



Prepared by:



CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025-2045



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The City of North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan is indebted to the work of previous planning efforts made within the city that have laid the groundwork to where North Tonawanda is today. The Comprehensive Plan will provide the next round of framework and assistance to push thoughtful planning and development forward through meaningful projects, strategies, and initiatives. The City thanks those community members and municipal representatives who were involved in prior efforts as well as the most recent Committee members who dedicated their time and insights to the project:

- Mayor Austin Tylec, City of North Tonawanda
- Matt Chavez, Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC)
- Keith Craigie, NT Planning Board
- Alex Domaradzki, City of North Tonawanda
- Donna Hutton, Real Estate Agent
- Rob DePaolo, City of North Tonawanda
- Maureen Harding, Planner
- Tim Martin, NT Waterfront Commission
- Joe Marranta, City of North Tonawanda Councilman
- Steve Pawlik, NT Waterfront Commission
- Tim Pieper, Climate Force Task Group
- Gabbie Richards, Business Owner / Oliver Street Merchants Association
- Emily Root, NT Waterfront Commission / Climate Force Task Group
- Ed Smolinski, Resident / Project Pride
- Chelsea Spahr, City of North Tonawanda
- Doug Taylor, LCDC Board Chair
- Mike Tuzzo, Climate Force Task Group
- Laura Wilson, City of North Tonawanda

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LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

It is my privilege to present the City of North Tonawanda's Comprehensive Plan to our residents and business community. This document analyzes our City's existing conditions, identifies trends shaping our future, and suggests actions to achieve our shared vision. It will serve as a blueprint for City officials over the next 10 years as we shape North Tonawanda's future.

The development of this plan was guided by a dedicated Steering Committee, including residents, local organizations, nonprofits, and City officials. In collaboration with expert consultants, the Steering Committee engaged the public through meetings, surveys, and various community outreach events to ensure input from the public.

The City's previous Comprehensive Plan provided a foundation for many initiatives that have revitalized North Tonawanda in recent years. It guided investments in infrastructure, economic development, and quality-of-life improvements. Our business district has grown, public spaces have been enhanced, and projects such as waterfront redevelopment and neighborhood revitalization have contributed to the City's resurgence.

The new plan builds on that progress, envisioning North Tonawanda as a thriving economic hub that supports businesses, fosters a skilled workforce, and blends historic charm with modern development. Our commitment to sustainability and preserving natural resources will ensure a resilient community for future generations. This plan aims to strengthen North Tonawanda as a dynamic and welcoming place to live, work, and invest.

The Comprehensive Plan was made possible through grant funding from the NYS Department of State Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning grant.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all who contributed to this document. North Tonawanda thrives because of the dedication and collaboration of our residents, employees, and community partners. This plan will guide us toward a bright and prosperous future.



Sincerely,

Austin J. Tylec

Mayor



FOREWORD

A progressive city wrapped in the cloak of small-town Americana (think The Sandlot with a dash of American Graffiti), the City of North Tonawanda is a collection of individual people that draw strength, pride, and identity from their community. With cultural staples such as the Saturday Farmer's Market, Canal Fest, the Pride Festival, square dances, jet boat races, Friday night TNT games, the Dyngus Day parade, senior center dances, and youth center basketball, anyone who visits NT can sense a culture that is rooted in connectivity, tradition, and an understanding that personal differences are opportunities for discussion and the development of a shared future.

NT has always been a source of connection within Western New York and the Greater Northeastern United States; NT connected the Great Lakes lumber industry with the Atlantic Ocean via the Erie Canal, and was invaluable to the passage of electricity from Niagara Falls to the City of Buffalo for the 1901 Pan-Am Exposition, where folks came together from around the world to experience the power of light. It is only fitting that in the 200th year of the Erie Canal that the City at the canal's Western terminus chose to continue its commitment to community and shared development in a comprehensive masterplan effort.

Comprehensive Plans are common practice in contemporary urban development; however, it is imperative to recognize that this Comprehensive Plan has been written during a period of history when national and international discussion, compromise, and an authentic understanding of others has been increasingly challenging to achieve. In contrast, the people of NT have come together to develop not one, but EIGHT independent yet synchronized planning initiatives within the past five years. This critical mass of planning efforts lays a strong foundation for future adaptation, growth, and development, and proves that NT is committed to learning from and utilizing its history, geography, and culture to cultivate a higher quality of life for future generations.

This Comprehensive Plan seeks to convert values and tradition into progress and inspiration by identifying concerns that exist within and amongst the City's existing infrastructure, land uses, and housing stock, inherent opportunities within recreation, natural, and cultural resources, and collective visions for improving community services and economic development. Together, these items set the stage for a future NT that will continue to embrace and celebrate community.

Mike Tuzzo

North Tonawanda Resident

Comprehensive Plan Committee Member & Climate Force Task Group



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of North Tonawanda, its community members, and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, prepared the 2025-2045 North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan to allow leadership to chart a fresh course for sustainable and economic growth. The City's last Comprehensive Plan was developed 17 years ago in 2008, but the vision and goals identified are no longer fully reflective of the City's desired development.

The planning process was community-driven and focused on the New York State identified Smart Growth Principles which target a mix of land uses, a range of housing opportunities and choices, creating a strong sense of place, well planned public spaces, availability of public transit, and walkable neighborhoods, amongst others.

The planning horizon for the City's Comprehensive Plan is 20 years and it is the goal that in 2045, the City's newly established vision is reality, and the goals are ready to be updated since many of the strategies and projects identified have been achieved.

Existing Conditions

Economic & Social Hub - North Tonawanda is an economic and social hub in Niagara County. Due to its regional setting, North Tonawanda draws visitors from all over the Western New York region and beyond to enjoy the city's downtown amenities, parks, stunning waterfront, and historical neighborhoods.



Employment Center - North Tonawanda contributes over 15,000 employees to the regional workforce. Major public and institutional employers within the City of North Tonawanda include North Tonawanda City School District, City of North Tonawanda government, DeGraff Memorial Hospital, Confer Plastics, and Armstrong Fluid Technology. The majority of North Tonawanda's workers hold white collar jobs (64.8%) and the unemployment rate is 0.2% lower than that of NYS.



Abundant Natural Resources - The City of North Tonawanda is home to over 600 acres of recreation and open space. These lands contain some of the city's most utilized park spaces such as Gratwick Park, the Botanical Gardens, and Payne Park, as well as small neighborhood parks, public kayak launches and more. While North Tonawanda's downtown is often the center of attention, the city also has vast swaths of important natural resources including the North Tonawanda Audubon Nature Preserve (Klydel Wetlands, owned and maintained by the Western New York Land Conservancy).



Recreational Destination - The City's recreation opportunities are vast, including public boat and kayak launches along the Erie Canal (Tonawanda Creek) and the Niagara River. Boaters utilize the waters surrounding the city and contribute to the economic health of the community by supporting waterfront and downtown businesses. North Tonawanda's rich marine history has lent itself to bolstering the city as a waterfront destination within the region. The City is in the process of drafting and adopting a Local Waterfront Revitalization Program plan that will outline the future of the city's waterfront area and build on the momentum of the past.





Historic Roots & Charm - The city contains robust historic resources including numerous designated historic and archeological resources on the National Register of Historic Places such as the Carnegie Art Center, Allan Herschell Carousel Factory, the Riviera Theatre, and the Wurlitzer Building. The city also contains two Historic Districts, the New York State Barge Canal Historic District, and the Sweeney Estate Historic District.



Diverse Services and Amenities - Community services and facilities within North Tonawanda include Fire and Police Departments, DeGraff Memorial Hospital, the North Tonawanda City School District and more. The city's cultural institutions provide a sense of place and quality of life benefits to its residents. These places include the City Market, the Carnegie Art Center, and the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens.



Regionally Connected - North Tonawanda is well connected to major transportation routes including River Road (Rt 265), Niagara Falls Boulevard (Rt 62) and Twin Cities Memorial Highway (Rt 425). The City is concurrently undertaking a redesign of Twin Cities Memorial Highway that will seek to provide safety to pedestrians and cyclists while employing complete streets tactics better accommodating the traffic along the corridor. The city is served by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) which provides regular transit services throughout the city and connections to other destinations within the region.



Capable and Improving Infrastructure - North Tonawanda continues to be dedicated to providing top of the line public infrastructure and services to its residents. The city is currently undergoing the process of creating a Water Distribution and Sewer Collection System Capital Improvement Plan. The Plan will determine present and future water/sewer demands, conduct field tests, develop models, and recommend system improvements.





Public Participation

The Comprehensive Plan was shaped by outreach sessions held within the city to gain feedback from those who live and work within North Tonawanda.

The planning process also included regular Steering Committee meetings. A breakdown of the outreach is provided below:



The outreach noted above allowed the City and community to provide a future-oriented guide for elected officials, local leaders, residents, business owners, regional entities, and other stakeholders that align with Smart Growth Principles which will be used when determining an approach to new projects or policies.

Vision

North Tonawanda is a progressive city with a unique sense of place that is welcoming for all. It is a destination that boasts a celebrated waterfront and environmentally conscious infrastructure. Providing diverse housing options and employment sector, forward-thinking policies, and a strong school system, North Tonawanda is the perfect place to live, work, and play.

Goals

1. Strengthen Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Networks	2. Continue Investment in Public Recreation and Open Spaces	3. Protect and Enhance Natural Resources	4. Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Optimize Land Use
5. Develop Opportunities for Diverse Housing and Improve Existing Housing Stock	6. Bolster Historic and Cultural Resources	7. Implement Efficient and Collaborative Community Services	8. Advance Economic Development and Tourism Initiatives



Future Land Use Plan

North Tonawanda's historic built patterns informed the update to the future land use plan. Building on past planning and economic development efforts, the guide for future development reflects the desired change to land use patterns and the successes that support a new era of development in the city. Residential land uses are encouraged throughout the city to spur the establishment of a wide variety of residential forms and the expansion of housing choice for residents. The City's major corridors are established as land use patterns to help classify the city.

Neighborhood Residential is the lifeblood of the city. These areas provide for a mix of housing, community service, and public uses to allow diversity and a sense of place within North Tonawanda's great neighborhoods.

To bolster and formalize the transition between established residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors, the Neighborhood Corridor land use category is cognizant of the sensitivity between land use types. The vertical and horizontal mixture of land uses is encouraged to be developed at a pedestrian scale to draw more residents to the neighborhood corridors and to support the establishment of more local businesses and re-create the traditional Main Street feel.

Land uses within North Tonawanda's downtown core are limited in their location but encourage the creation of a central business district for the location of major employers, bars, restaurants, and shopping. Within the Downtown Mixed Use land use category, the form of the building has a greater focus than the use within. Streetscaping and the public realm is paramount to the success of the corridor.

Large scale commercial and light industrial uses have long been a part of North Tonawanda's history. The preservation of land for the establishment of light industrial and manufacturing uses as well as large scale national retailers will ensure that North Tonawanda can attract employment opportunities for its residents. These Regional Corridor uses require careful consideration in their placement and the limitation of nuisance to surrounding homes and businesses.

To ensure that the banks of the Niagara River, Little River, and Erie Canal are developed in a pattern that seeks to protect the natural resource while utilizing its advantageous location, a Waterfront Development land use category was developed. Using the tenants of the LWRP as a guiding hand, waterfront uses will be encouraged and public spaces required as North Tonawanda's waterfront continues to expand and be revitalized.

North Tonawanda is dedicated to preserving and programming its public open spaces and important natural resources. The identification of these spaces and their programming relies on creating a public benefit. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space land use category will help to protect and grow the network of public lands available to residents and visitors in North Tonawanda.

Holistically, the future land use plan reflects past development and a shared vision of the development potential of the future.

“North Tonawanda is finally revitalizing, but there is still work to do.”

—Online Survey Participant



SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION





Background

Purpose

Comprehensive Planning in New York State can be described as “the culmination of a planning process that establishes the official land use policy of a community and presents goals and a vision for the future that guides official decision-making.” The City of North Tonawanda’s last adopted Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2008. Since its adoption, the 2008 Comprehensive Plan has been utilized as a toolkit to move the vision and projects forward.

In 2022, the City decided to undertake an update to their Comprehensive Plan and continue charting a fresh course for sustainable economic growth and improved quality of life for community members. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan reflects extensive community outreach, stakeholder and City department input, and collaboration between community members to advance new ideas for the next 20 years.



The Comprehensive Plan was funded by a New York State Department of State Smart Growth Planning Grant. Smart Growth is a planning theory that focuses on sustainability, equitable development and placemaking, and increasing efficiencies. The following Smart Growth principles developed by New York State Department of State were used as guideposts for the City’s Comprehensive Plan:

1. Develop plans and land use regulations that allow for and encourage mixed-use neighborhoods.
2. Enable a diverse mix of housing types that provide for opportunity and choice for all.
3. Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing buildings to revitalize neighborhoods and downtowns, including areas around public transit.
4. Provide well-planned, equitable, and accessible public spaces.
5. Encourage compact neighborhood design and concentrated development around existing infrastructure.
6. Preserve open space, agricultural resources, and natural resources.
7. Prioritize transportation options such as walking, cycling, and public transportation.
8. Promote climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
9. Build on unique traits to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.
10. Engage in an inclusive, collaborative public planning process that considers the needs and character of the community.



Applicability

Comprehensive Plans represent a high-level view of the community and its vision for the future. Due to this, they can directly or indirectly inform municipal decisions and initiatives including:

- Grant Opportunities
- Zoning and Land Use
- Capital Improvement Planning
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure Improvements
- Parks & Recreation

The planning horizon for the City's Comprehensive Plan is 20 years. It is the goal that by 2045, the City's newly established vision is reality, goals established within the Plan are ready to be updated, and many of the strategies and projects have been achieved. It is important that the Comprehensive Plan be regularly updated and re-assessed throughout its 20-year horizon to reflect the values of the community as they change over time.

Committee

The City's Comprehensive Plan Committee was comprised of elected officials, business owners, local institutions, department leaders, and community members. The Committee's role was to meet on a regular basis to provide guidance for the shape of the Comprehensive Plan document, insights on improvements to be made within the city, and participate in community engagement.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayor Austin Tylec, City of North Tonawanda • Matt Chavez, Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC) • Keith Craigie, NT Planning Board • Alex Domaradzki, City of North Tonawanda • Donna Hutton, Real Estate Agent • Rob DePaolo, City of North Tonawanda • Maureen Harding, Planner • Tim Martin, NT Waterfront Commission • Joe Marranca, City of North Tonawanda Councilman • Steve Pawlik, NT Waterfront | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission • Tim Pieper, Climate Force Task Group • Gabbie Richards, Business Owner / Oliver Street Merchants Association • Emily Root, NT Waterfront Commission / Climate Force Task Group • Ed Smolinski, Resident / Project Pride • Chelsea Spahr, City of North Tonawanda • Doug Taylor, LCDRC Board Chair • Mike Tuzzo, Climate Force Task Group • Laura Wilson, City of North Tonawanda |
|--|---|

Comprehensive Planning Process and Timeline

The City of North Tonawanda began the update to the Comprehensive Plan in the Winter of 2024 nearly 16 years following the Comprehensive Plan that was completed in 2008.





Past and Current Planning

The updated Comprehensive Plan is not the City's first or last planning initiative. The City of North Tonawanda has completed significant plans or programs to maintain efforts in moving forward as a destination for people to work, live, and play.

The following plans and planning documents have been completed since the completion of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan:

Twin Cities Memorial Highway Planning and Environment Linkages Study (in progress)

Twin City Memorial Highway Planning Study was selected to receive funding in 2023. Currently Twin City Memorial Highway is not safe for pedestrians, acts as a physical barrier that dissects lower income areas of the city, and contains many vehicular safety and operational issues for drivers.

Through the study, the City will be able to work through preliminary engineering to identify a new design for the heavily trafficked corridor which may include narrowing of traffic lanes, installation of green spaces, roundabouts, reduction in speed limits, and new consistent signage. The project includes a robust public engagement component and involves key regional stakeholders such as the Greater Buffalo



Niagara Regional Transportation Commission (GBNRTC), New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The study is scheduled for completion in the fall of 2025. Upon completion of the study, the City will be able to apply for Federal and State funds to implement the project.

North Tonawanda Climate Resilience Plan (2023)

North Tonawanda, in conjunction with the University at Buffalo Regional Institute prepared a climate resilience plan that focused on strategies to reduce the risk of potential impacts to climate hazards. Through robust public input over a 6 month planning process, the plan identifies 7 strategies for climate resilience including upgrading the sewer system, promoting green infrastructure & sustainable development, the monitoring of invasive species, and more. Each strategy is then prioritized and expanded to include actions to be taken in order to achieve the specific objective.

Tonawanda Island Infrastructure Analysis (2023)

In 2022, the City of North Tonawanda received funding through the Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Implementation program to conduct an analysis of the existing water and sewer infrastructure on Tonawanda Island, which is a key area for redevelopment as identified in the NT MomeNTum plan.

The process included field testing in the form of electromagnetic BEM testing, manhole inspections, CCTV, flow monitoring, and smoke testing to perform a SWOT analysis to identify the current capacity of the existing infrastructure, areas that need improvement, as well as short term and long-term recommendations to the City. Recommendations included transmission valve replacement/rehabilitation, water distribution main replacement/rehabilitation, sanitary pump station improvements, and a redundant sanitary force main.



City of North Tonawanda Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Strategic Investment Plan (2022)

The City of North Tonawanda was selected as one of two Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) DRI communities for Round 5 of the program. The purpose of the DRI is to assist downtowns with funding to spur economic development and transform the downtown by means of private development projects, non-profit, and public improvements. The City's DRI slate was dependent on approval by a Local Planning Committee comprised of business owners, community members, legislators, and local stakeholders.

The process included a robust community participation schedule including three public meetings, office hours, pop-up events, walking tours, and online surveys. The community outreach allowed for a finalization of a DRI vision and creation of goals that ranged from maintaining and enhancing a high quality public realm to development of diverse housing for renters and buyers of all income levels.

North Tonawanda's final project slate consisted of 23 projects totaling close to \$15 million. NYS announced funding for fourteen projects in the Spring of 2023. Projects include streetscape improvements along Oliver and Weber Streets, construction of apartments, a Commercial Property Improvement Program (administered by Lumber City Development Corporation), development of mixed-use spaces, and expansion of existing arts and cultural institutions such as the Riviera Theatre and the Allan Herschel Company Complex.



North Tonawanda Community Forest Management Plan (2022)

Realizing the community forest is a valued asset, the City invested in a collaborative planning process with support from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The planning process involved extensive resource and program analysis to develop a clear, concise, and timeline-oriented Community Forest Management Plan. The overall goal of the planning process was to develop a sustainable Community Forestry Program for the preservation and expansion of the community forest to serve the public interest by improving the community's physical, social, cultural, and economic environment. North Tonawanda's Community Forest Management Plan provided the framework to maintain, protect, and enhance the City's community trees. Recommendations developed as a result included: establishing a routine 7-year pruning cycle for public trees and 3-year for young trees, continuing to plant trees in appropriate locations, updating the Street Tree ordinance, exploring and adopting a shared maintenance responsibility for trees, and continuing to acquire a Tree City USA status.

Oliver Street Community Needs Assessment (2018)

Over the past four decades, Oliver Street has declined from a thriving business and economic hub into an underutilized and blighted corridor. To reverse this trend, the City of North Tonawanda completed a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) that identified opportunities, with the ultimate goal of revitalizing the Oliver Street business corridor.



CNA implementation through the efforts of the Oliver Street Merchants Association, Lumber City Development Corporation, North Tonawanda Project Pride, and recent investment projects will build off this momentum. By analyzing existing conditions and soliciting public feedback, this assessment identified the corridor's strengths and limitations and recommends action-oriented implementation strategies to meet these needs. These strategies have the potential to cultivate and sustain revitalization along the Oliver Street corridor and throughout the surrounding neighborhoods.

The CNA assessed the feasibility of residential and commercial redevelopment and concluded that both types of uses would be well suited for the revitalization of the area. Additionally, the CNA identified four broad categories of recommendations to advance the redevelopment concepts.

City of North Tonawanda Brownfield Opportunity Area (NT MomeNTum Plan) (2014)

The NT MomeNTum Plan was created using a NYSDOS Brownfield Opportunity Area Step 3 Grant. The NT MomeNTum Plan expresses a vision that will create a resurgence that extends downtown and on the waterfront. The Plan focused on properties that were vacant, underutilized, and potentially contaminated with the goal of redevelopment which would allow them to better contribute to quality of life, the local tax base, and economy.

The NT MomeNTum Plan was developed as a comprehensive revitalization plan and implementation strategy that reflects North Tonawanda's unique history, assets, and location along the Niagara River and the Erie Canal. The BOA Plan identified 10 principles and supporting strategic objectives to help guide decisions and future investments within its Study Area. The heart of the Step 3 Implementation Strategy is the graphic BOA Plan, which identifies 34 projects, divided into three phases over a period of 25 years.

City of North Tonawanda Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (2013/2024)

In 2013, the City of North Tonawanda completed an update of its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) which initially dates back to 1988. The LWRP seeks to capitalize on the city's waterfront assets, while also preserving and protecting waterfront resources for future generations.

The 2013 LWRP established 10 overarching goals for the City's waterfront including access improvements to all waterfronts, mitigate impacts of railroads, highways, and other abandoned infrastructure along waterways, and promote a balance of private versus public infrastructure.

Although the 2013 document was completed, it was never approved or adopted by NYS. The City is currently undergoing another update to their LWRP using the 2013 unadopted document as a basis. The LWRP update is expected to be completed before 2026.

City of North Tonawanda Downtown Parking Analysis (2013)

The Downtown Parking Analysis was performed to understand the current parking situation in downtown North Tonawanda and provide information that may be used to better plan for future development in the area. The study included the classification and evaluation of all parking areas in the downtown area.

The findings from this study show that the current parking capacity is sufficient for the downtown area, and there are opportunities for the City to make parking downtown more efficient. The study identifies parking corridors in the downtown area that are consistently significantly busier than other parking areas and recommends promoting development in areas where there is more available parking to put less of a strain on less busy parking areas. Other recommendations include signage improvements; improving additional parking lots; forming a partnership or agreement with some of the establishments that are not open during the busier parking times and have capacity; and making the area more pedestrian friendly.



City of North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan (2008)

The City last developed a Comprehensive Plan over 15 years ago in 2008. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan established specific policy areas of focus including: economic development, environment & recreation, housing, waterfront, history and culture, and community services and quality of life.

A land use plan was developed which included the recommendation to continue and enhance single-family neighborhoods, mixed-use neighborhood commercial development along Oliver Street, downtown mixed-use development along Webster Street, and mixed-use development along the Niagara River and Erie Canal waterfronts.

The document provided zoning recommendations, suggested additional planning including an LWRP update, remediation/redevelopment of Tonawanda Island, a Parks & Recreation Master Plan, and engineering initiatives for the City Marina, a new wayfinding system, and continued recreation improvements in Gratwick Park.

SECTION 2

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION





Commitment to, and from, the community was vital to achieve all objectives and for the ultimate success of future projects within the updated Comprehensive Plan. Community participation is essential to ensure that the local community is given a voice in the planning process.

Community participation was accomplished through diverse techniques including traditional meetings, public workshops, interactive sites tours, community chalkboards, and student engagement.

The Comprehensive Plan process demanded transparency, equity, and inclusivity through community engagement. The following community engagement events were facilitated throughout the duration of the Comprehensive Plan update.



Steering Committee Meetings

A Steering Committee (SC) was organized to provide strategic guidance and to thoroughly consider each of the visions, strategies, projects and initiatives that developed through the process. SC members represented a diversity of North Tonawanda business and property owners, the public sector, non-profits, and organizations. They were supported by a consultant team hired by the City of North Tonawanda, and representatives of the city, New York State, Niagara County, and local agencies.





The SC developed a vision and strategies for the future, as well as a series of projects that will curate economic development, social benefits, and recreational opportunities within a variety of formats. The SC met in venues accessible to the public. Each meeting was also convened over a virtual platform so that stakeholders unable to gather in person could participate.

Meeting #1, January 25, 2024, 500 Wheatfield

The SC kick-off meeting was designed to provide the members with a comprehensive overview of the Comprehensive Plan and process. The consultant team asked for the group to participate in an activity where they were provided PLAYCE insight cards for inspiration and a large sheet that had a timeline of North Tonawanda, and three questions; what are you worried to lose, willing to leverage, and okay to let go of?

Meeting #2, April 29, 2024, 500 Wheatfield

At the second meeting, the SC reviewed draft Existing Conditions, the draft Community Participation Plan for final comments and participated in a visioning activity. This activity asked the group to address the current identity of the city, and imagine the future identity they hope for/intend to create.

Meeting #3 July 11, 2024, 500 Wheatfield

The third meeting included a review of the Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Key Takeaways, the Engagement Outcomes, and Draft Vision and Goals. The Engagement Outcomes included key points from the Survey, and summaries of the workshops, tours, and other events.

The meeting included an activity where the committee split into groups of three, with each group assigned a topic to brainstorm strategies. Groups were given magazines, glue sticks, markers, and sticky notes and were asked to be inspired by these materials and, if inclined, collage different strategies. Each group was then asked to share, and these strategies are reflected within the vision, goals, and strategies. Following the activity was a review of the draft vision and goals for the Comprehensive Plan where the committee was able to give feedback and edits.



Meeting #4 October 2, 2024, 500 Wheatfield

During the fourth Steering Committee meeting, the group was asked to finalize previously identified goals, and add their perspectives on priority for strategies, and policies. This was done through a prioritization activity where the goals and strategies were each printed out on large posters, which were laid out around the room. Committee members were given sheets of stickers to place beside their prioritized strategy as they walked around to each poster. Edits were made to existing strategies, and new strategies were added as a result of Committee discussion.



Meeting #5 December 4, 2024, 500 Wheatfield

At Committee meeting 5, the consultant team asked the Steering Committee to assist in Goals and Strategies edits during the fifth meeting. These edits focused on whether or not the Goals align with the New York State Smart Growth Principles, and additional clarifications of goal #7. The goal was revised with a new title and strategies that better fall under the title.

Meeting #6 February 24th, 2025, 500 Wheatfield

Committee meeting 6 included a review of what a Future Land Use Plan is and why it is used within Comprehensive Planning. The consultant team presented a Draft Future Land Use Plan for Committee feedback and discussion. The Committee suggested land use revisions to specific corridors and edits to the Land Use descriptions. The group then discussed the development of conceptual plans to provide a visual for Land Use descriptions within the Comprehensive Plan.

Meeting #7 May 12th, 2025, 500 Wheatfield

At the final Steering Committee Meeting, the project team presented the updated Draft Future Land Use Plan and reviewed the concepts created for each Land Use description. The Committee provided edits and thoughts about the Draft Future Land Use Plan. The consultant team also discussed the Implementation Matrix created for the Comprehensive Plan and received edits and feedback from the Committee.

Public Workshops

Public Workshops give the opportunity for the community to come together at convenient times to receive updates about the state of the project, provide feedback, and participate in activities and Public Workshops provide the opportunities for deeper, more meaningful conversations and inquiry. All public meetings were held in accessible spaces and also convened over a virtual platform so participants unable to gather in person could participate.

Both types of meetings were held throughout the duration of the project to receive feedback and assist in shaping the Comprehensive Plan.

Public Meeting #1: April 11, 2024, Carnegie Art Center

The first public meeting introduced the community to the various ways they can participate with the team; surveys, pop-up community conversations, site tours, and fun and interactive workshops. The consultant team provided various ways for the community to provide high level and in depth feedback on what they hope for the future of North Tonawanda. Activities included conversation bubbles, where community members could answer specific questions in their own words about priorities for development and their vision for North Tonawanda. Other activities involved creating a magazine cover by collaging what North Tonawanda will look like in 2045.





Public Workshop #1: May 1, 2024, 1818 Bar and Grill

At the first Public Workshop, participants engaged in several activities, including Roles and Contributions, 4 Magic Questions (similar to SC Meeting 1 activity), and Cover Story. From the workshop, we recognize that the participants value education, development, funding for projects, and diversity. It became clear there is a vision for a strong cultural future in NT that is vibrant with arts, recreation, small businesses, and families.

Youth Engagement Workshop May 5, 2024, North Tonawanda City Hall & High School

The Youth Engagement workshops took place over the course of a school day where the consultant team asked students to engage in the Cover Story activity (similar to Public Meeting 1). Throughout the sessions, the team noticed reoccurring interests in cultural programming, recreation, a focus on family, and betterment of the community. They also shared their wants for a better waterfront and waterfront access, better infrastructure, preservation of natural resources, and recreation opportunities for teens. This insight is integral to understand the needs of the next generation to discover what they need for the future to stay in North Tonawanda.



Public Workshop #2: July 10, 2024, Wurlitzer Building 2nd Floor

At Public Workshop 2, the consultant team asked participants to gather in groups and collage strategies and projects for one of the topics below:

- Housing
- Transportation / Infrastructure
- Industry
- Recreation
- Arts & Culture
- Environment

Collage results were focused on the community's need for age-appropriate spaces, addressing existing housing infrastructure, recreation opportunities in consideration of the aging population, connections for bikes, pedestrians, and various forms of transit. Other strategies that were prominent include holding responsible parties accountable for environment-concerning practices, variety among recreation opportunities, and green infrastructure initiatives.



Site Tours

Site Tours were facilitated in areas of key focus to allow the City and Consultant Team to better understand community desires for specific neighborhoods and corridors. Site Tours allow for real time discussion of potential development, public improvement projects, and strategies to achieve desired outcomes and sense of place.

Site Tour #1: May 21, 2024, Oliver St.

The first Site Tour was focused on the Oliver Street corridor, a priority for North Tonawanda as it makes its way back to a thriving, neighborhood corridor. The Site Tour participants engaged in three activities:

Identity of Oliver Street – The participating group was asked what the current identity of the place is and what the future identity of the space is.

Magic Questions – A series of questions that invited tour participants to answer questions at various stops including “What is holding this district back?” and “What could be possible for this district?” Alignments from the responses will be shared within this document.

SWOT – Participants were asked to evaluate the tour area and stops through the specified lenses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Additionally, four people were asked to evaluate the experience of a place through a sense: touch, taste, smell, and sound.

The Site Tour noted Oliver Street currently feels disinvested in, neglected, and that there is movement, but not community-wide. The group was also concerned that there is a lack of strategy and consensus around redevelopment. They shared their thoughts on the future identity of Oliver Street, envisioning it as the center of entertainment, food, and culture in North Tonawanda, that connects back to its walkable roots and neighborhoods. Overall, the group recognized a strong need to return Oliver Street to a walkable part of the neighborhood and the city; to reinvigorate the corridor the road was intended to be and have a group of passionate leaders and visionaries that can help make those changes.

Site Tour #2: May 23, 2024, Valu Home Center Plaza and Wetlands

The second Site Tour was focused around the Valu Plaza located on Nash Road, and surrounding wetland areas within the City, which provided a mix of commercial activity and environmental protection discussion. The Site Tour participants engaged in three activities:

Love Story – Participants were asked what the existing relationship is to the stated space, and what we could give to it, and what could it give to us to feel loved.

Magic Questions – A series of questions that invited tour participants to answer questions at various stops including “What is holding this district back?”; “What could be possible for this district?”; “What’s it going to take for the possibility to be a reality?”; and “What partners are needed for success?”





SWOT - Participants were asked to evaluate the tour area and stops through the specified lenses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Additionally, four people were asked to evaluate the experience of a place through a sense: touch, taste, smell, and sound.

Following the Site Tour, a strong consensus came around the need to update the zoning code and visit what wetlands are currently zoned as. Discussion also included the topic of revitalizing the plaza and bringing activation forward to the street and decreasing the amount of pavement.

Online Survey

To reach a larger group of community members, business owners, local organizations, and other stakeholders, an online survey was launched on the Survey Monkey website. The survey was opened on April 16 and closed June 25, 2024. There were 242 responses total.

Across the survey, there were six significant topics, including Housing, Culture, Recreation, Environmental Concerns, Transportation, and Industry.

A majority of survey responders live in single-family homes and noted that the City provides high quality of life and high housing satisfaction although affordability of housing is a growing concern among residents.

38.5% of survey respondents noted that they are very satisfied and regularly attend events within the City, suggesting a solid base of community participation in exiting programs. However, over 55% of survey respondents attend one or two events a year or for a specific reason. A large number of respondents shared they would be more interested in events if there was a shuttle, regular weekly programs, or increased access to public spaces.

In terms of recreation, survey respondents noted that there seems to be a lack of recreation spaces for teens which was consistent with High School and Workshop outreach. Survey respondents also desired increased maintenance of parks and improved conditions of sports facilities.

Regarding transportation, pedestrian safety and sidewalk conditions were among the top concerns of respondents, with bicycle safety being the second highest concern. Respondents also noted that public transportation is limited, and parking availability is scarce.

Entertainment and Venue Crawl

The Entertainment and Venue Crawl occurred on June 7th, 2024, and was focused on Oliver Street's eating and drinking establishments in a 'blitz' format that took place from the late afternoon into the early evening. The group visited the four participating establishments to deliver scripted information snippets about the project and distribute short-answer surveys that were completed by patrons with a member of the team. The venues that participated in the crawl included Sticky Face BBQ, Dom Polski, the Village Inn, and Buffalo Wings and Brewhouse.

Summaries from discussion and completed paper surveys are noted below:

Culture: Respondents shared they would like socializing events with food and beverage to improve North Tonawanda, increased music performances, all-age family friendly programs, and arts and culture based events.

Housing: Affordable housing was noted as an important housing focus along with ADA Accessibility and In-law suites or accessory dwelling units. Others noted the need for high density housing development and then mixed-use buildings that include an office space or store on the first floor and housing above.



Industry: Respondents shared that they would like to see the energy technology industry have opportunities in North Tonawanda as well as micro agriculture, specialty manufacturing, “clean manufacturing” facilities, research, and recycling/upcycling materials.

Environmental Concerns: Flooding and/or drainage, severe winter weather, and invasive species were the three highest ranked environmental concerns.

Recreation: Respondents share the desire for opportunities to recreate on the waterfront, including better access for boat rentals/ small craft activities, and entertainment. Many shared the need for various sports like ice hockey, flag football, golf, pickleball, and softball. The addition of new bike trails and walking paths was also a recurring comment from those at the various venues.

Community Chalkboards

Three chalkboards were placed around the city and each board was up for 4 weeks from the beginning of May to early June 2024. The chalkboards were placed at Save-A-Lot, The Market in the Square, and City Hall. On the boards were a series of questions, asking community members what they are Afraid to Lose; Okay to Let Go Of; Where There Is Opportunity to Leverage; and Possibilities for Future. Responses included:

Afraid to Lose

- Animals and birds
- Wildlife
- Space for Animals
- Nature!

Okay to Let Go

- Bad sidewalks
- Abandoned homes

Opportunity to Leverage

- Biking
- Speed skating
- Dance hall
- Existing natural areas
- Staycation/ Tourism accommodations

Possibilities for Future

- More fishing access
- Paved roads
- Increased designated nature spaces
- Businesses along the river
- More walkability
- Outdoor places to socialize
- Theater/Music performance spaces





Public Meeting 2, September 13 2025, North Tonawanda City Farmers Market

The City's final outreach for the Comprehensive Plan Update was held on Saturday, September 13th, at the North Tonawanda City Farmers Market, which brings in hundreds of community members and visitors every weekend. The Project Team and City Staff set up an information tent with opportunities for members of the community to review the Draft Plan, general information about the process, and provide feedback on the Draft Plan Goals and prioritize various strategies under the goals.

A feedback poster was displayed asking participants which items they think are vital to moving the updated Comprehensive Plan forward and to mark them with a sticker dot. The following items were displayed:

- Create a Comprehensive Plan Action Committee
- Update the Zoning Regulations to align with the Comprehensive Plan
- Apply for grants and grant administration opportunities
- Create a Parks Master Plan
- Create a Transportation Master Plan
- Create a Housing and Parking Analysis
- Create a Design Standards Committee to align planning goals and new projects
- Analyze neighborhoods throughout the City for infrastructure and amenity needs

There was a high amount of support for creating a Parks Master Plan, developing a housing and parking analysis, and continuing to apply for grants and grant administration opportunities. Additional ideas added included:

- Increasing hospitality and tourism offerings including a Visitor Center
- Addressing City Market traffic, adding a bike rack for those who bike to and from the market, and developing a restaurant at the market
- Development of a Transportation Hub near Twin Cities Memorial Highway
- Development of a new community center that includes a gym and indoor pool
- Protection of wildlife
- Continued investment in small businesses
- Continued extension of the Sweeney Street Path
- Investment in Gratwick Park
- Exploring ways to connect neighborhood areas to waterfront

Engagement Summary

While the responses varied across Public Meetings, Workshops, the online survey, Site Tours, and chalkboards, several alignments became apparent through the outreach process: including the preservation of natural spaces and resources, leveraging the waterfront and City's history, increased walkability and pedestrian safety, and new programming activities, and the maintenance of existing programming facilities.





SECTION 3

EXISTING CONDITIONS





Regional Setting

The City of North Tonawanda is located in southwestern Niagara County, in Western New York. The city sits directly north of Erie County (Figure 1). The Niagara River makes up the city's western waterfront and the Erie Canal creates its southern and eastern borders. North Tonawanda is surrounded by other major Western New York municipalities including the Towns of Tonawanda, Amherst, Wheatfield, Grand Island, and the City of Tonawanda.



Figure 1: Regional Local Map

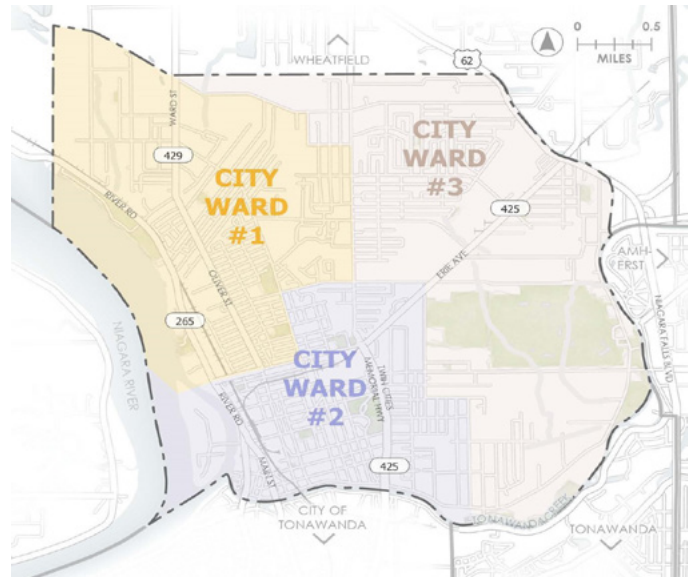


Figure 2: City of North Tonawanda Ward Map

A border crossing into Canada and City of Niagara Falls are just 3 miles north of the City, and the City of Buffalo is located 5 miles south, positioning North Tonawanda directly between two major regional attractions.

The City is 10.85 square miles and consists of 3 wards (Figure 2/Table 1).

Table 1: Acreage Verses Population

	Acreage	Area (%)	Population	Population Density (persons/acre)
WARD 1	2,361.0	34%	10,241	4.3
WARD 2	1,589.1	23%	10,273	6.4
WARD 3	2,993.0	43%	9,989	3.3

Source: US Census & Esri

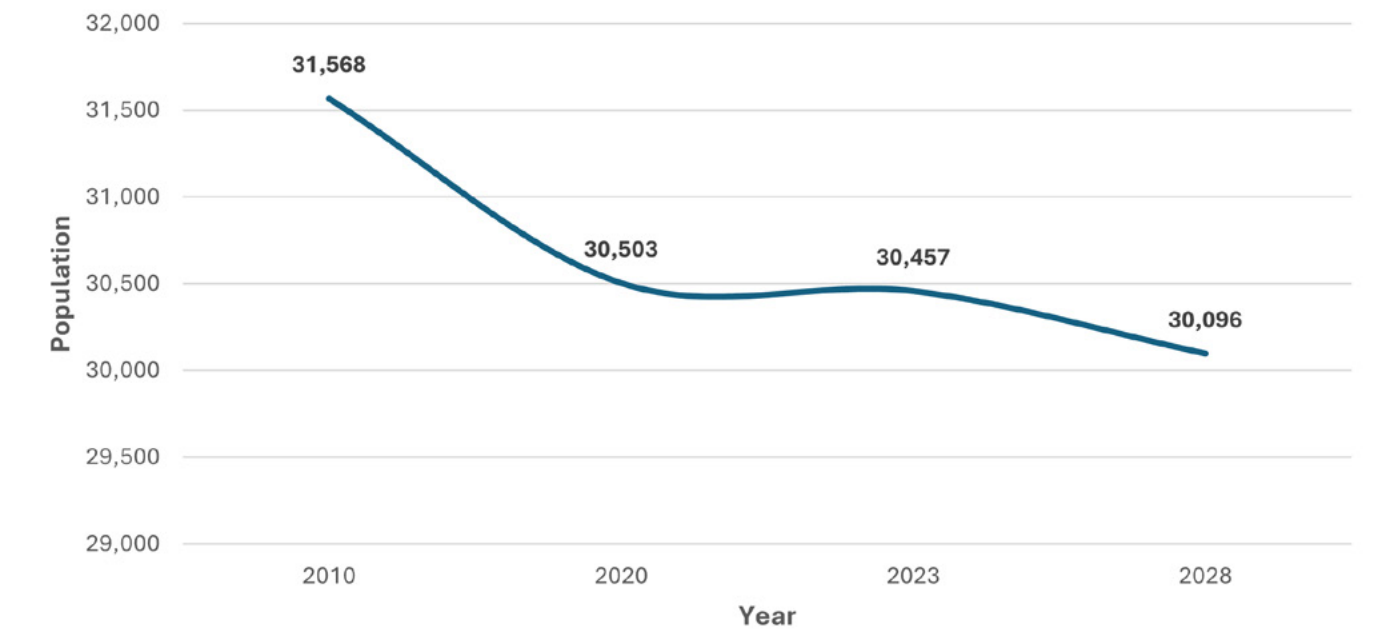
Population density within the City varies throughout each Ward. Ward 2, which comprises the southwestern and central portions of the city, has the highest population density (6.4). Wards 1 and 3, located in the northern and eastern portions of the city, have lower population densities. Although Ward 2 is smaller than both Wards 1 and 3, its population density is higher due to containing the city's downtown and dense residential neighborhoods. Ward 3, having the smallest population total, contains Deerwood Golf Course, protected wetland areas, as well as major transportation thoroughfares, which contributes to its higher land acreage and lowest population density.



Population

As of 2023, North Tonawanda’s estimated population was 30,457 people, which has been slowly declining since 2010. The population saw a drop of -3.4% from 2010 to 2020 and continued to slowly decrease by .15% from 2020 to 2023. Population projections show a continued decrease of 1.3% by 2028. North Tonawanda has seen a quicker population decrease compared to that of Niagara County as a whole (-2.9% from 2010 to 2023) (Figure 3/Table 2). When it comes to racial composition of the city of North Tonawanda, 91.4% of residents are white, 1.6% are black, and 0.8% of the population are Asian. Other races include Native American and other or multiple races. Table 3 below demonstrates the racial composition of North Tonawanda.

Figure 3: North Tonawanda Population Totals



Source: Esri Business Analyst and US Census Data

Table 2: Population Change 2010-2023	
North Tonawanda	-3.5%
Niagara County	-2.9%

Source: US Census & Esri

Table 3: Racial Composition of North Tonawanda (ESRI 2023 Estimates)	
Asian	0.8
Black	1.6
Native American	0.6
Pacific Islander	0
White	91.4
Other	0.8
Multiple Races	4.9

Source: US Census & Esri



Age

In 2023, the median age within the city was 44.7. This is nearly identical to Niagara County’s median age of 44.4 but higher than the New York State median age average of 39.8. The city’s median age has increased by more than two years (2.4) since 2010. North Tonawanda’s 2023 senior population (adults 65+) comprises more than 1/5th of the City’s total population (22.8%). This is higher than the senior population in both 2010 and 2020. This, combined with an increase in median age since 2010, shows a pattern that North Tonawanda’s population is aging in place. The age distribution of the City of North Tonawanda is shown in Figure 4.

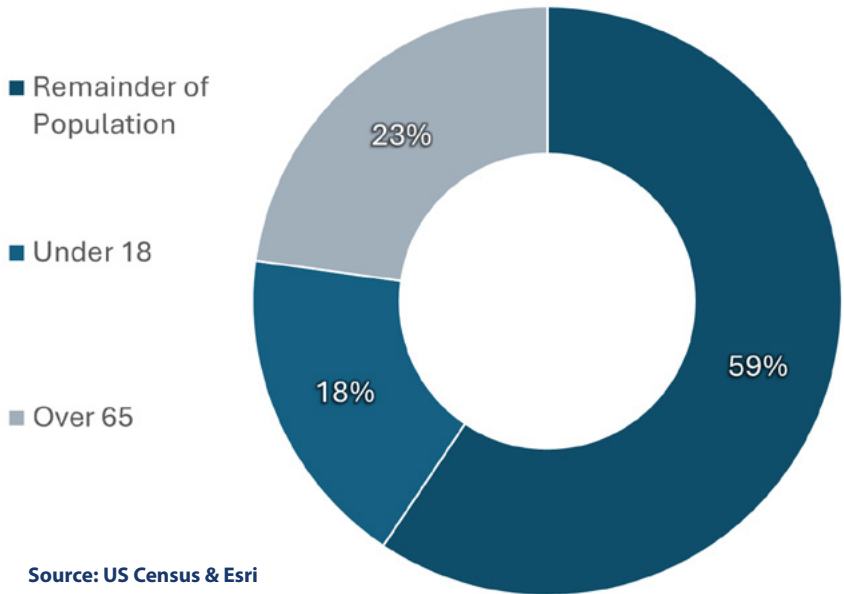
Those under the age of 18 contribute to 17.8% of the total population. Combined, those under 18 and over 65, which are known to be vulnerable populations, represent 40.6% of the city’s total population. Vulnerable populations are those that are generally at a greater risk of poor physical or social health. This means that vulnerable populations may encounter greater barriers to social, political, environmental, or economic elements of a community such as dependence on public and human services.

Housing

The total number of available housing units within the City of North Tonawanda was 15,231 in 2023. This is a 3.2% increase over the number of housing units (14,757) in 2010.

The total number of occupied households within the city in 2023 was 14,164. This is 1.1% higher than the total number of households in 2010. When compared to Niagara County, the City is seeing a similar increased rate of households (Table 4).

Figure 4: Age Distribution

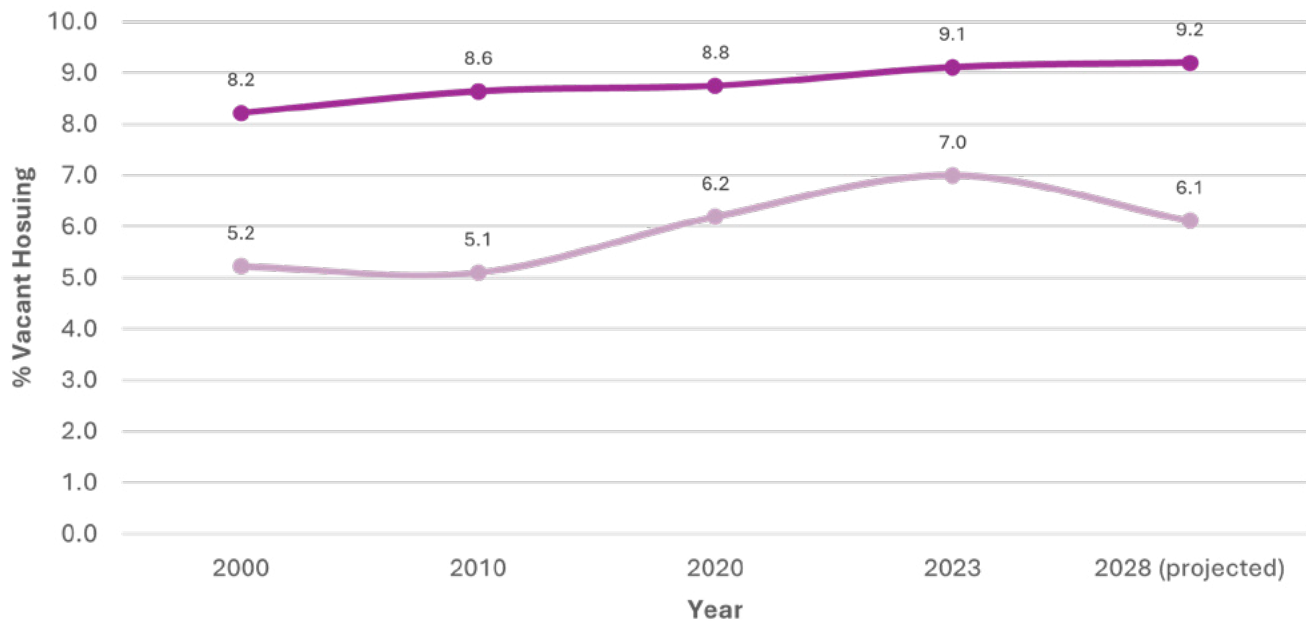


Source: US Census & Esri

Table 4: Total Number of Households 2010-2023			
	2010	2020	2023
	Total Households	Total Households	Total Households
North Tonawanda	14,004	14,110	14,164
Niagara County	90,557	91,393	91,526

Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2023

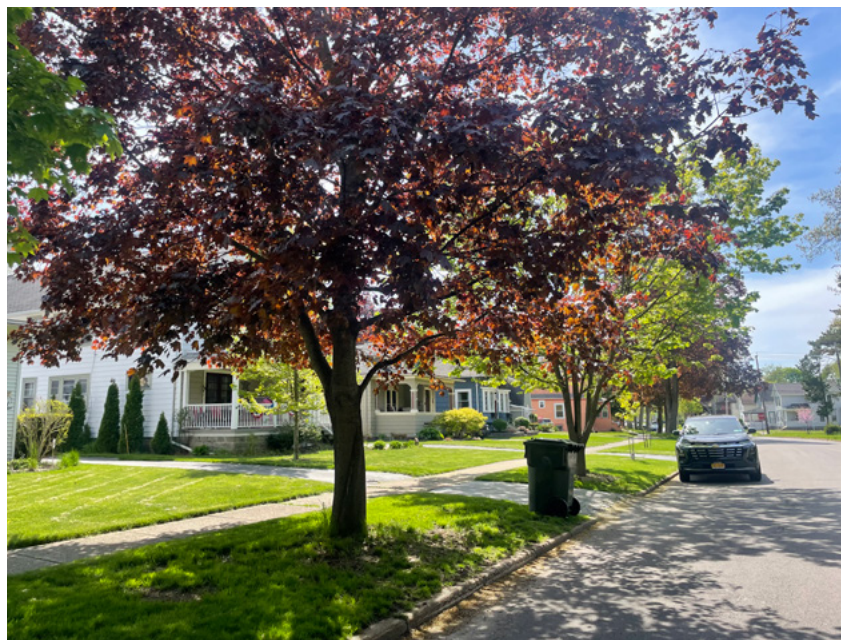
North Tonawanda is predominately owner occupied (68.6%) and 34.4% renter occupied. Owner occupied housing has remained relatively stable since 2010, dipping by only 2% to 66% in both 2010 and 2020.

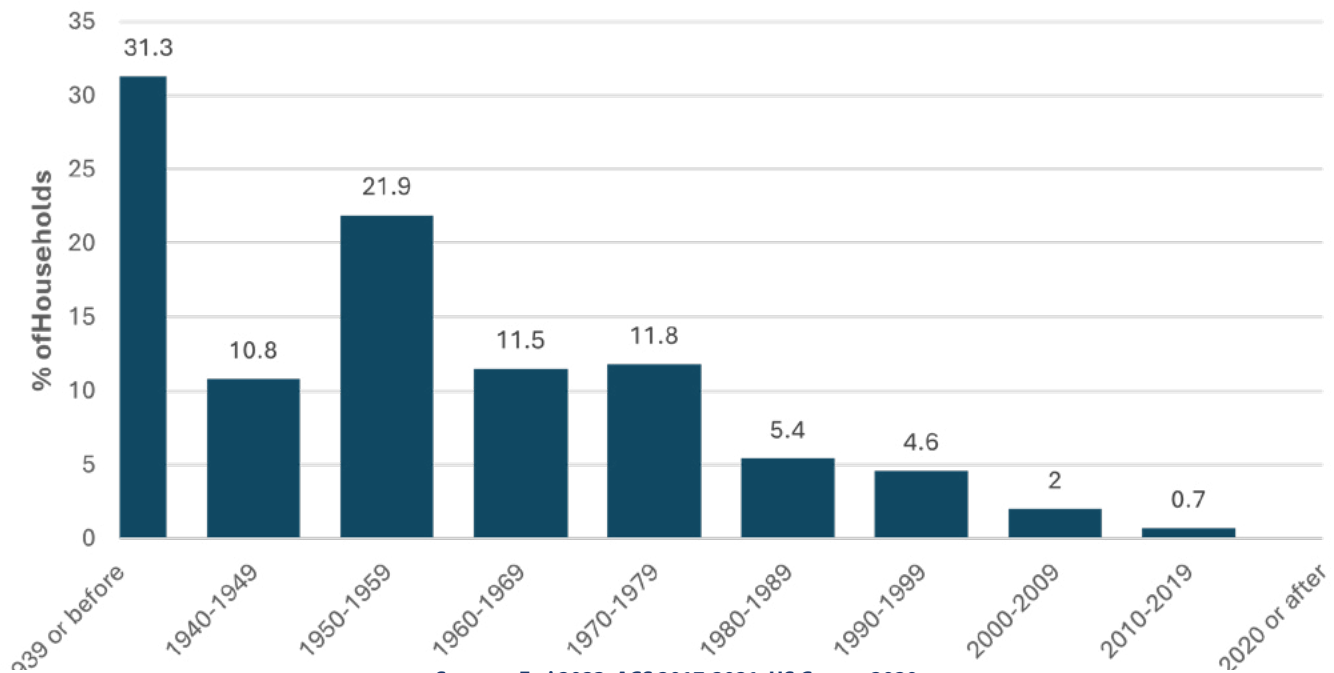
**Figure 5: Housing Vacancy Rates**

Source: US Census & Esri

Housing vacancy can stem from several factors including population decline and aging population. As seen from the preceding paragraphs, North Tonawanda is experiencing both the trend of population decline and an aging population. These factors create an influx of available housing within the city. Paired with an aging housing stock and the ebbs and flows of the housing market, housing vacancy can increase. From 2010 to 2023, North Tonawanda's vacancy rate increased by 1.9 percent whereas during the same interval of time, Niagara County as a whole only experienced an increase of 0.5 percentage points (Figure 5). Consistent with a national pattern, the city's average household size has been steadily declining since 2010. The current household size in North Tonawanda is 2.11, this is 6% less than the average household size in 2010 (2.24). These factors combined may explain the increase in the city's vacancy rate.

The median home value within the city is \$175,068, slightly lower than Niagara County's median home value of \$186,479. The value of homes has been increasing since 2021 (\$140,479) and is projected to continue to increase into the year 2028 up to \$188,000 (projection based on ESRI data). Figure 6 below shows the percentage of households compared to when they were built. Over 60% of North Tonawanda's homes were built prior to 1959 and less than 1% of homes were built after 2010. Aging housing can create the need for increased maintenance costs and capital improvements which can limit the ability of housing choice for those looking to buy a house in North Tonawanda.



**Figure 6: Year Property Built**

North Tonawanda is facing a declining population, which has been a contributing factor to the rise in housing vacancies. New housing is not being built, and the existing housing is aging and becoming more fiscally challenging to renovate. Despite the aging housing stock, the median home value for North Tonawanda has been increasing since 2021 and is only slightly lower than the county average which illustrates that the available housing is holding its value.

Local Economy

Income

The median household income in North Tonawanda is \$62,345. This is slightly lower than the combined (averaged) median household income for Erie & Niagara Counties (\$63,455). Median household income has seen an increase for both the City of North Tonawanda and Niagara County from 2017 to 2023.

The 2023 median disposable income for the City in 2023 was \$53,962, slightly higher than Niagara County's median disposable income (\$51,523) but almost 16% less than the statewide average (\$60,171). Disposable income is income remaining after deduction of taxes and other mandatory charges. The higher disposable income within an area, the more likely it is to be spent within the community on goods and services. Eleven percent of households within North Tonawanda are below the national poverty level. This is lower than Niagara County and the New York State percentage of population below the poverty level, both of which are 13%.

Education

Only 5.9% of North Tonawanda's adult population do not have a High School Diploma or Degree of any kind. One third of adults, 33.3% are high school graduates, 32.3% have some college or an associate degree, and 28.5% have a bachelor's or other post graduate degree. North Tonawanda has a similar representation of educational attainment to Niagara County as a whole.



Employment

North Tonawanda has 15,401 workers in total. The majority of workers (82.8%) drive to work while 6.2% of workers carpool, 3.1% walk to work, and 0.2% take public transportation. The majority of workers (62.1%) have a commute of anywhere between 10 and 29 minutes. There are 1,262 households (almost 10%) within the City of North Tonawanda that do not currently own a vehicle. This could impact community members' employment opportunities and mobility of workers not only within the city but throughout the region. The City has a current unemployment rate of 5.1%, which is 0.2% lower than New York State (5.3%).

The majority of the city's workforce (64.8%) are in white collar jobs including but not limited to professional offices, medical services, and finance. Twenty percent of the workforce are in blue collar industries or trades and 15.2% work in the service industry. Comparatively, the workforce industry sectors for Western New York (Erie, Niagara, Chautauqua, Allegany, and Cattaraugus Counties) are 63.6% white collar, 19.6% blue collar, and 16.8% service industry (Table 5).

Table 5: Workforce Sector

	White Collar	Blue Collar	Service Industry
North Tonawanda	64.8%	20%	15.2%
Western New York	63.6%	19.6%	16.8%

Source: US Census & Esri

City of North Tonawanda businesses employ 9,110 workers. Major employers within the city include North Tonawanda City School District, City of North Tonawanda government, DeGraff Memorial Hospital, Confer Plastics, and Armstrong Fluid Technology.

The City's daytime population, a measure of people who are present in an area during normal business hours, is 24,093. The daytime population being lower than total population shows that more people are leaving North Tonawanda Monday-Friday from 9AM – 5 PM, than staying or coming into it for work. This also shows that, even though the city provides diverse services and amenities and diverse industry levels, a majority of its existing population is traveling to work elsewhere.

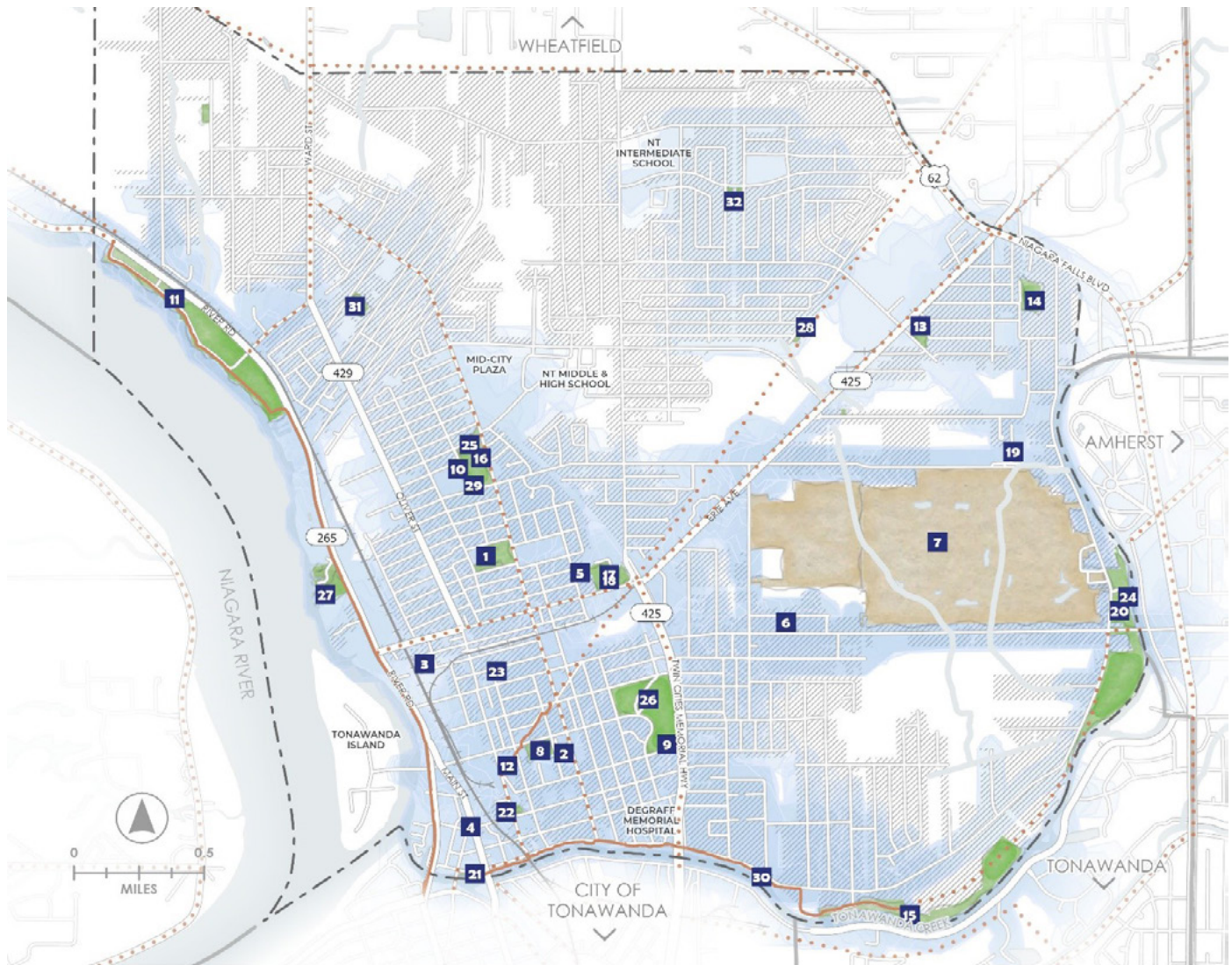
North Tonawanda's residents are largely well educated and are working in a white-collar job sector. These jobs are at some of the City's largest employers; however, it is apparent that a significant portion of the working population is employed at companies based outside of the city and have a 10-29 minute commute to work.

Parks, Trails & Recreation

The City of North Tonawanda owns, operates, and maintains 21 parks and recreation facilities totaling 152 acres of land. Table 6 summarizes information regarding the City's parks. The parks are dispersed throughout North Tonawanda, along the Erie Canal and Niagara River waterfront, and within the downtown, and residential neighborhoods. According to the Trust for Public Land, 73% of residents in North Tonawanda live within a 10-minute walk of a park. This is almost 20% higher than the median city score of 55%. Figure 7 provides a visual of a 10-minute walkshed, with darker colors indicating more access and lighter colors showing less access to parks. Some portions of the city, specifically near the northern municipal border and south of Deerwood Golf Course, have minimal access to nearby parks.



Figure 7: Parks, Trails & Recreation



PARKS & RECREATION ASSETS

THE CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA OWNS, OPERATES, AND MAINTAINS 21 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES TOTALING 152 ACRES OF LAND. THE PARKS ARE DISPERSED THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA, ALONG THE ERIE CANAL AND NIAGARA RIVER WATERFRONT, WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN, AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS. THE CITY ALSO MAINTAINS OR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL ASSETS INCLUDING THE YOUTH CENTER, SENIOR CENTER, GOLF COURSE, BOTANICAL GARDENS, KAYAK LAUNCHES, FISHING DOCKS, AND VARIOUS TRAILS.

MAP KEY:

- CITY BOUNDARY
- PARK / RECREATIONAL FACILITY
- PUBLIC GOLF COURSE
- EXISTING TRAIL
- PROPOSED TRAIL
- RESIDENTIAL AREA
- APPROX. 10-MINUTE WALKSHED TO PARK - DARKER COLORS INDICATE ACCESS TO MORE PARKS

PARKS AND RECREATION ASSETS:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 ASTRO CITY | 13 LEAH PARK | 24 NT KAYAK LAUNCH FACILITIES |
| 2 BRAUER PARK | 14 MARTINSVILLE PARK | 25 PAYNE PARK |
| 3 CARRUTHERS PARK | 15 MAYOR'S PARK | 26 PINEWOODS PARK |
| 4 CHARLIE FLEISCHMAN TRIANGLE | 16 MEMORIAL POOL | 27 RAYMOND KLIMEK VETERANS PARK |
| 5 COLONEL PAYNE PARK | 17 NATIONAL LEAGUE FIELDS | 28 REMINGTON PARK |
| 6 CRAMER PARK | 18 NT RECREATION DEPARTMENT | 29 ROJEK PARK |
| 7 DEERWOOD GOLF COURSE | 19 NT AMERICAN BABE RUTH FIELDS | 30 SERVICE DRIVE BOAT LAUNCH |
| 8 FELTON FIELD | 20 NT BOTANICAL GARDENS | 31 STENZIL FIELD |
| 9 GALASSI'S FIELD | 21 NT GATEWAY PARK | 32 WURLITZER PLAYGROUND AND PARK |
| 10 GILMORE FIELD | 22 NT SENIOR CENTER | |
| 11 GRATWICK RIVERSIDE PARK | 23 NT YOUTH CENTER | |
| 12 HERITAGE PARK | | |

**Table 6: City of North Tonawanda Parks**

Park	Address	Size (acres)	Amenities
Astro City	587-621 Gilmore Avenue	2.79	Playground, tennis courts
Brauer Park	214 Payne Avenue	1.03	Memorial Monuments, Children's Remembrance Garden
Carruthers Park	Carruthers and Miller Street	2.14	Small pavilion, playground, basketball court, tennis courts
Charlie Fleischman Triangle	36 Goundry Street	0.05	Green space
Cramer Park	53 Cramer Street	1.38	Playground, small pavilion, ½ basketball court



Felton Field	191 Thompson Street	3.45	Baseball / softball field, bleachers,
Galassi's Field	Christiana & Twin Cities Memorial Highway	3.11	Softball field & basketball court, bleachers
Gateway Park	99 Sweeney Street	1.56	Pavilion, seating, docking, harbor house & restrooms/showers
Gilmore Field	789 Gilmore Avenue	3.5	Baseball / softball field, bleachers
Gratwick-Riverside Park	1300 River Road	67.94	Walking paths, boat launch, 2 pavilions, fishing pier, nature area, marina
Heritage Park	166 Oliver Street	3.24	Green space, walking path, benches
Leah Park	1337 Erie Avenue	2.81	Playground, ½ basketball court
Martinsville Field	987 Sweeney Street	5.18	Playground, basketball court, softball/baseball field
Mayor's Park	987 Sweeney Street	1.85	Three shelters, playground, bathroom facility, kayak launch / fishing pier
Payne Park	848 Payne Avenue	4.25	Raindrop Pool, Memorial Pool, playground, pavilion, 2 basketball courts
Pinewoods Park	1 Pinewoods Drive	23.20	Walking paths, playground, two shelters, disc golf, bathroom facility
Raymond Klimek Veteran's Park	700 River Road	11.79	Bandshell, walking paths and loop, playground, two shelters, Marines Monument, Seabees Monument, bathroom facility, fishing pier
Remington Park	1100-1102 Remington Avenue	2.31	Playground, ½ basketball court
Rojek Field	250 Walck Road	4.6	Baseball field, bleachers
Stenzil Field	170 Stenzil Street	3.41	Softball field, playground, bleachers
Wurlitzer Playground/Park	Corner of Deerfield Drive and Cambridge Avenue	2.74	Green space, playground, tennis courts, basketball court
Colonel Payne Park	Corner of Bennett & Niagara Parkway	1.1	Playground, swings, volleyball courts
National Little League Fields	500 Wheatfield Street	7.43	4 baseball/softball fields
North Tonawanda American Babe Ruth Fields	1344 Walck Road	9.36	4 baseball fields

Source: City of North Tonawanda, 2025

The City also maintains or is responsible for community recreational assets including the Youth Center, Senior Center, Deerwood Golf Course, Botanical Gardens, kayak launches, fishing docks, Gateway Harbor boat docks, and various trails that are described below.



Botanical Gardens

The City of North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens are located along the Erie Canal at 1825 Sweeney Street and are managed by the North Tonawanda Youth, Parks, & Recreation Department. The North Tonawanda Botanical Garden Organization (NTBGO) is a nonprofit established in 2018 with the goal of promoting the gardens as a scenic destination for special events, gatherings, community education, and providing environmental awareness. The NTBGO has ongoing projects such as maintenance of beehives and hive education and implementation of green infrastructure throughout the property. A shoreline restoration project was completed on a portion of the property by Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper along Tonawanda Creek.

Deerwood Golf Course

Deerwood Golf Course was established in 1976 and is a 27-hole (3 sets of 9-hole courses) municipal public course located at 1818 Sweeney Street near the eastern border of the City. The course is adjacent to Tonawanda Creek and hosts 60,000 rounds of golf annually. Deerwood Golf Course also includes the 1818 Bar & Grill, a full-service four-season restaurant utilized by both the community and visitors to the course.

Riverside Park Bike Trail / Niagara Riverwalk

The Gratwick Riverside Bike Trail spans 2.6 miles from Gratwick Park located on River Road, along the Niagara River, and leads into North Tonawanda's downtown. The bike path was previously extended from Goundry Street along the River Road right-of-way, under the Seymour Street Bridge, and runs along Sweeney Street to Webster Street, then crosses the Webster Street/Main Street Bridge to connect to the Empire State Trail that runs through City of Tonawanda. The trail is part of the Niagara River Greenway Trail, which connects Lake Erie to Lake Ontario and includes many spurs and loops. The Riverwalk trail links the nature preserve, Gratwick Marina, and Raymond Klimek Veteran's Park and connects through Niagara County with help from a New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) led project in the Town of Wheatfield.

Gratwick Riverside Marina

The Gratwick Riverside Marina is located on River Road within Gratwick Riverside Park on the Niagara River. The Marina provides boat slips with seasonal and transient fees as well as a jet ski ramp. The Marina is directly connected to Gratwick Riverside Park amenities like the River Road Bike Path, and a seasonal waterfront restaurant called Lumber Jack's Patio Grill.



Niagara Street Kayak Launch / Fishing Dock

The Niagara Street Kayak Launch and neighboring Fishing Dock are located at the terminus of Niagara Street south of Sweeney Street along the Erie Canal.

The launch, dock, and adjacent parking spaces are available to residents and visitors of North Tonawanda's waterfront. The kayak launch is ADA accessible and provides inclusive recreation opportunities to those who want to explore the City's waterways via kayak.



North Tonawanda Senior Center

The North Tonawanda Senior Center is located at 110 Goundry Street, just steps away from the Oliver Street corridor and is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. The Senior Center offers nutrition programs, tax preparation, exercise programs, bingo, games, dinners, speaker series, grocery shopping opportunities, and legal services. The Center services 60 people daily during operating hours.

Memorial Pool

Memorial Pool is located within Payne Park along Payne Avenue. The historic pool was designed and built as a tribute to WWII veterans and opened in the summer of 1948. The pool is cherished by the local community as a place to relax, take swim lessons, and enjoy time with family and friends. The pool still stands today but general wear and tear over time has led to the closure of the pool in 2023 for concerns to the safety of its users. The City of North Tonawanda is actively fundraising to develop a new aquatic facility featuring two pools, additional seating, new locker rooms and bathrooms, and concessions. It is estimated the aquatic facility will see more than 48,000 users on an annual basis. The City has secured funding via:

- \$750,000 - NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
- \$4,084,000 - LWCF/NPS
- \$3,334,000 - Political appropriation

Service Drive Boat Launch

The Boat Dock located at the terminus of Service Drive and south of Sweeney Street provides seasonal docking and Boat Launch capabilities as well as a small parking lot.

Sweeney Street Bike Path

The Sweeney Street Bike Path begins at Gateway Park (99 Sweeney Street) and travels along Sweeney Street to Mayor's Park (987 Sweeney Street). A majority of the path is off-road (not within the road pavement surface) and includes space for all modes of non-vehicular travel. The path allows access to amenities including green spaces, picnic tables, the



Service Drive Boat Launch, and Niagara Street Kayak Launch & Fishing Pier. The City is currently facilitating the Erie Canal Bike Path Extension project to connect the existing Bike Path further along Sweeney Street to the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens. Construction for the extension is projected to begin in the summer of 2025.

Proposed trail plans feature an extension of the Sweeney Street bicycle path from the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens to the City line, and west to Wurlitzer Park. The City worked with the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) on a Niagara County Communities Joint Trail Outreach and Feasibility Study, which was completed in Fall 2024.



Youth Center

The North Tonawanda Youth Center is a branch of the North Tonawanda Department of Youth, Recreation & Parks Department and is located at 383 Vandervoort Street. The Youth Center serves residents in grades K-12. The Youth Center offers American Sign Language and chess programs, a babysitting course, cheer, dance, theatre, and STEM Clubs, junior hikers, RECscape room, and snack attack. The Youth Center utilizes Payne Park for outdoor programming starting in June and through September.

The City has numerous public spaces that are dedicated to serving as community assets. Direct access to the water from the public boat and kayak launches help to activate the water as a recreational resource. The preservation and expansion of parks, trails, and open space is of paramount importance throughout the planning process.

Although not owned or leased by the City of North Tonawanda, Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc - Donald F. Miller Park is recognized as a recreational asset within the city along Tonawanda Creek. The Park provides opportunities for social gatherings, as well as outdoor education and recreation. The organization is planning to implement an accessible sensory on the property and various capital improvements for cabins. Although not owned or leased by the City of North Tonawanda, Nor-Ton Red Jacket Club, Inc - Donald F. Miller Park is recognized as a major recreational asset within the city and along Tonawanda Creek. The Park provides opportunities for social gatherings, as well as outdoor education and recreation. The organization is planning to implement an accessible sensory trail and cabin capital improvements to ensure the property continues to be utilized by those of all ages.

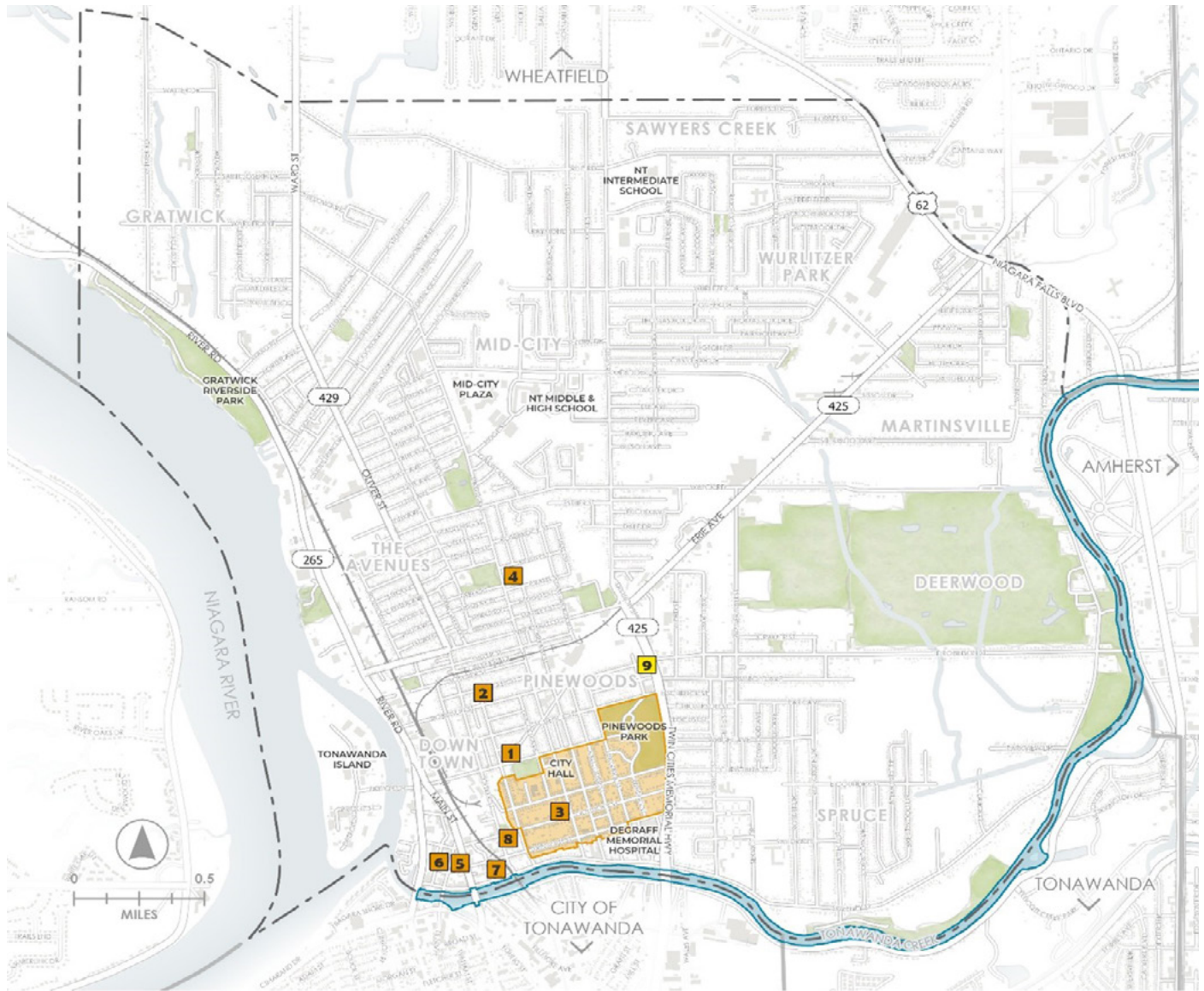


Historic Resources

Once home to a portion of the Seneca Nation of the Iroquois Confederacy, the City of North Tonawanda was a unique opportunity for land development in the mid-19th century. The “Swift Running Water” of the Tonawanda Creek became the namesake of the newly forming city. Navigable water and fertile soil were catalysts for development and gave way to the construction of the Erie Canal. After the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, investors saw potential for development within the City. By the turn of the century, lumber was being shipped eastward through the port of Tonawanda via the Erie Canal. The boom of the lumber industry brought boats carrying settlers looking to continue their journey westward. However, the rich farming soil allowed these settlers to shorten their journey and begin their new lives along the Erie Canal. The increase in population and access to the Erie Canal quickly brought about the expansion of produce markets for the new residents to sell their crops.



Figure 8: Location of Historic Resources



HISTORIC RESOURCES

THE CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA, WITH ITS ROOTS DATING BACK TO THE MID-19TH CENTURY, FLOURISHED DUE TO THE ERIE CANAL AND THRIVING INDUSTRIES LIKE LUMBER AND MANUFACTURING. TODAY, IT BOASTS NUMEROUS HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS, INCLUDING THE RIVIERA THEATRE AND CARNEGIE LIBRARY, REFLECTING ITS RICH HERITAGE. LEVERAGING ITS PROXIMITY TO THE CANADIAN BORDER AND UNIQUE LOCATION AMONG MAJOR CITIES IN NEW YORK STATE, NORTH TONAWANDA IS EMPLOYING A PROACTIVE APPROACH TO PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, FOCUSING ON BOLSTERING ITS HISTORIC AND CULTURAL TOURISM.

MAP KEY:

- HISTORIC LANDMARK ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES (NRHP)
- LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK
- NEW YORK STATE BARGE CANAL HISTORIC DISTRICT
- SWEENEY ESTATE HISTORIC DISTRICT
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY

- 1 ALLAN HERSCHELL CAROUSEL FACTORY
- 2 ASCENSION ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH COMPLEX
- 3 CARNEGIE LIBRARY
- 4 PAYNE AVENUE HIGH SCHOOL
- 5 RIVIERA THEATRE
- 6 THE DICK BLOCK
- 7 THE HERSCHELL-SPILLMAN MOTOR CO. COMPLEX
- 8 UNITED STATES POST OFFICE

- 9 NIAGARA FALLS POWER TRANSFER STATION

Sources: NYS State Historic Preservation Office



In 1847, Civil War hero and businessman Col. Lewis S. Payne introduced the City's first steam mill. Steam would eventually overtake lumber as the primary industry and employment source. Development continued due to the availability of raw materials from the Canal's importance to trade across the region. North Tonawanda businesses became world renown, including Herschell Carousel (later The Herchell Spillman Company). Producing the first steam driven riding gallery in 1883, by the late 1890s carousels were being shipped around the world.

In 1854, North Tonawanda split from Tonawanda using the southern boundary of the Erie Canal as the new dividing line.

Meanwhile, another world renown company was putting down roots in North Tonawanda, The Rudolph Wurlitzer Company. The Wurlitzer Building, constructed throughout the early 20th century was beacon for manufacturing and an architectural wonder. The success of the Wurlitzer Company contributed to the formation of the Martinsville and Wurlitzer Park neighborhoods.

North Tonawanda's rich history of ship building played a critical role in the City's ability to aid the nation during World War II. Bison Boat Co. manufactured landing barges for the U.S. Navy that would carry troops and supplies on both Pacific and European fronts.

The mid to late 20th century saw a decline for the City of North Tonawanda as the "Rust Belt" depression impacted the industrial powerhouses of the northeast. A decrease in utilization of the Erie Canal and the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway System were contributing factors for the decline of the once robust industries that provided employment opportunities and support for businesses.

Leveraging its proximity to the Canadian border and unique location amongst major cities of New York State, the 21st century has looked vastly different for the City. North Tonawanda is using a proactive approach to planning and development that will help to bolster its historic and cultural tourism.





North Tonawanda is home to a variety of historic landmarks on the National Register of Historic Places (Figure 8) including:

- Riviera Theatre (67 Webster Street)
- United States Post Office (141 Goundry Street)
- Allan Herschell Carousel Factory (180 Thompson Street)
- Carnegie Library (240 Goundry Street)
- The Dick Block Building (62 Webster Street)
- The Herschell-Spillman Motor Co. Complex (184 Sweeney Street)
- Ascension Roman Catholic Church Complex (168 & 172 Robinson Street, 69 & 91 Keil Street)
- Niagara Falls Power Transfer Station (Robinson Street/ Division Street) *
- Former Lowry Middle School (621 Payne Avenue)

As well as two historic districts:

- New York State Barge Canal Historic District
- Sweeney Estate Historic District

*Local landmark only

New York State Barge Canal Historic District

The Barge Canal Historic District, totaling over 100 acres of land within North Tonawanda, is a National Register of Historic Places-listed resource and includes the Railroad Bascule Bridge that crosses the canal near the southern terminal of Oliver Street. The district begins at the River Road Bridge and continues the entire length of New York State. The Main Street, Webster Street, and Seymour Street bridges are all also individually listed on the National Register. Canal District industrial buildings listed on the national register are the North Tonawanda Terminal and North Tonawanda Terminal Freight House for the Buffalo and Niagara Falls Railway and the Herschell-Spillman Motor Company Complex, all located on Sweeney Street. The Herschell Spillman complex was built in 1895 and was originally used as a powerhouse for the Buffalo and Niagara Electric Railway Company. It was purchased by the Herschell Spillman Company in 1899 for use as a factory. It was later owned by Remington Rand, an office equipment manufacturer. It has been adaptively reused as the Remington Lofts and Remington Tavern.

Sweeney Estate Historic District

The Sweeney Estate Historic District, newly designated in 2020, includes the previously listed Carnegie Library, now the Carnegie Art Center, located at 260 Goundry Street. The building was gifted to the City of North Tonawanda by Andrew Carnegie and served as the community's public library for more than 70 years and in 1975, became the Carnegie Art Center. The Center provides artistic programming including art exhibitions, classes for children and adults, concerts, and other arts programming. The Sweeney Estate Historic District's includes 478 contributing buildings within the 157-acre district. The district is roughly bounded by Vandervoort, Sweeney, and Thompson Streets and Twin Cities Highway on its eastern boundary. The residential neighborhood within the historic district was established by the Sweeney family on its family-owned estate during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Architectural styles included are Bungalow, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, American Foursquare, and Tudor Revival.

Bennett Kit Homes Survey

In 2023, the City of North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Commission received funding to complete a Reconnaissance Level Historic Resources survey of Bennett Kit Homes within the City of North Tonawanda.



The Ray H. Bennett Lumber Company was established in North Tonawanda, New York in 1902. Bennett produced more than 90 different plans of kit homes that were sold throughout the Northeast United States. Bennett Kit Homes were one of the several “catalog style” of homes throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Similar to other major brands such as Sears or Aladdin, the Bennett Lumber Company marketed their line of ‘redi-bilt’ homes in catalogs that gave customers the ability to choose a house that was designed to their exact specification. Offering many different designs in a catalog, customers were able to select from a range of models that were reflections of popular architectural styles of the time. Each model was given a unique floorplan that could be modified to fit the needs of the client.

From the Bennett Kit Homes survey, 68 Bennett Kit Homes were identified within the City, primarily on Wheatfield, Bennett, and Stanley Streets. The Historic Preservation Commission is actively seeking that this district become a National Historic District, which will conform to SHPO and National Parks Standards.

North Tonawanda’s robust industrial history has allowed the City to grow into what it is today. An abundance of historic resources including the North Tonawanda History Museum and Railroad museum can be found throughout the city and provide a reminder of the importance of character and sense of place in development. Using these historic resources to their advantage, North Tonawanda can shape the future of the city by learning from the successes of the past.

Natural Resources

Water Resources

One of the most important water resources in Western New York, the Niagara River, flows through North Tonawanda and is an important asset in the city’s development. Starting at the northern end of Lake Erie, the Niagara River flows 35 miles north and connects Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. The banks of the Niagara River have had an important impact on the history of North Tonawanda and will be a focal point in the future development of the city. Numerous boat launches and other waterfront uses line the river as it bends around Tonawanda Island and continues north towards Gratiwick-Riverside Park.



Inland, Tonawanda Creek, often referred to as the Erie Canal, winds its way along North Tonawanda’s eastern border. Tonawanda Creek is the starting point for what was once the heavily utilized Erie Canal stretching across New York State. Development adjacent to the creek includes a mixture of single-family homes, parks and open space, and commercial development within and near the downtown area. Tonawanda Creek is a popular spot for small boats and kayaks.

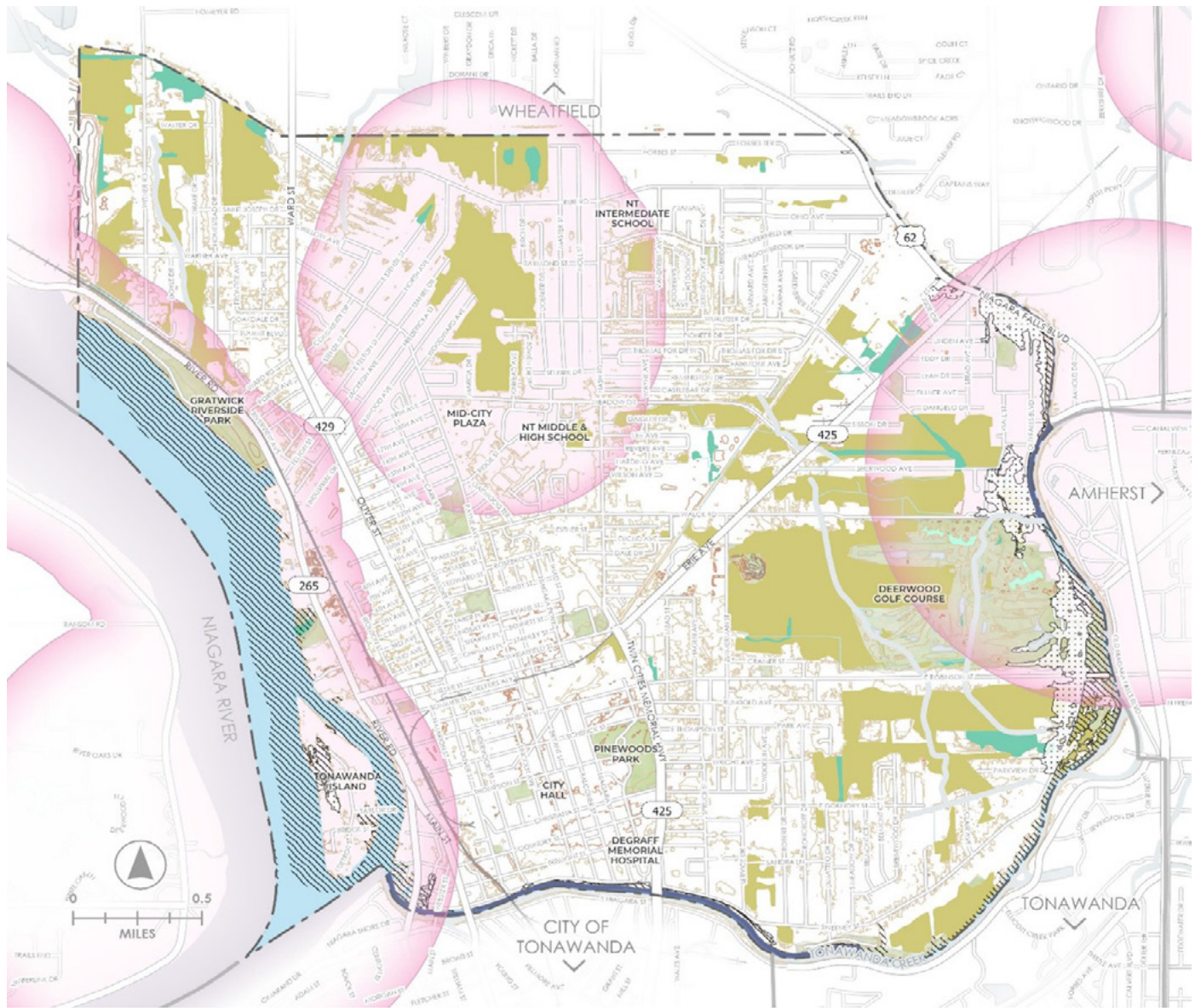
Tonawanda Creek and the Niagara River draw in numerous visitors to North Tonawanda and Niagara River region throughout all seasons.

Floodplains

Due to the presence of the Niagara River and Tonawanda Creek, many properties along the waterfront are within a floodplain. The Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) designates Flood Insurance Rate Maps and Special Flood



Figure 9: Natural Resources



NATURAL RESOURCES

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT WATER RESOURCES IN WESTERN NEW YORK, THE NIAGARA RIVER, FLOWS THROUGH THE CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA AND IS AN IMPORTANT ASSET IN THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT. INLAND, TONAWANDA CREEK, OFTEN REFERRED TO AS THE ERIE CANAL, WINDS ITS WAY ALONG NORTH TONAWANDA'S EASTERN BORDER. DUE TO THE PRESENCE OF THE NIAGARA RIVER AND TONAWANDA CREEK, MANY PROPERTIES ALONG THE WATERFRONT ARE WITHIN A FLOODPLAIN. THESE AREAS ARE THE MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO FLOODING BASED ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AND PROXIMITY TO THE FLOWING WATERWAYS. NUMEROUS UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICES (USFWS) JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS CAN BE FOUND IN NORTH TONAWANDA INCLUDING FRESHWATER EMERGENT WETLANDS, FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLANDS, FRESHWATER POND, AND RIVERINE.

MAP KEY:

FEMA FLOOD HAZARD

0.2% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD

1% ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD

REGULATORY FLOODWAY

USFWS NWI WETLAND TYPE

FRESHWATER EMERGENT WETLAND

FRESHWATER FORESTED/SHRUB WETLAND

FRESHWATER POND

RIVERINE

NYSDOS NATURAL HERITAGE PLANT AND ANIMAL OCCURRENCES - A GENERALIZED REPRESENTATION OF THE LOCATIONS OF ACTUAL, CONFIRMED OBSERVATIONS/ COLLECTIONS OF RARE SPECIES

STREAM/RIVER

ELEVATION CONTOUR (FT)

565 - 575

576 - 585

586 - 620

GREENSPACE

CITY BOUNDARY

Sources: USFWS (2024), FEMA (2024), NYS DEC (2024)



Hazard Areas (Figure 9) as part of the management of the floodplain. These areas are the most susceptible to flooding based on the characteristics of and proximity to the flowing waterways.

Within North Tonawanda, there is 127.1 acres of land within an area of a 0.2% chance of flooding. Most of that area is located along Tonawanda Creek. The land along the Niagara River (approximately 475 acres) is within the area of a 1% chance of annual flood including 39 acres of regulatory floodway. The floodway generally is limited to the banks of the waterway and is protected from development to ensure the preservation of the natural flowing course of the water.

Severe Weather & Resilience

Extreme heat and drought are increasing concerns for the City. In an extreme scenario, the City could face up to 11 days per year with temperatures over 100 degrees Fahrenheit, which could impact water usage and vegetation. On the other hand, an increase in average temperatures can cause warmer lake temperatures and increase the severity of a winter storm. Compared to the observed trend of annual lake effect snowfall, it is projected that an increase in lake effect snow could take place in the mid-21st century.

Nearly half of North Tonawanda resides on soil that has poor drainage. Those soils and properties within the floodplain are susceptible to flooding. Aging infrastructure, residential homes, and the proximity of valuable buildings to the waterways creates a need for an upgrade to these assets. Since the year 2000, North Tonawanda has experienced two flash floods (2002 & 2019) that resulted in approximately \$70,000 worth of damage combined.

Wetlands

Numerous United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) jurisdictional wetlands can be found in North Tonawanda. Four categories of wetlands; Freshwater Emergent Wetlands, Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands, Freshwater Pond, and Riverine total 1,639 acres within the City and are located inland and including Niagara River and Tonawanda Creek. USFWS wetlands are generally small in size and are regulated by the US Army Corps of Engineers. These wetland categories and their sizes are enumerated in Table 5 below.

The City of North Tonawanda has 451 acres of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) regulated wetlands that are included in Table 7 below. These wetlands are predominantly located in the western portion of the city which includes the back half of Deerwood Golf Course and a large undeveloped area of land south of

Table 7: Wetlands	
Wetland Type	Size (Acres)
Freshwater Emergent	79.3
Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands	981.5
Freshwater Pond	14.9
Riverine	563.6

Source: USFWS (2024) & NYSDEC (2024)

East Robinson Street. Each NYSDEC wetland has a regulated check zone that is a 100-buffer surrounding the wetland boundary. The check zone areas also have regulatory protections. Wetlands are also located in the northern portion of the city with concentrations at and surrounding the North Tonawanda Audubon Nature Preserve. These wetlands are referred to as the Klydel wetlands..

Wildlife and habitats are important for the ecological health of the city. By inventorying and protecting natural



resources, North Tonawanda can encourage sustainable development patterns and increase their climate resiliency. Increased local control over development near wetland areas and near the water are important tools for the City to use.

Community Services and Facilities

The City of North Tonawanda features a wide range of amenities and services. These include cultural and educational institutions, as well as essential facilities (Figure 10).

Carnegie Art Center

Located on Goundry Street, the National Register-listed Carnegie Library, now the Carnegie Art Center, was given to the City of North Tonawanda by Andrew Carnegie and served as the community's public library for more than 70 years. In 1975, it became the Carnegie Art Center. The Center provides artistic programming including art exhibitions, classes for all ages, concerts, and other arts programming. It is also a community gathering space and often used for public meetings.

City Hall

Located at 216 Payne Avenue North Tonawanda City Hall is within the Sweeney Street Historic District and was constructed in 1929. The building was built on the site of the "Gravel Dispute", which led to the Division of North Tonawanda from Tonawanda in the 1850's. City Hall is home to Accounting, Legal, Building Inspection, City Clerk / Treasurer, Code Enforcement, Common Council Chambers, Engineering, the Mayor's Office, Plumbing, and the Police Department. City Hall also hosts the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, Waterfront, and Historic Preservation Commission meetings.

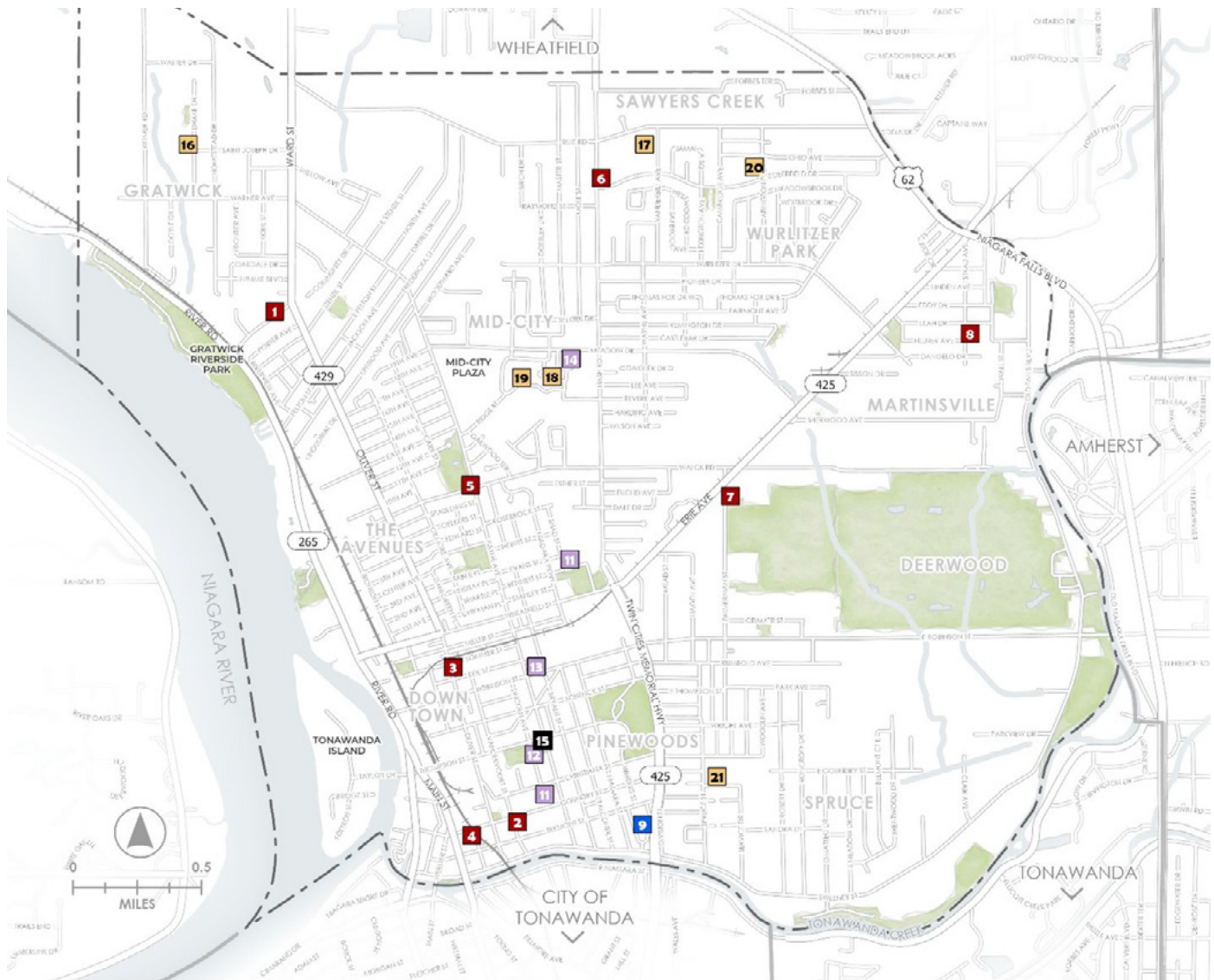
City Market

The North Tonawanda's Farmers Market is located on the corner of Payne Avenue and Robinson Street. The Market was established in 1908 and has been a staple of the North Tonawanda community for over 100 years. The Market is open year-round on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM and hosts over 90 vendors throughout the year. The American Farmland Trust – Farmers Market Coalition recognized the City Market as the 'Number 1 Farmers Market in the United States'.

The City Market provides fresh produce, baked goods, meat and poultry, canned and jarred products, dry goods, and eggs. The Market also hosts WNY food trucks with breakfast and lunch items. The Market hosts regular events and festivals including Halloween, Fall Fest, plant workshops, and Corn Fest. The City improved ADA accessibility along Market Street in 2022 but the Market still suffers from lack of updated infrastructure and proper site planning. The lot itself needs resurfacing and the lack of storm sewers showcases the need for green infrastructure improvements. The existing garage onsite that is currently being used by the City's Parks & Recreation and Building Maintenance Department has the potential for transformation into indoor vendor stalls. There is also a need for the construction of a covered pavilion for vendors due to the year-round nature of the Market.

DeGraff Medical Park

DeGraff Medical Park, also known as DeGraff Memorial Hospital, was founded by LeGrand S. DeGraff in 1914 in response to the need for hospital facilities in the expanding Tonawanda's and distance to nearby hospitals in Buffalo. Following the grand opening, the Hospital became a vital institution within the northtowns. Over time, the Hospital continued to expand with the construction of numerous building additions throughout the 1900s, including a four-story building in 1964. In 1998, DeGraff partnered with Kaleida Health to become part of the largest health care system in Western New York serving both Niagara and Erie County. Today, DeGraff provides emergency care and outpatient services including laboratory, radiology, imaging services, occupational and speech therapy, cardiac rehabilitation, women's health, and a skilled nursing facility.

Figure 10: Location of Community Services & Facilities

COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

THE CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA FEATURES A WIDE RANGE OF AMENITIES AND SERVICES. THESE INCLUDE CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THE CARNEGIE ART CENTER AND NORTH TONAWANDA PUBLIC LIBRARY, AS WELL AS ESSENTIAL FACILITIES LIKE CITY HALL AND DEGRAFF MEDICAL PARK. BY CATALOGING AND UNDERSTANDING THE VARIOUS SERVICES AVAILABLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, RESIDENTS CAN IDENTIFY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES, AND OPPORTUNITIES TO PRESERVE RESOURCES WHILE IDENTIFYING IDENTIFYING NEW NEEDS FOR THE FUTURE.

MAP KEY:

- FIRE STATION
- HOSPITAL
- MUNICIPAL FACILITY
- POLICE STATION
- SCHOOL
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 GRATWICK FIREHOUSE NO.6 | 9 DEGRAFF MEDICAL PARK | 16 DRAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL |
| 2 LIVE HOSE CO. | 10 CARNEGIE ART CENTER | 17 NORTH TONAWANDA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL |
| 3 NFTD ACTIVE HOSE NO.2 | 11 NORMAN KELLER BUILDING | 18 NORTH TONAWANDA MIDDLE SCHOOL |
| 4 NFTD COLUMBIA HOOK AND LADDER NO.1 | 12 NORTH TONAWANDA CITY HALL | 19 NORTH TONAWANDA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL |
| 5 NFTD RESCUE 1 | 13 NORTH TONAWANDA FARMERS MARKET | 20 OHIO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL |
| 6 NORTH TONAWANDA ENGINE 7 | 14 NORTH TONAWANDA PUBLIC LIBRARY | 21 SPRUCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL |
| 7 NORTH TONAWANDA FIRE DEPARTMENT | 15 NORTH TONAWANDA POLICE DEPARTMENT | |
| 8 RESCUE FIRE COMPANY | | |



Fire and Police Departments

North Tonawanda Fire Department

The City's Fire Department Headquarters are located at 495 Zimmerman Street, which is also the location of Sweeney Hose Co. #7, founded in 1894. The Department operates out of six firehouses, with three engine companies, one ladder / truck company, one light rescue, and one command vehicle. For fire alarms, four companies respond with a complement of five personnel operating two engines, a ladder truck, rescue, and command. For EMS calls, there is a response of one engine, light rescue, and a command car with 4 personnel.

The North Tonawanda Fire Department is a combination department, composed of 38 Career Firefighter and 17 Volunteer Firefighters. The number of volunteers the Department has on call has decreased drastically in the past 10 years, down from a high of 150 to 17 today. Call volume has steadily increased in the last 10 years, while career staffing has remained the same and the number of volunteer firefighters has drastically decreased, leading to a strain on the department.

North Tonawanda Police Department

The North Tonawanda Police Department (NTPD) and temporary lock-up facility are located within City Hall at 216 Payne Avenue. The NTPD has served the entirety of the City dating back to 1888. The NTPD includes a Patrol, Detective, and Training Division. The Police Department also includes Police Canine (K9) Unit, Special Victims & Youth Services, Police Therapy (K9), Specialized Units, and School Resource Officers. The City of North Tonawanda is the first community in Western New York to have an entire division dedicated to ensuring students and staff safety at school district campuses. The NTPD employs eight civilian employees including a mechanic, two account clerks, a senior clerk, and four police matrons.

Norman Keller Building

The Norman Keller Building located at 500 Wheatfield Street was formerly owned by Niagara County and included probation offices, the existing DMV, social services, and a county health clinic. In 2003, the building was purchased by the City of North Tonawanda and is currently utilized as office space for the City of North Tonawanda Parks & Recreation Department, Lumber City Development Corporation (LCDC), Niagara County Probation, Niagara County Courts, and Niagara County Department of Motor Vehicles. The building's parking lot is a community asset as it provides parking to surrounding recreational fields on weeknights and weekends.

North Tonawanda City Schools

The North Tonawanda City School District includes three elementary schools (Drake, Ohio, Spruce), North Tonawanda Intermediate School, North Tonawanda Middle School, and North Tonawanda High School. The School District had 3,102 students enrolled (K-12) in the 2022/2023 school year. Available enrollment data notes that enrollment within the City School District has decreased by 18.8% from 2010/2011 to 2022/2023. North Tonawanda schools offer recreational fields, courts, and playgrounds that are often utilized by community members including Spruce, Drake, and Ohio Elementary playgrounds, and the High School's track, tennis courts, football and soccer fields.

North Tonawanda Public Library

The North Tonawanda Public Library provides educational and informational materials as well as recreational programming for all ages within the community. The Library was chartered in 1893 as a school district library and was initially located in the now demolished Goundry School #1. Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie's foundation funded the Library's second home at 240 Goundry Street. However, the 240 Goundry Street location did not have the proper space capacity and prompted the opening of the library's third and present location at 505 Meadow Drive in 1975. The Library in-



cludes additional amenities such as community meeting rooms and a Business Resource Center. The space was utilized by over 9,000 participants in programming in 2023 and serves over 24,000 library card holders.

Department of Public Works Building

Located at 758 Erie Avenue, the Department of Public Works Building is a storage, office, and garage facility for the City's Department of Public Works. Many City owned vehicles, including garbage trucks and other heavy street paving equipment, are stored at this property. Additionally, this facility is where road salt is stored and provides an electronics recycling facility for residents.

North Tonawanda offers a wide range of community services including their own police and fire departments, school system, and public works department. In order to continue servicing the city residents, efforts will be made to improve these services to increase the quality of life. The City Market and library system help in building a sense of community amongst residents and provide essential opportunities for social gatherings.

Land Use

North Tonawanda is predominantly developed and includes a range of land uses from residential, commercial, mixed-use, to industrial (Figure 11). Table 8 below outlines the percentage of land uses by category.

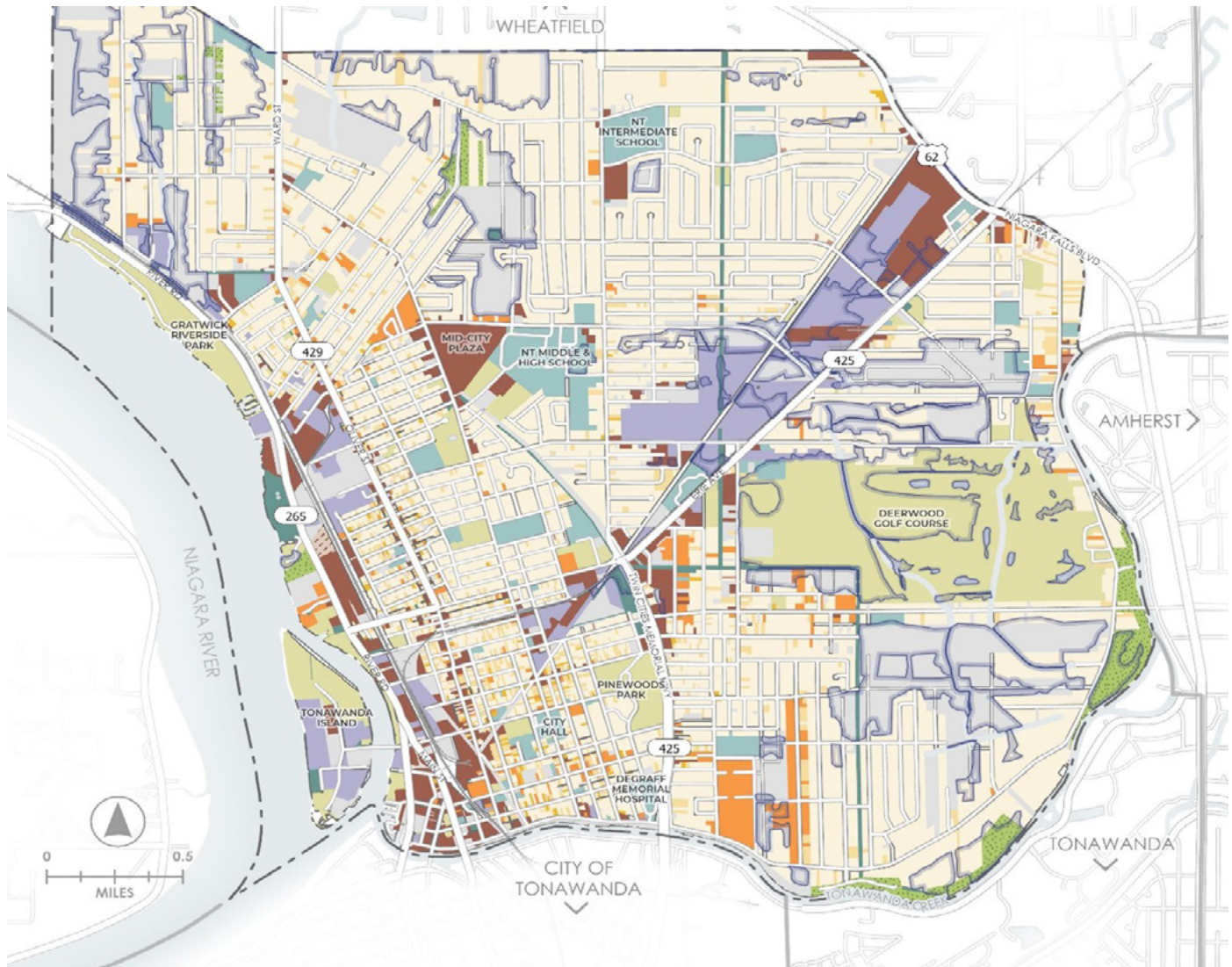
Table 8: Land Use Areas				
NYS Property Assessment Code Group	Land Use	# of Parcels	Size (Acres)	% of Total Land Area
200	Residential	10,536	2755.7	43.0
300	Vacant Lands*	1,058	888.4	13.8*
400	Commercial	792	322.3	5.0
500	Recreation & Entertainment	57	649.4	10.1
600	Community Services	70	240.6	3.8
700	Industrial	71	299.1	4.7
800	Public Services	62	85.3	1.3
900	Wild, Conservation, Forest	46	90.1	1.4

Source: Niagara County Parcel Data 2022

* Includes land classified as a wetland and regulated by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the United States Army Corps of Engineers



Figure 11: Existing Land Use



EXISTING LAND USE

NORTH TONAWANDA'S LANDSCAPE IS CHARACTERIZED BY A COLLECTION OF LAND USES THAT SERVE UNIQUE ROLES IN THE CITY'S FABRIC. RESIDENTIAL AREAS, COMPRISING 43% OF THE CITY'S LAND USE, REFLECT THE PRIORITY PLACED ON PROVIDING HOUSING FOR ITS RESIDENTS. TRANSPORTATION RIGHTS-OF-WAY, COVERING 16.8% OF THE AREA, FACILITATE EFFICIENT MOVEMENT AND CONNECTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE CITY AND BEYOND. ADDITIONALLY, VACANT LAND, AT 13.8%, PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION, WHILE RECREATION AND ENTERTAINMENT SPACES, MAKING UP 10.1%, ENHANCE THE CITY'S QUALITY OF LIFE. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES, COLLECTIVELY OCCUPYING 9.7% OF LAND USE AND DRIVE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES. COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PUBLIC SERVICES, COVERING 5.1%, PROVIDE ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES.

MAP KEY:

WETLAND AREA

EXISTING LAND USE CLASS

AGRICULTURAL
COMMERCIAL
COMMUNITY SERVICES
INDUSTRIAL

PUBLIC SERVICES

RESIDENTIAL - SINGLE FAMILY

RESIDENTIAL - TWO FAMILY

RESIDENTIAL - THREE FAMILY

RESIDENTIAL - APARTMENT

RESIDENTIAL - MULTI-PURPOSE/
MULTI-STRUCTURE

RECREATION AND
ENTERTAINMENT

TRANSPORTATION ROW

VACANT LAND

WILD, FORESTED AND
CONSERVATION LANDS



Almost 14% of the land in North Tonawanda is classified as vacant. There is not a particular concentration of vacant properties; however, many of the larger swaths of vacant parcels (446 acres) include Federal or New York State regulated wetlands.

Residential land encompasses the majority of land in the city. Single family homes account for 89% of residential properties in the City, while the other 11% is made up of two and three family homes.

Sources: Niagara County Parcel Data (2022)



Residential

Residential land use is scattered throughout North Tonawanda and is overwhelmingly the largest proportion of the development (48% of land area). There are two large concentrations of residential properties. The first is located north of Sweeney Street bounded by Main Street on the west, Robinson Street on the north and Sweeney Street on the east. The second is located south of Ruie Road, bounded by Erie Ave on the east, Wheatfield Street on the south and River Road on the west. On average, residential parcels are 0.25 acres in size. Single family homes account for 89% of residential properties in the City, while the other 11% is made up of two and three family homes.

Vacant Land

Fourteen percent of the land in North Tonawanda is classified as vacant. There is not a particular concentration of vacant properties; however, many of the larger swaths of vacant parcels include Federal or New York State regulated wetlands. Ownership of the vacant parcels is spread between the City, private property owners, and public agencies including the State of New York and the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA). The City has taken steps to consider some vacant parcels for redevelopment through the Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Study in 2014. The BOA includes recommendations for the development of the vacant land adjacent to Armstrong Pumps, smaller infill projects downtown, and others including:

Tonawanda Island Internal Roads, Central Park, Mixed-Use Buildings & Phase I & II Townhomes (133 Michigan Street & 2 Bridge Street)

Development of mixed-use buildings with upper floor for-sale and for-rent residential units along the Tonawanda Island waterfront. The BOA calls for the initial development of a promenade and waterfront plaza as well as surface parking to accommodate visitors. Future phases would see the full build-out of the area, up to 4 stories of development with structured parking.

Interpretive Rail Park & Museum (59 Thompson Street)

A new recreational space that utilizes repurposed rail equipment and cars. A new Rail Museum would provide an opportunity for play equipment, performance spaces, educational exhibits, retail, dining and more. This project would aim to draw visitors from throughout the region to celebrate the history of rail development of the City.

Gratwick Marina Redevelopment (650 River Road)

The redevelopment of an inactive marina adjacent to Gratwick Riverside Park. This space would include a banquet facility and restaurant and could serve boaters. This area has already been improved with funds from the Niagara River Greenway for dock reconstruction, shoreline stabilization, signage, and public access trails.

** Land that is classified as vacant through the NYS Property Tax Assessment Codes does not always paint the full picture. ## of acres of vacant land as shown on Figure 11 is constrained by NYSDEC and USFW wetlands. These wetlands, while privately owned, are difficult to develop due to the regulatory restraints placed on them by the NYSDEC and the US Army Corps of Engineers. These lands make an important contribution to the natural ecosystem of the City of North Tonawanda and act as a natural habitat to North Tonawanda's wildlife and foliage.*

Commercial

Nearly nine percent of the total land area is developed as commercial land uses. The commercial hub of North Tonawanda is located in the southwest corner of the city along Webster, Main, and Oliver Streets. Other clusters of commercial development are located at the corner of Meadow Drive and Payne Avenue and along Niagara Falls Boulevard adjacent to the Wurlitzer Building. Larger-scale commercial uses including warehousing, distribution and storage facilities are located along the River Road corridor.



Recreation & Open Space

The third largest land use in the City of North Tonawanda is its Recreation Land and Parks, accounting for over 620 acres of land and 12% of total land area. These uses are predominately located along the west side of River Road including Gratwick-Riverside Park and Raymond Klimek Veterans Park, on the east side of Tonawanda Island including Smith Boys Marina and other boating uses, and among the single-family neighborhoods in the form of small parks including Wurlitzer Park, Payne Park, Felton Field, and many more. Deerwood Golf Course is included in this in this category, encompassing 319 acres of land.

The smallest land use category present in the City of North Tonawanda is Wild, Conservation, Forest Land totaling 90 acres and 1.7% of the total land area. This category includes Mayor's Park and NYS owned land along Ellicott Creek.

While this land use category does not represent a large portion of the city, the lands within are an important natural resource. In recognition of their contribution, the Western New York Land Conservancy holds a conservation easement over 28 acres of the North Tonawanda Audubon Nature Preserve that is known as the Klydel Wetlands (116 Wurlitzer Drive). These wetlands are located south of Ruie Road extending to the back end of properties along Meadow Drive. Within this area is a vital habitat for wildlife that can be viewed from the walking trails that cross the preserve. By holding a conservation easement over the land there is an assurance that the property remains a community asset, open and natural in perpetuity.

Community Facilities & Public Services

Public uses total over 300 acres of land (6.2% of land area) and are made up of schools, hospitals, police and fire stations, places of worship, public infrastructure, and more. These land uses are spread throughout the community, most notably DeGraff Medical Park along Twin Cities Memorial Highway, North Tonawanda Middle & High School on Meadow Drive, and the North Tonawanda DPW on Erie Avenue.

Industrial

Industrial uses account for less than 1% of the total number of properties but encompass over 5.5% of the total land area of the City (299 acres). Most industrial properties within North Tonawanda are home to light manufacturing/processing facilities, which are characterized by high ceilings and open floor plans that accommodate a specific manufacturing process. These uses are predominantly located along Erie Avenue and west of downtown on Tonawanda Island.

The City's strong network of existing residential neighborhoods provides a tax base for the dense commercial downtown to thrive. Industrial land along the River Road and Erie Avenue corridors is crucial in providing jobs to city residents and must be retained but carefully analyzed in its future development. The historic downtown creates a unique sense of place while the intermixed vacant properties present opportunities for growth within established commercial areas.





Zoning

Zoning is a tool used to regulate development by the establishment of minimum standards that must be met. The way in which a community adopts zoning standards is informed by the goals and strategies identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

The City of North Tonawanda has 12 zoning districts (Figure 12):

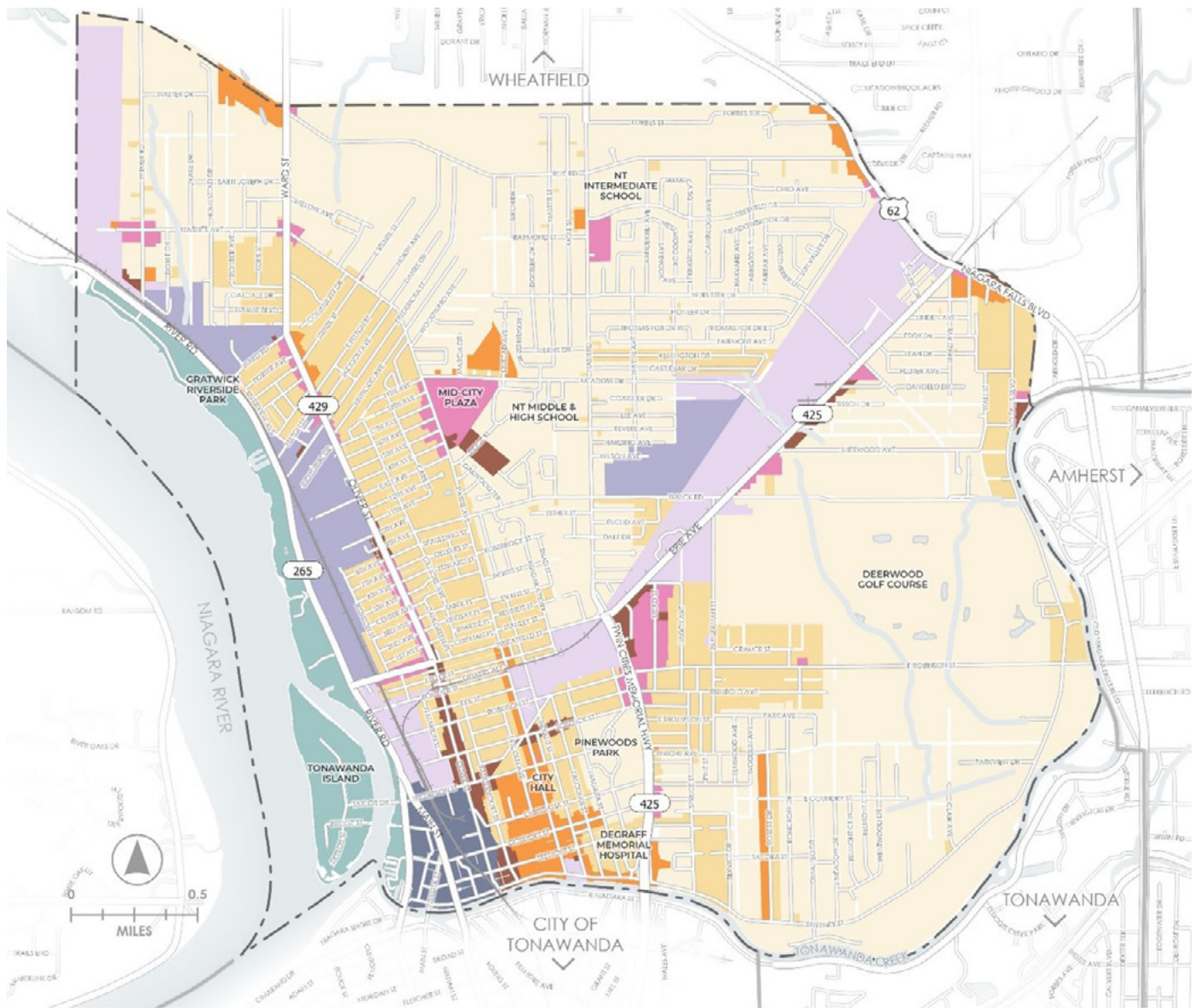
- R1-1, Single Family Residence
- R1-2, Single Family
- R2, General Residence
- RC, Residence- Restricted Business
- C1, Neighborhood Business
- C2, General Commercial
- M1, Light Manufacturing
- M2, General Industrial
- M-3, Special Industrial
- WD, Waterfront District
- WD-1, Waterfront District
- DD, Downtown Mixed-Use

Table 9: Zoning

District	Size (Acres)	% of Total Land Area	Examples of Permitted Uses
R1-1	610.3	11.3	Single Family detached residential Parks, Schools, Cemeteries Places of Worship
R1-2	2,546.1	47.0	Single Family detached residential Parks, Schools, Cemeteries Places of Worship
R2	901	16.6	Two Family Dwellings Private Club, Hospital
RC	145.7	2.7	Bank, Dental Office, Club/Lodge
C1	124.2	2.3	Retail, Restaurant Gas Stations
C2	99.2	1.8	Car sales, Warehousing Building materials supply/materials storage
M1	537.2	9.9	Laboratory, Manufacturing facility Truck terminal
M2	245.1	4.5	Junkyard, Concrete mixing Metal working
M3	0	0	M2 Uses, Adult Uses
WD	212.2	3.9	Mixed-Use (residential, retail, office, etc.) Marina, Performing arts venue
WD - 1	NA	NA	WD Uses, Adult Uses
DD	NA	NA	Mixed-Use (residential, retail, office, etc.) Includes Historic Preservation District Overlay

Source: Niagara County Parcel Data 2022

Figure 12: Existing Zoning



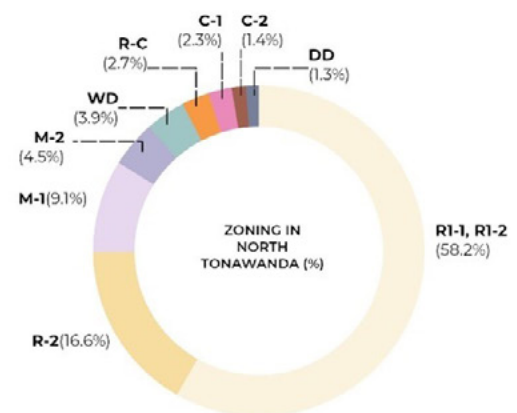
ZONING

THE CITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA HAS 12 ZONING DISTRICTS WITH SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE DISTRICTS ENCOMPASSING OVER 58% OF THE CITY'S TOTAL LAND AREA. GENERAL RESIDENCE AND RESIDENCE-RESTRICTED BUSINESS DISTRICTS ALLOW FOR EXPANDED USES FROM SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING INCLUDING SMALL SCALE COMMERCIAL AND ACCOUNT FOR CLOSE TO 20% OF THE CITY'S TOTAL LAND AREA. NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS AND GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS SERVE AS THE CITY'S GENERAL BUSINESS ZONING DISTRICTS AND ACCOUNT FOR 4% OF TOTAL LAND AREA. OVER 14% OF THE CITY'S LAND IS ZONED FOR MANUFACTURING BETWEEN LIGHT AND GENERAL INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS. THE CITY ALSO HAS TWO WATERFRONT DISTRICTS TO ENCOURAGE MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AND A DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE DISTRICT THAT FOCUSES ON FORM-BASED ZONING AND

MAP KEY:

ZONING

- NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS (C-1)
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL (C-2)
- LIGHT MANUFACTURING (M-1)
- GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (M-2)
- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENCE (R-1, R-2)
- GENERAL RESIDENCE (R-2)
- RESIDENCE - RESTRICTED BUSINESS (R-C)
- WATERFRONT DISTRICT (WD)
- DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE DISTRICT





The Single-Family Residence districts (R1-1 & R1-2) encompass over 58% of the total land area of the city and are spread across the whole city but there are large swaths of these districts located along the north, south, and east boundaries of North Tonawanda. The dimensional requirements of the single-family districts are almost identical except for the minimum lot size and lot width (8,200 square feet in area with 70 feet of lot frontage vs. 7,200 square feet in area with 60 feet of lot frontage). The single-family residence districts do not include the provisions for accessory dwelling units which can help to provide an alternative form of housing and increase density within existing neighborhoods.

The General Residence (R2) and Residence- Restricted Business (RC) zoning districts allow for an expanded number of uses from the single-family districts including some smaller-scale commercial uses. The R2 district is similar to the single-family residence district in its permitted uses but allows for hospitals and private clubs which are not typically uses that are allowed within residential districts. The RC district permits numerous commercial uses and larger scale land uses while still permitting single-family homes. There is an opportunity to remove the single-family homes from the RC district which is geared towards allowing commercial uses. These districts account for 19.3% of the whole City. The R2 district can be predominantly found running north to south along the east side of Oliver Street. R2 can also be found along the Creek on the eastern border of the city and in small pockets in close proximity to the downtown area. The RC district is primarily located just east of downtown and includes portions of Goundry, Sweeney, Tremont, and Christiana Streets and the Payne Avenue Corridor. The RC district also exists on the north side of Meadow Drive, surrounding Kinkead Avenue.

The Neighborhood Business (C1) and General Commercial Districts (C2) serve as North Tonawanda's general business zoning districts which combined account for just over 4% of the City's land area. These districts are aimed at providing a place for a wide range of commercial uses including hotels, auto sales, restaurants, and others. The C1 and C2 districts are located in various locations throughout the City, with their largest concentrations along the south side of Erie Avenue and at the corner of Payne Avenue and Meadow Drive. These districts encourage neighborhood scale uses, similar to those in the RC district but use location standards to prevent certain businesses (alcohol sales, fuel sales) from being established near residential uses.

Over 14% of North Tonawanda's land is zoned for manufacturing. The Light Manufacturing (M1) and General Industrial (M2) Districts total 782.3 acres in size are located along Erie Avenue from Niagara Falls Boulevard to Twin Cities Highway and on the east side of River Road, all the way from downtown, northerly to the City line. The manufacturing districts allow for industrial uses and have performance standards and increased setbacks to limit the potential nuisance of the allowed uses. There is no maximum height requirement in the industrial districts which in theory could allow a building as tall as desired.

The Waterfront District (WD) and Waterfront District (WD-1) are aimed at encouraging mixed-use development that promotes access to the waterfront. These zoning districts are located exclusively along the Niagara River (including Tonawanda Island) and stretch from the southern tip of the city, all the way to its northern boundary meeting with Town of Wheatfield. The WD was originally added to the zoning ordinance in 1988 and was most recently updated in 2019 through Step 3 of the Brownfield Opportunity Area. By allowing a broader classification of uses, these districts help to promote flexibility along North Tonawanda's waterfront. For ease of administration and mapping, the WD and WD-1 districts should be combined, and strict dimensional standards should be applied to the adult uses that are permitted in the WD-1 District or should be stricken from the district completely and put into different zoning district.

In an effort to help revitalize the downtown area, the Downtown Mixed-Use District (DD) was developed based on the recommendations of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, 2013 Draft Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, and 2014 NT Momentum Revitalization Strategy Master Plan. As a form-based zoning district, the focus is shifted from limiting permitted uses to encouraging design to better fit the character of the downtown area. The DD, created in 2019, is limited in



its application and exists with the boundaries of Thompson Street to the north, Oliver Street on the east, River Road on the west and Sweeney Street on the south. The DD district is broken up into three unique sub-areas that regulate the design and form of development within them. Further, the DD has a Historic Preservation Overlay that requires further approval from the Historic Preservation Commission.

The Zoning Ordinance in its entirety is in need of an update in order to consolidate zoning districts, provide statements of intent for each district, and to expand the development standards so that they can be utilized in all zoning districts to further mitigate potential perceived nuisances from adjacent land uses. Zoning has long dictated the form of development in the desired pattern of the past. Throughout the comprehensive plan, strengths and weaknesses in all aspects of the city can be identified and then corrected or sustained through zoning techniques.

Transportation Networks

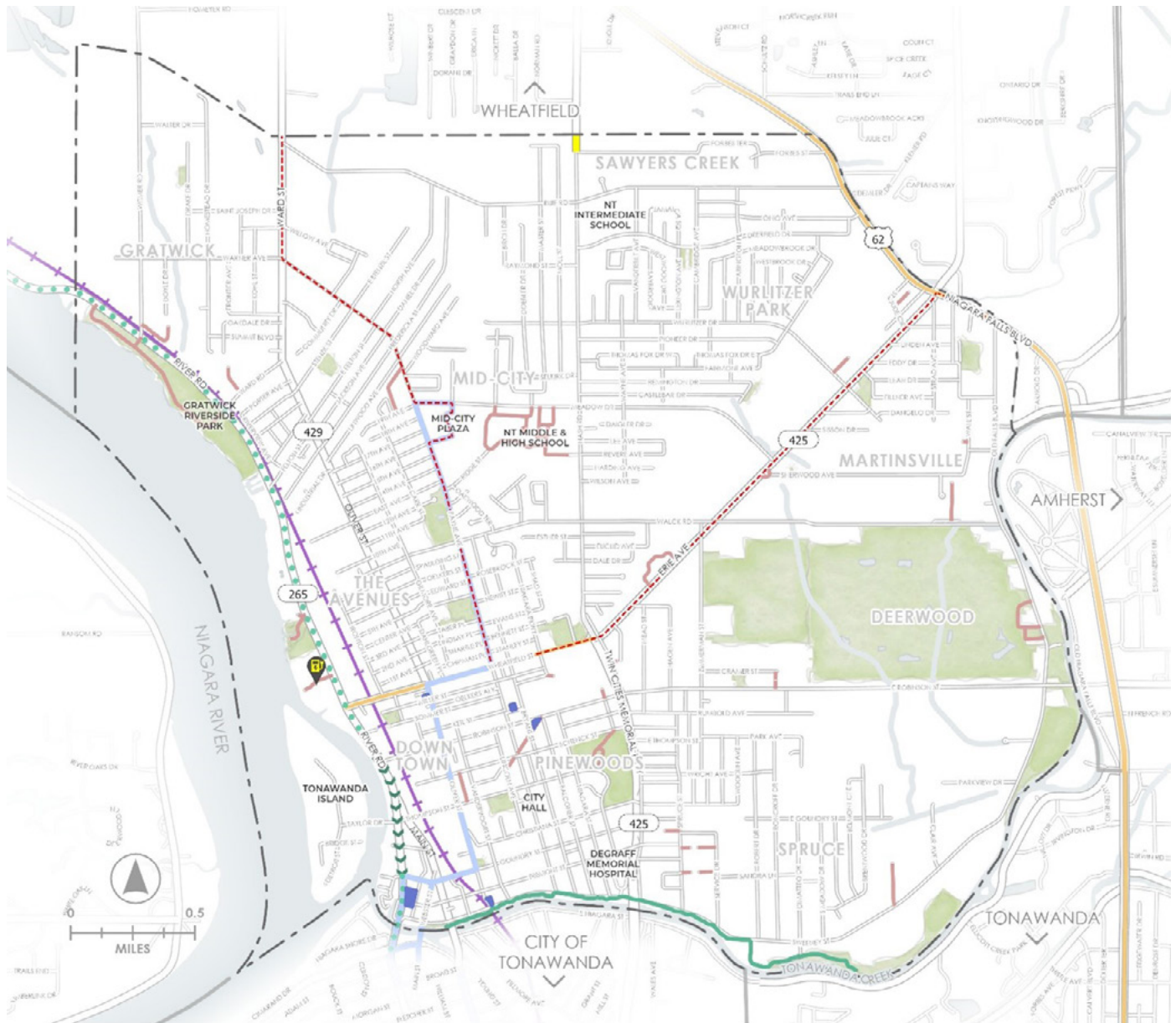
The majority of North Tonawanda follows a street-grid pattern and contains four New York State routes that form the City's major transportation corridors.

- River Road/Route 265 (19.75 miles total) runs north and south parallel to the Niagara River in Erie and Niagara County.
- Route 429 (12.16 miles total) runs north and south and connects North Tonawanda to the Towns of Cambria and Lewiston.
- Twin City Memorial Highway/Route 425 (23.85 miles total) starting at the interchange with Interstate 290 in the Town of Tonawanda and extends to an intersection with NY 18 on the shore of Lake Ontario in the Village of Wilson.
- Niagara Falls Boulevard (Route 62) starting east of Old Falls Boulevard to north of Forbes Street.





Figure 13: Transportation Network



TRANSPORTATION

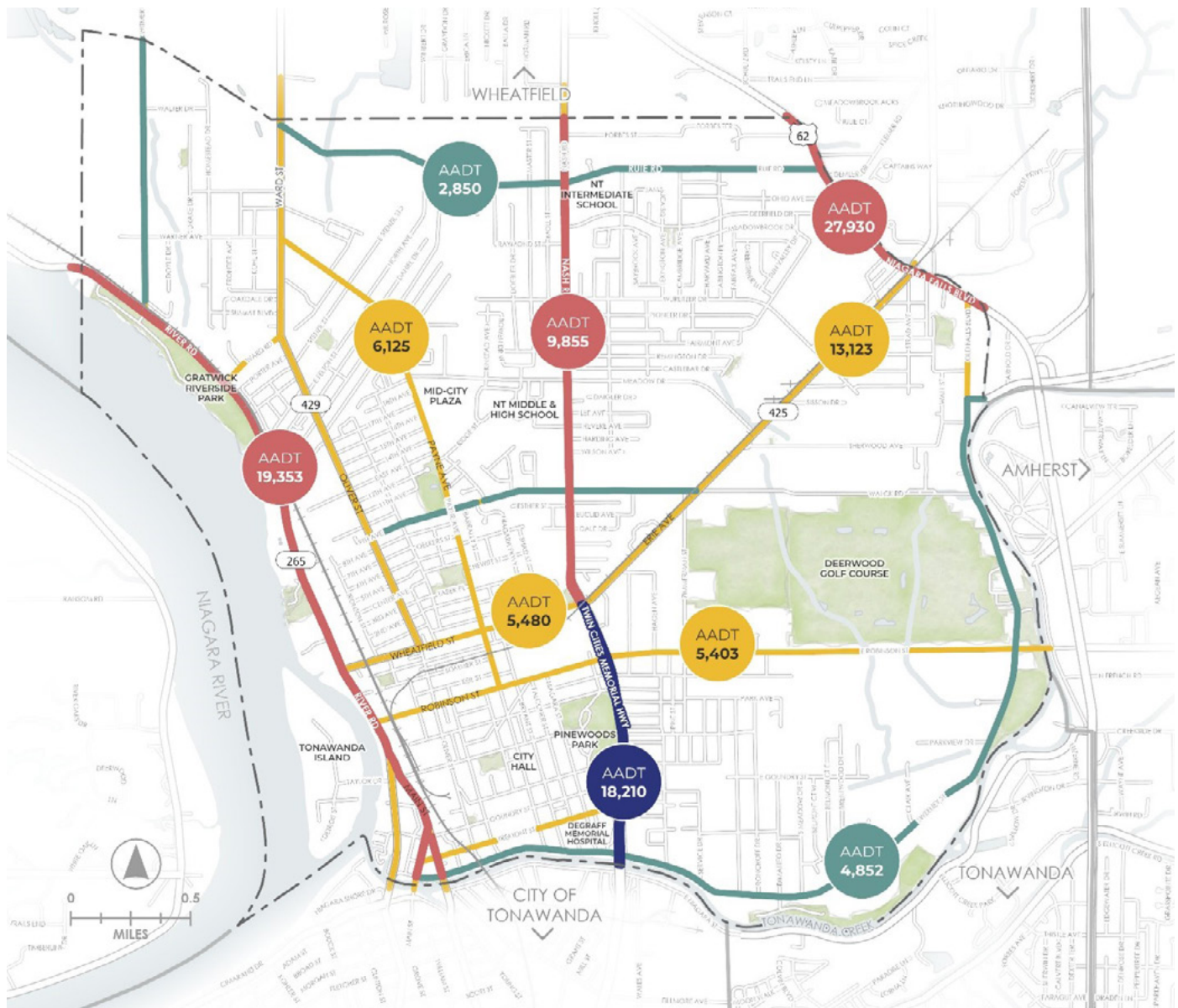
NORTH TONAWANDA'S TRANSPORTATION NETWORK IS ANCHORED BY FOUR MAJOR NEW YORK STATE ROUTES, FACILITATING CONNECTIVITY WITHIN THE CITY AND BEYOND. THE ADOPTION OF A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY UNDERSCORES THE CITY'S COMMITMENT TO SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL ROAD USERS. SIDEWALKS ARE PREVALENT THROUGHOUT THE DOWNTOWN AND ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS, BUT TONAWANDA ISLAND LACKS PEDESTRIAN INFRASTRUCTURE. THE NFTA OPERATES ROUTE 25, WHICH PROVIDES A BUS SERVICE THROUGHOUT THE CITY AND CONNECTS NORTH TONAWANDA TO THE GREATER WNY REGION. CONNECT NIAGARA, A NIAGARA COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM, OFFERS WEEKDAY BUS ROUTES AND ENHANCES REGIONAL TRANSIT OPTIONS. THE CITY

MAP KEY:

- ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATION
- NFTA BUS ROUTE 25
- CONNECT NIAGARA BUS (RED ROUTE)
- STATE ROUTE
- COUNTY ROAD
- CITY STREET
- PRIVATE ROAD
- PUBLIC PARKING LOT
- NYS BIKE ROUTE - MARKED
- NYS BIKE ROUTE - UNMARKED
- SWEENEY STREET BIKE PATH
- PROPOSED ON-ROAD BIKE ROUTE
- AMTRAK ROUTE
- CITY BOUNDARY

Source: NYS DOT (2024)

Figure 14: Roadways and Traffic

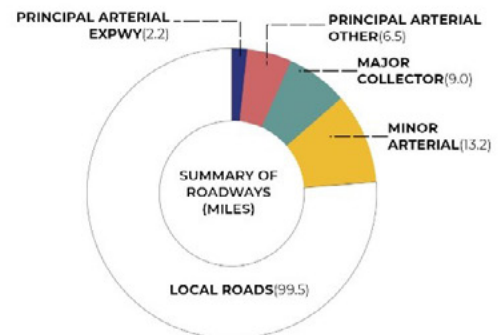


ROADWAYS & TRAFFIC

THE CITY CONTAINS LOCAL, MINOR COLLECTOR, MAJOR COLLECTOR, MINOR ARTERIAL AND PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL ROADS AND THE MAJORITY OF NORTH TONAWANDA'S STREETS FUNCTION WITH TWO TRAVEL LANES. ACCORDING TO NYS TRAFFIC DATA VIEWER, RIVER ROAD, TWIN CITIES MEMORIAL HIGHWAY SEE OVER 15,000 AND CLOSE TO 20,000 VEHICLES PER DAY DEPENDING ON SEGMENT WITH PORTIONS OF NIAGARA FALLS BOULEVARD SEEING CLOSE TO 28,000 VEHICLES PER DAY. SWEENEY, ROBINSON, AND WHEATFIELD STREET AVERAGE ANYWHERE FROM 4,000 TO 5,500 VEHICLES PER DAY.

MAP KEY:

- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL EXPRESSWAY
- PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL OTHER
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- LOCAL
- CITY BOUNDARY
- GREENSPACE



Source: NYS DOT (2024)



The city contains Local, Minor Collector, Major Collector, Minor Arterial and Principal Arterial Roads and the majority of North Tonawanda's streets function with two travel lanes. According to NYS Traffic Data Viewer, River Road, Niagara Falls Boulevard, and Twin Cities Memorial Highway see over 15,000 and close to 20,000 vehicles per day depending on segment. Sweeney, Main, and Wheatfield Street average anywhere from 4,000 to 5,000 vehicles per day.

According to the Local Highway Inventory via NYSDOT, there are 113 centerline miles within the city and 234 lane miles.

The City recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2022 to provide guidance for planning, design, and operation of public rights-of-way within the City to improve safety and access, maintenance efficiency, and environmental conditions. This marks a formal commitment to implementation of Complete Streets on all new infrastructure projects including renovation of existing roadways.

The City of North Tonawanda is generally well connected by sidewalks. Sidewalks are located throughout the downtown and nearby neighborhoods, connecting residential areas, public parks, and the waterfront. Gaps in the City's sidewalk network exist, specifically on Tonawanda Island. Areas within downtown, along major transportation corridors (Twin Cities Memorial Highway, Sweeney Street, Webster Street, Main Street, Oliver Street, River Road), and within existing neighborhoods would benefit from enhanced streetscaping and sidewalk improvements to boost aesthetics and quality of life. The establishment of a Sidewalk Improvement Program could assist the City and its residents with identifying sidewalks that need repair. Newly constructed and improved sidewalks provide the opportunity for multi-modal transportation and assist with overall visual enhancements of an area.

Transit

The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) serves the City of North Tonawanda and the greater Buffalo Niagara region. There is one bus route (Route 25) that makes multiple weekday stops within the City along River Road, Oliver Street, Payne Avenue, and Webster Street. Bus Route 25 originates in downtown Buffalo and takes about 45 minutes to get to the City of Tonawanda Transit hub at the intersection of Main and Niagara Streets. Route 25 terminates at Mid-City Plaza 12 to 15 minutes later. Currently, the fare is \$2 for single trip passes (\$1 for low-income individuals), and \$5 for an all-day pass.

Connect Niagara, the Niagara County Bus Service is open to the public, and provides Monday – Friday routes for \$2. Connect Niagara also allows off route pickups for \$4. The City of North Tonawanda is part of the Red Route with stops at the Wheatfield Senior Center and Mid City Plaza. The route connects North Tonawanda to Wheatfield, Niagara, Niagara Falls, and Lewiston.

Parking

Available parking (on and off street) is abundant throughout the City of North Tonawanda. Parking lots are scattered through North Tonawanda's traditional downtown including Main Street, Webster Street, Sweeney Street, Columbia Street, Tremont Street, and Manhattan Street. The City currently owns one municipal parking lot downtown which provides over 130 spaces. In 2013, North Tonawanda facilitated a Downtown Parking Analysis, which found that the current parking capacity is sufficient for the downtown. The document also identified strategies to make parking more efficient with the recommendation of promoting development in areas with more parking available. Currently, none of the City of North Tonawanda's public parking lots have Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations available to residents or visitors. The City plans to install EV charging stations as part of their Smart Growth 2.0 project that is funded by the NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative program.



Bike Lanes

Roadway cycling facilities are available within the City of North Tonawanda. Marked bike lanes are available along River Road starting at Goundry Street and travelling north ending at East Felton.

North Tonawanda's major roadways allow for the efficient movement of vehicles through the city, however the existing road network should better accommodate alternative modes of travel. The increased application of bike lanes along major road corridors should be encouraged, and the continued use of public transit should be celebrated so that all city residents can equitably and efficiently use the roadways.



Infrastructure

North Tonawanda is served by water, sewer, gas, and electric services due to its urbanized nature. The city owns and operates a water treatment plant (WTP) with a pump station that treats and distributes water to residents and businesses. The City also owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) that treats all of the City's wastewater before being discharged back into the Niagara River.

Water & Sewer

The City's water supply is surface drawn from the Niagara River and treated at the WTP located on the western bank of Tonawanda Island (1 Archer Street). The City maintains approximately 120 miles of water distribution main. According



to the City's 2022 Annual Drinking Water Quality Report, the North Tonawanda public water system services 30,372 people through 11,740 connections (approximately 900 connections (7.6%) service commercial & multi-family residential properties). An average of 4.13 million gallons of water is treated and pumped into the distribution system daily.

North Tonawanda operates a combined sewer system which allows for the flow of sanitary and stormwater through the same lines. The city maintains approximately 130 miles of combined gravity sewer and 70 miles of separate storm sewer in the collection system. Much of the City's system was constructed in the mid-20th century and is reaching the end of its useful life. Due to an increase in frequency of severe storm events, the combined system is more susceptible to becoming strained which causes sewer backups and increased discharge into the Niagara River.

The City's wastewater treatment plant (WWTP), located along River Road within the WRA, is 42 years old and suffers from lack of back-up power, age of piping, and an inoperable digester. The WWTP is responsible for the treatment of the City's wastewater. The WWTP is a physical/chemical plant that removes solids through screening, grit removal, clarification, and filtration. The effluent is then disinfected with gaseous chlorine before it is discharged into the Niagara River. The solids that are removed from the effluent are processed using digestion, de-watered with a belt filter press then landfilled.

The City is currently undergoing the process of creating a Water Distribution and Sewer Collection System Capital Improvement Plan. The Plan will determine present and future water/sewer demands, conduct field tests, develop models, and recommend system improvements.

Gas & Electric

City residents and businesses are serviced by National Grid as an electricity provider and National Fuel as the natural gas provider.

The city is currently executing an 'opt-in' electrical service program that will provide residents the opportunity to opt-in to a reduced-rate solar energy through the NY-Sun program facilitated by NYSERDA.

Telecommunications

Spectrum, Earthlink, Verizon, Hughesnet, Viasat, T-Mobile, and Greenlight provide the city with communications infrastructure.

In 2005, the City of North Tonawanda adopted a Wireless Telecommunications Facility (WTF) local law to regulate the consistency of the construction or modification of WTFs through a fair and efficient permit process. The adopted local law intends to minimize the potential impact of the telecommunication facilities to the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Currently, municipal broadband is not available within the City of North Tonawanda. The City does provide WiFi at Gateway Harbor Park for park visitors.

A larger portion of North Tonawanda's public infrastructure is coming to the end of its useful life. Repairs to existing and the installation of new water and sewer lines will better equip the city for its future economic growth. Water continues to be the most important natural resource to North Tonawanda and it's imperative that the main source of city water (the Niagara River) is sought after so that water quality can increase.



Existing Conditions Key Takeaways

- 1. North Tonawanda has a unique location along two water bodies that provides a continued opportunity for direct waterfront access, recreation, and development.*
- 2. The number of housing units that are available in North Tonawanda has increased and will assist to reverse the trending decline in population. However, housing vacancies have substantially increased, indicating that the available housing stock is not in adequate condition.*
- 3. The City's vast historic and cultural resources create a sense of place and promote a robust community character and should continue to be expanded upon.*
- 4. The high amount of vacant and underutilized land throughout the city points out the need for a rezone of areas to allow for new development and land uses such as mixed-use and multi-family housing while preserving important natural resources.*
- 5. North Tonawanda has a vibrant downtown that attracts residents and patrons from all over the region and is an example of the success of past planning efforts and future place-making initiatives.*
- 6. The City of North Tonawanda has an abundance of parks and public spaces that provide recreational opportunities for its residents.*
- 7. The large proportion of owner occupied housing creates the opportunity to expand alternative housing options within existing single family neighborhoods.*
- 8. Increasing levels of educational attainment and existing underutilized land in North Tonawanda can help to attract opportunities for new specialized industry to assist in economic development and the creation of jobs.*

SECTION 4

VISION, GOALS, & STRATEGIES





The Vision for a community is to provide a future-oriented guide for elected officials, local leaders, residents, business owners, regional entities, and other stakeholders. The City and its development boards should turn to the vision and subsequent goals when determining their approach to a project or new policy. The Vision is aspirational and lacks actions items. Actions are determined by Goals (more detailed and structured) and the projects, policies, and strategies that fall under them.

Vision

North Tonawanda is a progressive city with a unique sense of place that is welcoming for all. It is a destination that boasts a celebrated waterfront and environmentally conscious infrastructure. Providing diverse housing options and employment sector, forward-thinking policies, and a strong school system, North Tonawanda is the perfect place to live, work, and play.

Goals

The Comprehensive Plan goals were created as a result of community outreach, takeaways from the Existing Conditions and past planning, as well as a way for the City to drill down into key areas of focus as they implement the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Strengthen Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Networks	2. Continue Investment in Public Recreation and Open Spaces	3. Protect and Enhance Natural Resources	4. Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Optimize Land Use
5. Develop Opportunities for Diverse Housing and Improve Existing Housing Stock	6. Bolster Historic and Cultural Resources	7. Implement Efficient and Collaborative Community Services	8. Advance Economic Development and Tourism Initiatives



Strengthen Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Networks

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Encourage compact neighborhood design and concentrated development around existing infrastructure.	Prioritize transportation options such as walking, cycling, and public transportation.	Promote climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
--	--	--

The City of North Tonawanda is continuously working towards improving existing infrastructure to protect their abundant natural resources and provide an improved and safer transportation network for residents and visitors. Due to the age of existing infrastructure and transportation systems, the City is in a constant state of repairs and improvements.

Funding efforts and priorities for the City are focused on the existing Sewer and Water Capital improvement Plan, the strategic identification and elimination of existing Combined Sewer Systems and protection of water resources from pollution, traffic calming and improved pedestrian facilities, and an increased network of trails and paths to City resources and neighborhoods. It is the goal that by improving existing infrastructure, enhancing multi-modal transportation options, and providing the opportunity for Electric Vehicle charging, North Tonawanda will be a leader in the WNY region in reducing dependency on vehicles. These efforts are recognized in the strategies below:

- *Implement the City's Sewer and Water Plant Capital Improvement Plan.*
- *Eliminate municipal combined sewer systems (CSS) to protect the City's water resources from pollution.*
- *Upgrade and/or replace the Tollner Tank.*
- *Develop a backup power generation plan for the City's wastewater treatment plant.*
- *Reconstruct the Twin Cities Memorial Highway corridor to include traffic calming and multi-modal transportation opportunities and the potential to be a regional transit hub.*
- *Implement traffic calming and enhanced bike path connectivity projects along the River Road corridor.*
- *Realign intersection of Payne Avenue and Meadow Drive for better traffic flow and improved pedestrian safety.*
- *Develop and implement a transportation master plan or Safe Streets for All Plan to improve pedestrian infrastructure and safety along roadways and within neighborhoods.*
- *Upgrade the water, sewer, and road infrastructure on Tonawanda Island to anticipate potential private development projects.*
- *Plan and develop a comprehensive network of trails and paths to link existing trails, public parks, and natural resources.*
- *Coordinate with NFTA to increase and improve bus service for city residents.*
- *Continue to partner with NYS DOT to advance critical road infrastructure projects.*
- *Increase opportunities for residents and visitors to use Electric Vehicle charging stations in public lots.*



Continue Investment in Public Recreation and Open Spaces

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Provide well-planned, equitable, and accessible public spaces.	Preserve open space, agricultural resources, and natural resources.
--	---

North Tonawanda is known for their abundant public recreation resources and open space areas along their water-fronts and within residential neighborhoods. The number of public parks, trails, programming, and amenities provided for community members and visitors provides an increased quality of life and notable tourism draw. The City's unique location along the Erie Canal and Niagara River, accessible waterfront spaces such as Gateway Harbor and the Sweeney Street Multi-Use Path, and previous planning initiatives formed the development of strategies for continued recreation improvements. These efforts are recognized in the strategies below:

- *Construct a new water recreation facility at Payne Park.*
- *Reimagine the Memorial Pool Facility into a new use and preserve the building's historic character.*
- *Construct a community event center facility along the waterfront.*
- *Install a fishing pier improvement at Veterans Park.*
- *Preserve and enhance the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens and continue to explore and implement habitat restoration projects.*
- *Develop a Parks Master Plan to allow for the prioritization of parks improvements.*
- *Develop and adopt an Inclusive Parks policy.*
- *Provide permanent bathrooms, additional pavilions, and a dog park at Gratwick Park and implement the Gratwick Park Master Plan.*
- *Design and construct a dog park at Carruthers Park.*
- *Create an active, accessible fitness park at Leah Park.*
- *Consolidate the North Tonawanda Senior Center, Youth Center, and Parks Department services at 500 Wheatfield.*
- *Develop an Island Street overlook park.*



Protect and Enhance Natural Resources

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Preserve open space, agricultural resources, and natural resources.

Promote climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

North Tonawanda is home to numerous natural resources. With the Niagara River and Erie Canal forming the western and southern borders of the City, the protection and enhancement of natural resources has become an obvious and important goal for the City and its residents. North Tonawanda has done comprehensive work surrounding Climate Action planning and now looks to put that into motion. With the City continuing to attract businesses and residents, existing residents expressed the need for careful consideration of new development to not interfere with existing natural resource areas.

- *Encourage additional living shoreline and habitat restoration projects along Erie Canal, Mayors Park, and Niagara River shorelines including Veterans and Gratwick Parks.*
- *Implement green infrastructure initiatives for stormwater runoff, biodiversity support and urban heat island reduction with a focus near Tonawanda Creek, the Niagara River, and areas prone to flooding.*
- *Prioritize the preservation of public waterfront property and expand public access.*
- *Identify and protect wetland areas as significant natural resources using zoning, land use restrictions, and partnerships with stewardship organizations or land trusts.*
- *Work directly with local organizations and NYS entities to remove and abate invasive species along the waterfronts and implement an invasive species management plan.*
- *Implement the North Tonawanda Climate Resilience Plan.*



Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Optimize Land Use

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Develop plans and land use regulations that allow for and encourage mixed-use neighborhoods.	Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing buildings to revitalize neighborhoods and downtowns, including areas around public transit.	Encourage compact neighborhood design and concentrated development around existing infrastructure.	Engage in an inclusive, collaborative public planning process that considers the needs and character of the community.
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North Tonawanda is unique in the fact that it still contains many of its original neighborhoods and historic form, but over time investment has left, businesses closed, and what were once bustling, walkable corridors, are now dotted with vacant lots and inactivity while trying to build back toward what they once had. Due to this, a reinvestment is needed in not only commercial corridor areas, but also within dense, established residential pockets of the city.

Reinvestment into improving aging housing stock, sidewalks, residential parks, and streetscaping all contribute into a healthier and desirable place to age in place. Not all neighborhoods within North Tonawanda need the same types of investment. For this reason, it is important to plan on a neighborhood scale and hone in on what improvements matter most and identify sources of funding and resources for community members to improve what is important to them. The following strategies identify various types of neighborhood scale improvements and opportunities for creating a land use pattern that increases walkability and assists with increasing density.

- *Revitalize the Oliver Street corridor through the introduction of new housing, preservation of historic architecture, and public realm improvements.*
- *Promote the continued cleanup and development of brownfield properties.*
- *Improve walkability in neighborhoods through advancements in pedestrian infrastructure and connections to services and amenities.*
- *Encourage the inclusion and development of public spaces as part of private development projects.*
- *Increase density within existing neighborhoods by prioritizing infill development and allowing a variety of housing types.*
- *Promote a vertical and horizontal mix of uses outside of Downtown.*
- *Utilize the Comprehensive Plan to implement an update to the Zoning Ordinance and ensure zoning supports and maintains walkable, infill development.*
- *Use flexible zoning to incentivize private development for the revitalization of the Mid-City Plaza and Nash Road Plazas.*
- *Continue to support and implement community-based small area planning to further the revitalization of historic neighborhoods.*



Develop Opportunities for Diverse Housing and Improve Existing Housing Stock

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Enable a diverse mix of housing types that provide for opportunity and choice for all.

Providing diverse housing opportunities such as single-family homes, multi-family apartment buildings, Accessory Dwelling Units, senior housing, and condominiums, allows community members or those looking to move to North Tonawanda, to age in place. Diverse housing also opens the door for and maintains diverse communities in terms of age, income, and ability. The City of North Tonawanda recognizes the importance of supporting diverse housing where possible.

Over 60% of North Tonawanda's homes were built prior to 1959 and less than 1% of homes were built after 2010. Due to this, the city contains a great deal of historic housing stock that needs repair and assistance to continue its contributions in creating sense of place and the preservation of the City's history. There are also many non-historic and vacant homes within North Tonawanda that could benefit from owner-assistance such as repairs and rehabilitation due to home improvements being fiscally challenging. The strategies below are targeted at creating and maintain housing within North Tonawanda.

- *Encourage cluster development of housing by requiring natural resource protection in subdivision design.*
- *Develop a city-wide housing policy that supports a diverse variety of housing options including multi-family, accessory dwelling units (ADU), and promotes universal design practices.*
- *Develop a landlord registry and a vacant property inventory.*
- *Advertise the availability of home renovation and rehabilitation programs from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Housing Opportunity Made Equal (HOME) funds and other funding sources.*
- *Secure and maintain NYS Pro-Housing Community status and continue to practice and advocate for Fair Housing.*



Bolster Historic and Cultural Resources

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Build on unique traits to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.

North Tonawanda's robust industrial history has allowed the City to grow into what it is today, a regional destination along the Erie Canal that provides a sense of place with original historic buildings and neighborhoods. An abundance of historic resources can be found throughout the city and provide a reminder of the importance of character in development. Using these historic resources to their advantage, North Tonawanda can shape the future of the city by learning from the successes of the past. The strategies below will assist the City in maintaining their historic assets as well as assist in developing new resources.

- *Draft a historic property overlay zoning district to further protect the City's historic resources.*
- *Increase the code enforcement office's capacity to ensure that the State Historic Preservation Office and US Department of the Interior standards for historic properties are met and applied consistently.*
- *Support better guidance for homeowners improved access to funding and grants for historic properties.*
- *Invest in placemaking efforts that promote and highlight the City's historic resources such as signage, art, and monuments.*
- *Continue efforts to promote and preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods by maintaining the North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Commission.*



Implement Efficient and Collaborative Community Services

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Engage in an inclusive, collaborative public planning process that considers the needs and character of the community.

Promote climate resiliency and adaptation, preferably through nature-based solutions, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The City and members of the community recognize the importance of community services and their contributions to safety, welfare, and community satisfaction. Due to this, the City continues to explore where they can become more efficient internally and collaborate with other partners. The strategies below explore the potential for consolidation, centralization, and improvements to existing services and the creation of new services that are desired by the community that will move the Comprehensive Plan vision forward.

- *Construct a centralized City Vehicle Garage at the property adjacent to the Department of Public Works building on Erie Avenue.*
- *Consolidate the Fire Department and its resources for more efficient and cost-effective services.*
- *Partner with North Tonawanda Schools and other local groups to program educational, cultural and/or recreation projects and initiatives throughout the community.*
- *Establish regular “green waste” collection and composting.*
- *Continue to support the North Tonawanda City Market and implement permanent site and building improvements to increase year-round activation.*



Advance Economic Development and Tourism Initiatives

NYS SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES ALIGNMENTS:

Prioritize infill and redevelopment of existing buildings to revitalize neighborhoods and downtowns, including areas around public transit.	Provide well-planned, equitable, and accessible public spaces.	Build on unique traits to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.
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The City of North Tonawanda is an economic hub within Western New York and Niagara County. Its location along the Niagara River and Erie Canal, proximity to both the City of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, and amenities within the downtown and along its major corridors, have allowed North Tonawanda to experience a revitalization over the last decade. The City has implemented smart growth planning improvements in Gateway Harbor, Oliver Street, Sweeney Street, and River Road and the results of people-oriented planning are coming to fruition.

The City experiences a high number of visitors to the area due to waterfront and downtown programming, local businesses, entertainment venues, and available parks and recreation facilities. New and redevelopment is continuing with the city, including multi-family housing, commercial businesses, and office space.

Due to this, the City sees the opportunity to continue economic development and tourism initiatives to continue tax-base growth and their status as a destination. The strategies below assist in the encouragement of services and amenities.

- *Expand public water access for boating and kayaking along the Erie Canal.*
- *Improve accessibility, public transportation, and public parking in downtown and around recreational and tourist sites.*
- *Improve accessibility and implement the “NYS Blue-Way” model camp site project at Mayors Park.*
- *Support the development of a hotel and/or overnight lodging options in the city.*
- *Increase collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas and Visitor's Center.*
- *Leverage existing partnerships with Niagara County and Destination Niagara USA to promote tourism assets and assist with new development.*
- *Develop a cohesive branding and marketing initiative that highlights tourism opportunities.*
- *Invest in public art opportunities throughout Downtown and the Oliver Street corridor.*
- *Promote key industrial sites and available land to provide employment opportunities.*
- *Further develop and invest in the City's gateways including River Road, Twin Cities Memorial Highway, Main Street, and Sweeney Street.*

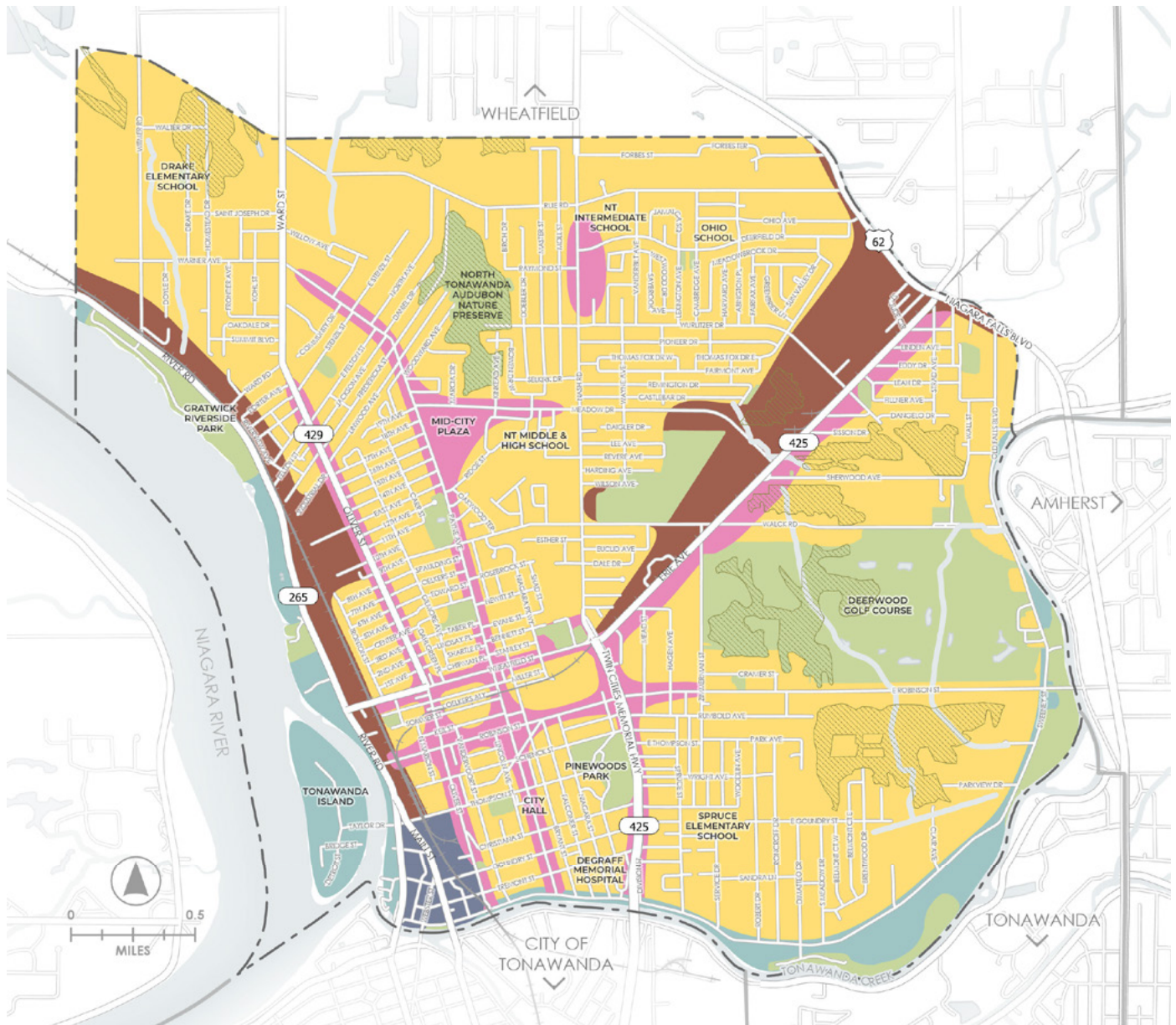
SECTION 5

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY





Figure 15: Future Land Use



FUTURE LAND USE

NORTH TONAWANDA'S FUTURE LAND USE PLAN PROMOTES A BALANCED, CONNECTED COMMUNITY GROUNDED IN SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES. LAND USE CATEGORIES—RANGING FROM NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN TO REGIONAL CORRIDORS AND WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT—REFLECT THE CITY'S GOALS TO SUPPORT WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS, REVITALIZE KEY CORRIDORS, EXPAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND ENHANCE PUBLIC ACCESS TO NATURAL ASSETS. TOGETHER, THESE CATEGORIES GUIDE INFILL DEVELOPMENT, PROTECT COMMUNITY CHARACTER, AND ENSURE THAT HOUSING, SERVICES, JOBS, AND RECREATION ARE ACCESSIBLE TO ALL RESIDENTS.

MAP KEY:

- CITY BOUNDARY
- WATERBODY
- WETLAND AREA

FUTURE LAND USE

- DOWNTOWN MIXED USE
- NEIGHBORHOOD CORRIDOR
- PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE
- REGIONAL CORRIDOR
- NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL
- WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT



North Tonawanda's Future Land Use Plan is designed to provide a framework for decision-making surrounding physical development. It outlines the community's expectations and preferences regarding future development and areas of focus. The Land Use Plan is flexible in nature, meaning, it should be used for updates to the City's Zoning Code and improvements, but it is not the final decision on development. The Future Land Use Plan is not and should not be used as a zoning map.

Based on robust public input, the future land use plan outlines a desired pattern of growth and infill within the City of North Tonawanda. The land use categories are meant to provide guidance for the gradual development and redevelopment of the city while resonating with the core tenants of the Comprehensive Plan and NYS Smart Growth Principals including:

- **Enable a diverse mix of housing types, providing opportunity and choice for all.**
- **Encourage compact neighborhood design and concentrated development around existing infrastructure.**
- **Preserve open space, agricultural resources, and natural resources.**
- **Build on unique traits to create an attractive and welcoming community with a strong sense of place.**

As part of the Future Land Use Plan, narrative and conceptual designs accompany each land use category to provide greater depth in the use and placement of each category. During the review of a development application, the Future Land Use Plan will assist the reviewing bodies in determining if the proposed development is consistent with the pillars of the City's Comprehensive Plan and the strategies within. It is crucial to keep climate resilience in mind when considering future development within the City of North Tonawanda. The City and its reviewing bodies should refer to the City's Climate Smart Resilience Plan when adapting to both minor and major transformative changes

Neighborhood Residential

Neighborhoods in North Tonawanda are primarily comprised of residential land uses but also feature neighborhood scale commercial uses, community services, and public buildings. This combination of uses within sections of the city creates an environment where residents both live and have the opportunity to socially interact with one another. Infill development in these areas must be sensitive to the character and setting of the existing neighborhood and should consider appropriate density, scale, and style based on the surrounding established neighborhood.



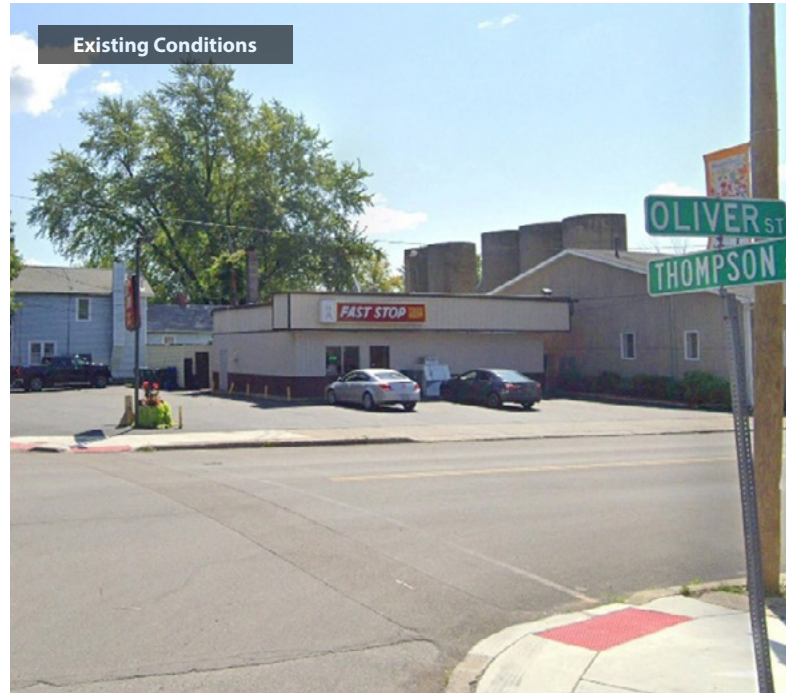


Neighborhood Corridor

The intent of the Neighborhood Corridor land use category is to provide a development pattern that is consistent with immediately adjacent residential neighborhoods and allow for the vertical and horizontal mixture of uses along a once traditionally developed commercial and residential corridor. Neighborhood Corridors are characterized by shallow lots, proximity to established residential neighborhoods, and buildings that are a maximum of 3 stories in height. Typical uses within a Neighborhood Corridor should include a diversity of housing types, small office developments, boutique retail establishments, restaurants and taverns, and community service uses. This type of land use also is aware of its context bordering an established neighborhood and has an increased focus on buffering, screening, and pedestrian experience. It is important for land uses within this category to be focused on the infill and revitalization of the adjacent neighborhood by introducing supportive development in equitable patterns. On Neighborhood Corridors that are predominantly residential, new small-scale commercial development should be focused on and around major intersections as to create a node of commercial activity. In larger commercial areas like Mid-City Plaza, gradual redevelopment should encourage new structures to be located at the street in an effort to create a pedestrian scale. Parking lots should be re-arranged as to create parking rooms and provisions for additional landscaping, and roadway access should be shared amongst adjacent parcels. These efforts will create a more unified development pattern across a Neighborhood Corridor.

Neighborhood Corridors include:

- **Oliver Street (Sweeney Street to Ward Road) (shown above)**
- **Erie Avenue (South Side)**
- **Payne Avenue (shown below)**
- **Wheatfield Street (From River Road to Twin Cities Memorial Highway)**
- **Robinson Street (River Road to Zimmerman Street)**
- **Twin Cities Memorial Highway**





Regional Corridor

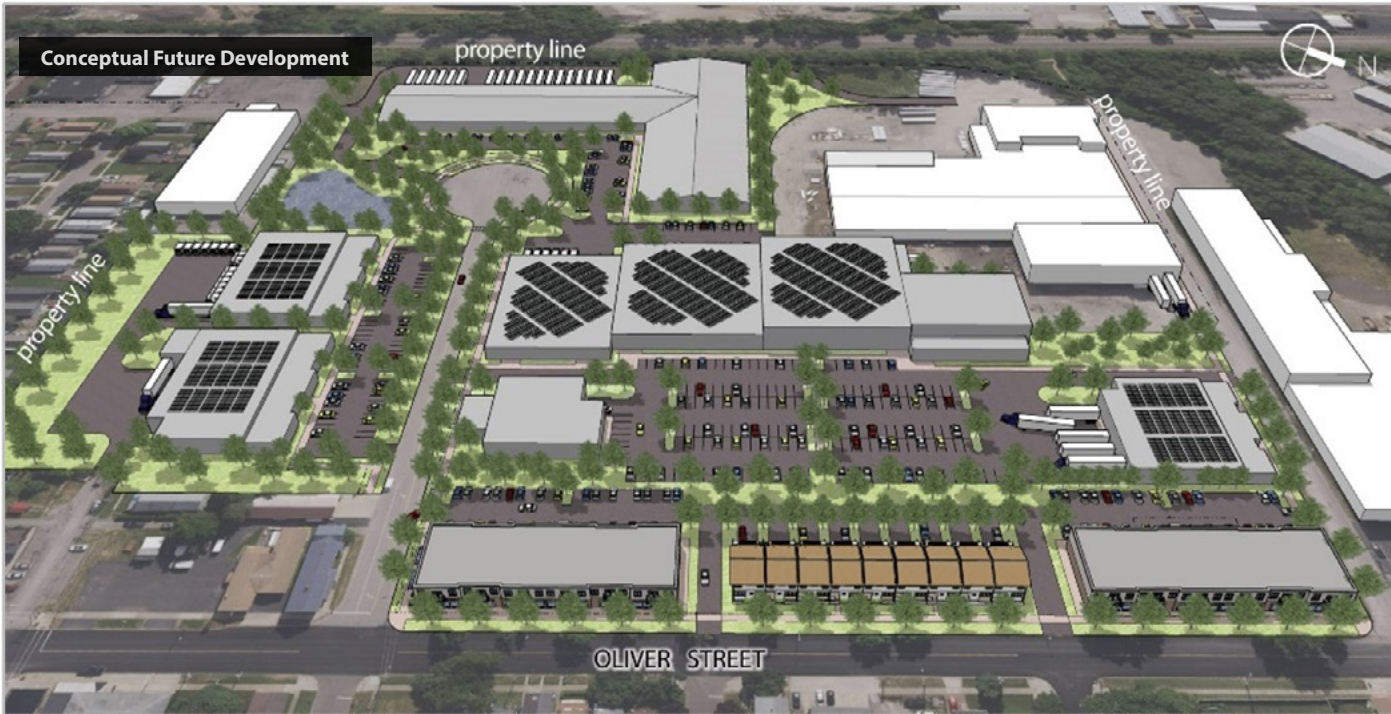
In an effort to retain the ability for national retailers and tenants to locate within the City of North Tonawanda, the traditional commercial land uses are recognized as a vital presence but carefully designated in its placement and design within the community. Typically, uses that are located within a Regional Corridor serve a regional population, require access to major transportation routes, and feature thoughtfully designed parking areas with appropriate screening. Maintaining these development patterns in strategic location within the city affords the opportunity for the attraction of new large-scale businesses, without sacrificing the desired downtown core location. Typical land uses within a Regional Corridor include large scale retailers & grocers, warehousing, light and medium manufacturing enterprises, research and development, large scale office buildings, medical centers, etc.

Regional Corridors Include:

- Niagara Falls Boulevard
- River Road
- Erie Avenue (North Side)

Strategic Redevelopment Sites:

- Buffalo Bolt (shown below)
- Wurlitzer Site





Waterfront

North Tonawanda's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) prescribes the City's vision for the waterfront including the site pictured below located at 2 Archer Street, on the western shore of Tonawanda Island. The pictured style of development includes housing, public spaces, and commercial development as deemed appropriate in the LWRP.

North Tonawanda's waterfront has transformed into and will continue to be the regional destination for water-dependent tourism and recreational opportunities. The city's waterfront hosts some of North Tonawanda's vital natural



resources and public open spaces. Parks and open spaces should be expanded and enhanced to capture the extent of the Niagara River, Little River, and Tonawanda Creek shorelines. Water-dependent and water-enhanced uses as outlined in the City of North Tonawanda's LWRP are the most appropriate for siting along the waterfront areas and should be designed to be conscious of their potential impacts to the water and to adjacent water uses. Buildings are oriented to maximize views of and relationship to the water, and organized around central, shared open spaces with parking tucked behind the buildings (inland side) and screened from interior roadways. Waterfront land uses provide additional access and opportunities for residents and visitors to recreate and utilize the water as an asset.



Downtown Mixed Use

North Tonawanda's Downtown has been an essential piece of the city's history and will continue to be the driving force for the city's future. Within downtown, Webster and Main Streets are lined with a mixture of historic structures as well as new development that is appropriately scaled and designed so as not to conflict with the established sense of place. Future growth within downtown must be aware of its place among established forms including minimal setbacks, ground floor transparency, and a focus on the pedestrian experience. Appropriate land uses within the downtown include residential, commercial, community services, recreational assets, and small open spaces. Spatially, the vertical and horizontal mixture of land uses are vital to the infill of vacant downtown parcels. The focus of development and density should remain on Webster and Main Streets, while ancillary streets like Tremont, Goundry, and Manhattan seek to provide access to development, and host supporting land uses.

North Tonawanda's Downtown has been a focal point of planning efforts in recent years. The Comprehensive Plan, the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, and the NYS Downtown Revitalization Initiative have bolstered the City's commitment to the development of the Downtown Core using strategies that encourage mixed-use projects with a focus on the pedestrian experience.





Parks, Recreation & Open Space

This land use category makes up three distinct forms of open spaces: 1) Public parks; 2) recreation and open spaces that are comprised of active and passive parks, private recreation and open spaces which encompasses Deerwood Golf Course; 3) and land that is subject to environmental regulation and preservation such as the North Tonawanda Audubon Nature Preserve. The combination of these spaces provides North Tonawanda with social gathering spaces, recreation opportunity, and important environmental benefits. The siting of new public open spaces should focus on expanding service to residents and providing public spaces in locations that are underserved by the existing parks network. Areas that are shown as open space and are home to NYSDEC and USFW wetland areas are recognized as important natural resources and should require individual review if proposed for development.

The concept below was created for Carruthers Park, located on the corner of Sommer Street and Carruthers Place. The idea to reactivate the existing park as a dog park sparked from the DRI engagement process. The existing park isn't as utilized as other neighborhood scale parks within the City and backs up to the rail line. Reactivation of the park includes a new dog park and associated walking paths, seating, walkways, landscaping, pickleball courts, and bocce.





SECTION 6

IMPLEMENTATION





Implementation Matrix

The Implementation Matrix expands upon the goals and objectives of the North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan by offering a series of actions, along with relevant partners, priority level, timeline, cost level, and potential funding sources. This Matrix is a culmination of the interviews, stakeholder committee input, plan review, and workshops that were undertaken as part of the Comprehensive Planning process.

The goal of the Implementation Matrix is to give City leaders and stakeholders clear direction for achieving the vision for North Tonawanda's future expressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The Implementation Matrix utilizes broad categories, such as a "short-term" timeline or "high" priority level, because conditions are always changing and the Implementation Matrix is meant to be a flexible roadmap, not a step-by-step guide.

All the actions in the Implementation Matrix are important, so an assignment of "low" priority does not indicate otherwise. A "low" priority designation could indicate any number of things, such as external barriers preventing immediate implementation, that other actions must be completed first, or simply that other actions in the category have a higher level of urgency.

Many action items in the matrix are informed by previous or current planning initiatives in North Tonawanda and the larger region. There are many ongoing initiatives, plans, and strategies that will be critical to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and its goals. Creating the Implementation Matrix leverages and bridges these existing efforts to foster cohesion. Some of the actions could reasonably fit under multiple goals and objectives, and many are interconnected despite being located in different sections of the Implementation Matrix.

Implementation Matrix Guide

\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	Low	Med	High
Easily accomplished with little to no necessary funding	Increased funding is necessary to accomplish the initiative utilizing grant applications or City budgetary contributions	Will take multiple years of funding and major grant support as well as collaboration with local, regional, state, and federal partners	Able to be accomplished with local effort and collaboration and not identified as a focal point in the near term	Will require increased attention and collaboration and seen as important to the community and City leadership	The highest amount of attention and resources are required, and steps should be taken immediately to work towards implementing the strategy/action

Table 10: Strengthen Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Networks

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Implement the City's Sewer and Water Plant Capital Improvement Plan.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$\$\$	City of NT, NYS DEC, NYS OCR, NYS EFC

**Table 10: Strengthen Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Networks**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Eliminate municipal combined sewer systems (CSS) to protect the City's water resources from pollution.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$\$\$	City of NT, NYS DEC, NYS EFC
Upgrade and/or replace the Tollner Tank.	City of NT	Medium	Mid-term	\$\$\$	City of NT, NYS DEC, NYS EFC, CDBG
Develop a backup power generation plan for the City's wastewater plant.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DEC, NYS EFC
Reconstruct the Twin Cities Memorial Highway corridor to include traffic calming and multi-modal transportation opportunities and the potential to be a regional transit hub.	City of NT, NYS DOT	Medium	Long-term	\$\$\$	NYS DOT, FHWA
Implement traffic calming and enhanced bike path connectivity projects along the River Road corridor.	City of NT, NYS DOT	Medium	Mid-term	\$\$	NYS DOT, FHWA, Niagara River Greenway
Realign intersection of Payne Avenue and Meadow Drive for better traffic flow and improved pedestrian safety.	City of NT	Low	Long-term	\$\$	City of NT, NYS DOT

**Table 10: Strengthen Municipal Infrastructure and Transportation Networks**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Develop and implement a transportation master plan or Safe Streets for All Plan to improve pedestrian infrastructure and safety along roadways and within neighborhoods.	City of NT	Medium	Mid-term	\$\$	City of NT
Upgrade the water, sewer, and road infrastructure on Tonawanda Island to anticipate potential private development projects.	City of NT	Medium	Short-term	\$\$	City of NT, ESD
Plan and develop a comprehensive network of trails to link existing trails, public parks, and natural resources.	City of NT	Medium	Short-term	\$\$	City of NT, NYS DOS, Niagara Greenway
Coordinate with NFTA to increase and improve bus service for city residents.	City of NT, NFTA	Low	Long-term	\$	NFTA
Continue to partner with NYS DOT to advance critical road infrastructure projects.	City of NT, NYS DOT	Medium	Long-term	\$	NYS DOT
Increase opportunities for residents and visitors to use Electric Vehicle charging stations in public lots.	City of NT, NFTA	Low	Mid-term	\$	NYSERDA

Table 11: Continue Investment in Public Recreation and Open Space

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Construct a new water recreation facility at Payne Park.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$\$\$	NYS Parks, National Parks Service

**Table 11: Continue Investment in Public Recreation and Open Space**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Reimagine the Memorial Pool Facility.	City of NT	Medium	Short-term	\$	NYS Parks, National parks Service
Construct a community event center facility.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$\$	City of NT, NYS DOS, NYS Parks
Install a fishing pier improvement at Veterans Park.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$\$	City of NT, NYS DOS, NYS Parks
Preserve and enhance the North Tonawanda Botanical Gardens and continue to explore and implement habitat restoration projects.	City of NT, NTBGO, Buffalo-Niagara Waterkeeper, NYS Canal Corp.	Medium	Short-term	\$	City of NT, NYS Canal Corp
Develop a Parks Master Plan.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DOS, NYS Parks
Develop and adopt an Inclusive Parks policy.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$	City of NT
Provide permanent bathrooms, additional pavilions, and a dog park at Gratwick Park and implement the Gratwick Park Master Plan.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$\$	City of NT, Niagara River Greenway, NYS DOS

**Table 11: Continue Investment in Public Recreation and Open Space**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Design and construct a dog park at Carruthers Park.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$	City of NT, Private Foundations, NYS Parks
Create an active, accessible fitness park at Leah Park.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$	City of NT, Private Foundations, NYS Parks
Consolidate the North Tonawanda Senior Center, Youth Center, and Parks Department services at 500 Wheatfield	City of NT	Medium	Mid-term	\$\$\$	City of NT, NYS DOS, NYS Parks, DASNY

Table 12: Protect and Enhance Natural Resources

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Encourage additional living shoreline and habitat restoration projects along Erie Canal, Mayors Park, and Niagara River shorelines Veterans and Gratwick Parks.	City of NT, Buffalo-Niagara Water-keeper	Low	Mid-term	\$	Niagara River Greenway, NYS Canal Corp., NYS DEC, Private Foundations
Implement green infrastructure initiatives for storm-water runoff, biodiversity support and urban heat island reduction with a focus near Tonawanda Creek, the Niagara River, and areas prone to flooding.	City of NT, Buffalo-Niagara Water-keeper	Low	Long-term	\$\$	NYS EFC, NYS DEC



Prioritize the preservation of public waterfront property and expand public access.	City of NT	High	Long-term	N/A	City of NT
Identify and protect wetland areas as significant natural resources using zoning, land use restrictions, and partnerships with stewardship organizations or land trusts.	City of NT, Buffalo-Niagara Waterkeeper, Western New York Land Conservancy	High	Long-term	\$	City of NT, Private Foundations
Work directly with local organizations and NYS entities to remove and abate invasive species along the waterfronts.	City of NT, Buffalo-Niagara Waterkeeper	Low	Long-term	\$	NYS DEC
Implement the North Tonawanda Climate Resilience Plan.	City of NT	Medium	Long-term	\$	City of NT

Table 13: Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Optimize Land Use

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Revitalize the Oliver Street corridor through the introduction of new housing, preservation of historic architecture, and public realm improvements.	City of NT, Oliver St. Merchants, LCDC	Medium	Short-term	\$\$	NYS HCR, NYS DOS, ESD, NYS Parks, City of NT
Promote the continued cleanup and development of brownfield properties.	City of NT, LCDC	Medium	Mid-term	\$\$	Niagara County, NYS DEC
Improve walkability in neighborhoods.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DOT

**Table 13: Reinvest in Neighborhoods and Optimize Land Use**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Encourage the inclusion and development of public spaces as part of private development projects.	City of NT	Low	Long-term	\$	
Increase density within existing neighborhoods by prioritizing infill development and allowing a variety of housing types.	City of NT, LCDC	Medium	Long-term	\$	NYS HCR
Promote a vertical and horizontal mix of uses outside of Downtown.	City of NT	Medium	Long-term	\$	
Utilize the Comprehensive Plan to implement an update to the Zoning Ordinance and ensure zoning supports and maintains walkable, infill development.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DOS
Use flexible zoning to incentivize private development for the revitalization of Mid-City Plaza and Nash Rd. Plaza.	City of NT	Medium	Mid-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DOS
Continue to support and implement community-based small area planning to further the revitalization of historic neighborhoods.	City of NT	Medium	Short-term	\$	NYS Parks

**Table 14: Develop Opportunities for Diverse Housing and Improve Existing Housing Stock**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Encourage cluster development of housing by requiring natural resource protection in subdivision design.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DOS
Develop city-wide housing policy that supports a diverse variety of housing options including multi-family, accessory dwelling units (ADU), and promotes universal design practices.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$	City of NT, NYS DOS
Develop a landlord registry and a vacant property inventory.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$	City of NT, LISC
Secure and maintain NYS Pro-Housing Community status and continue to practice and advocate for Fair Housing.	City of NT	Low	Short-term	\$	City of NT
Advertise the availability of home renovation and rehabilitation programs from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Housing Opportunity Made Equal (HOME) funds and other funding sources.	City of NT	Medium	Short-term	\$	NYS OCR

**Table 15: Bolster Historic and Cultural Resources**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Draft a historic property overlay zoning district to further protect the City's historic resources.	City of NT & HPC	Low	Mid-term	\$	NYS DOS, NYS Parks
Increase the code enforcement office's capacity to ensure that NYS Historic Office and US Department of the Interior standards for historic properties are met and applied consistently.	City of NT & HPC	Medium	Short-term	\$	NYS DOS, NYS Parks
Support better guidance for homeowners improved access to funding and grants for historic properties.	City of NT & HPC	Low	Short-term	\$	NYS Parks, City of NT
Invest in placemaking efforts that promote and highlight the City's historic resources such as signage, art, and monuments.	City of NT & HPC	Low	Short-term	\$	Niagara River Greenway, NYS HCR, Private Foundations
Continue efforts to promote and preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods by maintaining the North Tonawanda Historic Preservation Commission.	City of NT & HPC	Low	Short-term	\$	NYS Parks

**Table 16: Implement Effective and Collaborative Community Services**

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Construct a centralized city vehicle garage at the property adjacent to the Department of Public Works building on Erie Avenue.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$\$	NYS DOS, City of NT, ESD
Consolidate the Fire Department and its resources for more efficient and cost-effective services.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$\$	NYS DOS, NYS OCR, City of NT, ESD
Partner with North Tonawanda Schools and other local groups to program educational, cultural and/or recreation projects and initiatives throughout the community.	City of NT, NT Schools	Medium	Mid-term	N/A	
Establish regular "green waste" collection and composting.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$	NYS DEC
Continue to support the North Tonawanda City Market and implement permanent site and building improvements to increase year-round activation.	City of NT	Medium	Mid-term	\$	City of NT, NYS Ag & Markets

Table 17: Advance Economic Development and Tourism Initiatives

Strategies & Actions	Agencies	Priority	Timing	Cost	Funding Sources
Expand public water access for boating and kayaking along the Erie Canal.	City of NT	High	Short-term	\$	NYS DOS, NYS Canal Corp, Private Foundations, Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor, Niagara River Greenway, City of NT



Improve accessibility, public transportation, and public parking in downtown and around recreational and tourist sites.	City of NT, NFTA	High	Short-term	\$	City of NT, Niagara River Greenway
Improve accessibility and implement the "NYS Blue-Way" model camp site project at Mayors Park.	City of NT	Low	Mid-term	\$\$	NYS DOS, NYS Canal Corp, Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor, Private Foundations
Support the development of a hotel and/or lodging options in the city.	City of NT, LCDC	Medium	Mid-term	\$\$	ESD, Niagara County
Increase collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce of the Tonawandas and Visitor's Center.	City of NT, Chamber of Commerce	Low	Short-term	N/A	Erie Canalway Heritage Corridor, ESD, Private Foundations
Leverage existing partnerships with Niagara County and Destination Niagara USA to promote tourism assets.	City of NT, Destination Niagara USA	Low	Short-term	N/A	City of NT
Develop a cohesive branding and marketing initiative that highlights tourism opportunities.	City of NT, LCDC	Medium	Short-term	\$	City of NT, Niagara River Greenway, ESD, Private Foundations
Invest in public art opportunities throughout Downtown and the Oliver Street corridor.	LCDC, Oliver St. Merchants, Downtown Merchants	Medium	Short-term	\$	Private Foundations, NYS HCR, Niagara River Greenway, NYS DOS
Promote key industrial sites and available land to provide employment opportunities.	City of NT, LCDC	Medium	Short-term	\$	City of NT, Niagara County, ESD
Further develop the City's gateways including River Road, Twin Cities Memorial Highway, Main Street, and Sweeney Street.	City of NT, LCDC, NT Project Pride	High	Short-term	\$\$	City of NT, Private Foundations



Moving Forward After Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the City's Common Council and reviewed and approved by North Tonawanda's governing boards, is the highest representation for desired development and improvements within the city. The Comprehensive Plan will now assist the City, its Planning Board, Zoning Board, and staff on the next steps to guide important projects into the future.

Adoption is only the first step. The work now happens in the implementation and execution of the document. The tools below are opportunities to assist with the implementation of strategies, policies and projects that move the Comprehensive Plan vision and goals forward.

Updating the Zoning Code

The City has already taken steps to begin the process of updating the existing Zoning Code. North Tonawanda will utilize a NYS Smart Growth Planning Grant to update the existing code and implement form-based code in strategic areas. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan should be utilized as a guide for updating the code utilizing the Future Land Use Plan, strategies, and key takeaways from the Existing Conditions.

Additional Planning and Analyses

As noted in the strategies, policies, and projects section – additional planning and engineering or feasibility analyses will be needed to push initiatives forward. These include a Parks Master Plan, Transportation Master Plan or Safe Streets For All Plan, continued parking and housing analyses, and small-area or neighborhood based plans.

Grant Applications and Administration

The City of North Tonawanda will need to continue to be vigilant in submitting grant applications for the funding of priority projects. The City has been successful in recent years acquiring grant funds for streetscaping, park improvements, and infrastructure initiatives. To continue their success, the City should continue efforts focusing on a wide range of grants that contribute to quality of life and economic development.

Updating the Comprehensive Plan

Eventually, North Tonawanda will need to update the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. As conditions change, priorities shift, North Tonawanda today will be different from the North Tonawanda in 2035 and 2045. The City should recognize when it is time to update the Comprehensive Plan to be reflective of community desires and municipal needs.

Numerous recommendations have been proposed within the City of North Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan Update to holistically address current and future needs, challenges, and opportunities within the city. The Existing Conditions analysis, discussions with the community and local stakeholders have provided the basis for the implementation of initiatives that were identified.