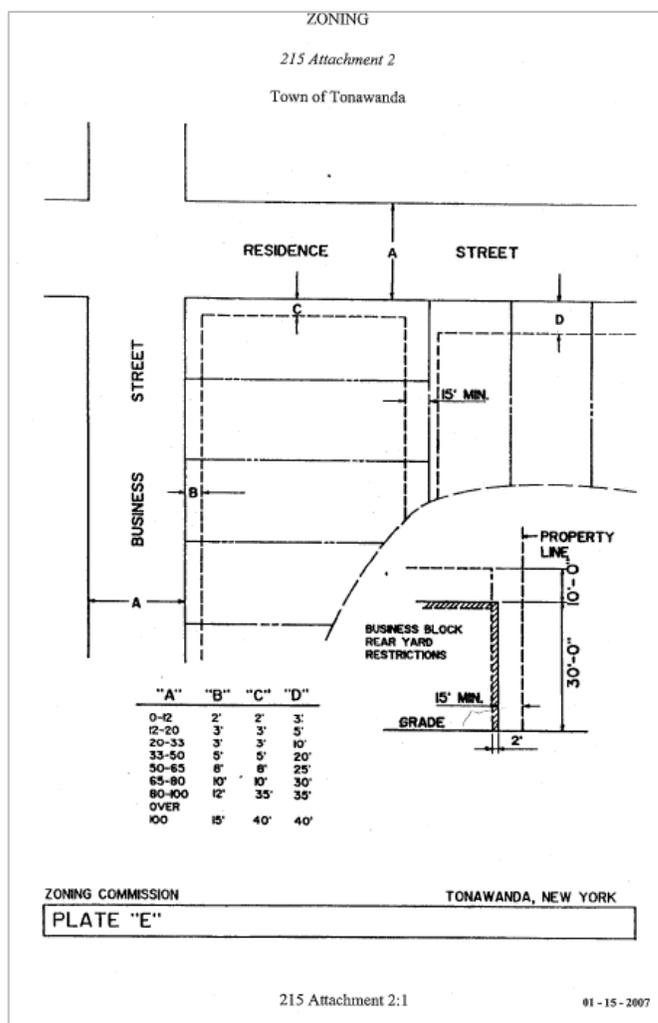
3. Zoning

Zoning is one of the key tools available to guide land use changes and achieve the goals for growth and development throughout the community. A review of existing zoning leads to the following findings and issues:

- The Zoning Law (Chapter 215 of the Town Code) allow for a variety of land uses, including residential, commercial and industrial. The zoning is written in a style that is typical for suburban communities, which uses a hierarchy that cumulatively adds uses that are allowed in the next less intensive district. As the Town has evolved and the commercial corridors have each taken on their own character, this style of use control is no longer the most effective for identifying the most appropriate uses for a given neighborhood. The uses and the height and bulk standards should be tailored to the neighborhoods in which they are located to allow greater flexibility and mix of uses.
- The Town currently is divided into twelve zoning districts with three overlay districts. There are also two proposed districts currently in the review/adoption process, as well as a new district regulations proposed in the 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan Update. Districts, uses and regulations have evolved over the years as a result of the numerous planning efforts undertaken by the Town. As planning and zoning studies have been conducted and amendments to the Zoning Law adopted, overlap and possible inconsistencies have resulted with older sections of the Zoning Law, such as signs, landscaping, definitions, and building design guidelines. This has lead to a need for a comprehensive review and update of the zoning regulations.
- Recent zoning studies and proposed zoning amendments have increased the Town of Tonawanda Planning Board's ability to review site plans for site design and aesthetic features, such as enhanced landscaping, parking and building layout, and general building design. However, these improved land use controls are targeted for the new and proposed zoning districts:
 - NB - Neighborhood Business (new 2011),
 - TND – Traditional Neighborhood Design (proposed 2014),
 - C-2 Commercial (proposed 2014)

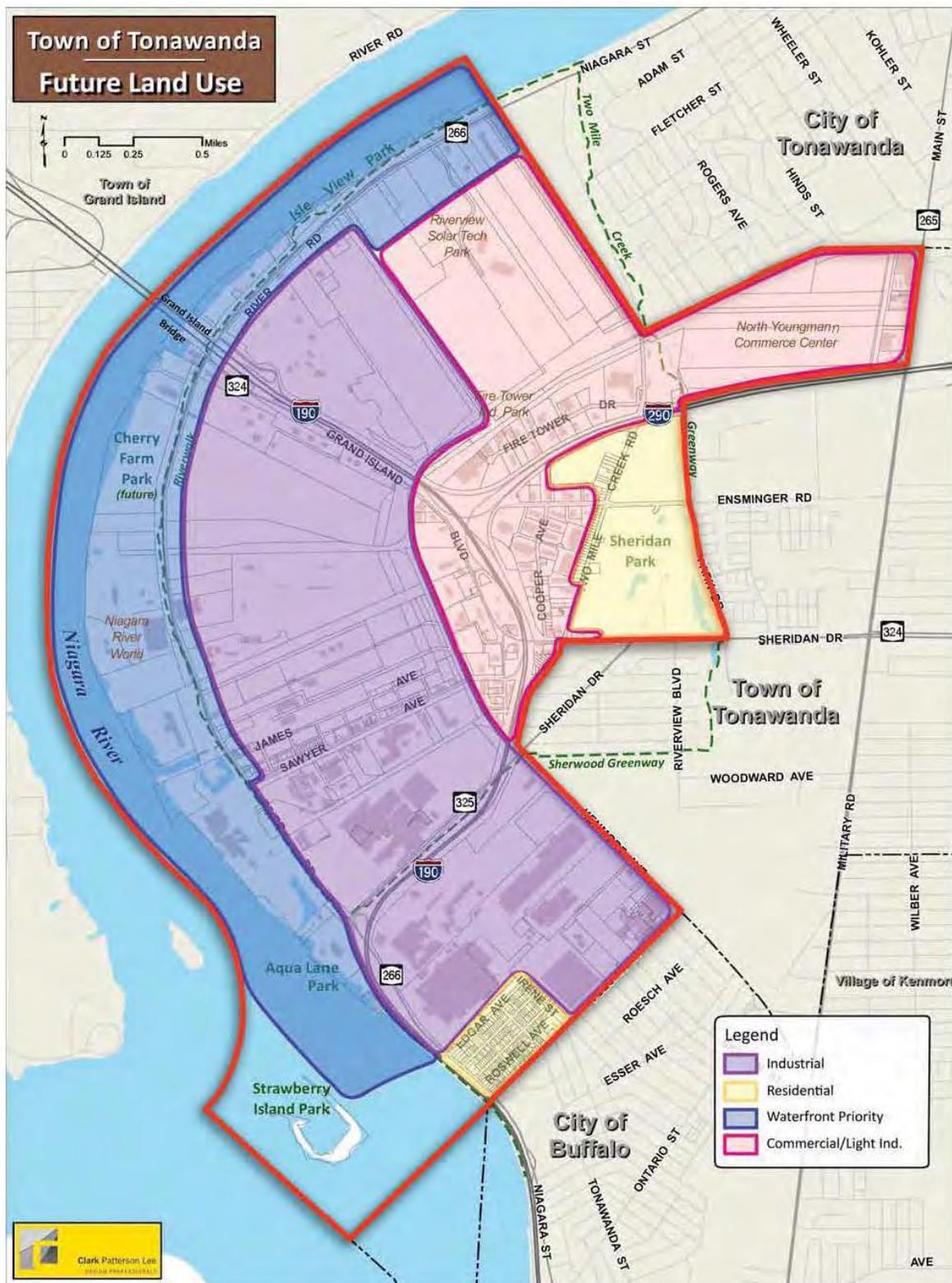
- Waterfront Priority District (proposed 2014), and
 - PS - Performance Standards (limited amendments proposed 2014).
- In the C-General Business District, automotive uses (repair shops, gasoline stations, detail and dealers (used) are allowed with a Special Use Permit (as authorized in 215-89). However, they are treated as “permitted” uses in the Performance Standards (PS) and General Industrial (GI) districts only because they are not listed as prohibited. Administration of the Zoning Law could be more effective and less ambiguous if each district, including PS and GI, had specific lists of Permitted Uses and uses requiring a Special Use Permit.
 - The schematic “Plates” that are appended to the Zoning Law define front yard setbacks and graphically display how the setbacks are to be applied. The strict front yard setbacks do not provide design flexibility for the redevelopment of existing buildings. Newer and more innovative approaches to redevelopment may provide greater flexibility and ease in administration.

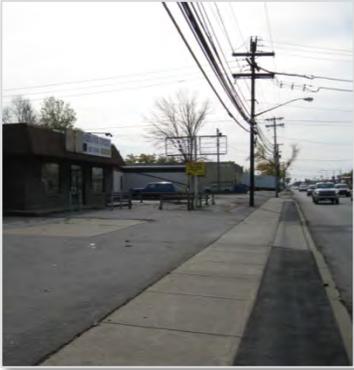
Plate “E” is one of eight graphic depictions of existing zoning requirements that should be reviewed and updated as necessary.



- In the past, some zoning districts boundaries (primarily for the Commercial and C-1 Commercial districts), were established at a consistent distance from the public right-of-way. The resulting zoning district boundaries created parcels with split zoning. This occurs where the arbitrary zoning district boundary separates a property into two different zoning districts. Split-zoning makes it difficult to issue zoning permits and for landowners to meet certain setback requirements. Split-zoning is a more significant problem in the more densely developed commercial corridors east of Military Road than it is in the western sectors where industrial properties are significantly larger. The zoning provisions need to be revised to address this issue.
- There are some instances in the waterfront and industrial areas where very large lots have split zoning. The 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan indicates the benefit to having split zoning is to “provide an opportunity to change the existing environment along River Road from one of large industrial parcels, to more manageable, non-heavy industrial-based development.” Split zoning is intended to facilitate outparcel development or subdivision of lands to achieve this objective. Therefore, there are places where split zoning can be beneficial.
- According to the 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan, there are currently ten different zoning districts in the waterfront area. This variation does not provide a consistent desired land use objective for the waterfront. A goal of this Comprehensive Plan Update and the Waterfront Plan is to encourage a transformation in the waterfront area from heavy industry and vacant lands to a mix of uses. The Future (waterfront) Land Use Map included in the 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan provides a useful starting point for these revisions. See Map 9 on the following page.
- The existing zoning map (Map 3) has a classification of School-Park-Cemetery District, which does not have a corresponding set of use or height-bulk regulations in the zoning text to control the types of uses or physical design allowed in these areas. Without definition or standards, they are essentially unzoned lands. While properties in the School-Park-Cemetery districts include public and semi-public uses, there are no guiding regulations to control how these lands could be redeveloped in the future. For publicly-owned lands, such as parks, there is a level of control by the Town. However, churches and cemeteries are privately owned, and schools are owned by another public entity, and are not controlled by the Town. Therefore they could be (and have been) sold. Either zoning regulations should be established for the School-Park-Cemetery map classification or a new zoning district should be developed that focuses on community facilities.

MAP 9 - Future Waterfront Land Use Plan





Example (along Military Rd.) where private parking is not separated from sidewalk.

- There is a need to review the zoning map to identify zoning district errors and ensure that all lands are included in an appropriate zoning.
- There are locations along the commercial corridors where parking lots run right to the sidewalk, or curb. In order to provide a higher sense of safety and walkability, parking lots should have a clearly defined edge (preferably curbing). There should also be a section of green space between the edge of parking and the sidewalk or curb to establish a buffer between these areas. Setbacks should be established to separate parking from the edge of property lines fronting on public streets. The new and proposed zoning district regulations for the Neighborhood Business (NB), C-1 Commercial, and Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) districts address this issue; however, the other commercial zoning districts should be reviewed and likewise amended.
- While the Town has created additional commercial zoning districts that are intended to better serve and integrate commercial and retail uses into residential neighborhoods, the sign regulations (§215-140 of the Zoning Law) have only been amended on an “as-needed” basis. There is a need to undertake a comprehensive review of the sign regulations, to determine if they provide adequate protection to the community, address the latest trends in signage, and are consistent with the intent of the newer zoning districts.
- As the Zoning Law has been amended to include enhanced landscape requirements in new commercial districts, inconsistencies have been created with the existing landscape requirements.
- When businesses close, issues with property maintenance and general appearance may arise. Problems may include unauthorized use for parking, dumping, outdated signs, abandoned materials and vehicles are never removed, and the possible need for post demolition restoration.

B. HOW WE LIVE – NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

Town residents generally express their sense of community identity and character at an individual neighborhood level. The general affordability, reasonable taxes, and overall quality of services in the Town, including schools, make the neighborhoods and housing desirable and help to maintain a pattern of long term occupancy.

- The Town offers a variety of housing types and style, with a blend of detached single-family dwelling units and multi-family housing. The housing stock is mostly comprised of smaller homes including both ranch style and

two-story structures that accommodate a variety of household types. In most neighborhoods, housing is well maintained and demonstrates pride in ownership.

- There were a total of 27,303 dwelling units in the Town in 2010, which is a slight increase from 26,207 dwelling units in 2000.
- Vacancy rates have shown a slight increase from 3.6% to 4.0%, which is still considered acceptable. Higher rates of vacancy indicate housing problems, whereas lower rates indicate housing shortages. As the community has little developable land, limited housing growth can be expected.
- The Old Town and Sheridan Parkside are the only neighborhoods that have experienced both a decrease in housing units and an increase in vacancies.
- Two-thirds of the housing in the Town was built between 1940 and 1959. The housing stock is relatively homogeneous and consists primarily of smaller single-family homes. Two-family homes make up 11% of the housing stock. Owner occupancy is high (72.6%). The Town also offers a wide range of rental housing, which helps to diversify options for residents.
- The Town has a number of strong neighborhoods that merit recognition and support. In many neighborhoods there is a strong sense of community. Neighborhood organizations, such as neighborhood watch groups, provide valuable service and should be encouraged in neighborhoods with struggling identity. The strong neighborhood identity increases the residents' awareness and appreciation of their local community and helps to instill pride in ownership. Map 11 – Planning Neighborhoods depicts parks, schools and identified neighborhoods.
- Tonawanda has a strong system of neighborhood schools, parks, churches and other community facilities that help to anchor neighborhoods and provide resident services, creating a positive sense of place. The density of the Town enhances connectivity and walkability and facilitates alternatives to automobile dependency.
- The Town has a good supply of affordable housing and there is a stable demand for all housing, particularly ranch style homes. The median value of owner-occupied homes in 2013, based on Multiple Listing Service data, was \$120,405, compared to \$143,027 for the Buffalo-Niagara region as a whole.
- Of the homes sold in the Town in 2013, the average size was 1,514 square feet. Discussions with realtors indicate that the Town's supply of "move up" homes (larger, with more amenities and space) is limited. The lack of larger, available, single-family homes is impacting buyer decisions and the size of households that are moving into the area. This may be one of the reasons why the number of single-person households is increasing. Based on

The average size home sold in 2013 was 1,514 s.f.

The median value of owner-occupied homes listed for sale in 2013 was \$120,405.



MAP 11 PLANNING NEIGHBORHOODS

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

Legend

- Water
- Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundary
- Park
- CDBG Eligible Areas (FY2015-2019)

Town Facility:

- Community Facility
- Recreation Facility
- Hospital
- Playground
- Religious
- School (Private)
- School (Public)

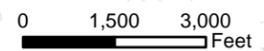
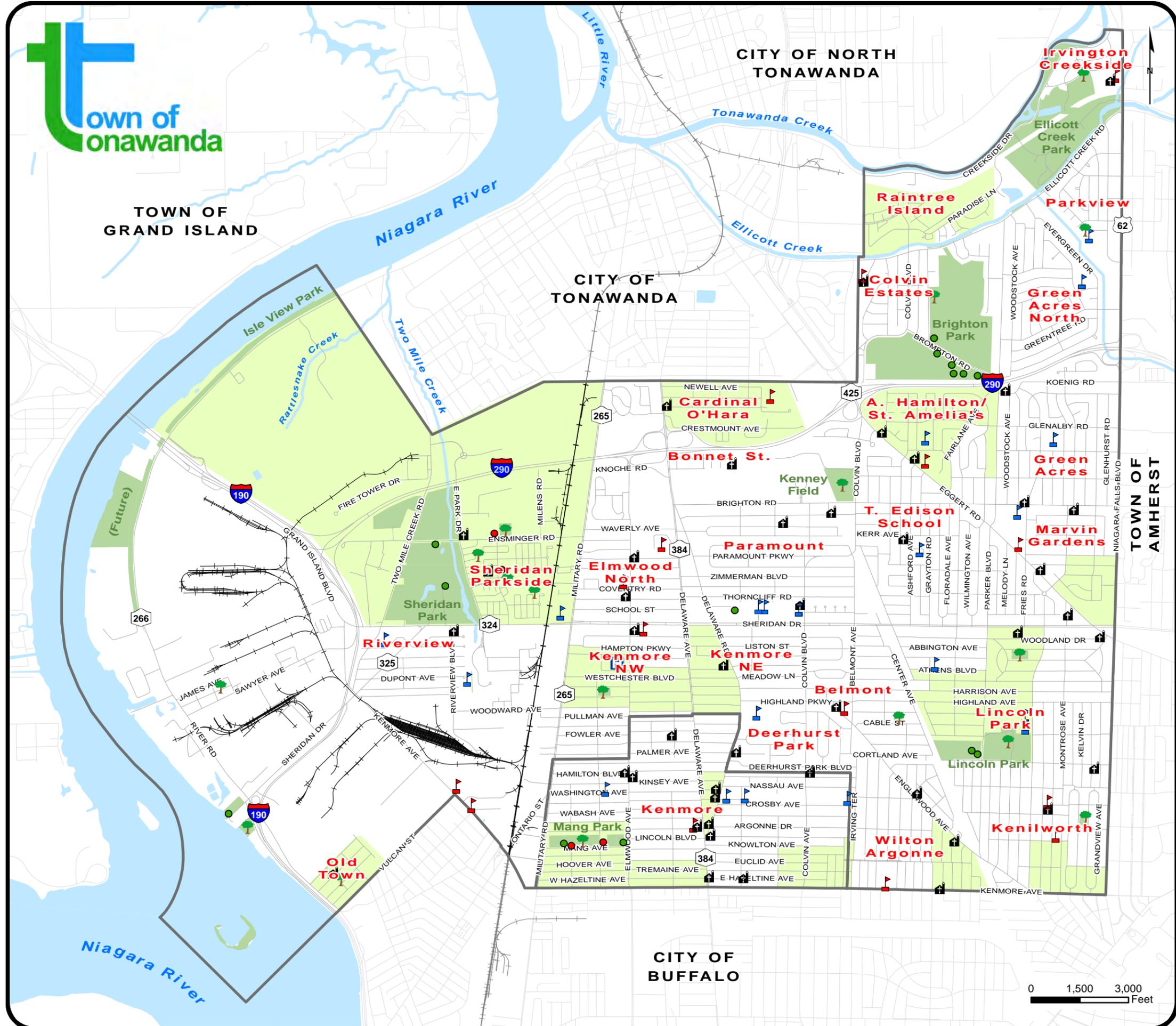
Recommendations:

- A** Support neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch groups
- B** Revitalize neighborhood shopping
- C** Address "problem properties"
- D** Encourage private investment in properties, Continue Community Development investments
- E** "Welcome Packet" to new residents

NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
Sources:
- Town of Tonawanda

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demographics and the size of available housing, it is expected that the demand for smaller housing will continue to be strong for “empty nesters” and single-person households. In light of the lack of larger homes, the Town still has a housing stock that is desirable and in demand.

- Long-term homeowners who require more space or rooms in their home, yet desire to stay in their neighborhoods, have chosen to construct additions as opposed to moving out of town. This practice adds to the quality and value of the existing housing stock.
- Most of the Town’s housing stock was developed during the post-World War II era. The general age of the housing stock represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is for Town services to adapt to a changing population profile: fewer seniors, fewer children, a growing middle aged population, and smaller households that are often headed by a single person. The opportunity is to re-shape the future of the area by promoting strategies and policies that encourage re-investment in housing and public services to maintain the quality of neighborhoods.
- As the real estate needs for commercial activities have changed in recent decades (i.e. – size of buildings, size of sites), there has been a transformation in traditional commercial corridors that represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is aging commercial structures and sites designed and constructed to meet the needs of an earlier era. The opportunity is re-shape the future of the area by promoting strategies and land use policies that encourage re-investment in existing commercial properties and construction of new facilities, where appropriate.
- Quality of education and schools is important to Town residents. School districts are good quality, but according to a survey conducted by Business First, which is based on test scores, district ratings are dropping. This has an impact on public perceptions (according to local realtor observations) although school district quality has not changed.
- The State-mandated 2% tax cap restricts district revenues. The Ken-Ton School District currently has its lowest enrollment rate since 1947 (approximately 7,000 students) and budget constraints have warranted the closing of three school buildings (anticipated in 2015). Additionally, private and parochial schools are experiencing a reduction in enrollment. This trend of decreasing enrollment is also being experienced by schools districts through the region, and is not unique to Tonawanda.
- The west side of the Town offers opportunities for new commercial and light industrial development necessary to balance the tax base and help address the impacts of the State-mandated 2% property tax cap.

The State-mandated 2% tax cap restricts school district revenue.

- The Town offers a variety of senior housing options. New senior housing complexes at Fries Road/Brighton Road and on Crestmount Avenue, north of the I-290 are reportedly filled to capacity. The Town needs to assess opportunities for additional senior housing options, including aging in place, in-law apartments, senior independent living, and assisted living, which will enable current residents to remain in the community.
- The Sheridan Parkside Village Courts Redevelopment Plan and the Old Town Neighborhood Plan provide goals and recommendations to revitalize these areas. Other areas with declining residential neighborhoods also warrant attention in an effort to maintain and improve the character and viability of these areas in the Town.
- Certain “problem properties” that evidence poor maintenance, poor tenant management, or other issues can create problems that extend to adjacent areas and have a negative impact on the quality of life. The maintenance of properties affects their market value and occupancy levels. While voluntary compliance is preferred, State and Town property maintenance regulations provide the tools to enforce compliance.
- There is a good level of private investment in housing improvements in the Town. However, if this falls off or if additional investment is desired, there are programs that provide tax incentives to make home improvements. It would follow the model of the Commercial 485-b tax program for residential improvements, where the increase in assessment due to the improvements is phased in, so that the homeowner does not bear the full cost of added taxes immediately. This program would target those areas that are seeing the stresses of blighted conditions.

c. STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Stewardship of natural resources is a priority for maintaining the sustainability of the Town. The following considerations should be taken into account as part of growth and development decisions in the Town.

- The Town has a legacy of heavy industry along the waterfront, and a strong supply of existing industrial businesses. The continued presence of these businesses and accommodation of infill development of appropriate and compatible uses in the area is necessary to the economic base. However, existing industry needs to operate and manage waste in a responsible manner, recognizing for need for protecting public health and safety, and the need to establish a new legacy of cleaner and more sustainable industrial uses in this area.

Existing industry and business needs to operate and manage waste in a responsible manner.

- Of the twelve Industrial hazardous waste disposal sites noted by the NYSDEC, six are Class 4 (closed), two are Class 3 (no threat).
- Class 2 (active) hazardous waste sites pose a significant threat to public health and the environment and should be properly closed and remediated. This also applies to any sites that are still affected by radioactive waste contamination.
- To ensure that appropriate actions are taken to address pollution and environmentally-compromised lands, there is a need for continued and improved coordination with State and Federal agencies that oversee these matters. There are a number of local studies that have been completed that should be reviewed and implemented in this regard. Additionally, conducting the BOA Step Two Nomination Study will further this objective.
- Under the New York State Department of State's Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program, the Town of Tonawanda has identified the Tonawanda Opportunity Area to address and provide a plan to redevelop brownfield and underutilized properties. Twenty nine such properties have been identified within this area. These properties may be deterrents to development in the area because they create a perception of decline. The next step in the BOA process is completion of the Nomination Study that would provide a conceptual redevelopment plan for the BOA sites and provide a basis for stimulating remediation and reuse. This is particularly important for the Class 3 and 4 hazardous waste sites, where additional required actions and proper site management and monitoring could enable future reuse.
- The Niagara River, Tonawanda Creek, Ellicott Creek, Two-Mile Creek, Rattlesnake Creek and other smaller streams in the Town are important for the management of stormwater runoff and some industrial operations. These areas are also integral parts of the Niagara River/Lake Erie Basin watershed. These waterbodies provide habitat for fish and wildlife and are used extensively for public recreation. There is a need to focus on water quality improvements to protect these local creeks and streams from degradation (municipal discharges, sanitary sewer overflows, non-point source pollution, etc.). There is also an opportunity to utilize the Environmental Commission to educate the public on the importance of doing their part to prevent water pollution, reduce non-point source discharges and protect surface water resources.
- Some areas of wetlands remain in the Town that provide habitat and play a role in storm drainage control. These areas warrant protection. There are areas within the Town where the existing National Wetland Inventory mapping indicates the potential for wetlands. These areas are located primarily along existing drainage ways, poorly drained areas and in areas



Ellicott Creek

with hydric and/or potentially hydric soils. In order for development/redevelopment to proceed, site-specific investigations delineate wetlands must occur. The presence of wetlands does not prohibit development of these areas. Future development should be designed to avoid wetlands where possible. Where wetland impacts are unavoidable, development should be designed to minimize impacts to the greatest extent possible. Following these preliminary strategies in the planning stages will then minimize the need for more expensive and time-consuming wetland mitigation.

- Floodplains exist along the Niagara River shoreline and in certain areas along the shores of Tonawanda and Ellicott Creeks. The Town's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) are in the process of being updated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The draft map modifications include an expansion of the designated special flood hazard areas, primarily along the Tonawanda Creek and Ellicott creek corridors. FEMA is considering the Town's protest regarding the boundaries and the final revised mapping may not expand the regulated floodplain as extensively as originally proposed. Regardless of the location of the finalized boundaries, the importance of these areas, as well as the potential for flooding should be recognized and considered in redevelopment plans for the waterfront in an effort to protect public health and safety.
- The Niagara River and its tributary creeks provide opportunities for public recreation. These waterways support extensive recreational boating and fishing activities that provide great value and benefit to the Town. Efforts should be taken to support and improve the use of these resources in a manner that protects their integrity. Additional recreational opportunities that provide for public use and interpretation of existing water resources should be identified.
- As described in the LWRP Appendix E, Strawberry Island is part of a State-Designated Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat (which also includes Motor Island and surrounding shallows). Strawberry Island and its surroundings are part of a rare riverine littoral zone in the Niagara River and provide important fish spawning and bird habitat. This island is subject to the erosion effects of the Niagara River and proposed for restoration. As
- Construction on the Frog Island Habitat Improvement Project is anticipated to continue through the end of 2014. The project, funded by New York Power Authority (NYPA), will re-create and establish emergent marsh and submerged aquatic vegetation habitat at Frog Island.

D. OUR WORKFORCE, BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC BASE

Community development runs parallel with economic development. New business development provides jobs for local residents and strengthens the tax base, adding vitality to the Town. Tonawanda has historically had a strong economic base, offering residents a variety of living and working opportunities, as well as retail options. The Town has maintained a solid manufacturing base, which features prominent companies, including Goodyear-Dunlop, Praxair and General Motors. In recent years, newer areas of commerce have been developed, successfully attracting less intensive industry and creating new job opportunities. Economic development efforts should be targeted on keeping existing businesses and industries healthy and enabling opportunities to bring new businesses to the Town. The analysis of current economic conditions in the Town offers the following:

67% of Town Residents work in “white collar” positions.

At \$52,399 in 2009, median household income in Tonawanda is 4% higher than in Erie County.

- The Town has a diverse workforce. Town residents work in a variety of industries, with the greatest concentration working in the fields of education, health, and social services (26%). Around 9% of residents work in manufacturing industries, 10% in production or transportation, 17% in service occupations, and 14% in retail trade. The rest of employed residents in the Town are fairly evenly distributed among all other industries. The Town is strongly white collar, with approximately 36% of workers employed in management or professional positions; 31% work in sales or office occupations. Since 2000, there has been a 5% drop in sales and office occupations, a 3% drop in overall production and transportation employment, and a 4% gain in service sector employment.
- Median household income was reported at \$52,399 in 2009 and is 4% higher than the 2009 median income of \$49,977 in Erie County. The poverty rate increased by 3.4% from 2000 to 2010, which is 1.2% higher than the overall rate increase for Erie County. This is assumed to be due to the increase in single-person households with only one income and not a reflection of the declining economic prosperity, as median income is rising.
- There are many modern, well-maintained business properties in the Town, as well as areas where commercial and industrial properties are under-utilized or abandoned. Maintaining the strength of existing businesses and industries, and working with County and State agencies to revitalize deteriorated areas, are dual missions that should be pursued by the Town. Achieving these goals will help to maintain and build the Town’s economy.
- The Town is within the focus of several regional economic development initiatives. Brownfield remediation, increased efforts to enhance local waterfront access, and connectivity improvements (including enhanced bicycle, walking and public transportation options) have all benefitted the

Town. These efforts will help grow the community in a manner consistent with attracting new residents and consistent with regional economic development objectives.

- Local developers are committed to Town economic development initiatives that will address the demand for modern commercial and residential improvements. Emphasis on achieving these initiatives is important for commencing the revitalization of the waterfront, which is an important asset for economic development.
- The continued monitoring and clean-up of brownfield properties is essential. There are a number of large brownfield properties that have the potential to support new development, provide job opportunities and generate tax revenue. Capitalizing on existing shovel ready certification, and renewing sites to make them shovel ready, is necessary for facilitating business investment and new development in the waterfront and other areas of the Town.
- The Town maintains a stable base of major employers. The GM Powertrain plant has made over \$1 billion in facility improvements and has secured new product lines that will strengthen its competitive position for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the Town maintains positive relationships with other major employers which include, but are not limited to DuPont, Dunlop, FedEx Trade Networks, Praxair and United Healthcare. Many of these employers have also expressed an interest in cooperating with the Town to complete environmental initiatives that will reduce their carbon footprint and enable them to operate more sustainably.
- The east side of Town is densely built out with residential and commercial uses that must be sustained. Business district revitalization is needed in certain areas and infill development and redevelopment opportunities need to be achieved in the waterfront area and other areas to help strengthen and balance the Town's tax base.
- Much of the Town's commercial development is situated in a strip pattern along major roadways, such as Niagara Falls Boulevard, Sheridan Drive, Kenmore Avenue, Military Road, Delaware Avenue and Elmwood Avenue. The width and depth of many of the current sites make expansion and modernization difficult. Niagara Falls Boulevard will continue to be a major commercial destination supporting both the Town of Tonawanda and Amherst, with "big box" style retailers on the Amherst side of the roadway, and smaller, supporting retail and commercial uses on the Town of Tonawanda side. Sheridan Drive will remain the Town's major east/west corridor, and a commercial activity center of the Town.

- The depth of parcels in commercial zones limits the size and type of retail establishments that can be built in these areas. There are no sites that can support larger “big box” style retail development. Given adjacent land use patterns, it has proven difficult to retrofit businesses along the Town’s commercial corridors.
- Portions of Delaware Road and Delaware Avenue have potential to be developed with a greater mix of uses to create traditional neighborhood style districts. Mixed use development provides greater benefit to local residents than strip retail.
- Neighborhood commercial convenience centers are the small convenience shopping areas located within and adjacent to the residential areas of the Town. They offer small shops, restaurants and personal service establishments, such as hair salons, in locations catering to the surrounding homes. These are the most likely to have a higher proportion of pedestrian traffic, and their design should support and encourage customers to walk. Neighborhood business areas need to remain vital and maintain a sense of place. These areas should continue to support businesses that cater to local residents and create activity without creating significant traffic. They must remain pedestrian friendly.
- In general, many of the larger scale commercial districts and strip developments in the Town need aesthetic improvements, as well as improvements to make them more pedestrian friendly and attractive to Town residents and non-residents. Certain areas need to be re-envisioned as destinations to better serve patrons from outside of the Town and local residents. Efforts to make streets calmer, lend focus to other modes of transportation, and enhance the appearance of retail establishments and commercial districts are essential to improving their vitality.



- The Niagara River World (formerly Roblin Steel and Wickwire) property is a 40-acre site on River Road, west of the Grand Island Bridge. Redevelopment of the site has been identified as a priority in waterfront plans. Environmental issues have been addressed, although foundations remain below ground in some areas. The property offers a number of assets for light-industrial and mixed-use development, including an excess capacity of infrastructure, waterfront access and docking facilities, and good access to the interstate transportation system. As recommended in the LWRP, water-dependent uses are strongly encouraged along the riverfront. Any future development should maintain high design and landscaping standards.
- A vacant corner of the United Refining property located on the inland side of River Road, immediately north of the Grand Island Bridges, has the potential for redevelopment with commercial uses. This 25-acre area has high visibility and ease of access to the interstate transportation system, making

it an attractive location for highway-related commercial or retail activity, such as a truck depot or restaurant. Any new development on this site should maintain high design standards, as well as accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Funding for the Town of Tonawanda Development Corporation (TTDC) ended in 2015. The TTDC offered a comprehensive range of programs and services to promote economic development in the Town. This agency had a cooperative relationship with the Empire State Development Corporation and the Erie County Industrial Development Agency. If the Town wishes to continue similar economic development efforts, alternative resources will have to be utilized.

E. HOW WE MOVE – TRANSPORTATION

1. Highways

- The Town has a strong road and highway network in place. Available access to major arterials and the interstate highway system links the Town to other places in the region and areas beyond Western New York. However, like many other suburban communities, the current transportation system was developed primarily for the purpose of moving vehicular traffic and remains automobile-centric.
- The Town Highway Department has a regular cycle for repaving Town roads. While this addresses most needs, it presumes that no major reconstruction is needed on local roads. However, most roads are over fifty years old and have reached normal life expectancy. A capital improvements plan for more extensive reconstruction and repairs on local roads should consider all current and future engineering improvements within the right-of-way, including drive lanes, lane markings, curbing, drainage and utility infrastructure, sidewalks and the public realm (including streetscaping for landscape, lighting, and pedestrian, transit and bicycle amenities).
- The Town would like the provision for backup power supply (i.e., “generator capable”) for the State-owned traffic signals throughout the Town. This would free up police resources during power outages.
- River Road is a key development area. It connects the Town’s industrial area to the Cities of Buffalo, Tonawanda and North Tonawanda, other areas of Niagara County, and the interstate highway system. While capacity and level of service are not major concerns along River Road, it is anticipated that new and continued business development in this area will demand a broader range of transportation and access services and facilities, including “Complete streets” improvements.

- In an effort to improve highway corridors along the waterfront, as well as the gateway avenues leading to the waterfront, the Town has initiated a landscape and streetscape design project for portions of River Road, Sheridan Drive, Grand Island Boulevard and Sawyer Avenue. The Waterfront Corridors Landscape Plan is an off-shoot of the Waterfront Land Use Plan and will provide concept level designs that should serve as a starting point for public and private projects in the future. The project will function as another tool for the Planning Board to use in guiding future redevelopment in the waterfront areas.
- To support future business, industrial and residential development in the waterfront area, expanded public transportation service (east-west bus) is needed to link River Road housing and employment centers to retail, entertainment, and restaurants in the commercial districts along Military Road, Sheridan Drive, Delaware Avenue and, Elmwood Avenue, as well as residential areas where workers may reside.
- Park and ride lots are seen as beneficial within the Town. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) supports the development of additional park and ride lots, particularly near I-290 interchanges, such as near Knoche Road or Delaware Ave. NYSDOT could build the lots, provided that the Town provides lighting, operation and maintenance, and takes ownership of these areas. Park and ride lots for trails are also anticipated. The tandem lot by the South Grand Island Bridge, which is owned by the NYS Thruway Authority (NYSTA), is proposed as a favorable location. Park and ride lots would provide better connectivity within the transportation network and promote carpooling in an effort to reduce traffic congestion and automobile dependency.
- The NYSTA currently has postponed developing an implementation plan for an all-electronic tolling pilot project to install electronic tolls at three downstate locations. Similar opportunities exist in Tonawanda for electronic tolling (AET) technology to be employed at the Grand Island Bridges. AET would reduce congestion and vehicle idling, helping to improve air quality in this area.
- Transportation planning for the I-190 and I-290 corridors is under the responsibility of New York State Thruway Authority, New York State and the GBNRTC. Changes to these highways can have profound impacts on transportation patterns and quality of life in the Town of Tonawanda. Therefore, early and continued coordination with regional and state transportation planners is essential in order for the Town's interests to be represented in future projects related to these highways.
- General traffic concerns include congestion, difficulty in making left-turn lanes, and certain "problem intersections". NYSDOT is exploring the use of

What is a Complete Street?



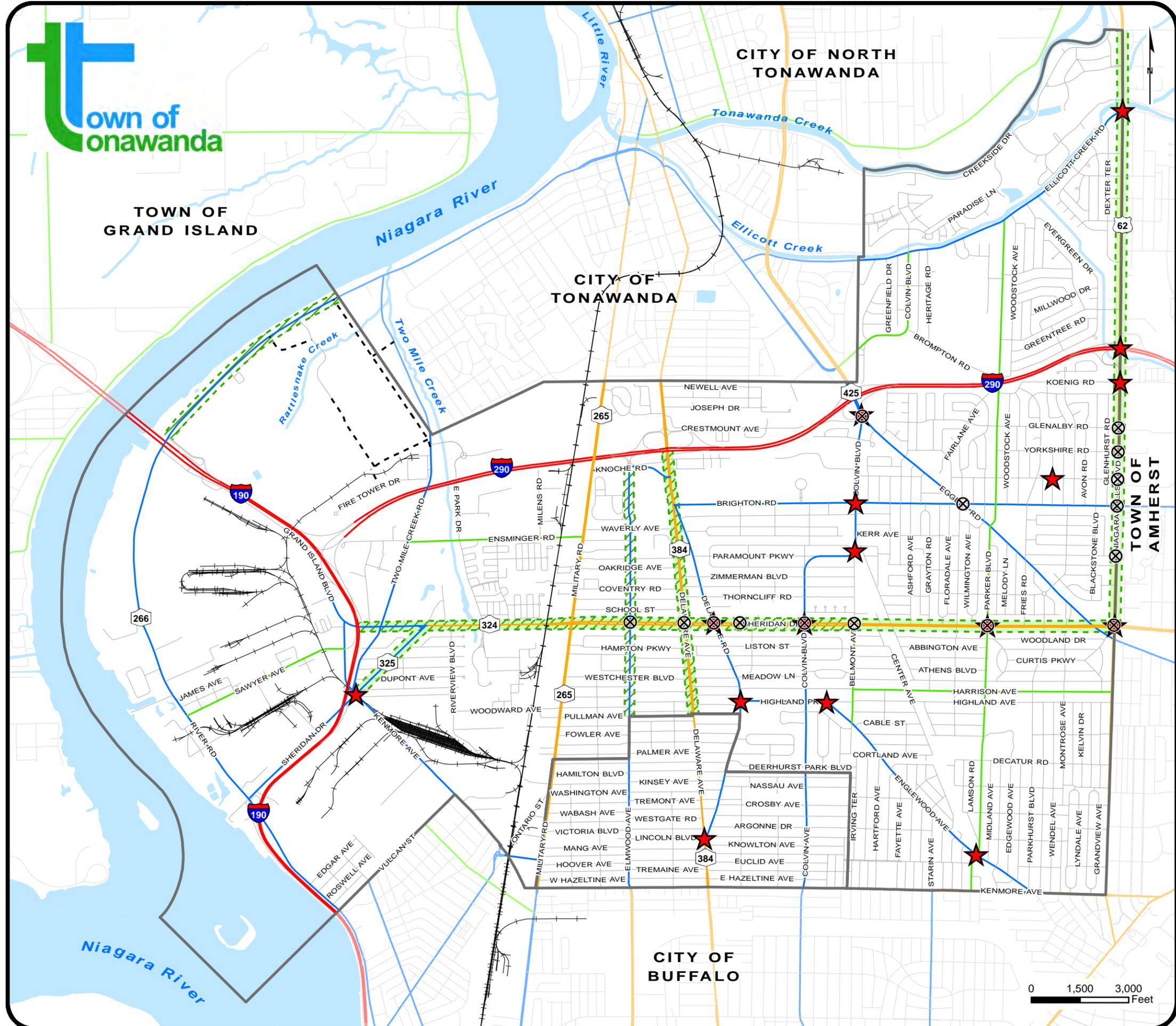
A Complete Street is safe, comfortable, and convenient for travel via automobile, foot, bicycle, and transit.

roundabouts in Western New York, and is considering the feasibility of constructing roundabouts at certain problem locations in the Town of Tonawanda to address these issues. The NYSDOT is also open to making additional safety improvements identified by the Town. Problem intersections are identified on Map 10 – Transportation and Traffic Issues.

- The NYSDOT has a “Complete Streets” policy that requires consideration of pedestrian and contextual design alternatives during its planning for transportation projects. It is important for the Town to coordinate with this agency to ensure that such improvements can be achieved to help improve roadways in the community.
- Transportation and traffic issues have an effect on the community, in terms of economic development, quality of life, and community development. There are specific areas where transportation improvements are needed to alleviate traffic congestion and unsafe conditions, or calm traffic patterns. Access management measures are an effective means to improve traffic flow and reduce turning conflicts on major commercial roadways. At present there are no formal access management requirements.
- The Town is seeking funding for a study of access management issues along Niagara Falls Boulevard jointly with the Town of Amherst and the NYSDOT. The Town is continuing to cooperate with the Town of Amherst to further study the issues of traffic congestion, access management and problem intersections along Niagara Falls Boulevard.
- There are no northbound/southbound left turn lanes at Elmwood Avenue and Sheridan Drive, which increases potential traffic conflicts. A solution to minimize conflicts at this intersection is desired to improve public safety.
- Improvements are also desired at the intersection of Brighton Road and Colvin Blvd. The traffic signals on Colvin Boulevard have been advanced to the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) that is administered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization in the region. Other intersection improvements are needed to correct safety problems at this location.
- Design for the Kenmore Avenue project is underway through an Intermunicipal/Shared Cost Agreement between Erie County and the City of Buffalo. The project was originally intended to reconstruct Kenmore Avenue between Main Street and Elmwood Avenue. However, due to a reduction in federal aid available to the region, the project scope of work was reduced. The western terminus was moved to Fairfield Avenue and the project may combine both full reconstruction in sections and mill and overlay in others. The Town has asked Erie County to put the section of Kenmore Avenue, which extends from Fairfield Avenue to Military Road, on the TIP. The Town believes full roadway construction is needed along this section of Kenmore Avenue to address traffic, functional and safety issues.



MAP 10
TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC ISSUES
 TOWN OF TONAWANDA
 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
 OCTOBER 2014



- Legend**
- ★ Problem Intersection
 - ⊗ Improved Pedestrian Crossing
 - - - Proposed New Road
 - Interstate/Expressway
 - Principal Arterial
 - Minor Arterial
 - Collector
 - Local Road
 - Railroad
 - Water
 - ▭ Municipal Boundary
 - ▨ Potential Road Diet Location
 - ▨ Access Management and Roadway Improvement Needed

NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
 Sources:
 - Town of Tonawanda

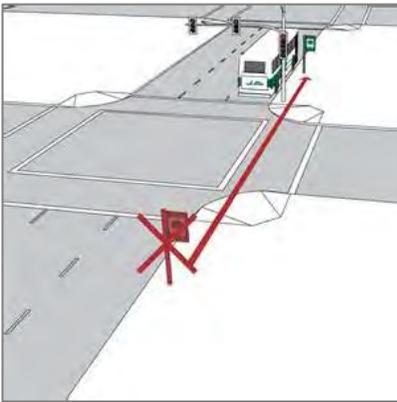
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- The GBNRTC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan includes area-wide signalization upgrades and intersection improvements.

2. Public Transportation

- Compared to most suburban communities in Western New York, Tonawanda has good access to public transit service. However, bus service is still limited, particularly east-west oriented service. There are no planned service expansions or major route changes for the bus system. Job access is a priority of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) and the agency is working on being able to provide more flexible transit options for concentrations of employment. They are also considering rerouting some routes in the waterfront industrial area to provide site access for new business development, which has been identified as a need in this area.
- The Town is looking to increase public transit ridership. The NFTA is to the existing system, and is working on improving public transit facilities/amenities in an effort to achieve this goal:



Depiction of a “Far Side” bus stop

- The NFTA is adding bike racks to all buses, which improves access to the bus routes and enhances connectivity throughout the Town and region.
 - The NFTA is implementing a pilot project along the Niagara Street corridor that uses new “next bus” technology and signal prioritization, and is looking into areas to implement this program. “Next bus” technology will assist riders by displaying the arrival time of the next bus on an electronic sign in the bus shelter. Signal prioritization will allow a sensor on a bus approaching an intersection to electronically send a signal to extend the green light, which will allow the buses to develop faster runs and increase the chance of being on schedule.
 - Considering relocating certain bus stops to the far side of the intersection to improve traffic movements.
 - Upgraded bus shelters
- The NFTA is currently conducting an alternatives analysis of transit options to enhance rapid transit service between the SUNY University at Buffalo Main Street campus and the Cross Point development in the Town of Amherst. While the alternatives analysis is not yet complete, it is understood that one of the options under consideration is bus rapid transit service along Niagara Falls Boulevard. It is also understood that none of the light rail alternatives being studied is located in the Town of Tonawanda.
 - The Tonawanda-Niagara Falls Corridor High Quality Transit Improvement project is intended to fill future public transit needs by utilizing NFTA’s existing right-of-way. While the Tonawanda Rail Trail is being designed to utilize the former rail bed, the right-of-way will also be available to

accommodate future multi-modal facilities and transit service within this former rail corridor.

3. Connectivity and / Complete Streets

- The pedestrian bridge over Sheridan Drive sees minimal traffic and is in disrepair. Recent biennial bridge inspections indicate meeting recommended construction safety standards continues to be a challenge. The pedestrian bridge is not ADA compliant. The bridge has extensive corrosion and deterioration throughout the structure and will either need to undergo significant maintenance and repairs or be demolished. If the bridge is to be demolished, an alternative pedestrian crossing or accommodations should be provided on Sheridan Drive.



Example of a HAWK traffic signal.

- The Town has requested that the NYSDOT examine the potential for width reduction that would reduce crossing lengths for pedestrians. A high-intensity activated crosswalk beacon (HAWK) type pedestrian signal and/or pedestrian refuge median are options for this location.
- Sheridan Drive is a busy, major thoroughfare and is cited by pedestrians as difficult to cross in most locations. Alternative pedestrian crossings or accommodations are desired to improve pedestrian safety. Sheridan Drive is a corridor where the need to move traffic efficiently conflicts with the need for safe access to surrounding neighborhoods.

- The Town has provided a conceptual “road diet” plan to the NYSDOT for the section of Sheridan Drive that is located between Military Road and Belmont Avenue. This would entail the conversion of the current outside westbound and eastbound travel lanes on Sheridan Drive (which is an eight-lane highway in the area) into separated bike lanes (referred to as cycle tracks). In addition to the road diet, the Town is also interested in exploring the conversion of the raised

landscape median for bio-retention that could address stormwater management issues currently experienced in this section of the roadway. The rain garden premise would ideally be integrated into the pedestrian refuge island at the crossing.



Example of a “road diet” implemented in the Village of Great Neck, NY. The road was converted from a two-lane one-way road to a two-lane two-way road with a new aesthetic, easier and safer crossing for pedestrians, and a number of traffic calming measures. Source: NYSDOT Complete Streets Report, 2014

- The bike and pedestrian trail network is an important asset. Eliminating gaps in the off-road and multi-use trail networks and connecting recreational assets is a priority for the Town. The recently completed Sherwood-Two Mile Creek Greenway Trail project and the Tonawanda Rail Trail project (currently underway) address these objectives. The Town proposed Sheridan Drive road diet project would link the Tonawanda Rail Trail to the new Sherwood Greenway/Two Mile Creek Greenway. The network of existing and proposed multiuse trails is depicted on Map 6.
- Bikeways are a priority of the GBNRTC and are becoming expected by the public. The GBNRTC is promoting the establishment of a fully connected shoreline corridor from the Village of Youngstown to the Town of Brant. The Shoreline Trail in Tonawanda is part of this trail system, and provides local residents with excellent access to the entire Lake Erie-Niagara River- Erie Canal shoreline. The Shoreline Trail is part of the larger Great Lakes Seaway Trail system.
- The Riverwalk, a section of the Shoreline Trail through the Town of Tonawanda, is a valuable waterfront asset that provides recreation and aesthetic benefits. While this portion of the Shoreline Trail is complete, it is older and nearing time for a resurfacing. It would also benefit from additional amenities (e.g. – shelters, water, restrooms, etc.) in order to obtain the “world class” objective, as desired by the Niagara River Greenway Commission. Recommendations for this trail are included in the Waterfront Corridor Landscape Plan.
- The on-road portion of the Erie Canalway Trail on Creekside Drive creates a significant gap in the off-road trail system.
- Delaware Avenue was recently restriped in the Village of Kenmore. The Town desires to have Delaware Avenue and Sheridan Drive reviewed for a “Complete Streets” approach for a more pedestrian friendly facility. The NYSDOT repaves State roads periodically; therefore, the Town should coordinate these improvements with the State to properly schedule necessary improvements. NYSDOT may regulate speed and construct narrower lanes to accommodate amenities, i.e., bike lanes, sidewalks, etc.
- The Town has an excellent sidewalk system. Most of the Town has sidewalks, making it easier to walk to nearby services or destinations. However, in some areas existing sidewalks are in disrepair and/or should be upgraded to be compliant with the requirements of the American Disabilities Act (ADA). The Town desires a better funding mechanism and continuity in capital project planning for sidewalks. The Town has a sidewalk program for replacing sidewalks, if damage is related to Town-owned trees of sewer or waterline repairs. The Code does not address maintenance of existing ramps or tree pruning over sidewalks, nor does it provide adequate standards for sidewalk replacement.

- There are a few areas in Town where “Florida sidewalks” are a problem. In these areas, there is no tree lawn (vegetated strip) between the walk and the curb. They are very hard to keep clear of snow, and can be a safety hazard. Additionally, sidewalks of this type invite vehicular conflict and are used for parking (lack of visual separation between sidewalk and travel lane).
- New Federally funded transportation projects must include ADA Compliant pedestrian facilities. The Town can look back at planned and designed projects to ensure this standard is met.
- Town is heavily dependent on automobiles for access to goods and services. While residents can walk to some recreational facilities and services in nearby commercial nodes, most residents cannot walk to work. Tonawanda residents have expressed strong desire for better streets, connectivity, and walkability. There is a need for improved non-automotive connections and access between residential neighborhoods and services/amenities.
- As Town residents become more health conscious, and as bicycle use is increasing in the Town (due in part to the continued development of off-road multi-use trails and bike routes), there is a need for supporting bicycle accommodations. As the Town improves and increases the availability of trails and other bicycling facilities, there is a coincident need for bicycle-friendly amenities such as bike racks and lockers, park-and-bike lots and trail head facilities. The provision of such amenities would promote bicycling as a commuting option, as a greater recreational past time, and would enhance conditions for current bicyclists. Capital and maintenance projects on streets need to consider these uses.
- The GBNRTC has designated bicycle routes throughout the region, including several in the Town of Tonawanda. All of the designated routes in Tonawanda are located on-road, which means that bicyclists must share the roadway with cars and trucks. Many of these routes could be improved, through better markings that more clearly distinguish the bicycle lane from the automobile lanes.
- The Town will improve its pedestrian accommodations, aesthetic image, and support economic development through streetscape projects along major corridors, enhanced landscaping and design standards, and targeted projects designed to increase the attractiveness of the Town. Such projects would include targeted upgrades of commercial centers through façade programs, creation of gateways and/or pocket parks, public artwork and other efforts to improve appearances.

- Certain pedestrian improvements will increase accessibility. Crosswalks are needed across busy streets, particularly where there is a great deal of pedestrian activity. Priority areas for crosswalks are areas where there are major destinations or activity centers, such as popular retail centers, schools, parks, the YMCA or apartment buildings.
- Improved pedestrian accommodations should be incorporated into site design and implemented through review of site plans for proposed commercial development. Site plans should show connectivity through non-vehicular means. There should be clear passageways for pedestrians through parking lots. Features such as benches, bus stops, sidewalks, greenspace and landscaping can help improve the aesthetics of a roadway corridor, enhancing pedestrian access and promoting safety.

F. SERVICES WE NEED TO LIVE, WORK, PLAY



The Town provides a number of services, facilities and activities to residents that are important to everyday life. These include community facilities, such as parks and playgrounds, senior services, public safety and emergency services, solid waste collection and recycling, street lighting, highway repair and snow removal services, and public water and sewer infrastructure. The police and emergency services are rated high by Town residents. The quality of the Town's public services is one of the reasons why people move to, and remain in, the community. However, a number of Town facilities are in need of repair or improvement, and this comes at an increasing cost. The Town is facing decisions regarding the continued provision of certain amenities and services, and there is a growing need for an evaluation of expenditures required to provide these services.

The analysis of existing conditions with respect to public services offers the following.

1. Community Facilities

- There are over 700 acres of parkland in the Town of which 368 acres are in golf courses. Town parks, as well as the Erie County parks (Ellicott Creek and Isle View), are quality amenities that receive heavy use by Town residents and others.
- The waterfront offers opportunities for additional recreational amenities, particularly on the Cherry Farm Park property (a remediated brownfield) that will offer shoreline access. It is important to continue to provide a comprehensive system of amenities that benefit Town residents. The

vacant lands along the Niagara River, north of the Grand Island Bridges, are also suitable for development of a new waterfront park and public access to the shoreline.

- The Town provides an array of recreational amenities, including an aquatic and fitness center and three outdoor pool complexes, which are sustained through user fees and tax revenues; however, not all of these services and facilities are financially self-sufficient in terms of operating costs or costs for necessary capital improvements.
- The Town operates two 18-hole golf courses, a driving range, and an indoor golf facility. Costs and benefits must be assessed to ensure that these facilities are paying for themselves. An adjustment in user fees may be required to address inequities in covering operating costs.
- The Town operates a boat launch facility and a park that are adjacent to either side of the (domestic) water treatment plant on Aqua Lane at the end of Sheridan Drive. The boat launch (also known as the small boat harbor) includes two launch lanes, a small craft launch, restrooms and a large parking area. The park includes a large area of lawn and trees that offer opportunities for passive recreation, waterfront access and two small picnic shelters.
- As identified in the LWRP and Waterfront Land Use Plan, the boat launch, park and water plant are valuable resources and represent the only town-owned waterfront on the Niagara River.
- Attendance/usage data must be evaluated to determine if the Town can sustain the provision of recreational amenities and services in light of the costs associated with required maintenance and upgrades. This is particularly important for the outdoor facilities, which are only used for the short summer season.
- The Town has two covered ice rinks, at Lincoln Park and Brighton Park, respectively. The rinks are aging and maintenance costs are becoming prohibitive. The rinks are small, have no shower facilities and one of the rink's chillers is anticipated to be replaced. Necessary refurbishment costs are expensive. Possible projects include replacing the rink at Lincoln Park with a twin-rink facility and reconstructing the rink at Brighton Park. While there is public support within the Town for improved hockey facilities, the continued operation and maintenance of the existing facilities may not be cost effective.
- At the policy level it needs to be determined if recreation fees are intended to cover operating costs, and by what means capital improvement costs should be funded. There is also a need to recognize and adjust to trends in

recreation, such as the increases in travel sports that have differing needs (existing Town facilities may not be suitable for such use). For instance, travel sports has effected little league or “house” activities in the Town. The Town needs to have facilities and flexibility to accommodate the current recreation needs.

- The Town provides many services to seniors. There are classrooms and community rooms available at the Senior Center, high quality activities and classes, transportation services, and nutrition programs. The way the facility is used has changed in recent years -- seniors used to come and stay for the day and now they typically join a class or activity and only stay for a couple of hours at a time.
- The Sheridan Parkside Community Center offers a number of services to the community. It is host to Meals-on-Wheels and the after-school program. Although it is in need of upgrades, this building has the potential for expanded use.
- The Ken-Ton School District has announced the need to close additional school buildings, which raises the question of the best options for their reuse and/or redevelopment (how would they best serve the surrounding community and what is needed the most).
- As the Town budget continues to be constrained by the State-mandated 2% tax cap, budgeting decisions will become more difficult. Therefore, there is a need to identify options to increase revenues or establish more creative ways to operate certain facilities. Public/private partnerships are one possibility.
- Consideration should be given to a long-term plan for further consolidation of Town services and more centralized facilities to house a number of departments and services. Having public services, such as a senior center, library, parks and recreation department, police department and courts, etc. in one place would provide significant benefit. This is a sustainable approach that could lead to the elimination of more than one functionally obsolete structure in the Town and avoid significant investments for upgrade and maintenance. However, any evaluation of this nature should also consider the potential impacts of separating Town services from the Village of Kenmore, which has traditionally functioned as the Town center. The Town could pursue grant opportunities to fund a study of this nature to help improve the Town’s delivery of services. As a part of this evaluation, consideration needs to be given to sharing services and facilities with the Village, and the potential impact of separating Town services from the Village.



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2. Infrastructure and Utilities

- The town has a good water supply system with no major capacity issues within the distribution system. The treatment and distribution system is capable of meeting the existing needs of Town residents, and has capacity to accommodate future development. A 2007 study of the Town's water treatment and distribution system identified the need for high priority rehabilitation and replacement of above and below ground assets, and fire flow improvements within the system. The Town has been undertaking maintenance and repair projects yearly to address the findings of this study.
- In addition the system wide improvements required the water supply infrastructure, the Town is evaluating the costs required to repair and/or replace the water treatment plant, which is located in parkland. This plant was constructed in 1956 and is in need of repair. Based on the results of this study, the Town needs to make a determination about the long term viability of continuing to operate this plant or the options of:
 - Decommissioning the plant and purchasing water from the Erie County Water Authority or City of Buffalo, or
 - Selling the plant to another entity to operate.
- The Town operates a wastewater treatment plant and supporting infrastructure providing collection and treatment for the Town, Village of Kenmore and City of Tonawanda. The plant is almost 40 years old and in need of repair and upgrade. The Town is undertaking improvements to address current needs.
- The wastewater treatment plant is capable of treating up to 75 million gallons of wastewater per day (MGD). As it currently handles approximately 20 MGD, it has sufficient capacity to accommodate new development. However, during significant rainfall events SSOs continue to be an issue and the Town is undertaking efforts to address the problems as part of a Long Term Control Plan with the NYSDEC. The Town has undertaken the first 3 of 4 phases of work. Construction costs of the complete project are estimated at \$80 million.
- The Town operates a separate stormwater sewer system, the operation of which is subject to Phase II Stormwater regulations in conformance with a stormwater management plan prepared for the community. The storm sewer system was installed in the 1940's and 1950's and is reportedly in relatively good condition and has sufficient capacity. There are no plans to increase the system or perform major work on the system in the near future. Stormwater and other infrastructure regulations are affecting the Town's ability to maintain existing infrastructure systems.

- Many houses in the Town have an underdrain or bubbler systems to drain stormwater from residential properties to curb underdrains, which were not originally designed to handle the additional residential stormwater. A common issue is that curb tile collects debris and becomes clogged, which results in bubblers overflowing into the street. The Town Water Resources Department maintains the storm sewer collection system, and the Town Highway Department maintains the catch basins and receivers. As a result of this arrangement, it is not clear which department has the responsibility of dealing with the recurring overflow issue. It has been discussed that when curbs are replaced in the Town, the respective underdrains should also be replaced. This should also be considered when performing utility work, such as sanitary or storm sewer replacement. Full road reconstruction also provides the opportunity to perform additional maintenance and repair items (such as replacement of underdrains and bubbler systems) compared to mill and pave work.
- A localized portion of Sheridan Drive and an area of Niagara Falls Boulevard, near Brighton Road, are prone to flooding in heavy rainfall events. The Town indicates that the existing system that is in place along the roadway is adequate to remove stormwater from the road during these strong rain events, and that the occasional flooding is not a deterrent to future development in the Town. Another problem area is the ditch located north of Evergreen Drive that discharges to Ellicott Creek. The ditch is also problematic and subject to flooding during heavy rainfall events, and the Town would like to have the ability to monitor the depth and flow in the ditch in an effort to remedy the problem.
- The Town of Tonawanda provides municipal solid waste collection services to residents, including recyclable materials and bulk waste. Curbside pick up includes automotive batteries, appliances, yard waste and waste oil, anti-freeze and paint (that is properly sealed and labeled). Tires may be brought to the Highway Department. The Town provides information about these services on its website. The Town needs to continually evaluate the cost and benefits of operating municipal collection and disposal services.
- Although the national average is 25%, the curbside recycling rate in the Town is estimated to be approximately 12% (ratio of recycled material to trash). In 2014, the Erie County average is 12%. There are monetary incentives from reduced tipping fees and recycled material market revenues to increasing the recycling rate and subsequently reducing the volume of the waste stream.
- Other utility services in the Town include electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications. All of these services are provided by private companies or suppliers and there is adequate capacity to accommodate current and future development.

Trees are important to community character, quality of life and property values. Many trees in the Town are of a similar age and species, and there is a risk of losing significant proportion of the tree stock over a relatively short time frame if they become plagued by disease or pests. Tree maintenance and tree replacement policies are required to ensure that trees along public roadways and in local parks are maintained and replaced annually. Additionally, Town crews do well with the maintenance of gardens in roadway medians. This quality of service should be maintained.

G. PUBLIC POLICIES AND COOPERATION

Communities in the Erie-Niagara region are increasingly recognizing the importance and benefits of inter-municipal and regional cooperation. The Town of Tonawanda influences and is influenced by the Village of Kenmore, the adjoining Town of Amherst and Cities of Buffalo and Tonawanda, the school districts and Erie County. These interrelationships present certain limitations, as well as opportunities for improved planning and cooperation. The following should be taken into account as the Town plans for its future.

- In light of more constrained resources and jurisdictional issues, there is a need for better cooperation and coordination with County and State agencies to address issues within the Town that are related to planning, infrastructure and economic development. Better coordination can help to bring about better project results from roadway or infrastructure improvements. Working more closely with State and County agencies, the Town can achieve greater success with waterfront and other community redevelopment projects, as well.
- Strengthening the relationship with the school districts is another priority. Demographic changes and trends in the Town impact the district. The quality of the district, in turn, impacts home values and residential real estate decisions in the community. Continued and improved cooperation and coordination between the Town and the school districts can provide a better understanding of trends and changes and help to create a more proactive decision making environment.
- The Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan provides findings and recommendations that can be applied in order to achieve sustainable development in the Town of Tonawanda.
- Niagara Falls Boulevard is one of the major commercial centers in the Buffalo metropolitan area, anchored by the Boulevard Mall in the Town of Amherst, at Niagara Falls Boulevard and Brighton Road/Maple Road. On the Tonawanda side, older plazas tend to be smaller in scale, configured in traditional strips. Newer developments along Niagara Falls Boulevard in Tonawanda are more likely to be larger, stand-alone commercial uses.

Cooperative transportation planning efforts with the Town of Amherst for Niagara Falls Boulevard improvements will improve the attractiveness and functionality of this corridor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents a series of specific recommendations designed to guide the Town in achieving its stated vision for the future. The recommendations build upon the findings and issues. Various issues and recommendations are graphically shown on the plan maps. Maps 6 and 10 depict those related to traffic, transportation and connectivity. Map 12 depicts a series of key project recommendations.

A. OUR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

1. Demographics and Community

- Town Officials, as well as Community Development representatives and Town Department Heads, should keep abreast of demographic changes, including population data and projections and household composition, to gauge changing need and demands for housing and community facilities and services. The demographic implications predicted for the years 2010 forward differ significantly from the implications predicted by the US Census pre-2010. Local planning and policy development initiatives should respond accordingly.
- The Youth, Parks and Recreation Department and Senior Services Department should thoroughly review the demographic changes forecasted for the Town of Tonawanda. A reduction in residents under age 18 and over age 65, accompanied by a rise in the middle aged population, should be considered as future programs are developed. Further, a continuing decline in the median housing size (and increase in single person households) should also be considered as future programs are developed.

2. Land Use and Zoning

- Adopt the proposed (2014) commercial corridor zoning amendments for Kenmore Avenue, Elmwood Avenue, Englewood Avenue, and Military Road that addressed split zoned parcels, schedules of use and site design standards, and created Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) and C-2 classifications.
- Based on the results of the most recent review of the Zoning Law, the Town should consider a comprehensive review of the entire zoning code. This effort should acknowledge all the recommendations in the 2005



MAP 12 PROJECTS

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2014
OCTOBER 2014

Legend

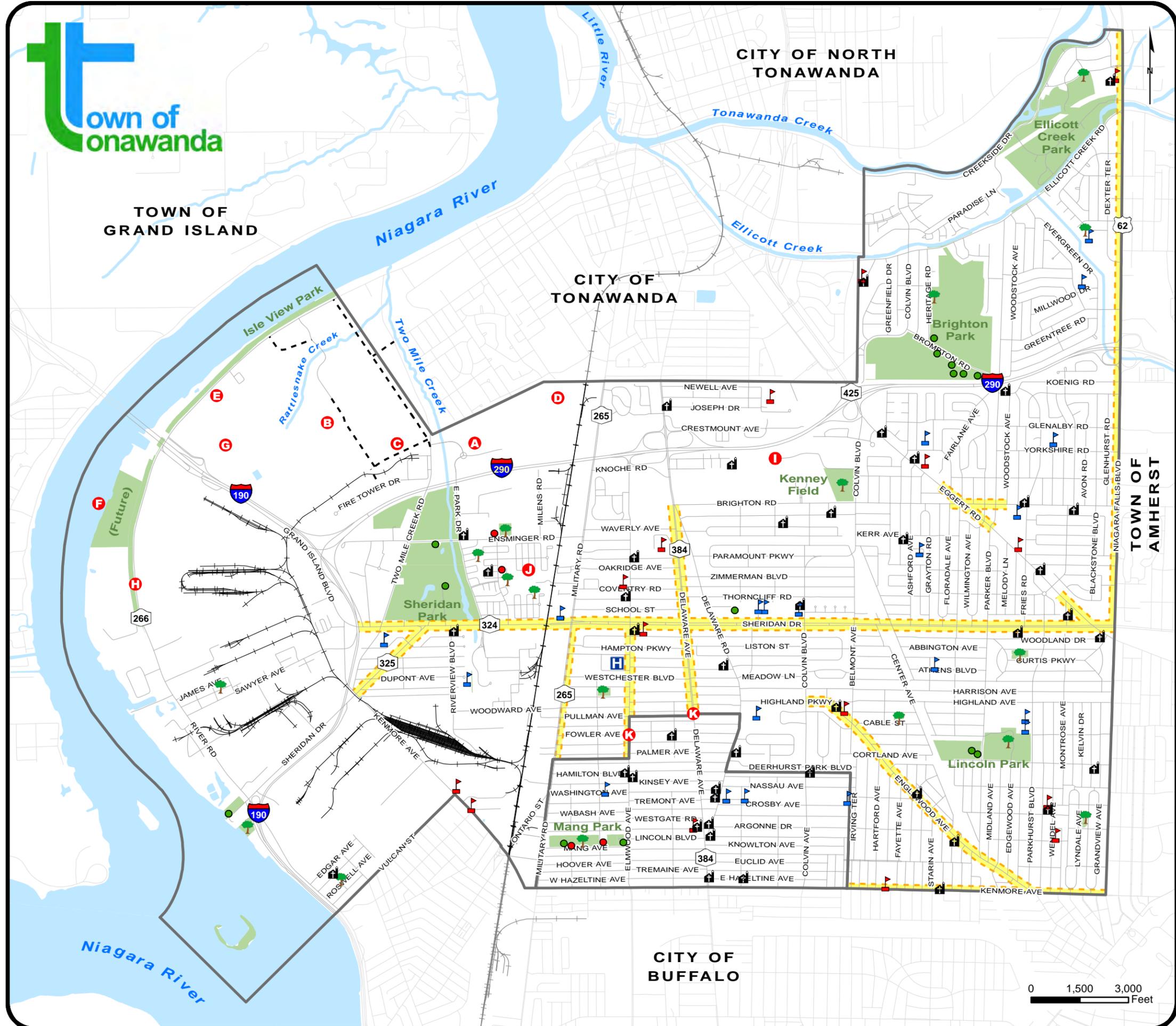
- Water
- Proposed New Road
- Road
- Railroad
- Municipal Boundary
- Park
- Commercial Corridor
- Town Facility:**
 - Community Facility
 - Recreation Facility
 - Hospital
 - Playground
 - Religious
 - School (Private)
 - School (Public)

- Recommendations:**
- A** Business/Industrial Park at North Youngmann Commerce Center
 - B** Build-out of New Office/Light Industrial Park at Riverview Solar Technology Park
 - C** Continue Riverwalk Parkway to connect to Two Mile Creek Road
 - D** Re-use of the Town Landfill for a recreational use
 - E** Niagara River Greenway: Continued improvements to the Riverwalk, River Road Corridor, and other trails in the waterfront area
 - F** Cherry Farm Park & River Front Park
 - G** Mixed use development near Grand Island Bridges
 - H** Small business redevelopment in River Road Corridor between Grand Island Boulevard and Sheridan Drive
 - I** Continue build-out of Colvin Woods
 - J** Sheridan Parkside Village
 - K** Support Village shopping district - use appropriate zoning and design standards for a "Main Street" setting
- Commercial Corridor: Access management standards, corridor zoning, and other techniques to help reduce congestion and improve appearances along commercial corridors

NOTES AND/OR SOURCES:

Project No. 2655.1
Sources:
- Town of Tonawanda

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- Comprehensive Plan, as well as those contained in this Comprehensive Plan Update, to ensure that the Law is consistent with current land use and zoning practice. Consideration should be given to amending the Zoning to address the following:
 - Zoning district boundaries along the commercial corridors (primarily Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard) should be amended to eliminate split zoned parcels.
 - A new Community Facilities zoning district should be created to encompass all lands currently designated Schools-Park-Cemetery. All lands that are developed with or as public facilities, parks, cemeteries and schools should be rezoned under this new classification. Additionally, provisions should be included that address the potential redevelopment of school properties that are closed to ensure the preservation of open space (school yards), particularly in areas of the Town where this is lacking.
 - The General Industrial (GI) District should be amended to include specific lists of Permitted Uses and uses requiring Special Use Permits.
 - There is a need to develop appropriate definitions for “junkyard” and “recycling operations” to eliminate confusion between these uses and update the regulations as such.
 - Setbacks should be established for minimum distance between parking lots and public rights-of-way to create a green buffer or other physical separation, whether with vegetation or special pavement, to break up these paved surfaces and improve public safety.
 - The Town should conduct a comprehensive review and update of Zoning Law Article XXII – Signs, in order to ensure adequate protection and consistency between existing sections, as well as to reflect the changing regulatory trends for signage.
 - A comprehensive review should be done of all the landscape standards to ensure there is consistency in terms of terminology, approach and design standards to ensure achievement of desired improvements. To best address inconsistencies and conflicts, all landscaping standards should be organized in a stand-alone subsection of the Zoning Law with district specific provisions included.

- Parking requirements in the Zoning Law should be reviewed and updated to be more flexible with less focus on the number spaces, and more focus on pedestrian accommodations, aesthetics, landscaping and stormwater management within parking areas and facilities. Amend code to make uniform parking space size to accommodate current vehicle size preferences.
 - At present, design standards are scattered throughout the Zoning Law that dictate how projects can be designed in various zoning districts. The Town should develop comprehensive design standards that would organize the various design requirements in one place to be applied town-wide. Specific district-based provisions would be included. The standards would include a narrative description of the desired features and layout for a site, as well as graphic illustrations. Many of the criteria contained in the existing Zoning Law are still relevant and could be expanded upon in the new zoning section. The combination of narrative and visual representations would provide a clearer direction for both the Town and the applicant.
 - The definition and districting for automotive uses in the Zoning Law (repair shops, gas stations, detail and dealers) should be reviewed to ensure they are only allowed with a special use permit in the appropriate districts.
 - There is a need to clarify the Zoning Law as it speaks to roadway setbacks and make it easier to understand. The addition of improved graphic illustrations is recommended to either clarify or replace existing Plates “D” through “L”, which are appended to the Law.
 - Each zoning classification needs the inclusion of a purpose and intent narrative.
- The Town shares boundaries with the Village of Kenmore, the Town of Amherst, the City of Buffalo, the City of Tonawanda, the City of North Tonawanda and Town of Grand Island (at Niagara River). In areas adjacent to the municipalities, especially the Village of Kenmore where the boundary appears “seamless”– village land use patterns should be continued. The zoning that extends along these municipal boundaries should be coordinated with the adjoining communities to correlate zoning classifications, bulk standards, design requirements and other regulations guiding development.

- A Local Law should be adopted to address issues arising when a business closes that would:
 - require driveways to be effectively blocked
 - require outdated signage to be removed
 - require property owner to maintain property after business is closed or vacated
 - require maintenance of on-site stormwater management facilities
 - institute post demolition requirements

- Investigate a revolving loan fund for commercial property owners to invest in for streetscape and façade improvements. The Town should explore the possibility of streetscape improvements in priority locations along commercial corridors. Features could include street trees and landscaping; planted medians; better signage; more creative pavement treatments, including textures to set off crosswalks and pedestrian walkways; improved lighting, etc.

- The Town should continue to make investments in improved streetscaping that help make the roadways more attractive and walkable. Priorities include areas adjacent to the Village, Sheridan Drive, Elmwood Avenue, and Kenmore Avenue.

- The Town should work closely with the State and County to promote the reuse of former industrial sites in the westerns portion of the Town to bring about new investment and move beyond the negative perceptions of its industrial heritage.

- The 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan identifies the need for redevelopment of waterfront industrial areas to improve the aesthetics of the area and create an improved sense of place and positive community identify. Adherence to the design guidelines provided in the Waterfront Plan can help to achieve this objective. It is further recommended that these design guidelines be included as graphic-based design standards in a future Zoning Law update.

- The 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan identifies ten different zoning districts in the waterfront area. This does not provide for consistent land use planning to achieve the objectives for this area. Therefore, new zoning district or revised zoning district boundaries should be developed that more accurately reflect the goals and objectives for the waterfront.

- To provide a cohesive development pattern for the waterfront and to implement the objectives of the 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan, LWRP and BOA Pre-Nomination Study, all lands within the waterfront priority area should be rezoned to a single category that allows both mixed use

waterfront uses as well as some light-industrial uses where appropriate. In addition, the design standards currently required in the existing River Road zoning overlay district should be incorporated into this zoning district.

- The design standards contained within the existing River Road zoning overlay district should be incorporated into the new Waterfront Mixed Use zoning classification.
- Over the long term, review, update and amend the LWRP and Waterfront Land Use Plan, as needed, based on significant changes in current conditions and key projects, such as emerging opportunities for sustainable development.
- The Town Building and Engineering Departments should monitor and report to the Town Board and Planning Board on significant trends and changes in land use, such as new uses or conditions of existing uses and infrastructure, in an effort to keep the Town Code up to date.

B. HOW WE LIVE – NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

- Reevaluate the Town’s zoning structure to consider greater opportunities for mixed uses and non-residential uses in residential districts. Consider a hybrid form-based code.
- Collaborate with owners of key neighborhood assets (schools, churches, institutions, etc.) in order to prepare for their potential future closure or re-use to ensure the viability of neighborhoods. These features along with other community features such as schools and churches help build neighborhood identity and stability. If there are proposals to close and/or eliminate any of these features, the impact of closure on the surrounding neighborhood should be fully considered.
- Consider the opinions of local residential realtors as new/infill housing decisions are considered throughout the Town: ranch style homes are and have been in perpetually high demand. Further, “move-up” homes with a minimum of four bedrooms are also cited as a high demand commodity.
- Promote access and overall walkability to neighborhood shopping areas. Creative site layouts, well lit and attractive walkways along the side property line, or alternative “back door” access points are possible solutions to better tie businesses to the neighborhoods. Neighborhood shopping enhances quality of life and is an important factor in home purchase decisions.

- Plan for overall neighborhood walkability with special focus on safe access to key neighborhood focal points. Sidewalks should be maintained and in good condition. The Town should develop crosswalks at key locations and continue to plant street trees to provide shade for pedestrian character.
- Actively address “problem properties” through land banking and/or strict adherence to the property maintenance regulations and State Building Code. Problem properties can create issues that extend to adjacent areas and negatively impact quality of life, market values and occupancy levels. The Town should work with landlords of problem properties to encourage better maintenance, and use stricter enforcement efforts where needed.
- Encourage private reinvestment in neighborhoods Town-wide. The Town should make efforts to notify homeowners of Town programs that are available in eligible areas. The Town should also ensure that the permitting process for home improvements is efficient and encourages private investment in the housing stock.
- The Town should continue to implement recommendations of the Sheridan Parkside Village Courts Redevelopment Plan and the Old Town Neighborhood Plan to revitalize these areas.
- Continue targeted neighborhood housing and public facilities investment through the Town’s Community Development department. The redevelopment of low and moderate income neighborhoods should continue to be a focal point of Town efforts.
- Encourage the continued good work of neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch groups. The Town should promote the expansion of these agencies and other volunteer activities that enhance the quality of life in these neighborhoods. These groups can provide an effective conduit between residents and Town officials, sponsor beautification projects, neighborhood clean-ups and maintenance. They can also help improve a sense of community through sponsoring social events and activities.
- Promote the dissemination of “welcome” information about the Town, which is currently found on the Town’s website and provides knowledge about Town services and policies (recreational programs, aquatic and fitness center, garbage collection, sidewalk maintenance, taxes etc.), committees, meeting schedules, neighborhood watch information, schools, etc. This information is useful to new and existing residents.

C. STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT

- The Town should encourage the sustainability of existing and new businesses to improve operations and reduce costs through the use of

alternative energy (solar, etc.); the conservation of resources; and the reduction of environmental impacts.

- The Town should complete the work plan for the BOA Step Two Nomination Study and coordinate with the NYSDOS to fund and contract for the Nomination Study.
- The boundaries of the existing BOA should be examined and, where necessary, expanded to include additional sites located south of James Avenue, as recommended in the Waterfront Land Use Plan (2014).
- The Town should continue to encourage the regulatory agencies to facilitate the completion of corrective actions and eventual clean up of Class 2 (active) hazardous waste sites.
- The Town should work with private owners, responsible parties and regulatory agencies to investigate and remediate privately-owned properties where new spills and contamination issues are found.
- The Town should undertake a study of landfills in the community, looking at ownership, current use, tax status, environmental issues and the potential for future reuse and ownership.
- The Town should continue to coordinate with State and Federal officials and agencies on air, soil and water quality issues throughout the community.
- Utilize the Environmental Commission to promote public education programs to teach the public about the importance of preventing water pollution to protect and improve the quality of Town surface waters and creeks.
- The Town should continue to coordinate with FEMA on revisions to proposed floodplain boundaries.
- Update Chapter 92 of the Town Code (Flood Damage Prevention Law) when FEMA's updated Flood Insurance Rate Maps become effective (in process).
- As a part of site plan review, the Planning Board should review development projects in an effort to optimize the preservation of open space through effective site design.
- Where appropriate, work to achieve the goals and objectives of the Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan, as administered by NYSERDA.
- Prepare an inventory of existing wetlands in areas targeted for priority redevelopment, noting which fall under State or federal regulatory jurisdiction and which are not.

- Work with developers and property owners early in the site development process to incorporate wetlands into project design to first avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands, and the need for mitigation.
- The Town of Tonawanda Environmental Conservation Commission should review its programs to ensure that it effectively educates and engages the public on environmental issues.

D. OUR WORKFORCE, BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC BASE

- Continue to implement the recommendations from the Town's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) and 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan. General recommendations include:
 - Streetscape improvements along River Road and higher design standards for new development.
 - Transitioning uses from heavy industrial at the southern portion of the waterfront to increasingly less intensive uses toward the north.
 - Redevelopment of specific sites in accordance with the land uses identified in the updated Waterfront Plan.
 - Passive recreational activities and support services on sites with direct waterfront access.
 - Development of Cherry Farm Park and designing structures in the park that could be sponsored and developed privately or through other forms of public/private partnership.
 - Mixed use development in the vicinity of the Grand Island Bridges, including the potential for a riverfront park and public access.
 - Redevelopment of the vacant corner United Refining property located at the intersection of River Road and the I-190, near the Grand Island Bridge
 - Small business redevelopment south of the Grand Island Bridges, including mixed use redevelopment of the property owned by Niagara River World and potential small-scale businesses along James Avenue, including tool and die manufacturers and repair services.

- Continue participation in the One Region Forward initiative sponsored by the UB Regional Institute to ensure that Tonawanda is well represented as decisions are made on future planning and funding opportunities.
- Maintain a positive relationship with the NFTA to ensure that the location transit facilities serve Tonawanda's changing working population.
- The Town should coordinate with the NFTA and private developers to ensure that new bus stops are located at appropriate locations to service shoppers, commuters and local workers.
- The Town should work with the NFTA to facilitate the installation of new bus shelters that incorporate "Next bus" technologies along transit routes in the community.
- Work with NFTA to address needs for commuter bicycle storage at strategic locations.
- Implement recreational improvements to enhance public access and waterfront development opportunities. Potential projects include Cherry Farm Park (developed privately or via a public/private partnership) and the waterfront park near the foot of the Grand Island Bridge.
- Support improvements and continued upgrades to Isle View Park, which is a County-owned recreational facility.
- The area along the waterfront located between Cherry Farm Park and north to Isle View Park should be prioritized for recreational improvements and waterfront access.
- Extend Riverwalk Parkway through the Riverview Solar Technology Park to connect with Two-Mile Creek Road. This roadway should also be continued through the North Youngmann Commerce Center, thereby connecting the two business parks, continuing out to Military Road, to the east. Ultimately, this road should be extended further to connect these areas with the Spaulding Fibre site in the City of Tonawanda.
- Continue positive relationship with the developers of the Riverview Solar Technology Park and Colvin Woods Business Park, to ensure full build out.
- The Town should continue its efforts to build out the North Youngmann Commerce Center.

- Implement development of new public access road in the Sawyer Avenue/James Avenue area to improve industrial access through vacant lands and facilitate development for light industrial uses.
- The Town should consider commissioning a study to catalog distressed, abandoned and functionally obsolete properties and assess their long-term viability and reuse potential for future marketing and redevelopment purposes.
- Focus on redevelopment, infill and/or stabilization of functionally obsolete and underutilized lands located in the area between Military Road and River Road.
- As neighborhood schools close due to demographic shifts, the Town should evaluate options for the reuse of each school property on a case by case basis in order to determine how they would they best serve the surrounding community.
- Promote retention and enhancement of neighborhood commercial convenience centers by adopting and implementing recently developed rezoning and design standard initiatives.
- Tonawanda is fortunate to have existing neighborhood commercial nodes and small business districts available to many residents. For example, these areas include the Eggert-Colvin Plaza, the Brighton-Eggert area, the area in the vicinity of Kenmore Avenue and Englewood Avenue, and the Highland-Englewood-Colvin area. The Town should ensure that these neighborhood business districts stay vital through the following means:
 - Encouraging façade improvements through an appropriate degree of design guidelines
 - Landscaping and/or streetscaping improvements
 - Private investment in neighborhood businesses through loan programs, supplemented with targeted investment of community development dollars, where necessary;
 - Where necessary adequate separation and/or buffers between commercial and adjacent residential uses;
 - Neighborhood friendly improvements, such as clear walkways through parking lots, landscaping and pedestrian-scale lighting to enhance linkages between businesses and adjacent residential neighborhoods; and

- Retention of small-scale businesses.
- Larger scale community shopping areas, located along major roadways, include areas such as Sheridan-Eggert Plaza and adjacent plazas, the Sheridan Drive and Delaware Avenue area, Niagara Falls Boulevard and Kenmore Avenue. These larger scale shopping centers offer a wider range of services and a greater number of stores on larger footprints. To ensure these shopping areas remain vital and continue to function as destinations, the following is recommended:
 - Assistance with façade improvements;
 - Landscaping and/or streetscaping improvements including landscaping along edges and within parking areas;
 - Adequate parking and pedestrian access from public highways to building entrances;
 - Implementation of general design standards to encourage attractive development and discourage generic architecture, particularly in areas adjacent to the Village;
 - Adequate buffers between commercial and adjacent residential uses;
 - Bus stop improvements and additional bus stops; and
 - Implementation of “Complete Streets” techniques, such as access management standards and other measures to help congestion improve public safety and enhance appearances along commercial strips.
- Investigate the tax structure (including the gap between homestead and non-homestead tax rates), which affects the sustainability of existing businesses and the potential for economic development, to ensure the Town’s taxing structure is competitive with other area communities.
- The Town Tax Assessor should monitor trends in assessed valuation, noting significant changes such as new projects, projects coming off Payment in Lieu of Taxes agreements (PILOTs) and assessment challenge.
- Continue to support and seek remediation of brownfields, hazardous waste sites and other contaminated sites with aim towards appropriate reuse of the sites. Promote completion and issuance of a favorable Record of Decision (ROD) by Army Corps of Engineers for FUSRAP (radioactive residue) sites in the Town of Tonawanda.

- The Town of Tonawanda, Erie County and Ken-Ton School District should monitor the status of the NRG Huntley power plant (which is strategically located on near the waterfront) and consider seeking funding to collaborate on the preparation of a strategic plan to address its potential closure.
- The Town should monitor changes in local workforce trends through demographic data, regional agencies and contact with employers, noting significant changes in patterns.
- The Town and Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Chamber of Commerce should educate businesses and residents about its economic development strategies and encourage participation through public meetings, web resources and forums.

E. HOW WE MOVE – TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

- In order to improve walkability the Town should ensure that sidewalks are maintained and in good condition. Where sidewalks are missing or in disrepair they should be replaced in compliance with the appropriate ADA standard.
- The Town should prepare a capital improvements plan for more extensive and systematic reconstruction and repairs on local roads and sidewalks. This plan should consider all current and future engineering improvements within the right-of-way with a minimum design service life of 50-years.
- The 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan indicates the desire for continuous access to the waterfront, including both public and private properties. Although public access is generally easier to achieve along the publicly-owned shorefront, the Town should utilize a range of tools, such as incentive zoning, riparian buffers, and/or public access easements, to accomplish waterfront access along private lands.
- The Town Code should be reviewed to ensure that it adequately addresses responsibility for sidewalk maintenance and snowplowing and removal.
- The Town should develop a town-wide comprehensive sidewalk plan to identify gaps, and necessary upgrades. The Town should investigate New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Transportation Alternative Projects Program - Safe Routes to Schools grants to help fund these capital improvements.
- The Town should ensure that all transportation projects that are in the planning and design stages have ADA-compliant pedestrian facilities.

- The Town should adopt a “Complete Streets” policy in order to:
 - better integrate its public transportation and infrastructure resources into the context of the neighborhoods,
 - enhance walkability and functional access for all users of the public right-of-way, including improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations,
 - increase connectivity of neighborhoods with retail and commercial services, employment centers and the waterfront,
 - Ensure that County and State projects comply with Town policies.
- Furthermore, adopting a “Complete Streets” policy, could reduce traffic congestion, improve public safety and reduce dependency on automobiles.
- Design measures should balance all legal uses of the street and right-of-way.
- Continue to study problem intersections and access management opportunities along Niagara Falls Boulevard, Sheridan Drive, Delaware Avenue and other commercial corridors.
- The Town should encourage the regional entities to undertake these improvements identified in the GBNRTC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan, including area-wide signalization upgrades and intersection improvements.
- Institute access management requirements along major roadways where appropriate such as Sheridan Drive, Niagara Falls Boulevard, Delaware Avenue, Kenmore Avenue and possibly Military Road. These measures include:
 - Limit or reduce the number of curb cuts/drive ways allowed for an individual parcel and limiting turning movements to reduce congestion resulting from cars turning into and out of the travel lanes.
 - Encouraging adjacent properties to share driveways.
 - Requiring interconnected parking lots and cross access (ability to get from one parking lot to adjacent properties) where feasible as a means to limit multiple ingress/egress points along roads.

- Encourage coherent on-site circulation patterns that enable motorists and pedestrians to move safely and easily through the site (clearly marked lanes, walkways, signage and landscaping islands to direct traffic).
 - Limit the number of driveways allowed for one parcel, and
 - Control driveway spacing to minimize conflict points.
- Work with the County, NYSDOT and GBNRTC on providing additional bicycle accommodations, such as bike racks and lockers, park-and-bike lots for bicyclists at key activity centers and trail heads.
- To provide improvements to on-road bicycle facilities, through better markings that clearly distinguish bicycle facilities, future paving and reconstruction projects should consider enhancing bicycle access, awareness, and safety by:
 - Incorporate “sharrows” to help convey to motorists and bicyclists that they must share the lanes in which they are operating.
 - Reducing travel lanes where appropriate to allow:
 - 5-foot bike lane where there is a curbed shoulder
 - 4-foot bike lane where there is an open shoulder
- As future road reconstruction projects are planned, consider:
 - Context sensitive design
 - Pedestrian/bicycle improvements in the form of sidewalks or off road multiuse paths
 - Streetscaping
 - Comprehensive design of utilities and ancillary facilities
- Continue implementing connectivity improvements between the Tonawanda waterfront, the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail in the Town, and adjacent connecting trail systems. Extension of this trail system region-wide, through the Niagara River Greenway initiative, is a priority of New York State. This trail system links to the Erie Canalway Trail in the City of Tonawanda, and will eventually connect to a trail system located along the Lake Erie shoreline in the South Towns.
- Encourage the future extension of the Tonawanda Rail Trail project north through the City of Tonawanda and south to the City of Buffalo LaSalle Station, to better support and the regional trail system.

- The Town should request that Erie County include resurfacing in its maintenance plan for the Riverwalk section of the Shoreline Trail in the Town of Tonawanda.
- As part of the regional Shoreline Trail system, the Riverwalk should be also be upgraded with needed amenities (e.g. – shelters, water, restrooms, etc.) in order to obtain the “world class” objective, as desired by the Niagara River Greenway Commission.
- Complete the planning and design of loops and gaps in the off-road recreational trail system, depicted in Map 6 - Transportation Alternatives and Connectivity Plan.
- The Town should continue working with key stakeholders (private, NYSDOT, NYSTA, and Erie County) in implementing the design concepts in the Waterfront Corridors Landscape Plan.
- The Planning Board should adopt the design recommendations in the Waterfront Corridors Landscape Plan as another tool to use in reviewing site plans for future redevelopment in the waterfront areas.
- The Town should continue to support the inclusion of full roadway reconstruction (including complete streets techniques) of Kenmore Avenue, from Fairfield Avenue to Military Road, on the TIP.
- Coordinate with the NYSDOT to ensure the proposed Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard signal coordination projects include updated LED lights, balanced signal timing plans and countdown pedestrian timers.
- The Town should coordinate with NYSDOT to facilitate an examination of the Sheridan Drive corridor to identify locations where pedestrian accommodations could be improved. If the pedestrian bridge over Sheridan Drive is removed in the future, alternative pedestrian accommodations for crossing Sheridan Drive should be provided. The Town should coordinate with the NYSDOT to examine the potential for width reduction in that section and use of a high-intensity activated crosswalk beacon (HAWK) type pedestrian signal and/or pedestrian refuge median at this location.
- The Town should coordinate with the NYSDOT to achieve implementation of a “road diet” plan for the section of Sheridan Drive that is located between East Park Drive and Belmont Avenue. This would reallocate travel lanes and provide enhanced pedestrian/bicycle accommodations.
- Once the NYSTA implements its pilot project to install all-electronic tolling (AET) at three downstate locations, the Town should coordinate with the NYSTA to explore similar electronic tolling at the Grand Island Bridges.

The Town should encourage the NYSTA and NYSDOT to maintain levels of service on the I-190 and I-290. Future improvements to these highways can have profound impacts on transportation patterns and quality of life in the Town of Tonawanda. Therefore, the Town should remain involved in discussions with these entities to ensure its interests are represented in planning of improvements to these highways. In addition, efforts should be made to improve aesthetic issues along the I-290, such as maintaining trees and landscaping and regulating billboards.

F. SERVICES WE NEED TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

- Continue to provide a comprehensive system of amenities and services that benefit Town residents.
- Continue planning and developing for the re-use of the Town landfill for a recreational use. The Town landfill is undergoing the process of closure, and could be a site for redevelopment for recreational use.
- The Town boat launch facility on Aqua Lane is a valuable waterfront asset that should continue to be maintained in order to increase public access and usage.
- The Town Park on Aqua Lane should be improved with additional shelters and other amenities to expand the passive recreational use of this property.
- Evaluate attendance, usage data and cost estimates to determine the fiscal justification of continuing certain recreational amenities/facilities that may not be financially self-sufficient (operating costs), or that require extensive repair and upgrades in order to provide facilities at current standards.
- The Town Board should determine at the policy level, if the operating costs of Town facilities are being covered by fees and other facility revenues, and how capital improvement costs for these facilities should be funded. Subsequently, the Town Board should prioritize projects and consider holding a bonding referendum in order to fund necessary capital upgrades at Town facilities.
- Continue to provide programs that are flexible and suited to the changing demographic needs and demands of the Town.
- Undertake an asset assessment and needs analysis to address capacity,

operations, maintenance and management of Town services and the continued use and operation of individual facilities to house Town departments, services and programs. The assessment should make recommendations as to what changes may be considered for cost savings, improved efficiency and continued high level of public service.

- The Town will explore opportunities for shared or consolidated services and coordination with other communities, including the Village of Kenmore.
- Decide on the most cost effective way to supply potable water to Town residents (decommission water plant and buy water from the ECWA or sell the plant and facilities to others to operate).
- Continue to fund and implement the recommendations of the Long Term Control Plan to mitigate sanitary sewer overflows in concert with stormwater and complete streets programs.
- Evaluate impacts of implementing programming, management and funding of stormwater regulations.
- Continue to invest in upgrades at the wastewater treatment plant in order to keep up with changing regulations.
- The Town should encourage the NYSDOT to investigate the feasibility of converting the raised landscape median along Sheridan Drive to a bio-swale that could help to address stormwater management issues currently experienced along sections of this roadway.
- Keep up with ongoing changes in stormwater management regulations and expand the ability for water quality testing at outfalls.
- Enhance the Town's capability to oversee construction, maintenance and operation of private stormwater management systems.
- Use stormwater pollution and prevention plan best management practices for Town projects.
- Town departments should organize individual infrastructure projects (water, sewer, stormwater, highway) so that each project considers the full range of improvements during project planning and design and can be constructed in

a coordinated fashion to better leverage funding and minimize disruptions to neighborhoods.

- Developers and utilities must better coordinate with the Town to avoid extensions of gas, electric and telecommunications facilities overtopping municipal sewer and water facilities, making sure there is coordination for municipal projects.
- Work with the Town of Amherst and NYSDOT to coordinate management of the existing stormwater management system in the Brighton/Boulevard Mall area, and undertake a comprehensive storm drainage evaluation for Niagara Falls Boulevard.
- Evaluate the most cost effective way to manage solid waste collection and ultimate disposal for Town residents.
- Improve the recycling rates through public education in addition to information on the Town website.
- Review and amend Chapter 197 of the Town Code (Trees and Shrubs) to incorporate policies and procedures for tree maintenance and replacement on public properties.
- Consider the adoption of a tree preservation law to establish standards, including species inventory and project clearing limits, for the protection and retention of vegetation as a part of private site development.

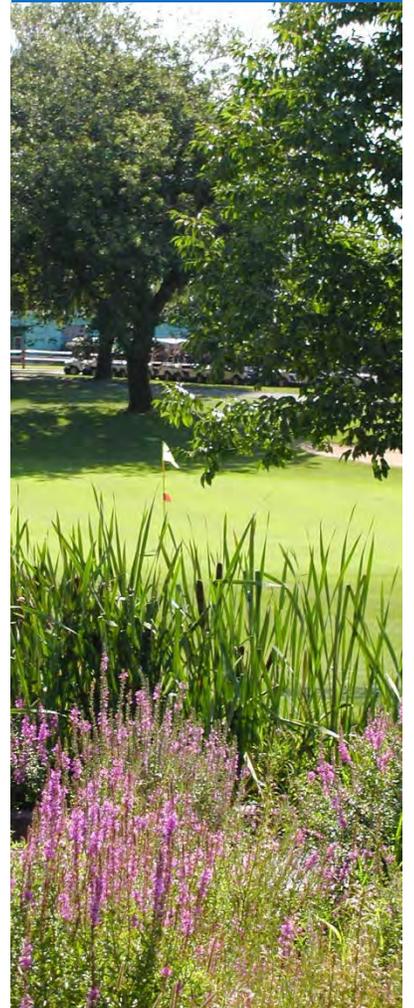
G. PUBLIC POLICIES AND COOPERATION

- Strive to improve cooperation and coordination with State and County agencies, and school districts to address issues within the Town that are related to planning, infrastructure and economic development.
- Strengthen the relationship with the School Districts to provide a better understanding of trends and changes and bring about more pro-active decision making.
- Continue to coordinate and communicate with the Village of Kenmore regarding water and sewer services, fees and capital improvement projects.

- Coordinate with the Village to continue its implementation of the Elmwood Avenue Corridor improvements into the Town.
- Consider appointing non-voting liaisons to committees such as the Planning Board and Environmental Commission, in order to enhance coordination with the Village of Kenmore.
- In addition to the boundary with the Village of Kenmore, the Town shares boundaries with the Town of Amherst, the City of Buffalo, the City of Tonawanda, the City of North Tonawanda and the Town of Grand Island. When considering zoning updates, the Town should investigate land use standards, such as zoning and design standards along these shared boundaries to determine where better coordination makes sense.
- Continue to follow and respond to the recommendations set forth in the Regional Economic Development Council's strategic plan and the Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan, as well as the future findings and recommendations of the One Region Forward initiative.
- Continue to participate in regional forums and initiatives to ensure that the needs and goals of the Town are represented in the decisions made for future planning and funding opportunities.

Section V

Implementation



SECTION V: IMPLEMENTATION

Planning is an on-going effort, and updating the Town of Tonawanda's Comprehensive Plan is only one step. Equally important is the next stage: implementation of the ideas and concepts outlined here. This section of the document provides an implementation table that summarizes and prioritizes the recommendations by "topic area" for the Town of Tonawanda.

The items listed under each topic area have been assigned potential impact and cost ratings of high, medium or low. Other columns identify the type of action that is needed (e.g., administrative, planning, capital investment, regulatory, etc.); the entities that would be responsible for implementation action, and potential funding sources that may be available to help bring implementation efforts to fruition.

A high impact rating indicates that implementation could significantly *transform* the topic area. A medium ranking indicates that implementation could significantly *enhance* an existing initiative in the topic area. A low impact rating indicates that implementation is administrative – review, maintenance or updating of existing initiatives in the topic area. High priority items are issues that are important to achieving the goals and objectives of the Town, and should generally be considered for action in the near term.

The cost column evaluates potential costs in terms of time and resources required for implementation of a particular item, wherein a high cost would represent a more significant expenditure of time or resources relative to the topic area. A medium rating would require moderate time and resources expenditures for implementation, with a low rating being less time and fewer resources relative to the topic area. Not all of these high priority items will be accomplished within the near term, but they are issues of high importance where, at the very least, preliminary progress should be initiated. Some actions are ongoing.

While the priority listing provides a general guideline to scheduling, it is important to take a flexible approach. It is likely that some items with lower priority will actually be accomplished prior to higher priority items. Partly, this will be a function of effort, as some high priority issues are long-term actions that cannot be accomplished quickly, while some lower priority actions are items that can be accomplished easily. Some actions may get accomplished because a particular group or organization may want to adopt them as a project. In some instances, state or federal priorities may affect the scheduling of actions. If funding becomes

available for a particular project, the Town may choose to move forward on a lower priority item in order to take advantage of this assistance. Accomplishing projects wherever possible is encouraged, regardless of the priority ranking. The cumulative effect of many smaller projects can be significant and help build momentum and support for other improvements.

Perhaps the most important implementation item is the need to constantly monitor circumstances in the Town and reprioritize actions as conditions change. The Town Board should take ownership of implementation actions to ensure that progress is made. The Planning Board should continue to monitor accomplishments and conditions, and make adjustments to prioritization or specific recommendations as implementation items move forward and/or as conditions change. The Planning Board should continue to address particular topics, and be responsible to provide annual updates on progress to the Town Board.

Since adoption of the last update to the Comprehensive Plan in 2005, numerous recommendations have been implemented including the key projects noted below:

- First phase of the new industrial access road for the Riverview Solar Technology Park (formerly known as the Isle View Site) – completed
- North Youngmann Commerce Center – under construction
- Niagara River World (Wickwire property) – re-investment underway
- River Road Streetscape development standards – completed
- River Road Streetscape Project design and construction – underway
- Update of Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) – completed
- Waterfront Land Use Plan – completed
- Riverfront Park design – concept completed as part of Waterfront Master Plan
- Remediation of contaminated sites – complete for 5335 River Road, 3445 River Road, 100 Sawyer Road; 5655 River Road in design
- Zoning amendments for commercial corridors, site plan review, wind energy conversion systems, solar energy systems – completed
- Sherwood Greenway Trail and Tonawanda Rail Trail – in design
- War Memorial at Kenney Field – completed
- Brownfield Opportunity Area Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study – completed
- Old Town Neighborhood Plan – completed
- Zoning study and amendments for commercial corridors

A. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Table V-1: Implementation Actions provides the procedural steps that must occur in order to adopt the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update and commence implementation of identified actions. The table also indicates the responsible party and type of action needed.

1. Comprehensive Plan Adoption:

The Town Board, after holding the appropriate public hearing and completion of the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process, should adopt the Comprehensive Plan Update.

2. Distribute Copies of the plan:

The Town should provide copies of the updated Comprehensive Plan document to appropriate Town boards, departments and committees that play a role in its use and implementation. This will help to ensure that this plan continues to be utilized and considered in Town planning and decision making.

3. Annual Review:

The Town Board should charge the Planning Board with the responsibility of conducting an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan Update implementation activities to ensure that the plan remains a dynamic and useful document. The Planning Board, with input from Town Department Heads and Committee Chairmen, is best situated to determine how the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan are being achieved and how to prioritize actions for each coming year. The Planning Board would be responsible to help ensure that the plan is being implemented, evaluate the results of actions, re-prioritize implementation actions as necessary, and suggest modifications to the plan as required. The Board would report their findings and determinations to the Town Board annually.

4. Implementation Budget:

Each year when the Town Board is developing their annual budget for the following year, the Planning Board will provide the Town Board with an approximate estimate of funding needed for the coming year's implementation actions. The committee will also provide assistance to the Town Board in

identifying and seeking grants for these actions. The Town Board will then budget for these actions and/or apply for grants in an effort to achieve the goals and objectives and keep the Comprehensive Plan Update an active document.

B. IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY TABLE

Table V-2: Implementation Actions: By Topic Area provides a listing of actions for the Town to undertake to satisfy the goals and objectives and achieve the recommendations, as set forth in this plan. The items shown in Table V-2 were developed around the findings and recommendations and are categorized under the themes that were established in earlier sections of this plan. As previously noted, the information in this table is organized by action, expected impact, and costs in terms of time and resources. The responsible parties have been identified and, where applicable, potential sources of funding are provided. Table V-2 follows the format laid out in the Recommendations section.

Table V-1: Implementation Actions

Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Cost / Potential Funding
PROCEDURAL ACTIONS					
Adopt the Comprehensive Plan	High	Low	Legislative	Town Board	N/A
Distribute copies of Plan to Town Departments, Boards, Committees	High	Low	Administrative	Town	Local
Annual Review	High	Low	Procedural	Planning Board	N/A
Develop Implementation Budget	High	Low	Administrative	Town Board	Local

Notes on 'Impact':

- High: significantly ***transforms*** the 'Topic Area
- Medium: significantly ***enhances*** an existing initiative in the 'Topic Area
- 'Low': continued ***administration*** (review, maintain, update) of existing initiatives in the 'Topic Area

Notes on 'Cost':

- High: ***significant*** time and resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area
- Medium: ***moderate*** time and resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area
- 'Low': ***less*** time and fewer resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area

Table V-2: Implementation Actions: By Topic Area

SENSE OF COMMUNITY - Demographics						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
D-1	Monitor changes in local workforce trends through demographic data, regional agencies and contact with employers, noting significant changes in patterns	Medium	Low	Administrative	Community Development; Technical Support Department; Sweet Home and Kenton School Districts	General Fund; Community Development Block Grant federal funding (CDBG)
D-2	Monitor demographic data to determine needs and demands for housing and community services and programs	Low	Low	Administrative	Community Development; Technical Support Department; Sweet Home and Kenton School Districts	General Fund; CDBG

Notes on 'Impact':

- High: significantly **transforms** the 'Topic Area
- Medium: significantly **enhances** an existing initiative in the 'Topic Area
- 'Low': continued **administration** (review, maintain, update) of existing initiatives in the 'Topic Area

Notes on 'Cost':

- High: **significant** time and resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area
- Medium: **moderate** time and resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area
- 'Low': **less** time and fewer resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area

SENSE OF COMMUNITY – Land Use and Zoning						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
LU-1	Creation of implementation committee to spearhead review and amendment of zoning code.	Medium	Low	Planning; Administrative	Planning Board; Department Representatives	General Fund
LU-2	Adopt and implement proposed (2014) commercial corridor zoning amendments for Kenmore Avenue, Elmwood Avenue, Englewood Avenue, and Military Road	High	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-3	Initiate a comprehensive review and amendment of the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate a schedule of uses and landscaping, parking, site design guidelines and other aesthetic standards	High	Medium	Planning; Legislative (See Land Use and Zoning section in Recommendations)	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-4	Include a purpose and intent narrative for each zoning classification	High	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-5	Adopt a new “Community Facilities” zoning district to encompass all lands currently designated Schools-Park-Cemetery	High	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-5	Review, update and organize all landscaping standards into a stand-alone subsection of the Zoning	High	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-6	Review, update and organize all site design standards into a stand-alone subsection of the Zoning to include narrative descriptions and graphic illustrations	High	Medium	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	Technical Assistance from NYSDOS

**SENSE OF COMMUNITY
– Land Use and Zoning (con't.)**

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
LU-7	Initiate zoning studies for amendments (use, standards and districts) for the Sheridan and Niagara Falls Boulevard commercial corridors	Medium	Medium	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-8	Review and update of Zoning Law Article XXII – Signs	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-9	Amend zoning map to eliminate split zoned parcels along commercial corridors, including Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Technical Support Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-10	Amend the General Industrial (GI) District to include a specific list of Permitted Uses and uses requiring Special Use Permits	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-11	Establish setbacks for minimum distance between parking lots and public rights-of-way to create a physical separation	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-12	Review and update the parking requirements	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-13	Review and update districting for automotive uses (repair shops, gas stations, detail and dealers) to ensure they are only allowed with a special use permit in the appropriate districts	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-14	Add clarifying narrative and improved graphic illustrations to replace Plates “D” through “L” in the Zoning	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

– Land Use and Zoning (con't.)

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
LU-15	Zoning amendments along neighboring municipal boundaries should be coordinated to correlate zoning classifications, bulk standards, design requirements and other regulations that guide development	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-16	Examine development of a Local Law or zoning amendment designed to address issues arising when a business closes related to access, parking, signs, maintenance and demolition	Low	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-17	Develop an appropriate definition and clarify zoning language for junkyards and recycling operations	Low	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-18	Ensure that the Town Code adequately addresses the responsibility for sidewalk maintenance and snow removal	Low	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Town Highway Department	General Fund
LU-19	Report significant trends and changes in land use, such as new uses or conditions of existing uses and infrastructure to Town Board to keep Town Code up to date	Low	Low	Administrative; Procedural; Legislative	Building Department; Engineering Department; Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
LU-20	Revise and update zoning Article XXVI – Wind Energy Conversion Systems	Low	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department, Planning Board, Town Board	General Fund

SENSE OF COMMUNITY - Waterfront						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
W-1	Adopt and Implement the recommendations of the 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan	High	Medium	Legislative; Planning	Planning Board; Town Board	General Fund
W-2	Review and Update the Waterfront Land Use Plan, as needed	Low	Low	Planning	Planning Board; Town Board	NA
W-3	Update the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP)	High	Medium	Planning	Planning Board; Town Board	Environmental Protection Fund
W-4	Incorporate the River Road Zoning Overlay district design standards into the new Waterfront Mixed Use zoning classification	High	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Planning Board; Town Board	NA
W-5	Rezone the waterfront priority area Waterfront Mixed Use	High	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Planning Board; Town Board	NA
W-6	Acquire Cherry Farm Park property and develop as a recreation amenity	High	High	Planning; Capital investment	Youth, Parks and Recreation; Technical Support Department; Town Board	Brownfields programs (EPA, NYSDEC); Potentially Responsible Party; Niagara River Greenway Commission; NYSOPRHP
W-7	Develop Riverfront Park	Medium	High	Planning; Capital investment	Youth, Parks and Recreation; Technical Support Department; Town Board	Brownfields programs (EPA, NYSDEC); Niagara River Greenway Commission; NYSOPRHP

HOW WE LIVE**– Neighborhoods and Housing**

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
N-1	Address “problem properties” through land banking and/or adherence to Town regulations	High	Medium	Technical Assistance; Public Education; Enforcement	Building Department; Community Development	Private; CDBG; Grants; Buffalo Erie County Land Improvement Corp. (BENLIC)
N-2	Continue to focus on revitalizing low and moderate income neighborhoods	High	Low	Administrative	Community Development	BENLIC; CDBG; HUD; NY Main Street Program (where eligible)
N-3	Promote Town programs that support home improvements	High	Low	Administrative; Outreach	Community Development	NA
N-4	Undertake gateway improvements at major entrances into the Town, whether on Town properties or on lands in adjoining municipalities	Medium	High	Planning; Capital Investment	Planning Board; Technical Support Department; Town Highway Department	NYS DOT; FHA; CDBG; general funds
N-5	Collaborate with owners of key neighborhood assets (schools, churches, institutions, etc.) to plan for potential future closure or re-use	Medium	Medium	Planning; Long Term Capital Investment	Planning Board; School Districts; Church and Cemetery Representatives; Community Organizations	NA
N-6	Review and update, as necessary, Town regulations that apply to property maintenance	Medium	Low	Regulatory; Legislative	Building Department; Planning Board; Town Board; Community Development	NA
N-7	Establish lines of communication with residential realtors to gauge residential housing needs	Medium	Low	Planning; Outreach	Chamber of Commerce	NA

HOW WE LIVE – Neighborhoods and Housing (con't.)						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
N-8	Encourage the continuation of Neighborhood Watch programs	Medium	Low	Public Education and Awareness	Police Department; Crime Resistance Executive Board; Local Volunteers	State grants to the Crime Resistance Executive Board
N-9	Promote the dissemination of “welcome” information about the Town services, facilities and regulations (website/ brochures, etc.)	Medium	Low	Public Education and Awareness; Outreach	Supervisor’s Office; Town Clerk; Town Highway Department; Chamber of Commerce; Realtors; Community	General Fund
N-10	Develop and promote homeowner investment incentives for home repairs	Medium	Low	Public Education and Awareness; Outreach	Community Development; Building Department	HUD CRA
N-11	Review permitting process for home improvements for effectiveness and efficiency	Low	Low	Procedural	Building Department; Community Development	NA

Notes on ‘Impact’:

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- Medium: significantly **enhances** an existing initiative in the ‘Topic Area
- ‘Low’: continued **administration** (review, maintain, update) of existing initiatives in the ‘Topic Area

Notes on ‘Cost’:

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- Medium: **moderate** time and resources to implement, relative to ‘Topic Area
- ‘Low’: **less** time and fewer resources to implement, relative to ‘Topic Area

STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
E-1	Continue to remediate and reuse contaminated sites	High	Medium to High	Planning; Monitoring	NYSDEC; EPA; Army Corps. of Engineers (USACE) ; Town Environmental Commission	Responsible Parties; NYSDEC; USEPA
E-2	Inventory existing regulated wetlands for priority development areas	High	Medium	Planning	Building Department; Technical Support Department	NYSDOS; General Fund
E-3	Continue to work with regulatory agencies to clean up remaining Class 2 hazardous waste sites	High	Low	Planning	Technical Support Department	NA
E-4	Continue to implement the Tree program	High	Low	Planning; Capital Investment	Town Highway Department; Youth, Parks and Recreation Department	General Fund; NYSDEC; Tree City USA; NYSOPRHP NYSEFC green infrastructure funding
E-5	Consider and implement recommendations of Western New York Regional Sustainability Plan	Medium	Medium	Planning	Planning Board; Town Environmental Commission	NYSDEC; EPA; NYSERDA; NYSEFC; General Fund
E-6	Implement public education programs for water quality and other environmental issues	Medium	Medium	Public Education and Awareness; Outreach	Town Environmental Commission; Technical Support Department	NYSDEC; USEPA
E-7	Continue coordination with State and Federal agencies on air, soil and water quality issues	Medium	Low	Planning	Technical Support Department; NYSDEC; EPA; USACE; Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper; Clean Air Coalition	NA

STEWARDSHIP OF THE ENVIRONMENT (con't.)						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
E-8	Incorporate existing wetlands into project layout and design	Medium	Low	Planning	Planning Board	NA
E-9	Continue to coordinate with FEMA on floodplain boundary revisions and update Town floodplain regulation	Medium	Low	Planning; Regulatory	Building Department; Technical Support Department	NA
E-10	Collaborate on a strategic plan to address the potential closure of large industrial facilities	Medium	Low	Planning	Technical Support Department; Planning Board; NYSDEC; EPA	NA

Notes on 'Impact':

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- Medium: significantly *enhances* an existing initiative in the 'Topic Area
- 'Low': continued *administration* (review, maintain, update) of existing initiatives in the 'Topic Area

Notes on 'Cost':

- High: *significant* time and resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area
- Medium: *moderate* time and resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area
- 'Low': *less* time and fewer resources to implement, relative to 'Topic Area

WORKFORCE, BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC BASE						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
ED-1	Complete construction, and market the North Youngmann Commerce Center	High	High	Economic Development	Town Board; ECIDA; Buffalo Niagara Enterprise; Private Sector	NYS Market New York program; Private; National Grid
ED-2	Encourage the build-out and marketing of remaining parcels at the Riverview Solar Technology	High	High	Economic Development	ECIDA; Empire State Development; Private Sector	NYSERDA; NYS Market New York program; Private
ED-3	Encourage the extension of Riverwalk Parkway	High	High	Planning; Capital Investment	Town Highway Department; Planning Board; Technical Support Department; Erie County Highway; Private Sector	Private
ED-4	Implement trails improvements and complete gaps in off-road trails that link waterfront and activity centers	High	Medium	Planning; Capital Investment	Town Highway Department; Youth, Parks and Recreation Department; Erie County Parks and Recreation Department	Erie County; NYSOPRHP; FHA; NYSDOT; Private
ED-5	Prepare a Marketing Package to enhance the Town image and attract businesses	High	Medium	Education, marketing, outreach	Chamber of Commerce; Private sector	US Economic Development Administration (EDA) Technical Assistance; NYS Market New York
ED-6	Implement the economic development recommendations in the LWRP and 2014 Waterfront Land Use Plan	High	Medium	Planning	Planning Board; Town Board	NA

**WORKFORCE, BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT
AND ECONOMIC BASE (CON'T)**

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
ED-7	Facilitate façade improvements with local businesses to help keep commercial areas and districts vibrant	High	Low	Economic Development	Chamber of Commerce	NYS Main Street Program; CDBG; Small Business Administration (SBA)
ED-8	Require adequate parking and pedestrian access through parking lots, and the provision of landscaping along edges and within commercial parking areas	High	Low	Regulatory	Planning Board; Building Department	NA
ED-9	Develop a public access roadway in the Sawyer Avenue/James Avenue area	Medium	High	Economic Development	Town Highway Department; Erie County; Private Sector	EDA; Erie County; NYSDOT
ED-10	Implement landscaping and/or streetscaping improvements in local business districts and commercial areas	Medium	Medium	Economic Development	Highway Department; Youth, Parks and Recreation; Erie County; NYSDOT	NY Main Street Program; NYSDEC; NYSERDA green infrastructure funding
ED-11	Revitalize functionally obsolete and underutilized lands between Military Road and the railroad corridor	Medium	Medium to High	Planning; Economic Development	ECIDA; NYSDEC; Empire State Development Corp.	EDA Strong Cities, Strong Communities program funding; EPA/HUD Building; Blocks For Sustainable Communities; EPA Smart Growth funding
ED-12	Encourage private investments in neighborhood businesses through loan programs and/or targeted community development funding	Medium	Medium	Economic Development	Community Development; Chamber of Commerce	CRA; SBA; EDA Strong Cities, Strong Communities program funding

WORKFORCE, BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC BASE (CON'T)

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
ED-13	Establish a revolving loan fund to support streetscape and façade improvements for commercial properties	Medium	Low	Economic Development	Chamber of Commerce	CRA; SBA; NYS Main Street Program funding
ED-14	Catalog available commercial properties and identify their long term potential for reuse	Medium	Low	Administrative; Economic Development	Chamber of Commerce	EDA Technical Assistance Grant; NYS Market New York program
ED-15	Work with the NFTA to undertake bus stop improvements and install new bus stops at commercial shopping centers and areas.	Medium	Low	Planning	Technical Support Department; NFTA; GBNRTC	NYS DOT; FHA
ED-16	Provide technical and business assistance for business development initiatives	Medium	Low	Economic Development	Erie County; ECIDA; ESD; NYSDEC	SBA; EPA Brownfield Programs; Potentially Responsible Party; Empire State Development Corp.

Notes on 'Impact':

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HOW WE MOVE – TRANSPORTATION
- Highways and Traffic

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
H&T-1	Construct the River Road Streetscape Improvements	High	High	Capital investment	Technical Support Department; NYSDOT	Niagara River Greenway Commission Private;
H&T-2	Traffic System Management improvements: more study required	High	Medium	Planning	Technical Support Department; GBNRTC	Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition
H&T-3	Re-initiate Niagara Falls Boulevard Study	High	Medium	Planning	Planning Board; NYSDOT; GBNRTC; Town of Tonawanda	NYSDOT
H&T-4	Study Problem Intersections	High	Medium	Planning	Erie County; NYSDOT; GBNRTC; Town Highway Department; Technical Support Department	NYSDOT, Erie County, GBNRTC
H&T-5	Continue to track progress of Kenmore Avenue corridor reconstruction and advocate for re-construction from Fairfield Avenue to Military Road.	High	Low	Planning; Capital Investment	Erie County, Village, NYS DOT, GBNRTC, City of Buffalo	NA
H&T-6	Ensure that sidewalks are maintained and in good condition	Medium	Low to Medium	Capital investment	Town Highway; NYSDOT; Erie County; private sector	NYSDOT; CDBG; GBNRTC,
H&T-7	Study and implement roadway improvements including “road diets”	Medium	Medium	Planning	Technical Support Department; Town Highway Department; NYSDOT	NYSDOT

HOW WE MOVE – TRANSPORTATION - Highways and Traffic						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
H&T-8	Investigate merits of redesign of Parker Avenue to increase traffic capacity	Medium	Low	Planning	Technical Support Department; Town Highway Department	NA
H&T-9	Participate on the GBNRTC Bicycle Committee	Medium	Low	Planning	Technical Support Department; Town Highway Department	NA
H&T-10	Develop a comprehensive sidewalk connectivity plan to identify gaps and necessary upgrades, including ADA compliance	Medium	Low to Medium	Planning; Capital Investment	Technical Support Department; Town Highway Department	NYSDOT; CDBG; FHA

HOW WE MOVE – TRANSPORTATION
- Connectivity and Complete Streets

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
C&C-1	Ensure crosswalks are installed at key locations	High	Medium	Planning; Capital Investment	Town Highway Department; Erie County; NYSDOT	NYSDOT; Erie County; General Fund
C&C-2	Develop access management standards	High	Low	Planning; Legislative	Planning Board; Town Board; NYSDOT	NA
C&C-3	Adopt a Complete Streets Policy	High	Low	Planning; Legislative	Planning Board; Town Board; Engineering - Technical Support Department	NA
C&C-4	Brighton Park Connector- design and construction to link Brighton Park with Tonawanda Rail Trail, Crestmont Trail and Ellicott Creek Park Trail -	Medium	High	Planning; Capital investment	Town Highway Department; Technical Support Department ; Youth, Parks and Recreations; Erie County	NYSDOT; FHA
C&C-5	Design and construct trails through Riverview Solar Technology Park and other priority access areas	Medium	Medium to High	Planning; Capital Investment	Town Highway Department; Technical Support Department ; Youth, Parks and Recreation; Private Sector	Private
C&C-6	Brighton Road Trailway - design and construct bike lane linking Kenney Field Loop with Delaware Road	Medium	Medium	Planning; Capital investment	Town Highway Department; Technical Support Department; Erie County	Erie County; General Fund
C&C-7	Lehigh Valley Rail trail - coordinate with Town of Amherst to design and construct along existing right-of-way	Medium	Medium	Planning; Capital investment	Town Highway Department; Technical Support Department; Youth, Parks and Recreations; Erie County	NYSDOT; FHA

**HOW WE MOVE – TRANSPORTATION
- Connectivity and Complete Streets**

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
C&C-8	Provide/improve pedestrian and bicycle accommodations to increase connectivity of neighborhoods with retail areas and the waterfront	Medium	Medium to High	Planning; Capital Investment	Planning Board; Technical Support Department ; Town Highway Department	NYSDOT; FHA
C&C-9	Support east-west linkages between parks and school properties in Kenmore to Lincoln Park Trail.	Low	Low	Planning; Capital investment	Town Highway Department; Technical Support Department; Youth, Parks and Recreation; GBNRTC	General Fund
C&C-10	Erie Canalway Trail - design and construct missing portion of off-road trail along Creekside Drive	Medium	Medium	Planning; Capital investment	Technical Support Department; Erie County	Erie County; NYSDOT; General Fund

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SERVICES WE NEED TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
L-1	Continue to alleviate stormwater/ sanitary sewer overflow issues	High	High	Planning; Capital investment	Technical Support Department; Water Resources; Town Board	NYSDEC; EPA; NYSERDA; NYSEFC Green Infrastructure program funding
L-2	Prepare a Capital Improvements Plan and coordinate infrastructure project planning and design for all projects within the public right-of-way	High	Low	Planning; Capital Investment	All Town Departments; various State and County agencies;	NA
L-3	Prioritize and implement water and sewer system maintenance, rehabilitation and expansion activities	High	Medium to High	Planning; Capital Investment	Technical Support Department; Water Resources; Town Board	NYSEFC Green Infrastructure program funding; NYSDEC
L-4	Develop Riverfront Park	Medium	High	Planning; Capital investment	Youth, Parks and Recreation; Technical Support Department; Town Board	Brownfields programs (EPA, NYSDEC); Niagara River Greenway Commission; BENLIC; NYSOPRHP
L-5	Implement final closure and planning for the reuse of the former Town landfill	Medium	Medium	Planning; Capital Investment	Technical Support Department; NYSDEC	Brownfields programs (EPA, NYSDEC); NYSOPRHP; USACE
L-6	Improve and upgrade the Town boat launch facility	Medium	Medium	Planning; Capital Investment	Youth, Parks and Recreation; Town Board	NYSOPRHP; NYSDOS; Niagara River Greenway Commission
L-7	Improve Aqua Lane Park to increase and expand recreational usage	Medium	Medium to High	Planning; Capital Investment	Youth, Parks and Recreation; Town Board	NYSOPRHP; NYSDOS; Niagara River Greenway Commission
L-8	Evaluate attendance/usage and operating costs to determine the fiscal feasibility for maintaining recreational amenities and facilities	Medium	Low	Planning; Capital investment	Youth, Parks and Recreation; Town Board	NA

PUBLIC POLICES AND COOPERATION						
Item	Action	Impact	Cost	Type of Action	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Source
P-1	Collaborate with the school districts to better assess trends and changes in the community	High	Low	Planning; Outreach	Town Board; School Districts; Technical Support Department	NA
P-2	Improve cooperation with State and County agencies on issues related to planning, infrastructure and economic development	High	Low	Planning; Outreach	Various Town Departments	NA
P-3	Continue to coordinate with the Village of Kenmore for infrastructure services, fees and capital improvements	High	Low	Planning; Outreach	Various Town Departments	NA
P-4	Follow and respond to recommendations outlined in the Regional Economic Development Council's Strategic Plan, as well as future recommendations of the One Region Forward initiative	High	Low	Planning; Outreach	Various Town Departments	NA
P-5	Participate in regional forums and initiatives to ensure that the needs and goals of the Town are represented in the decisions made for future planning and funding opportunities	High	Low	Planning; Outreach	Various Town Departments	NA
P-6	Continue to coordinate with NFTA to expand public transit options	Medium	Low	Planning; Outreach	Technical Support Department; NFTA	NA
P-7	Appoint non-voting liaisons to boards and committees to enhance coordination with the Village of Kenmore	Medium	Low	Procedural	Town Board	NA
P-8	Work with City of Buffalo and Village of Kenmore to establish Delaware Avenue as a "Main Street", by encouraging development that brings physical upgrades and creates economic development.	High	Low	Planning	Planning Board; Village Planning Board; Erie County; City of Buffalo	NA

Section VI

Annual Review



SECTION VI: ANNUAL REVIEW

A. BENEFIT OF ANNUAL REVIEW

A Comprehensive Plan is only useful if it reflects current conditions. In today's environment, where change is constant and unpredictable, it is important to continue to monitor conditions and assess whether the actions recommended in the plan remain valid, or whether a shift in emphasis is needed in order to remain consistent with the intent and substance of the plan. To this end it is recommended that the Town of Tonawanda Town Board charge the Town Planning Board with conducting an annual review of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the plan remains an up-to-date and useful document. The Planning Board should also be responsible for determining the accomplishments of the Town in implementing and enforcing the goals and objectives of the plan.

The Planning Board should, as needed, be assisted by representatives from the Town Departments that are familiar with, and responsible for the various recommendations and implementation action items. This will help to ensure that implementation actions are undertaken efficiently and are planned and/or undertaken in consideration of other Town initiatives.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES

All Site Plan and Subdivision approvals issued during the previous year should be reviewed in conjunction with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan to determine where this activity has occurred, if it has occurred consistent with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, and the overall impact of these planning approvals on general land use trends in the Town.

Any major rezoning decisions approved during the previous year should also be reviewed in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan to determine if these actions were consistent with the recommendations of the plan and the overall impact of the rezoning decisions on the general land use trends in the Town. The zoning actions specified in the Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished and which ones should be undertaken in the coming years. The overall impact of these rezoning decisions should be evaluated with respect to general land use trends in the Town. The Planning Board should also determine if there are any new zoning actions that should be added to this list.

A review of applications to the Zoning Board of Appeals can also indicate which provisions of the zoning should be reviewed and possibly updated to better reflect the changing land use patterns. The nature of area variance

requests may also indicate practical difficulties from stringent application of the dimensional requirements in the zoning.

The list of other priority items, as contained in the Implementation Strategy (Section V of the Comprehensive Plan), should be reviewed to determine which items were accomplished during the previous year. It should also be determined if there is a need to update or amend this list.

C. MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRESS

Comments from the Town Board, departments and committees and public input gathered during the previous year should be evaluated in conjunction with the information ascertained from the reviews outlined above. Based on this evaluation, an action plan for Comprehensive Plan implementation activity in the coming year will be developed.

At the beginning of each year, the Planning Board should prepare a statement outlining the accomplishments of the past year, including a list of accomplishments in terms of zoning code amendments and other implementation achievements, as specified in the Comprehensive Plan. This information, along with the action plan for the continuing implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, should be presented to the Town Board for their review and approval.

In addition to the identification of accomplishments and needs, the annual update report should include a list of specific recommended actions to be undertaken in the coming year. The specific actions to be accomplished may differ from the list of actions in the implementation plan, as long as the intent is consistent.

Timing of the annual review should consider the Town Board's budget cycle so implementation items to be undertaken the following year can be funded. Mid-year the Planning Board should review their progress on that year's action plan and make specific recommendations for budget allocations to fund the next year's implementation items. In example, the Planning Board would make recommendations to the Town Board in mid-2015 for a 2016 allocation.

By following this procedure, the Town will be able to continually monitor the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan in achieving the vision it articulates. It is anticipated that the Planning Board will include Comprehensive Plan Implementation on its monthly agenda as a reoccurring item. The Planning Board should continually track the implementation of the priority action items.

The adjustments, amendments and changes recommended by the Planning Board, and approved by the Town Board, will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan by acceptance of the Town Board, and documented in the annual update report.

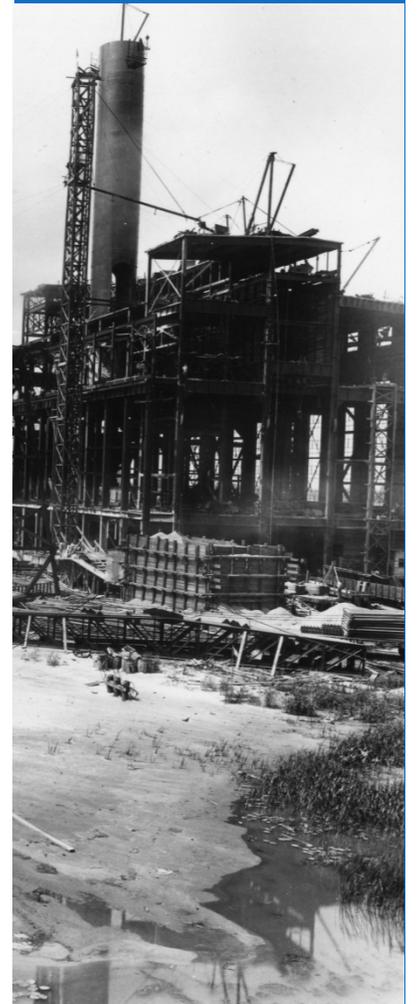
D. FUTURE ACTIONS

Approximately every five years, as circumstances indicate the need, the Comprehensive Plan should be more thoroughly reviewed and updated, as necessary, to reflect current priorities, needs and goals. The annual update reports should be used to assist in this effort. At the end of this more extensive review and update effort, the Town should incorporate all changes into an updated Comprehensive Plan, and undergo formal adoption procedures (including public hearings and SEQR review) to accept the updated plan. Unless there are major changes to circumstances or conditions in the Town, it is anticipated that these reviews and re-adoption procedures will be simple. They are important, however, in order to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a relevant and useful document to guide growth and development in the Town, and help the citizens of the Town of Tonawanda build a community that meets their goals for its future.



Section VII

**STATE
ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY REVIEW**



SECTION VII: STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

According to §272-a.8 of New York Town Law, a town comprehensive plan and its amendments are subject to the provisions of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) under Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law and its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617). It is commonly accepted that a generic environmental impact statement (GEIS) is the most appropriate way to analyze the environmental impacts of a comprehensive plan. The potential environmental impacts of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update (Plan) are being evaluated through a GEIS. To meet the SEQRA content requirements, the Plan itself is set up to serve as the GEIS. This format enables the Town, as the SEQRA Lead Agency, all involved and interested agencies, and the public to review one comprehensive document that outlines Plans for the future and the potential environmental implications of the Plan. This section of the Plan has been provided to assist with the environmental review for this document.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Similar to a conventional environmental impact statement, a GEIS includes a section on Environmental Setting. The Inventory of Existing Conditions (Section III) of this Plan provides an updated description of the environmental setting of the Town as it exists now. Section III has been designed to describe the features and conditions shown in Table VII-1: Location of GEIS Content.

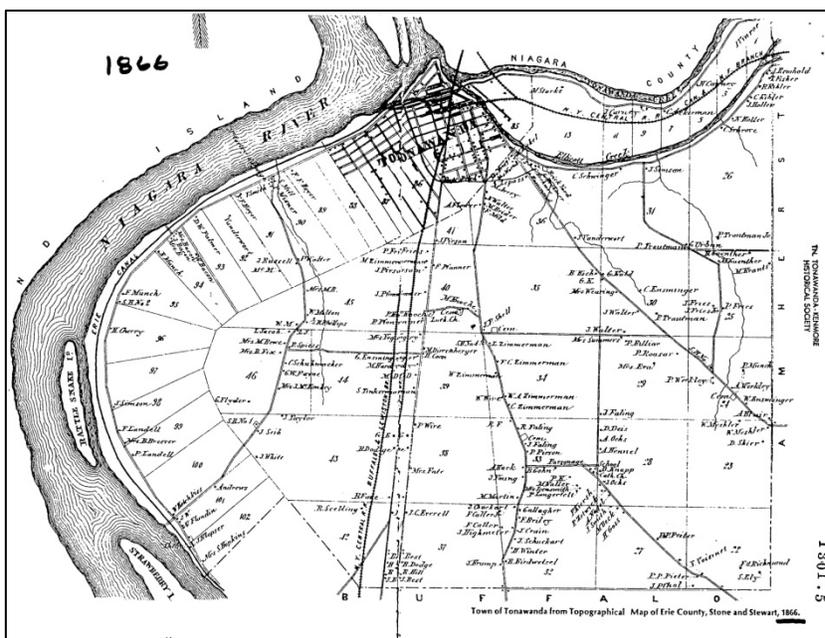


Table VII-1: Location of GEIS Content

GEIS TOPIC	LOCATION IN SECTION III	APPLICABLE CORRESPONDING MAP
Existing Land Use Patterns	Subsection III.A	Map 2: Existing Land Use
Existing Land Use Controls	Subsection III.B	Map 3: Existing Zoning
Demographic and Socio-economic Conditions	Subsection III.C	
Characterization of Housing and Neighborhoods	Subsection III.D	Map 4: Neighborhoods and Parks
Existing Natural Resources	Subsection III.E	Map 5: Environmental Features
Water Resources (Surface Waters, Watersheds, Floodplains, Wetlands, Water Quality)	Subsection III.E.1	Map 5: Environmental Features
Significant Habitats	Subsection III.E.2	Map 5: Environmental Features
Soils (existing conditions, Solid Waste Facilities, Contamination and Brownfields)	Subsection III.E.3	
Existing Infrastructure and Facilities	Subsection III.F	
Potable Water	Subsection III.F.1	
Wastewater	Subsection III.F.2	
Stormwater	Subsection III.F.3	
Street Lighting	Subsection III.F.4	
Energy Resources	Subsection III.F.5	
Transportation Facilities and Traffic Conditions	Subsection III.G	
Road Networks (Interstate Expressways, Arterials and Local Roads)	Subsection III.G.1	Map 6: Transportation Alternatives and Connectivity Plan
Roadway Classification	Subsection III.G.2	
Traffic Volumes and Roadway Conditions	Subsection III.G.3	
Pedestrian Facilities (Sidewalks and Pedestrian Crossings)	Subsection III.G.4	Map 6: Transportation Alternatives and Connectivity Plan
Bicycle Facilities	Subsection III.G.5	Map 6: Transportation Alternatives and Connectivity Plan
Public Transportation	Subsection III.G.6	
Existing Public Facilities and Cultural Resources	Subsection III.H	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Municipal Buildings	Subsection III.H.1	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Parks and Recreation	Subsection III.H.2	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Senior Services	Subsection III.H.3	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Libraries	Subsection III.H.4	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Schools	Subsection III.H.5	
Child Care Facilities	Subsection III.H.6	
Emergency Services	Subsection III.H.7	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Cemeteries	Subsection III.H.8	Map 7: Existing Public Facilities
Cultural Resources	Subsection III.H.9	
Visual Resources	Subsection III.H.10	
Existing Economic Conditions	Subsection III.I	Map 8: Economic Development

B. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The underlying purpose and a major aim of the Plan is to promote appropriate land use and guide development activity in the Town of Tonawanda, and to avoid significant adverse environment impacts in the community. However, it is also necessary to identify and consider potential significant adverse impacts that may result from the implementation of the Plan. This section of the Plan addresses potential impacts to the community related to land use and development, which may result through implementation of the Plan.

1. Short Term/Long Term and Cumulative Impacts

The Comprehensive Plan Update is designed to properly guide growth in the Town to lessen the negative impacts of land use changes and development activities. Based on the environmental setting of the Town of Tonawanda, the following potentially significant adverse environmental impacts could occur if the community did not plan adequately and provide the proper tools to manage growth and development. The discussions in this section are based on the general content and format of the SEQR Full Environmental Assessment Form Part 2 - Identification of Potential Project Impacts. The reader can also refer to Section IV (Findings and Recommendations) for an understanding of potential impacts.

The following are the potential short term and long term impacts due to anticipated growth patterns and how they may be affected by implementing the actions recommended in the Plan.

a. Impacts on Land

The existing land use pattern in the Town provides a diverse range of uses across the range of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and public uses which are primarily built-out. In general, the Town has limited areas for future development. It is anticipated that most development activities will consist of modification and/or total redevelopment of existing non-residential properties, including but not limited to former industrial sites which are currently vacant or underutilized. There are areas of non-developed lands, such as the waterfront area, where new development may occur. There are few "greenfield" sites for new development.

The Plan facilitates the Town to focus on how new development and redevelopment will occur, minimizing potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

Map 1: Aerial Photography, Map 2: Existing Land Use, Map 3: Existing Zoning, and Environmental Features Map in Section 4 depict the existing land use patterns.

b. Impact on Geological Features

Potential changes in land use and environmental features that may result from adoption of the Plan are not anticipated to negatively impact the underlying geology or result in the modification or destruction of any unique or unusual land forms in the Town.

c. Impacts on Water (Surface Waters, Groundwater and Flooding)

There are limited areas of Federal and State designated freshwater wetlands located in the Town.

The Town's major water features include the Niagara River, which runs along the western border of the Town, as well as the waterways of Ellicott Creek, Tonawanda Creek and Two-Mile Creek. There are some areas of floodplains associated with these waterways. FEMA has prepared an update to the FIRM maps for Erie County, including the Town of Tonawanda.

The Town will continue to implement the Phase 2 stormwater regulations (SPDES), thus helping to protect the community's waterways (including protection from erosion and siltation).

The Town is completely serviced by public water and sewer systems. The Town will continue to invest in this infrastructure and does not foresee major problems with capacity issues.

Water resources are identified on the Map 5: Environmental Features.

d. Impacts on Air

As the Town land use and economic base evolve former industrial uses are slowly changing from heavy industry to modern "clean" light industrial, assembly and distribution uses. The plan does not encourage new industrial uses where they were not previously allowed.

e. Impacts on Plants and Animals

As a built-out suburban environment, the Town does not contain large contiguous areas of natural wildlife habitat. Existing wildlife habitats are located along portions of water corridors and in public open spaces. Significant wildlife habitats are located on Strawberry Island. New York State is responsible for this area, which is protected. There is an on-going project to re-create and establish emergent marsh and submerged aquatic vegetation habitat at Frog Island, a shallow shoal in the Niagara River – Tonawanda Channel.

Implementation of the Plan will afford more protection to the Town's waterways and associated wildlife habitats. These actions will help to protect habitats on Strawberry Island and also non-protected species and habitats.

f. Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

There are no agricultural lands in the Town and therefore no impacts to agricultural resources will result from implementing this Plan.

g. Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

As a fully developed suburb, most aesthetic resources in the Town are associated with waterfronts, parkland and man-made features (such as architecture or landscaping). Scenic vistas are available from Ellicott Creek Park, where Ellicott Creek provides an aesthetic backdrop. A portion of the Town's northern border also fronts on the Erie Canal. There are several locations along the Niagara River where scenic views of the water are available, including the Town Boat Launch, Aqua Lane Park, and at locations along the Shoreline Trail.

Deterioration of buildings as well as vacant, under-utilized or abandoned properties can be seen as an aesthetic issue.

h. Impacts of Historic and Archeological Resources

Outside of the Village of Kenmore, there are no historic resources listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Sites within the Town.

Portions of the Town along the Niagara River, Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek are located in designated archaeologically sensitive areas. This designation indicates that archaeological resources may be found, however, no significant archaeological sites are recorded in the Town.

i. Impact on Open Space and Recreation

The Town has limited large areas of undeveloped open space. These existing areas are predominantly located in the waterfront areas. Former industrial and landfill areas that have been remediated also offer larger areas of undeveloped land that may be repurposed in a variety of ways, including open space and recreation.

The Town has an excellent park system, with parks and playgrounds distributed throughout the community. School facilities also provide open space and active recreational resources. Closed schools offer an opportunity for repurposing their undeveloped areas for recreation and/or open spaces.

Some additional recreational opportunities are supplied by private businesses and by governmental facilities in adjacent communities.

j. Impact on Critical Environmental Areas

New York State has set criteria for municipalities designating specific geographic areas within their boundaries as "Critical Environmental Areas" (CEAs). To be

designated as a CEA, an area must have an exceptional or unique character with respect to one or more of the following:

- a benefit or threat to human health;
- a natural setting;
- agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values; or
- an inherent ecological, geological or hydrological sensitivity to change.

There are no designated CEAs in the Town of Tonawanda.

k. Impact on Transportation and Traffic

The surface transportation network in the Town includes excellent access to the Interstate Highway System through I-190 and I-290. There are also several State and County roads that traverse the Town. The transportation system is heavily dependent upon automotive travel.

The Town, like many suburban communities, has problem areas in its transportation system, such as problem intersections or periods of localized congestion. Development and growth both within and outside of the Town may result in changes in traffic patterns.

Land uses throughout most of the Town, primarily in the eastern areas and closer to the Village of Kenmore, are dense enough to support alternative modes of travel, such as walking or biking, but adequate facilities for these alternative modes do not exist throughout the Town.

Rail remains an important mode of transportation in the Town for commercial (freight) use.

Additional development or redevelopment has the potential to increase demands on the transportation system, or increase potential conflicts between pedestrians, bikes and automobiles.

The plan contains several recommendations (expansion of multi-use paths, complete streets policy, identified problem intersections, improved transit facilities) that are intended to broaden the transportation choices and to lessen negative impacts on transportation systems in the Town.

l. Impact on Energy

As vacant, underutilized and abandoned properties are redeveloped or expanded, their re-use will create an increase in energy use.

The existing electric and gas networks have adequate capacity available for future development projects. In addition, revised zoning regulations encourage increased usage of solar energy in all sectors, from small-scale to utility-scale.

m. Noise, Odor and Light

The western portion of the Town has historically been the center of industrial uses in the Town and therefore the major source for noise and odor impacts. As industrial and commercial uses are redeveloped in accordance with the Plan, there may be an increase in noise, odors or outdoor lighting.

n. Impact on Human Health

Certain land uses (in particular, industrial, manufacturing, and energy production) have the potential to impact human health from exposure to new or existing sources of contaminants. The Plan allows existing industrial uses to continue as well as redevelopment of vacant, underutilized or abandoned brownfields into modern industrial facilities (meeting current health and safety standards).

The Plan also supports the continued remediation and appropriate reuse of former hazardous waste or known spill sites.

o. Consistency of Community Plans

One purpose of this update to the Plan is to make it consistent with several planning initiatives and studies undertaken since the 2005 Plan was started in 2003. They include but are not limited to:

- Waterfront Land Use Plan (2014)
- Commercial Districts Rezoning Studies and Amendments (2010 and 2012)
- Local Waterfront Revitalization Program Amendment (2008)
- Brownfield Opportunity Area Pre-nomination Study (November 2012)
- Old Town Neighborhood Plan (July 2010)
- Tonawanda Community Air Quality Study (2007-2009)
- Critical Water System Master Plan (2007)

p. Consistency with Community Character

The Town of Tonawanda experienced declining population and household size for several decades. The number of households continues to increase as

household size continues to decrease. As demographics change and new families move into the Town it is anticipated that population decline will level, and the population will begin to increase the coming decades.

The Town was built to accommodate a larger population than is currently residing in the Town, and is able to absorb the anticipated moderate population growth without negative impacts to community character.

The Plan focuses mainly on redevelopment and making the community more aesthetically pleasing and enhancing quality of life features for the community.

Large increases in new residential development are not anticipated as a result of the Plan.

The Plan's recommendations are intended to strengthen and improve residential neighborhood character, access and character of the waterfront, and viability and aesthetic character of neighborhood commercial centers.

2. Adverse Environmental Impacts That Can Not Be Avoided

With or without the adoption and implementation of this Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update, the Town will continue to have new development and redevelopment that will potentially impact the environment and the character of the Town. The adoption of this Plan will allow the Town to better manage growth and development, and reduce potential environmental impacts.

All development actions taking place after the adoption of this Plan will still be subject to the SEQR process on a site specific basis. Nothing contained in this document supplants the necessity of adequate environmental review of future actions. However, this Comprehensive Plan Update will be a resource that can be used to facilitate the review under SEQR of future development actions.

In addition to site plan review by the Planning Board, this Plan will have the greatest impact on rezoning requests, because zoning must be in accordance with the community's Comprehensive Plan.

3. Growth Inducing Aspects of the Plan

Most of the implementation actions outlined in this Plan will help to control and better direct growth within the community. Certain implementation actions will act to encourage certain types of development or redevelopment in specific areas of the Town. However, the Town is predominantly built out, and most of the anticipated development will be improvements and upgrades, consistent with the general character of the Town.

C. MITIGATION MEASURES

One objective of this Comprehensive Plan Update is to help to reduce the likelihood that potential significant impacts will result from the implementation of the Plan recommendations. This can be accomplished by providing techniques for changing the development trends of a community, such as amending zoning or other development regulations, or by providing tools to help mitigate the possible impacts of those development trends (improved infrastructure, increased/improved standards for development, etc.). An effective comprehensive plan will supply techniques for changing the direction of the community, and the tools for reducing the impacts of development that themselves do not create other adverse environmental impacts. The following section discusses the Plan's recommendations and the logic as to why and how they help mitigate the potential impacts of future growth. (See Section IV for further discussion of the recommendations.)

a. Impacts on Land

Most of the remaining undeveloped or underutilized land in the Town is located in the waterfront district. The Plan supports the Waterfront Land Use Plan (2014). Development guidelines for the waterfront encourage sustainable mixed use development, enhanced access, preservation of resources and compatible development.

This Plan also encourages redevelopment of existing underdeveloped properties and renovations/reuse of existing commercial properties which will divert development away from undeveloped lands and mitigate impacts from sprawl or greenfield development.

b. Impact on Geological Features

Potential changes in land use not anticipated to negatively impact the underlying geology or require mitigation.

c. Impacts on Water (Surface Waters, Groundwater and Flooding)

Waterfront lands in Tonawanda are protected by a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP), which the Town updated in 2010. This Plan reaffirms that document.

In order to minimize impact to wetlands the Plan guides new development to first avoid then minimized disturbances to wetlands. The Town will continue to ensure that development activities State and Federal requirements to protect wetlands.

In order to minimize impacts from flooding the Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and enforces the Flood Damage Prevention law. The Plan documents the Town's intention to use the new FIRM maps and update the local Flood Damage Prevention law once the new maps go into effect.

The Town will continue to implement the Phase 2 stormwater regulations (SPDES), to help protect the community's waterways (including protection from erosion and siltation).

The Town will continue to invest in its public water and sewer infrastructure in order to protect water quality.

d. Impacts on Air

The Plan does not encourage new industrial uses where they were not previously allowed. As facilities expand or are re-used the Town will continue to ensure that new operations meet the current applicable air quality standards avoiding significant adverse impacts. New uses that require air permitting will mitigate potential impacts through permit standards and conditions.

e. Impacts on Plants and Animals

By encouraging redevelopment of existing developed lands and preservation of important open space, the Plan minimizes impacts on plants and animals, reducing the need for mitigation.

f. Impacts on Agricultural Land Resources

There are no agricultural lands in the Town of Tonawanda and therefore no impacts that require mitigation.

g. Impacts on Aesthetic Resources

The Plan recommends land use controls to protect the aesthetic resources of the Town and to improve them as redevelopment occurs. These techniques include commercial zoning districts that reflect the context of their surroundings, site layout and design guidelines, and generally more stringent site Plan review by the Planning Board.

The Waterfront Land Use Plan emphasizes improved access, heightened consideration to site and building design, and projects to enhance streetscape and landscaping. Implementation of the Waterfront Land Use Plan and adherence to the LWRP policies will protect (and enhance) the scenic resources

along the waterfront, mitigating any impacts from land use changes in those areas.

h. Impacts on Historic and Archaeological Resources

The Plan supports the protection of important historic and archeological resources in the Town. While there are no known significant archaeological sites in the Town, the environmental review of major new development projects must document consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, which will identify and mitigate impacts to cultural resources.

i. Impacts on Open Space, Parks and Recreation

The Plan identifies the important open space and recreation features of the community and provides recommendations towards the continued provision of parks and recreation services as well as protection of open spaces.

The Plan recommends some opportunities for additional recreational facilities, such as converting the former Town landfill to recreational use.

Other recommendations include expanded connections between residential neighborhoods and the open space, parks and recreational assets in the Town. The Plan recommends enhancement and expansion of the network of multi-use pedestrian and bicycle paths.

The Plan identifies the value and encourages continued use of school properties as neighborhood open space and recreation resources.

j. Impact on Critical Environmental Areas

There are no designated Critical Environmental Areas in the Town of Tonawanda, therefore additional evaluation of CEAs and mitigation are not required.

k. Impacts on Transportation

Transportation in Tonawanda is heavily based on roadways and automobiles. The Plan identifies opportunities to reduce the dependence on automobiles and encourages multi-modal opportunities such as, enhanced multi-use path connections, pedestrian and bicycle enhancements, improved transit (bus) routes and facilities, potential locations for “road diet” projects, and encourages a complete streets policy.

Land use recommendations in the Plan encourage a pattern decentralized commercial nodes that facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access to neighborhood activity centers, potentially reducing congestion on the roadways.

Because the Plan does not call for major changes in land use, the implementation of zoning and land use recommendations are not anticipated to cause significant increases in traffic or congestion and therefore, require less mitigation.

The Plan identifies localized problems within the community, and recommends continued cooperation with regional transportation entities to address these problems. The Plan also recommends access management improvements on major corridors in the Town to reduce congestion.

l. Impact on Energy

It is anticipated that the economic development and growth identified in the Plan will be adequately served by the existing gas and electric infrastructure as well as augmented by developing small wind and solar technologies, avoiding the need for mitigation.

m. Noise, Odor and Light

As individual industrial and commercial uses are redeveloped in accordance with the Plan, potential impacts from noise, odors or outdoor lighting will be addressed through site plan review, environmental review and applicable permitting at the Town, County and State levels. Current review standards provide the Town better opportunity to minimize impacts from noise, odor and light.

n. Impact on Human Health

The Plan encourages the continued remediation and appropriate reuse of former hazardous waste or known spill sites. The Town will continue to work with property owners and the NYSDEC to identify and remediate sites that may have once had spills or other contamination. The Town will also work with the NYSDEC to identify and “clear” sites for appropriate redevelopment and reuse.

o. Consistency of Community Plans

This plan update makes the Plan consistent with several planning initiatives and studies undertaken since the Plan was last updated in 2005. These other studies are referenced within the Plan and their recommendations taken into consideration in the development of the Findings and Recommendations and Implementation Strategies.

p. Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

The projected growth rate for the Town indicates a reversal of population decline and modest growth in the coming decades. Implementation of the Plan supports modest growth and addresses increased demand for smaller households. The existing infrastructure is adequate to support residential infill and redevelopment and significant negative impacts are not anticipated.

The Plan provides the opportunity to better control how redevelopment will occur and encourages mixed use, revitalization of existing commercial districts, and enhancing the character of the community.

Recommendations discussed throughout the Plan focus on the character of the community and will help create neighborhood-centric commercial nodes, improved design standards throughout the community, revitalization of older neighborhoods, and improved pedestrian/bicycle facilities.

The Implementation Strategy also provides mitigation measures that offset the minimal negative impacts identified in the Findings. Overall implementation of the Plan's recommendations is anticipated to result in positive changes in land use and community character.

D. EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Throughout the Planning process, alternatives for the Town to achieve its Vision were evaluated, and the recommendations in the Plan represent the concepts that best express residents' goals and objectives, as presented in Section II. Recommendations and Implementation alternatives were evaluated for not only their desired results, but also their impact to the environment, the needs of local residents, encouragement of economic development, and the overall vitality of the community.

The evaluation focused primarily on the near-term recommendations. Long-term actions were not thoroughly evaluated since these actions were intended for potential implementation only if short-term recommendations are not achieving the desired results.

The "No Action" alternative would be to not continually review, update or implement the Town Comprehensive Plan. However, this alternative does not afford the Town the ability to pro-actively direct and manage growth or mitigate potential environmental impacts. Therefore the "No Action" alternative was deemed inappropriate. There is also the potential that the "No Action"

alternative would lead to increased negative impacts, as the Plan encourages revitalization and enhancements to the Town that may not occur without the Plan in place.

The plan is determined to be preferable to the “No Action” alternative, since it is designed to properly manage growth and to mitigate potential impacts.

E. THRESHOLDS FOR FURTHER REVIEW

According to the guidance from the NYS DOS and NYS DEC, SEQR provides an important incentive for preparing a GEIS, namely, if a GEIS has been prepared, further SEQR compliance may not be required for some future projects (actions) if those subsequent projects are carried out in conformance with the conditions and thresholds established in the GEIS. In this manner, the combined Comprehensive Plan Update/Generic EIS can function as a tool for preplanning projects that require further action (such as implementing actions outlined in Section V, including re-drafting of zoning laws, and calling for transportation and infrastructure projects).

Subsequent development actions taking place after the adoption of the plan, including actions recommended in the document, will be subject to SEQR review on a site-specific basis, but this document will facilitate future assessment of planned development actions.

The recommendations and implementation strategies established in the Comprehensive Plan will guide the how future implementation actions should be subject to further review under SEQR.

F. SEQR PROCESS

- Steering Committee achieves consensus on revisions to the Draft Comprehensive Plan/GEIS document and requests its review by the Planning Board.
- Planning Board accepts the Draft Comprehensive Plan/GEIS and forwards to the Town Board with their recommendation adopt.
- Town Board directs SEQR Lead Agency solicitation and Coordinated Review to begin.
- Town Board holds public hearing on combined Draft Comprehensive Plan/GEIS
- 30-day public review period.

- Assuming it will be determined that “there are no potentially significant adverse environmental impacts as a result of the plan's adoption” a Negative Declaration will be drafted for the Town’s use.
- Town Board Adopts the Comprehensive Plan/GEIS.

APPENDIX A
PUBLIC AND
STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

5. What are the top three issues the Town will need to address/overcome to accomplish long-term economic goals?

Welcome!
Town of Tonawanda
Comprehensive Plan Update
Focus Group: Economic Development
November 12, 2013



Photo courtesy of the Town's website

--Thank you for participating! We look forward to the prospect of working with stakeholders and residents to create a Comprehensive Plan Update that truly addresses the needs of the Town of Tonawanda--

Hosted By:

Gary Palumbo, AICP
Wendy Weber Salvati, AICP
Jocelyn Gordon, AICP

Name _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

1. Please describe the Town of Tonawanda's economic role in the region (retail, industrial, housing, tourism/entertainment).
3. What are the top three strengths the Town can build upon to enhance economic development?
2. How has Tonawanda's economic role evolved over the past decade?
4. How can the Town incorporate its efforts into regional economic development initiatives?

MEETING NOTES

Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update Economic Development Focus Group

November 12, 2013

Attendees:

Robert J. Gilmour – TTDC
Tracy Lukasik – KenTon Chamber of Commerce
Jim Jones – Town of Tonawanda
Bonnie Leto- Niagara River World
Timothy Vaeth – TM Montante
Dan Leonard – Buffalo Niagara Partnership

Jocelyn Gordon welcomed the attendees and provided an explanation of the use and importance of a comprehensive plan, and the purpose of the focus meeting, explaining that three such meetings were being held for three specific focus areas (land use/community facilities; transportation and economic development).

Discussion commenced using the workbook:

1. Describe the Town's economic role in the region...

Bob Gilmour – supports the use and update of the TT comp plan. Bob is affiliated with Town of Amherst (as Planning Board member) and the use of the Amherst plan. TT has great opportunities; waterfront development and business parks that are ready to go. Need to take advantage of these sites for mixed use. Waterfront is a greater challenge. Much potential on Delaware Ave, from Sheridan Drive to Kenmore Ave. Demographics are changing on both sides of Delaware, with younger people moving in who seek a more walkable neighborhood and a better mix of commercial uses. You could also go north to the Youngmann, but the land use and property sizes change; and there is not much retail in this area, although there may be potential. There has to be enough flexibility to change buildings/properties to enable more mixed use, etc. How can you amend development in the area to the north?

Jocelyn noted the abundance of empty school sites that could be reused.

Tracy Lukasik – The main reason that Town lost premier liquor was that they felt there was not enough opportunity and mix of uses; they wanted a more attractive commercial environment. Between Village and Town, - Kenmore has a greater concentration of businesses that are more inclusive to the village. Need a greater reach across municipal boundaries (better cohesion across the blurred line of where Town stops and Village begins).

Bob noted a patio home development that was quite successful. Could this happen on the waterfront or in other places. How to we attract population to the area. For WNY to be successful as a region in the future, we need to find a way to be better than Toronto. If we can figure this out (the right campaign), we could be very successful. Need incentives to get people here; once here, they will stay, but need to find a way to get them here. This is our legacy of the future, to overcome mistakes of the past (use of waterfront for industry).

Dan Leonard – need a partnership of agencies to help with this effort. They (the Partnership) are currently focused on developing an international trade gateway in the area. He could see the Tonawanda locations playing a big role with this.

Timothy Vaeth (Montante) – Their property is noted as the large green (proposed) area on the map, which should now be blue (existing). They are doing some business park development in the area, which has its main infrastructure. They direct people towards the City, for commercial services. How can we direct people to service areas in the Town (lacking these opportunities)? Redevelopment of older industrial areas is affected by former Tonawanda Coke site. How do we push people out to the waterfront locations, where infrastructure exists? How do you get residential out there? If we can accomplish this, the amenities will follow. Also, it's difficult to do things on the water because of other agency approvals that are required (DEC, ACOE, etc.). Group discussed a site that is cleared for development but owner cannot find a developer to move it forward.

Bonnie Leto – discussed her 62 ac waterfront property (Riverworld), which has 50 developable acres. They are undertaking additional site cleanup (and demo of old steel mill). Site has great waterfront views, but upland areas and surrounding sites are not attractive and preclude interest in the site. The monumental challenge is the existing industries that will not be going away and the perception of industry in this area. She has reviewed recommendations and information in LWRP (their site is approved for commercial and industrial use). They need to find a big user who needs a large tract of land to build some type of industrial or manufacturing use. DEC is already very familiar with the site, which has been cleaned up and parts could even be used for restricted residential use (likely along the waterfront). She feels the site needs grant money to be used to fix the seawall and other improvements to enable better use. Also, need flexibility with the approval process (how can things be streamlined?)

Gilmour – can we be flexible with this site to allow use (what should it be classified for?). If everything is too “black and white” we lose opportunities for future use. Must should be flexibility for reuse and redevelopment. Bob asked how much developable land is left in the Town? TTDC has signs posted advertising shovel ready sites availability. He doesn't believe there are a lot of NIMBY issues in the Town (west side). If we make changes within neighborhoods, this could be different.

Vaeth – Municipalities can many times stand in the way (sited Colvin Woods and Muir Woods Ciminelli projects); politics can make it more difficult. At Riverview, they have had good experiences working with the Town (better than Amherst). Have 300K sf going in and are looking at a neighboring parcel. TTDC should find out how much developable land is left and where opportunities exist (including what sites may be more problematic than others and what sites have attractive amenities such as rail access, etc.).

Jim Jones – spoke about BOA status and ability for the Step 2 BOA to fund Phase 1 ESA studies at 10 locations. Question of whether Bonnie's site is beyond needing a Phase I if cleanup is mostly done.

Gary Palumbo – voiced what he sees as a flaw in the BOA program; Phase I's are part of Step 2, but often only needed as documentation for the lending institutions.

Gilmour – need to also look at sites that can be redeveloped aside from the waterfront industrial lands. Have three potentials sites...–

Leonard – potential in older strip development to bring about more walkable, mixed use areas (along Sheridan).

Lukasik – many of the (commercial) properties are noted to be old and in disrepair. Need incentives for rehabilitation. We need to know what resources are available so we can capitalize on our strengths. Stakeholders want to participate but it is difficult and we need to know what resources we have.

Gilmour – take lessons from some downstate areas and Elmwood Ave, which have successfully been redeveloped. If we can establish a base, it can become a catalyst for future activity and change. Need to establish initial attractive mix. Also need the other features (bike trails, etc.) to help create better neighborhoods. Growth brings growth.

Jones – noted that Town did rezone Delaware to provide tools to start molding the area to more mixed use.

Vaeth – noted “Tetzo” development – moving their headquarters to Town’s North Youngmann park (f.k.a. mudflats. Need to start cobbling pieces together to add density based on easy access and availability of amenities. Want to be able to draw larger projects. Between Montante, Ciminielli North Youngmann and Bonnie’s land there is probably 300 acres. To do larger projects, we need more land (nano development example). Could we make compelling argument that we have 300 acres of shovel ready developable industrial/commercial land. Look at the other strengths that we can draw from in the Cities of Buffalo and Tonawanda that can make our sites more attractive.

Leonard – noted that COB, with lakeside commerce park, which was built around Union Ship canal and did ship canal commons park, which is helping to attract businesses. Also noted what Montante is doing with solar energy (high tech industrial area). Companies want to locate in areas that have more cache. Energy efficiency makes a difference and will continue into the future. It will be in demand.

Jocelyn – noted what 3M, dupont and others in the industrial area are working on high tech energy things and are interested in working together to create environmentally conscious initiatives, which are different from what is happening in the City.

Palumbo – are we losing underutilized industrial land opportunities to other uses? Is this change permanently away from industry what the Town wants to see?

Leonard – not really, industry (new) is cleaner and more compatible with neighborhoods. Buffalo River corridor is becoming more attractive.

Jones - We want to attract a healthy, sustainable tax base

Gilmour – used Amherst example of looking at places where uses could be flipped (i.e., Westwood/Audubon golf courses)? Are such things possible here?

Palumbo - what about reuse of schools (on a smaller scale).

Gordon – any heritage or history; things that make the Town special. Is there an interest in heritage or tourism or things that make the Town great? Can we capitalize on any of this – can we create a story?

Jones – The Town wants to do this in the waterfront landscape plan along River Road to improve image and vistas to river. This would involve strategic clearing in a few locations (GI Blvd., Sawyer and Sheridan). EC Riverwalk is on top of Erie Canal; Town has only one small sign on canal. Want to do more interpretive signage and note points of interest. (discussion of rail bridge and train car in area). Project will include interpretive signs in front of notable industrial activities as well as heritage opps, such as Cherry Farm. They are also working with private stakeholders who could implement plans on their private lands, where the Town cannot expend public monies for improvements. They can’t do improvements on DOT ROW, but are working with DOT to implement improvements. Town only owns about 500 yards of waterfront in Town; most is private or other agency ownership, so partnerships are essential. They have done some preliminary mapping and mash ups for this effort.

Leto – they have had extensive discussions with Bob Dimmig on heritage and identity. He seems to be the greatest proponent for this (Jocelyn). There are little things on the property where this type of thing could be accomplished.

Vaeth – questioned issues with the river that make it harder to dock boats on the south shore of the river do to the river current.

Bonnie – floating docks are known to be problematic.

Leonard – what does Town need to do to stand out? What makes it unique? Town has the opportunity to be a more walkable, transit-oriented development (unlike other suburbs). TOD probably hasn't been discussed. Well connected to downtown and more dense, in ways that are better than Amherst. Use the densities to the Town's advantage. Better neighborhoods good housing stock, opportunities for public transit and schools which help and can be built upon (all are strengths for the Town). Delaware Avenue has great bus service to the City.

Wendy – Town has advantages that other Towns lack in this respect. Quality of life characteristics are better.

Jones – noted that NFTA has pruned some bus routes in the area. Town requested better accommodations at the existing bus stops to benefit riders. Town advocates an electric public travel system on the abandoned rail line – long-term vision of multi-modal use of this corridor, tying in with the proposed bike trail. Connection from City of Tonawanda to City of Buffalo downtown with options for public transit, biking, walking, etc. Noted that BOA and LWRP plans are on website for public review.

Jones – Town is working on a road diet for River Road; Vaeth noted concerns with speed limit changes and proposed issues with proposed development

Jocelyn – noted public meeting that is planned for November 26th and explained format for that meeting.

Please feel free to add anything else you would like the Town to consider as we work to update the Comprehensive Plan.

Welcome!
Town of Tonawanda
Comprehensive Plan Update
Focus Group: Transportation
November 12, 2013

--Thank you for participating! We look forward to the prospect of working with stakeholders and residents to create a Comprehensive Plan Update that truly addresses the needs of the Town of Tonawanda--



Photo of Delaware Avenue courtesy of the Town's website

Hosted By: Gary Palumbo, AICP
Wendy Weber Salvati, AICP
Jocelyn Gordon, AICP

Name _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

1. Please describe the most significant improvements to the Town's transportation network over the past decade. How have these improvements enhanced overall quality of life in Tonawanda?
2. How should the Town respond to evolving concepts of road design including facilitating the development of more bicycle lanes and pedestrian-friendly street design?
3. Please describe safety/traffic problem areas/issues the Town should ensure are address as the Comprehensive Plan is developed?
4. How can transportation enhancements contribute to a greater quality of life in Tonawanda?

MEETING NOTES

Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update Transportation Focus Group

November 12, 2013

Attendees:

Mark Armbrust – URS
Robert Dimmig – TTDC
Joe Buffamonte – NYSDOT
Jim Cuozzo - NYSDOT
Tim Trabold – GBNRTC
Steve Tandick – Tonawanda Highway Dept.
Lt. Nick Bado- Tonawanda Police Department
Jim Jones – Town Engineer
Gary Bennett- NFTA

Gary Palumbo welcomed the attendees and provided an explanation of the use and importance of a comprehensive plan, and the purpose of the focus meeting, explaining that three such meetings are being held for three specific focus areas (community facilities; transportation and economic development).

Discussion commenced using the workbook:

1. Describe the most significant improvements to the Town's transportation network over the past decade. How have these improvements enhanced overall quality of life?...

Tim Trabold – noted Kenmore Avenue (interface with City of Buffalo) is underway. They are working together to pave this roadway in portions. These are the areas in Town that have been deteriorating in quality of life. Rails to trails conversion along Lehigh Valley corridor, from Kenmore Avenue up to State Street in City of Tonawanda (by 2014-15) and up to the canal, which will connect to the North Buffalo rails to trails project taking it to LaSalle/Main Street. Also, the greenway trails (riverwalk section through Town) and whole concept through Erie/Niagara County (and ultimately to Pennsylvania). Greenway commission looking at improvements along Town waterfront to establish "world class" facility, including security cameras, signage, etc. The GW commissioner is looking for projects and wants to fund improvements, so this is a good opportunity for the Town.

Jim Jones – noted waterfront corridor landscaping and opportunities for riverwalk improvements.

Gary Palumbo – How can reconstruction of Kenmore Avenue (Fairfield to Main St) help to stabilize economic base or quality of life for residents? What should the Town be asking for in terms of ped amenities as part of reconstruction?

Tim Trabold – streetscaping would be the most significant. Section would be three lanes with bike lanes.

Jim Jones – Town has asked the County to put the remainder of Kenmore Avenue (to Military) on the TIP. Current and proposed projects are just mill and overlay, which are quick fixes; Town wants reconstruction.

Steve Tandick – Any Town projects? Sees no changes coming up right now for Town roads.

Nick Bado – without studying statistics, no areas come to mine. At Elmwood and Sheridan there is no left turn lane which results in crashes. Anything to minimize conflicts at intersections would be recommended. Also they (Police) get complaints about sidewalks; some areas in Town still lack them.

Jim Jones – Delaware Road at Sheridan could use some pavement striping improvements, from Thorncliff south to Glen Cove. Could use a five-lane section striping design. Sidewalks are a huge issue in Town, they are too narrow (4 feet), in disrepair, and some have vertical clearing issues (tree pruning, which is not addressed in the Code), etc. We need a better funding mechanism and continuity in capital project planning (for sidewalks). Many people avoid the sidewalks and walk in the streets – why? Generally, it is likely a condition issue and perceptions of proximity to private property. Maintenance of the sidewalks is required, by Code, to be undertaken by property owners (using concrete for repairs). Code lacks other standards that would bring about continuity. Should have 5-foot sidewalks, but if existing are 4-foot, there will be inequalities. Also, the Code does not require/address handicap access. Town should consider sidewalk districts to generate funding for comprehensive sidewalk repairs and replacement; this is not politically favorable.

Gary Palumbo – where are the sidewalk gaps?

Jim Jones – estimate that 80% of roads have sidewalks; most were installed in the 50's and are old. NF Blvd. does not have sidewalks from Sheridan to the 290. State would need to make the road narrower to install them, or take property which would affect available parking (a big issue). Access management (with Town of Amherst) study was never started when funding source was not identified for the study.

Joe Buffamonte – every state traffic signal is supposed to have walk/don't walk indicators (timers) and ADA compliant ramps. DOT is in the process of doing these small projects everywhere – not as a specific project, but a program. Sheridan Drive was just completed. Most DOT roads have sidewalks but not all signals have the pedestrian features. Town may request full compliance for County Roads, as well.

Nick Bado – Brighten and Colvin is a location where improvements have been requested. The signals on Colvin were on the TIP, but only one got replaced. Asked if State signals can be made “generator capable” for use during power failures. It's not known if this can be done, but it would free up (police) resources. Town would like to have this universal throughout the Town.

Tim Trabold – there are signal coordination plans for both Sheridan Drive and NF Blvd. This effort is ready to go forward. This project requires upgrades of signals for pre-empting with a button. When pressed, the pedestrian phase is extended longer (have to use button to enable enough crossing time). After pressed, the signal resets itself to regular functioning mode. The coordination would be dovetailed with the intersection signal improvements.

Joe Buffamonte – NYSDOT has done (reconstructed?) the 290 interchange at Niagara Falls Blvd. Main purpose was to eliminate the weave as people exit the 290. Restriped Delaware Avenue in the Village (change occurred at Village line). Section changes north of the Village, where it becomes more suburban. This could be carried up Delaware to the north (not likely, but it is possible). Joe stressed the importance of working/tying in with the State when they are doing proposed projects. Recently did some work on Sheridan, from military to GI Blvd., changing the striping and removed a lane in some spots. The standards are the same, but the DOT design group is more flexible when implementing improvements. With local support, it is typically doable to make things narrower to fit in sidewalks or bikelanes.

If Town's plan was to have improvements of this nature in certain areas, the State will take it into consideration. State Roads are repaved in the town every seven years, which is the best time to change pavement markings. The State encourages the plan to be somewhat specific to enable better coordination when projects come up and allow the State more leeway to work to achieve the Town's desires for roadway improvements.

Another major project, rebuilding bridges on the Youngmann – Military and Delaware are the first ones planned. This will cause huge traffic congestion as lanes will need to be closed to do this. Construction will likely start in 2015 (in final design and going to bid in fall 2014). Plans to work on the bridge over Parker and over the NFTAs ROW. In our plan, we should note that in the course of the 10 years (planning horizon), every state highway will be repaved. Hence, Town should plan to coordinate improvements with these efforts.

Pedestrian bridge over Sheridan, near Hoover School, may need improvements. That would be an issue that the State will have to eventually address. They can assist to make ADA compliant.

Jim Jones - Town did a traffic count on it in May 2013 – 30 AM, 17 PM. The status of this bridge will be part of the comprehensive plan update process. Demolition is an option, as well as rebuilding ADA compliance and repairs. It was built to facilitate access to Delaware Pool, which is no longer there.

Town is looking at signal warrant analysis at Sheridan and Ashford to justify moving the signal to Sheridan and Vicksburg/Gettyburg. This would be in support of the construction of the future multi-use trail on the adjacent rail corridor. Old rail bridge in COT that crosses over Ellicott Creek; Town would like support from the NFTA to take a look at this.

Palumbo – question re: rapid transit study. Do we have the correct info re: the alternatives study. There are no alternatives that would affect the Town? (looking at Buffalo to Amherst and using the NF blvd to get to the destination in Amherst. There are no bus alternatives that would involve the Town?

Gary Bennett – no changes of importance are planned. Route wise – all the same. May do some rerouting in the waterfront industrial area to provide site access.

Joe Buffamonte – DOT would like to see small park and ride lots be considered in the Town, such as in the vicinity of Knoche Road. Would Town consider owning, lighting and maintaining if the State builds? DOT would be receptive to assisting with this. They cannot control who parks in them but they do contribute.

Bob Dimmig – what about park and rides for trails.

Joe Buffamonte, DOT can build trail head facilities as part of a trails project. Let the State know what the Town wants, as long as the locations make sense. Could use the tandem lot by GI Bridge as a park and ride. Facility is owned by NYSTA.

Jim Jones – NYSTA participates in waterfront landscaping committee; he will speak to them about this.

Gary Bennett - Delaware and the 290 interchange; anywhere where bus service is frequent. This would be "locker" type facilities, similar to what was done at LaSalle Park. Also, look at Delaware Avenue at the 290 (Valu Plaza on left side of parking lot, about a dozen people park here informally). NFTA has an agreement with the City of Tonawanda to use a portion of the municipal lot for park and ride (lot is underutilized by the residents). They have similar agreements at Eastern Hills and McKinley malls.

Jim Jones – spoke about congestion study (re: air quality improvements). NYSTA has pilot project to install electronic tolls (likely doing it down state); Town would like to see it done here at GI Bridge. If converted to all electronic tolls (with plate recognition system), idling and slow downs would be curtailed helping to improve air quality.

Tim Trabold – when the Town is advising the State on coordinating projects and the recommendations of the Comp Plan, this information has to be shared with the County so that they also coordinate their project plans with the Town.

Joe Buffamonte – State has a complete streets law and if the Town wants to implement such projects, the State will work to assist, as it is their policy to support such efforts. Roundabouts are another improvement the State will evaluate when looking at intersection signalization.

Bob Dimmig – noted looking at River Road for complete street improvements.

Gary Bennett – NFTA has a project along the Niagara St corridor that will use new “next bus” technology in the shelters with LED displays to assist riders. Depending on how successful this is, there is the potential to expand the use to other areas. This could be recommended in plan for Tonawanda. Near Side/Far Side (where bus stops before or after the signal) – old view is to stop before signal, new thinking is to have after the signal. Looking at where improvements of this nature could be implemented. Again, should include recommendation in the plan.

Jim Jones – want to change public thinking to use public transit more (not just for poor people).

Gary Bennett – percentage of ridership is inner City/core, with lesser ridership in suburbs. Looking at ways to build ridership. NFTA is continually studying the data to determine where and how to make improvements.

Closed meeting - advised attendees of upcoming public meeting on November 26th.

Please feel free to add anything else you would like the Town to consider as we work to update the Comprehensive Plan.

Welcome!
Town of Tonawanda
Comprehensive Plan Update
Focus Group: Community Facilities
November 12, 2013



Photo of Town hall courtesy of Tonawanda's website

Thank you for participating! We look forward to the prospect of working with stakeholders and residents to create a Comprehensive Plan Update that truly addresses the needs of the Town of Tonawanda--

Hosted By: Gary Palumbo, AICP
Wendy Weber Salvati, AICP
Jocelyn Gordon, AICP

Name _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____

1. Please describe the elements of the Town of Tonawanda that make the community a high quality living and working environment.
3. Name three strengths and/or opportunities the Town can build upon to improve overall quality of life?
2. How has the quality of this environment evolved over the past decade?
4. How can Tonawanda's vision and direction fit in with ongoing regional initiatives in Western New York?

MEETING NOTES

Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update Community Facilities Focus Group

November 12, 2013

Attendees:

Dorinda Darden, Libraries
Jeffrey Ehlers, Parks and Recreation
Jim Jones, Technical Support
Ken Swanekamp, Planning Board
Patricia Pray, Senior Center
Dennis Uminski, Planning Board
Mark Mondanaro, Ken-Ton School District
Jim Hartz, Community Development
Anthony Day, Sweet Home School District
Bob Dimmig, TT Development Corp
Bob Morris, Planning Board

Jocelyn Gordon welcomed the attendees and provided an explanation of the use and importance of a comprehensive plan, and the purpose of the focus meeting, explaining that three such meetings were being held for three specific focus areas (land use/community facilities; transportation and economic development).

Discussion commenced using the workbook:

1. Describe the elements of the Town of Tonawanda that make the community a high quality living and working environment.

Patricia Pray – classrooms, community rooms at the Sr. Center – a lot of quality activities, dance classes, great support “Cadillac” of facilities. The way the facility is used is changing. Seniors used to come and stay for the day – now they like to join a class, come for a couple of hours, go home. Transportation services take people shopping, doctors’ appointments for a fee (\$5). Big change has been in use of – transport – vans filled to capacity. Nutrition programs – lunch every day. There is also Meals on Wheels.

New senior housing Fries/Brighton and on Crestmount off of 290. Both filled to capacity. Tonawanda Manor is an assisted living next door to Senior Center. Other include Sr living facilities include: Kenmore Presbyterian, Mount St. Mary’s, Westchester.

Mark Mondanaro – Anecdotal stories. Moved into Green Acres subdivision two years ago. People adding ramps and stairwells to their homes. Women living alone able to maintain their unit with a bit of help – 1300 square feet. They wait in Riverside for homes to come on sale in the Town of Tonawanda for these small ranch homes.

Ken Swanekamp – Ranches in Green Acres are a half price/third price alternative to patio homes.

Wendy – Tonawanda has a good quality housing stock that offers small alternatives to patio homes

Bob Dimmig – Does the senior center consider satellite locations? What about school buildings that are in need of reuse?

Pray – Operate out of Ellwood Fire Hall, and another location satellite. Likes the idea of satellite locations.

Gary Palumbo– Are there schools that may be closed in the near future that might be suitable for repurposing.

Mondanaro – Jefferson is open (available) now. Green Acres was sold and subdivided two years ago – retained 90% of green space.

The recession put things over the edge – impacted by the tax cap, draconian budget gaps, tried to keep the impact away from the kids. But it did impact them, increased class sizes, many programs are gone – exploratory language is gone. Free and reduced lunch rate used to be 28% (10 years ago) now it's 44%. Competing with ourselves too much – only have 3 years of borrowing.

Down to 7,000 kids – last time it was that low was 1947. Reasons include Demographics plus reduced birth rate (but typical, not unique to Tonawanda). There was a bubble in the 1950's.

Didn't hear 6 or 7 years ago that the taxes were too high on houses, but now I do hear that.

Tony Day – Sweet Home occupies a small percent of town, have dropped overall number of students and not turning over houses. Have not experienced the same budget issues as Ken-Ton. Have had perfect timing where retirements have matched reductions. Average only 17 kids in a classroom. Some layoffs, but they have all been able to come back. Glendale is 43% for reduced lunch (was 32% ten years ago). There's been an influx of people from City of Buffalo. Population was 450 students, now 370. We are on the cusp – we are looking at closing a building – but not likely to be Glendale. Biggest challenge is meeting new performance standards for kids. Don't face all the same issues as Ken-Ton but some.

Wendy – Can Sweet Home add new homes? I know Ken-Ton can't.

Tony – Not really. A lot of university (student) housing is being built that adds to tax rolls but doesn't help with school population.

Mondanaro – Suggested we call Jack Quinn and put ECC (satellite) at Kenmore Middle School. A pre-K/community college pipeline would be perfect here. I have started a conversation with him and he is listening. Wonderful opportunity for everyone.

Tony – In the last 10 years, many more of our students are going to NCCC than ECC. Facilities are nicer and closer for some.

What about parochial schools?

Mark - They are down, Catholic schools in particular. More closures to add to a potential reuse program.

Wendy – How many schools are vacant?

Mark – One. Jefferson. Brighton is closed and demolished for new housing development.

Ken – I would think that most of the people who moved in to the new housing at Brighton are seniors without kids.

Dorinda – 2 Libraries – Kenilworth and Kenmore. Brighton, Sheridan Parkside and Greenhaven were all closed during the 2005 crisis. The Town helped with remodeling the remaining two. Part of Erie County System. Can use libraries websites, databases, ebooks, Buffalo News. Kenmore has a community room that is used every day. Free tax preparation for public, blood drives, etc.

Wendy – Do libraries interact with school districts?

Dorinda – We do. Kenmore Middle is right across the street. Summer reading programs. Library is trying to become a special district in 2014. Don't know what that means for future, but circulation is up.

Bob D – Do people come from Buffalo and Amherst to use Kenilworth

2. Name Three Strengths and Opportunities.....

Group named four: *Schools, Housing Stock, Libraries and Parks*

Jeff – Aquatic and Fitness Center and one of the nation's most comprehensive park systems. Aquatic Center serves toddlers, seniors. Town owns the Paddock golf dome and leases the restaurant. Two 18 hole golf courses, batting cages. Two ice arenas – Lincoln and Brighton. Brighton is also used as an indoor soccer facility. We cooperate with school district, high school teams use our ice, schools and gyms are used for basketball program. Ice skating lessons, branches at senior center. Parks and Rec has a total of 48 facilities – brand new pavilion that rents out, NOCO pavilion gets rented out, 3 outdoor pools, spray park, wading pools, Sheridan Park, Brighton Park, baseball, Kenny Field, Veterans memorial, 13 playgrounds. 12 hole disc golf course, Winter Fest in January, Disc Golf Tournament, pavilion with gas fire pit, Aqua Lane park, small boat harbor at foot of Sheridan. Run a concession business at golf courses and Lincoln wading pool. 79 full time employees – 527 seasonal employees. 2 youth centers. Ken-Ton soccer.

Jim Jones – We are planning more along the waterfront.

Gary – Future for parks and rec services? Where would you be looking at new facilities?

Jeff – Cherry Farm, changes at Aqua lane, would love a new ice rink. But that would cost \$8 million, \$13 million for twin rinks. Too expensive, Lockport is building a new one and downtown, Pagula has an unlimited checkbook. We are already trying to advertise to get rid of ice time. Our rinks are very old and small and we are dropping a lot of money on maintenance. No showers. Estimate on a new chiller – \$60K we will have to spend next year. Just to refurbish will be very expensive. Operate from mid-October to March. Rent facilities out when possible.

Wendy – Will you abandon them?

Jeff – Probably not, at least not in next 10 years. But unless something changes drastically, they will be patching the rinks together for a while. Keep trying to make the ice rinks multi-use like for soccer.

Believes fees are incredibly low to use anything in the Town. Aquatic Center is supposed to sustain itself – and is close. There have been 3 additions. There is a lot of competition in fitness. No other communities offer fitness.

The Town has two greenhouses – the islands (in road r.o.w.) are done by Parks department. Work with Kenmore garden club, 48 public locations, little islands all over the town, volunteers to help maintain. Putting up a new one at Paramount island bus stop, flag pole (need to contact National Grid), senior center veggie garden, more activities in the parks keeps riff raff out of the park.

What makes Tonawanda unique are the services – Recreation, Highway Department. You won't get the size of the home or the large amount of land, but the services are great.

3. How does the Town vision fit in with ongoing regional initiatives?.....

Ken - Everything at the regional level is pushing for smart growth and urbanism – Tonawanda has been ahead of the curve for 50 years.

Gary – the density is a good thing, Town has benefited from having such a high density residential area.

Wendy – linkages and connections to City are important, so much going on downtown and Tonawanda has the greatest opportunity to connect with City initiative

Bob Morris– Green Acres was forerunner for Levittown. This area should be ground zero for Senior Services.

*Jim – Do an assessment of ranch homes – house style attribute

HELP PLAN FOR THE TOWN'S FUTURE

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

FOR THE

TONAWANDA MASTER PLAN UPDATE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26TH, 6:30 PM

Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post

3354 Delaware Avenue Kenmore, NY

*To Discuss the Issues and Opportunities That Will
Continue to Guide the Future of our Community*



Economic Development

Housing

Community Character

Waterfront Revitalization

Quality of Life

Parks and Recreation

Traffic and Transportation

Public Services

Press Release – for immediate release

*Contact: Gary Palumbo
(716) 923-1325
gary.palumbo@urs.com*

Town of Tonawanda Preparing Update to Master Plan

A public information meeting to discuss the updating of the Town of Tonawanda Master Plan is scheduled for -

**Tuesday, November 26, 2013 - 6:30 P.M
in the Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post
3354 Delaware Avenue, Kenmore, NY 14217**

The purpose of this informational meeting is to provide local residents and stakeholders the opportunity to express their views on land use and zoning, community character, economic development, recreational needs, housing, community services and other issues and concerns in the Town of Tonawanda. The Town wants to ensure that the comprehensive plan is relevant and up to date to help guide future growth and improve the overall quality of life in the community. The Comprehensive Plan is one of the most important tools that a community can use to establish a vision for the future and set effective goals and objectives for achieving that vision. This meeting will include a discussion of the current vision and goals as part of the update process.

The Town has hired URS Corporation and WWS Planning, local engineering and planning firms, to assist with the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan Update. Representatives from the consulting team will provide a brief presentation and moderate open discussions to gather input from the public. Residents and other interested parties are encouraged to come out and offer your thoughts on what is important for the future of the community. Doors will open at 6:00PM, with the formal meeting starting at 6:30PM.

JocwendPlease Use the Rating Scale of 1-5 to answer the following:

- ___ I am satisfied with the level of service provided by my public libraries.
- ___ I am satisfied with the level of recreational activities the Town offers to all ages
- ___ I am satisfied with the park amenities operated by the Town.
- ___ The Town should continue clean-up of industrial sites
- ___ I am satisfied with the level of service provided by Senior Services

Long Term Vision

Barring any and all physical and financial constraints, craft a statement that best describes your ultimate vision for the Town's future.

What are the top three strengths the Town can build on to achieve this vision?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What are the top three weaknesses the Town will need to overcome to accomplish this vision?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Other Comments? Please Write Below:

WELCOME!

Town of Tonawanda Master Plan Update
 Public Information Meeting
 November 26, 2013



Hosted By:
 Town of Tonawanda Planning Board <http://www.tonawanda.ny.us>
 Gary Palumbo, AICP – URS Corporation (gary.palumbo@urs.com)
 Wendy Weber-Salvati, AICP – WWS Planning
 Jocelyn Gordon, AICP – Gordon Strategic Planning

Name (*optional*) _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____



Please rate the statements highlighted in bold, below, on a scale of 1 to 5:

1- Strongly Agree 2- Agree 3 - Neither Agree Nor Disagree 4 - Disagree 5 - Strongly Disagree

Identity

<p>The Town of Tonawanda expresses a unique identity to both visitors and residents. As a GROUP, use the green marker to show areas on the map that make the Town unique or should be developed to express the Town's unique identity</p>	
<p>The Town of Tonawanda waterfront currently contributes to the Town's unique identity. As a GROUP, use the green marker to map potential improvement/enhancement areas along the waterfront that would have the greatest impact.</p>	
<p>The history of the Town of Tonawanda makes the community unique. As a GROUP, use the green marker to show areas on the map where the potential for historic preservation or historic interpretation is a real possibility.</p>	

Transportation/Connectivity

<p>New and/or reconstructed roadways in the Town should be designed to include pedestrian/bicycle accommodations that make them "Complete Streets". As a GROUP, use the red marker to highlight corridors on the map where multi-modal improvements and more aesthetically pleasing streets should be designed.</p>	
<p>The Town has minimal traffic and safety issues of concern. As a GROUP, use the red marker to show areas on the map where traffic/safety issues are a concern.</p>	
<p>The Town meets my needs for walkability. As a GROUP, use the red marker to show areas on the map where gaps, deficiencies and deteriorated conditions of sidewalks and curbs are an issue.</p>	
<p>The Town meets my needs for connectivity; i.e., I can easily get around safely by using walking/cycling trails and/or sidewalks. As a GROUP, use the red marker to show areas where the Town should establish better connectivity to existing trails, destinations or activity centers. Also show where neighborhood trails might be developed to connect with major trail systems.</p>	

TOP THREE ISSUES

GROUP DELIBERATION – When you have finished with all four sections, review your work and address the following: Of all of the notes you have made on your table's map this evening, which represent the highest priority issues for a the Town's Master Plan Update? AS A GROUP, Please use the **ORANGE DOTS** to identify the GROUP'S Top Three Issues.

Economic Development

<p>The Town's commercial corridors should be revitalized to stimulate economic development. As a GROUP, use the blue marker to highlight specific corridors where revitalization should be prioritized.</p>	
<p>Several "Village Centers", rather than one "Town Center", are a better solution to stimulate economic growth. As a GROUP, use the blue marker to highlight specific areas throughout the Town where walkable, dense "nodes" of development filled with a mixture of uses are possible.</p>	
<p>Vacant/underutilized sites (residential, commercial, recreational, industrial) should be redeveloped to stimulate economic growth. As a GROUP, use the blue marker to highlight areas that could be redeveloped to stimulate economic growth.</p>	

Land Use & Community Facilities

<p>Closed neighborhood schools are an appropriate location for mixed-use development that could include senior housing, retail or light commercial/office development. As a GROUP, use the black marker to show on the map reuse potentials and describe the types of uses you envision here in your notes.</p>	
<p>The Town offers a diverse array of housing opportunities for existing and potential residents. As a GROUP, use the black marker to show areas on the map infill/reuse/new housing development should be located.</p>	
<p>The Town should prioritize developing new housing types in vacant/infill locations. As a GROUP, map locations for new housing and make notes to describe the types of housing you envision.</p>	

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING SUMMARY

Date of Meeting: November 26, 2013
Meeting Time: 6:30PM
Meeting Location: Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post
3354 Delaware Ave., Kenmore, NY

Subject: Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update

ATTENDEES (See attached sign in sheets)

INTRODUCTIONS

Ken Swanekamp welcomed meeting participants, highlighted the purpose of the meeting, identified Town representatives in attendance, and introduced Gary Palumbo from URS Corporation to introduce the project team and commence the meeting.

MEETING INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATION

Jocelyn Gordon conducted a presentation to further discuss purpose of the meeting and review the meeting format (which included maps, markers and workbooks provided at each table). She provided a brief overview of the status of the Town, noting examples of how the Town has changed since the completion of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, and how it has not. The goals and objectives that were prepared for the 2005 were briefly discussed, including a handout that summarized suggested revisions to the goals. The meeting participants were asked to review the goal summary and provide their input.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Gordon reviewed the activity workbook provided participants with instructions on how to individually address the statements provided for each subject area, how to collectively use the map provided on each table for group comments and annotation. The subject areas offered for consideration included Community Identity, Transportation and Connectivity, Economic Development, and Land Use and Community Facilities. Time was allotted for the groups at each table to complete the exercises.

Upon completion of the exercises, a spokesperson from each group was asked to present their top three issues/opportunities of concern, as follows:

Group #1

- Redevelopment of the Cherry Farm Park property for public access and recreation
- Development of a multi-use trail (and potentially light rail) along the abandoned rail corridor in the Town, which extends between the City of Buffalo and the City of Tonawanda.
- Closing of the Tonawanda Coke facility to protect public health.

Group #2

- Adoption of a "Complete Streets" policy to ensure that roadway improvements address the needs of all users (not just cars) and improve walkability in the Town.
- Facilitation of "aging in place" in the Town to address the needs of a growing senior citizen population.

- Bringing new life and renewal to Town services to improve overall quality of life in the Town and help to increase/maintain the Town's population.

Group #3

- Make better utilization of the waterfront as a priority to offer greater benefit of this asset to Town residents and others.
- Emphasis on transportation improvements and Complete Streets, recognizing and capitalizing on the urban/suburban nature of the Town.
- Improving the internal connectivity of the Town to connect different sections/neighborhoods to improve ease of access to services and becoming less auto-dependent.

Group #4

- Focus on the importance of neighborhoods and improve quality of life (housing, central business district prosperity, walkability, etc.).
- Improved connectivity and complete streets (including connecting Sheridan to the Waterfront).
- Waterfront access and redevelopment in general, and improvements at Cherry Farm Park.
- Improvements to protect public health (*bonus comment*).

Group #5

- Roadway improvements to address pedestrian safety and improve walkability (Sheridan Drive).
- Provide more grocery stores throughout the community (there are areas where access to these facilities is lacking).
- Waterfront redevelopment to provide greater benefits to the Town.

NEXT STEPS

Gary Palumbo thanked everyone for providing their input. He identified how residents can stay involved in the process and follow the progress of the plan, including visiting the Comprehensive Plan link on the Town's website, using the scan code to reach the website or using the comment forms that were handed out to provide additional input. A second public meeting will be held once the inventory and analysis is completed and draft findings and recommendations are developed. As draft sections of the Master Plan Update are completed, they will be posted on the Town's website for the public to review.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wendy E. Weber Salvati, AICP

TOP THREE ISSUES

Responses from each Table:

1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherry Farm Park - develop for recreation Rails to Trails - walk/bike/extend light rail close Tonawanda Coke 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Streets Aging in Place Town services - new life into programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> better utilize the waterfront transportation/complete streets/mass transit connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> importance of neighborhoods/walkability complete streets/connect Sheridan to the waterfront Cherry Farm Park/waterfront connectivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> need to be more pedestrian friendly need new/more grocery stores waterfront

Statements Rated by Participants	Rating					Did not respond
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Identity						
The Town of Tonawanda expresses a unique identity to both visitors and residents.	14%	18%	32%	32%	0%	5%
The Town of Tonawanda waterfront currently contributes to the Town's unique identity.	14%	27%	9%	27%	14%	9%
The history of the Town of Tonawanda makes the community unique.	27%	27%	23%	14%	0%	0%
Transportation/Connectivity						
New and/or reconstructed roadways in the Town should be designed to include pedestrian/bicycle accommodations that make them "Complete Streets".	82%	9%	5%	0%	5%	0%
The Town has minimal traffic and safety issues of concern.	0%	9%	27%	32%	27%	0%
The Town meets my needs for walkability.	0%	14%	18%	50%	18%	0%
The Town meets my needs for connectivity; i.e., I can easily get around safely by using walking/cycling trails and/or sidewalks.	9%	9%	18%	68%	18%	5%
Economic Development						
The Town's commercial corridors should be revitalized to stimulate economic development.	68%	14%	9%	0%	0%	9%
Several "Village Centers", rather than one "Town Center", are a better solution to stimulate economic growth.	36%	45%	0%	5%	0%	9%
Vacant/underutilized sites (residential, commercial, recreational, and industrial) should be redeveloped to stimulate economic growth.	50%	27%	9%	5%	0%	9%
Land Use & Community Facilities						
Closed neighborhood schools are an appropriate location for mixed-use development that could include senior housing, retail or light commercial/office development.	36%	45%	0%	5%	5%	9%
The Town offers a diverse array of housing opportunities for existing and	14%	36%	36%	5%	0%	9%

potential residents.										
The Town should prioritize developing new housing types in vacant/infill locations.	27%	32%	18%	14%	0%	9%				
Other										
I am satisfied with the level of service provided by my public libraries.	14%	23%	23%	18%	14%	9%				
I am satisfied with the level of recreational activities the Town offers to all ages.	32%	36%	5%	14%	5%	9%				
I am satisfied with the park amenities operated by the Town.	32%	32%	14%	14%	0%	9%				
The Town should continue clean-up of industrial sites.	82%	9%	0%	0%	5%	5%				
I am satisfied with the level of service provided by Senior Services.	27%	5%	27%	14%	0%	23%				

Long Term Vision (individual responses)

- I'd like to see the Town of Tonawanda find some way to develop "brownfields" for light industry or housing.
- Take advantage of more urban/suburban attributes. Make things convenient and green.
- A great place to do business, dine, and accommodate pedestrians and bicycles – this would include hotel and restaurants with waterfront access.
- This waterfront has to be developed and accessible. Have complete streets.
- A town adapted to the needs of all its residents.
- Be a place that enhances quality of life for existing residents and becomes a place that attracts new residents and investment.
- Developed waterfront multi-use amphitheater
- A community that provides for all segments of society, offering exceptional services, employment opportunities, schools, and recreation amenities in a safe and welcoming environment.
- A cleaner and more connected community
- Well-developed waterfront including : 1) redevelopment of Cherry Farm as a park and including a community/wellness center; 2) redevelopment of Wickwire Steel site; community, schools, parks and recreation
- Clean up industrial sites and polluters; make the town more pedestrian friendly; make the waterfront more accessible and plentiful.
- A great pedestrian friendly town. Sidewalks are shoveled especially on Sheridan and other main streets.
- A diverse community that is welcoming, safe and prosperous. Improved safety and wellness would encourage future investment/settlement.
- A walkable community where neighborhoods are connected to work areas and waterfront heritage.
- Safe neighborhoods, updated park facilities, new housing opportunities, land reuse, economic development
- The town's social, environmental, economic and human capital collectively making us the most attractive suburb in New York State.

Top three strengths (individual responses, () indicates number of duplicate/similar responses)

- Waterfront (7)
- Great services – trash, snow removal, highway, etc. (4)
- Parks and recreation (4)
- Proximity to the City of Buffalo; Location in between the downtown waterfront and 3rd and 4th ring suburbs (3)
- Friendly and helpful people (3)
- Affordable housing (3)
- Existing resources (housing, recreation, parks, facilities) (2)
- Strong economic base (2)
- Heritage/environment (history, river)
- Complete streets
- Improve “green”
- Keeping housing stock standards
- Maintain low taxes
- Clean water
- Safety of residential areas
- Land reuse opportunities
- Diverse communities
- Police/paramedics response
- Appropriately sized homes
- Street/road grids
- Neighborhoods
- Old industrial land
- Access to public officials
- Community services/parks/senior center/etc
- Dealing with violations/offenses of Tonawanda Coke/ Amigone (quality)
- Community connections
- Schools/libraries

Top three weaknesses (individual responses, () indicates number of duplicate/similar responses)

- Industry (6)
 - Tonawanda Coke (2)
 - Legacy of past industrial practices (1)
 - Industrial pollution (1)
 - Being industrial (factories) (1)
 - Too much industry and pollution especially along the waterfront (1)
- Environmental issues (6)
 - Stigma from environmental health issues (2)
 - Toxics in ground (1)
 - Brownfields (2)
 - Reputation of contaminations along Two Mile Creek /Sheridan /Parkside (1)
- Pedestrians/Sidewalks (5)
 - Horrible pedestrian experiences up and down major roadways
 - Need to make sure sidewalks are shoveled
 - Need to improve pedestrian walkways
 - Sidewalk repairs needed
 - Need better markings for crosswalks throughout the town.
- Waterfront (4)
 - Lack of waterfront access
 - No access to waterfront south of Grand Island bridge
 - Disconnected waterfront
 - Underutilized waterfront
- Aging infrastructure (4)
- Transportation, Public transport, Transportation connectivity (3)
- Loss of population, aging population (2)
- Economic stimulus
- Working together with state – county – village
- Old stock of housing – buildings and infrastructure
- Cut up by highways and rails
- Lack of vision for entire town

Top three weaknesses (continued)

- Need stronger industrial development
- Somehow keep families in their homes, not a stepping stone.
- More “village community” areas
- Need more neighborhood libraries
- Low density development
- Overbuilt streets
- Budget
- Building setbacks are awful along Sheridan – bring the buildings closer to the street and put the parking in back
- The town needs a design guide for development along Sheridan and Delaware
- The town needs a design review board to review and approve building designs before construction.
- The town needs a planning department.
- Seen as bedroom community more than a center
- Problems (right now) within the school district as far as closing schools
- Conservative “limiting views”
- Understanding change process
- Lack of a more aggressive public relations campaign to market the town’s assets

Comments (individual responses, () indicates number of duplicate/similar responses)

- Use the “hills” that have been built up for the landfill and make a recreation area out of them – toboggan runs, hiking trails, etc.
- Town recycling services need updating better – bigger – covered containers, composting of green
- Senior services – we need to help more
- I would like to see someone develop a banquet facility within the limits of the Town. We have none at this time.
- Development of village centers (Brighton/Eggert, Colvin/Highland, Parker/Ellicott Creek) and recognize Kenmore as the natural “Town Center.”
- Need a year round multi-use recreational facility (baseball, soccer, football, gymnastics, training, etc.)
- Drive education with respect to pedestrian right-of-way in WNY
- It’s time to plan/think/replace our water lines, sanitary sewers, crumbling roadways
- [There was] not enough time to answer such important questions [during the public information meeting]

PLEASE HELP PLAN FOR THE TOWN'S FUTURE

PUBLIC FOCUS MEETING FOR THE TONAWANDA MASTER PLAN UPDATE

TUESDAY, APRIL 22TH, 6:00 PM

Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post

3354 Delaware Avenue Kenmore, NY

*To Discuss the Findings and Recommendations That Will
Continue to Guide the Future of our Community*



Economic Development

Housing

Community Character

Waterfront Revitalization

Quality of Life

Parks and Recreation

Traffic and Transportation

Public Services

Press Release – for immediate release

*Contact: Gary Palumbo
(716) 923-1325
gary.palumbo@urs.com*

Town of Tonawanda Seeks Public Input for Update to Master Plan

The Town of Tonawanda is holding a second Public Meeting to discuss updates to the Comprehensive Plan. This Public Focus meeting is scheduled for -

**Tuesday, April 22, 2014 - 6:00 P.M.
at the Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post
3354 Delaware Avenue, Kenmore, NY 14217**

The purpose of this meeting is to review the preliminary study Findings and Recommendations for the Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Planning Committee will provide residents and stakeholders the opportunity to offer their feedback on the proposed recommendations for land use and zoning, economic development, parks and recreation, neighborhoods and housing, community facilities and services, transportation and other issues in the Town of Tonawanda.

This is the second public meeting to discuss the Master Plan Update project. The first meeting was held in November 2013 to obtain valuable public input regarding concerns and opportunities for improving the Town and their quality of life.

The Town wants to ensure that the Master Plan is relevant and up to date to help guide future growth and improve the overall quality of life in the community. The Master Plan is one of the most important tools that a community can use to establish a vision for the future and set effective goals and objectives for achieving that vision. The Master Plan also guides the Town in making future land use decisions.

The Town has hired URS Corporation, WWS Planning and Gordon Strategic Planning, local engineering and planning firms, to assist with the preparation of the Master Plan Update. Representatives from the consulting team will provide a brief presentation and moderate open discussions to gather input from the public. Residents and other interested parties are encouraged to come out and offer your thoughts on what is important for the future of the community. Doors will open at 6:00PM, with the formal meeting starting at 6:30PM.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Overview of the Master Plan Update
- Results of the Public Information Meeting
- Findings of the Inventory of Existing Conditions
- Vision Statement and Goals for the Community
- Recommendations
- Preliminary Vision Map

OPTIONS FOR PUBLIC INPUT

NOW: During this meeting, we want to hear your opinions, thoughts and ideas. We hope to provide everyone with an opportunity to offer input.

LATER: If you prefer to make comments in writing, or have some additional ideas later, please contact us.

URS Corporation
257 West Genesee Street, Ste. 400
Buffalo, NY 14202
(716) 923-1325
Attention: Gary Palumbo
e-mail: gary.palumbo@urs.com

WEBSITE: Information about the plan will also be available on the Town's website:

<http://www.tonawanda.ny.us>

TOWN OF TONAWANDA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



PUBLIC FOCUS MEETING

Tuesday, April 22, 2014
6:30 p.m. – Milton J. Brounshidle VFW Post

PLANNING FOR TONAWANDA'S FUTURE

WELCOME.

Thank you for taking the time to attend this meeting and participate in the project.

The Comprehensive Plan Update: The Town of Tonawanda is preparing an Update to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan (“Master Plan”). This Update will set forth revised priorities, based on current conditions and trends, to help guide future decision making in the Town.

Tonight’s Meeting: This meeting will continue the discussion about the planning process, confirming the vision for the future of the community and discussing recommendations for achieving our goals.

Public input: This meeting is the second opportunity for the public to provide input for the Plan Update. Listening to the public is a very important part of the planning process. Your comments will be used to finalize the goals for the Town. **Your** opinions, thoughts and ideas about the future of the Town are important for helping to guide long range land use management and economic development.

The public will have a third and final opportunity to comment on the Plan later in the process, at the Public Hearing, after the draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update is developed.

AGENDA

- I. OPEN HOUSE 6:00 – 6:30PM
 - Sign-in
 - Review Maps

- II. WELCOME 6:30PM
 - Introductions
 - Brief Overview of Project Background
 - Purpose of the Public Focus Meeting

- III. PROJECT VISIONING
 - Community Vision
 - Review of the draft Goals and Objectives
 - Break Out – Workbook exercise

- IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
 - Summary of draft findings and recommendations
 - Break Out – Vision Map Exercise

- V. NEXT STEPS

Goals

Goal 5 – Promote a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

Goal 6 – Ensure coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective facilities and services that are required by residents and businesses in a sustainable community

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

Goal 7 – Institute best management practices to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of Town government and planning, and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

WELCOME!
Town of Tonawanda Master Plan Update
Public Focus Meeting
April 22, 2014



Hosted By:
Town of Tonawanda Planning Board <http://www.tonawanda.ny.us>
Gary Palumbo, AICP – URS Corporation (gary.palumbo@urs.com)
Wendy Weber-Salvati, AICP – WWS Planning
Jocelyn Gordon, AICP – Gordon Strategic Planning

Name (*optional*) _____

Phone: _____ e-mail: _____



Long Term Vision

Do you agree with this Vision for guiding the future of the Town?

"To improve quality of life and create a vibrant and sustainable community in which the environmental, social, economic, built and human capital collectively make the Town one of the most attractive suburbs in Erie County and New York State, through strategic improvements to natural resources, neighborhoods and housing, commercial and industrial buildings and sites, and essential infrastructure, services and amenities".

If not, what would you change?

Goals

Do you agree with the following Goals for the Community?

Goal 1 – Maintain the safety, high quality of life, public health and sustainability of our community

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

Goal 2 – Support the preservation of environmental features and the continued remediation of former waste sites

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

Goal 3 – Maintain and enhance the vitality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and retain a diverse stock of residential properties that meets the needs of all residents

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

Goal 4 – Promote smart, sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities

_____ Yes _____ No

If not, how could it be improved?

Table II-1 Public Comments on Vision and Goals – April 22, 2014 Public Focus Meeting

Community Vision / Goals	Participant Responses
<p>Community Vision - <i>“To improve quality of life and create a vibrant and sustainable community in which the environmental, social, economic, built and human capital collectively make the Town one of the most attractive suburbs in Erie County and New York State, through strategic improvements to natural resources, neighborhoods and housing, commercial and industrial buildings and sites, and essential infrastructure, services and amenities”.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with the community vision (5) • Community vision is too general, not specific enough • Community vision should comment on Town population and housing units
<p>Goal 1 – <i>Maintain the safety, high quality of life, public health and sustainability of our community</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 1 (7) • Public safety is the #1 priority in our low to moderate income neighborhoods • Maintain green space and biking amenities • Green space, particularly south of Brighton/Sheridan
<p>Goal 2 – <i>Support the preservation of environmental features and the continued remediation of former waste sites</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 2 (7) • Goal 2 is important because the former waste sites have large footprints and are a significant potential source of job creation. • Support redevelopment of the waterfront
<p>Goal 3 – <i>Maintain and enhance the vitality of neighborhoods and neighborhood centers, and retain a diverse stock of residential properties that meets the needs of all residents</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 3 (7) • The Town should be encouraging/promoting more housing that is low-maintenance and affordable for seniors and the disabled. • Key in enhancing neighborhoods is the town’s role in streets and ground services – which are excellent. • Create parks or schools available to the public
<p>Goal 4 – <i>Promote smart, sustainable and well-planned economic development opportunities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 4 (7) • Promote brownfield development and IDA marketing • Make the Town more attractive to jobs creation • The Town needs to become less industrial
<p>Goal 5 – <i>Promote a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 5 (7) • Continue repurposing existing rails, trails, etc. for bicyclists and pedestrians
<p>Goal 6 – <i>Ensure coordinated, high quality, well-maintained and cost effective facilities and services that are required by residents and businesses in a sustainable community</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General consensus with Goal 6 (7) • Concerns about the school district’s plan to sell public emergency shelters. The Town needs to revisit its Emergency plan.

<p>Goal 7 – Institute best management practices to enhance the efficiency and efficacy of Town government and planning, and strive to improve interaction with other communities and agencies.</p> <p>Additional Comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More public amenities lead to a greater quality of life for Town citizens. • General consensus with Goal 7 (7) • Politics can get in the way of achieving Town goals <p>Additional Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original development in the town was centered on planned school sites/neighborhoods. With the recent trend in consolidation of schools, the Town needs to focus on defining objectives to acquire open spaces and recreational opportunities and maintain neighborhood centers. Open spaces/green areas are a precious resource that cannot be replaced if they disappear. • Creating more affordable senior transportation should be a priority • There should be road diets on Colvin Blvd and Eggert Road and bike paths provided on the streets • There needs to be more affordable and low maintenance senior housing • There needs to be a better connection between Military Road and the Parkside neighborhood • Brownfield and low income housing around Parkside Community Center needs to be addressed
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Note: () indicates number of duplicate/similar responses

PUBLIC FOCUS MEETING
APRIL 22, 2014

TOWN OF TONAWANDA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

PRELIMINARY VISION MAP:

- ⊗ Improved Pedestrian Crossing
- ▽ Proposed Park n' Ride Lot
- * Improved Waterfront Access
- ↔ "Complete Streets" Treatment
- ↔ New Trail Connection
- ↔ Neighborhood Connection
- Build Out of Business Park
- Industrial/Commercial Revitalization & Brownfield Redevelopment
- Neighborhood Business Revitalization
- Parks Development
- Reuse of Closed School

Bike + Pedestrian Safety

- People need to feel safe using bike paths.
- Provide communication points along paths.

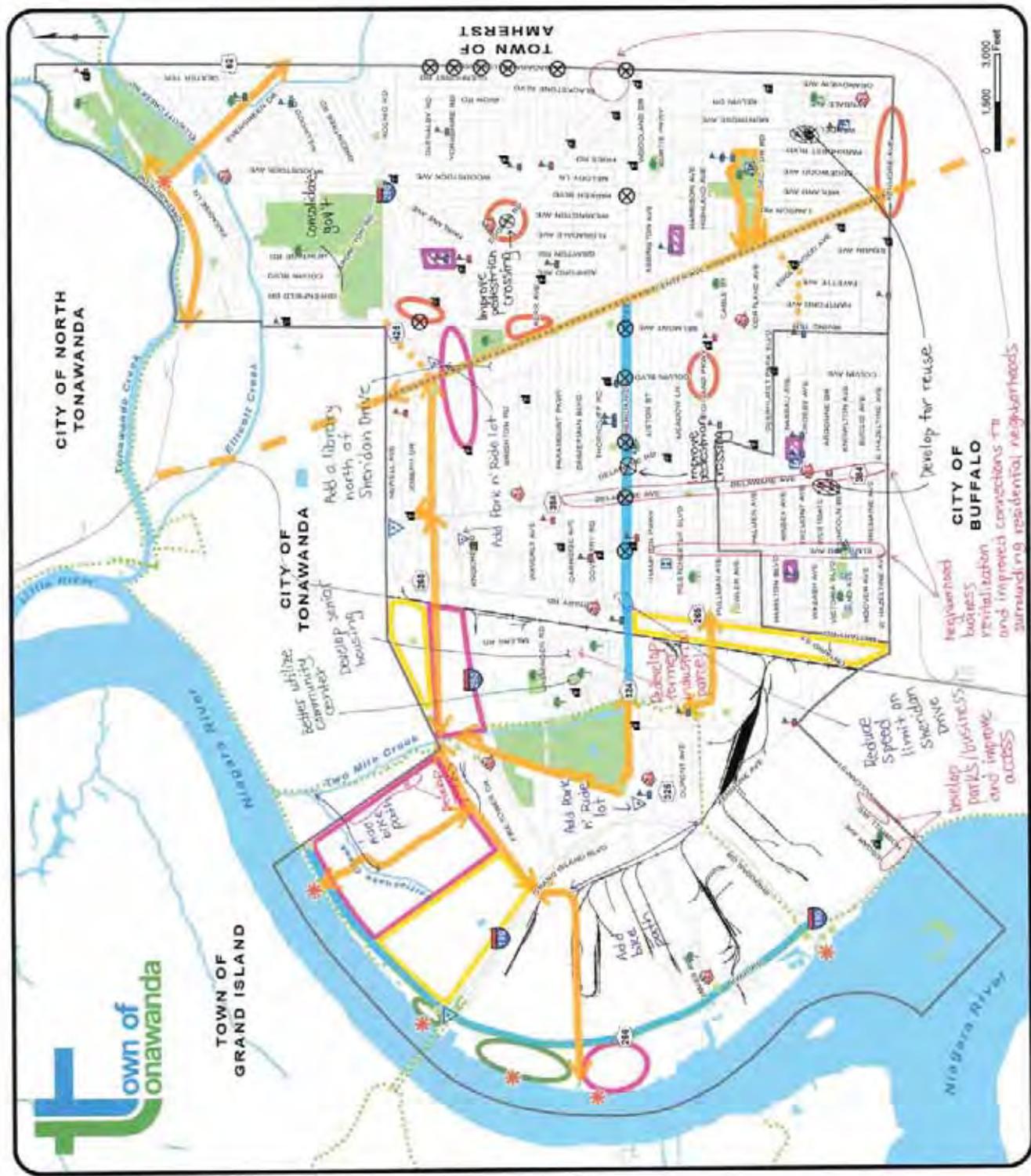
Need a balance between environmental concerns and industrial development.

- Enviro. concerns cannot drive away industry.
- Industry must work on air quality, noise, and dumping issues.
- Residential areas should not be built next to industrial sites.

more regulations for absentee landlords to keep up the quality of neighborhoods.

Legend

Water	Multi-Use Trail	Speed Facility
⊗	⊗	⊗
▽	▽	▽
*	*	*
↔	↔	↔
↔	↔	↔
○	○	○
○	○	○
○	○	○
○	○	○
○	○	○



Develop for reuse
neighborhood business revitalization and improved connections to surrounding residential neighborhoods

Reduce Speed limit on Sheridan Drive
develop parks/business and improve access

City of Tonawanda
Add a library north of Sheridan Drive

Integrate pedestrian crossing

Improve pedestrian crossing

Develop former vacant parcels

Reduce Speed limit on Sheridan Drive

develop parks/business and improve access

Develop for reuse
neighborhood business revitalization and improved connections to surrounding residential neighborhoods