

**DRAFT REVIEW SESSION**May 17, 2017



## **A Community Collaboration**

A broad group of partners from the public, private, and nonprofit sector have joined the Town of Tonawanda to launch this initiative.















## **EDA POWER Program**



Tonawanda Tomorrow is funded by a federal grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) aimed at helping communities adapt economically to a changing energy landscape.





### is focused on:

- Creating good-paying jobs for the 21st Century
- Preparing our residents and workers for those jobs
- Reinvesting in the community to preserve what makes Tonawanda such a great place to do business and raise a family.
- Deepening Tonawanda's role as a key regional economic hub

# A Starting Point for Tonawanda's Tomorrow



**Community Values** 



What the Data says

Oct. 2016 - Dec. 2016

### Looking to the data to understand where the Town's economy is headed and understanding

what people in the Town value about living, working, and doing business in Tonawanda.



# **Community Survey**



Ran from October - January

727 responses

Helps to ground this work in what residents and stakeholders see as the Town's strengths, and the unique attributes that make Tonawanda a special place to live.



## Creating 21st Century Strategies for Tonawanda's Economy



Jan. 2017 - Apr. 2017

Grounded in data and community values, strategies will be identified that build on strengths, address weaknesses, and work for the people of Tonawanda.



# Refining Strategies and Setting Priorities





Refine Set Strategies Priorities

Apr. 2017 - May. 2017

In the spring, we will present a draft set of strategies and catalytic moves.

We'll look for your feedback and input on what is most important.



## **Building Capacity and Tools to Put the Plan into Action**



Getting ready for action

May 2017 - Jun. 2017

In early summer, we will release the final plan, celebrate the work that went into it, and get ready for next steps and implementation.



# Review of Tonawanda Tomorrow's draft plan



High level overview of what you'll find in the draft and how to offer detailed feedback.

# An Economic Action Plan shaped by the community every step of the way.

A Starting Point for Tonawanda Tomorrow



Community
Values & Guiding
Principles



Strategies for Action







TONAWANDA TOMORROW



pp. 5 - 7

Tonawanda is addressing challenges, building on its unique strengths, and forging a path toward a sustainable economy for the 21st Century.

# Understanding where the community is today and where it's headed tomorrow

pp. 8 - 9

What do people value about living, working, or operating a business in the Town of Tonawanda?

How does the Town maintain its high quality services and address its aging mid-20th Century infrastructure as its tax base has declined?

How does Tonawanda generate an economic vision for its future that is resilient, supports good jobs, and promotes equitable development?

How can industry thrive in Tonawanda while not raising public health concerns?

What can be done with vacant land from Tonawanda's industrial past to pave the way for the economy of tomorrow?









# What the data tells us

pp. 12 - 17

# Over 50% of Tonawanda residents

work in these five industries.

Healthcare & 15%
Social Assistance

.....

Retail 12%

Education 10%

Accommodation % Food Service 9%

Manufacturing 8%

.....

TOTAL **54%** 

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, OnThe-Map Application, LEHD, LODES data (2013) Though older overall,

the population of young adults has been surging over the past 15 years, changing the demographic profile of the Town.

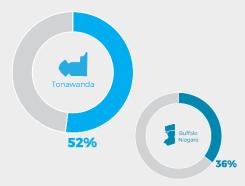
% Change in Population by Age, 2000-2014

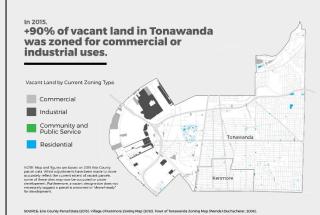




## Tonawanda is attracting young adults who are **buying homes**.

Homeownership Rates Among Young Adults Under 35







# Learning from other communities

pp. 18 - 19

How are other communities across the world redefining economic revitalization?



**Zoliverin Coal Mine Industrial Complex** 



Widows Creek Power Plant, Jackson, AL



**Chester Power Station, Chester, PA** 



Municipal Powerhouse, St. Louis, MO



# **Building blocks for Tonawanda Tomorrow**

pp. 18 - 19



Grounded in the Town's local planning framework



Building off community partnerships



Aligning with regional economic priorities and plans

# Community values and guiding principles

pp. 22 - 27



Healthy Community Socially, Econ's Humanley Walkable Blue Economy (los 5 Kills-age gap keep small town feel balanced a/ new development WATERFRONT TOWKISM Government and community working together



# **Tonawandans value...**

pp. 24 - 25

our sense of community, where neighbors look out for each other and have pride in where we live.

our waterfront, although we want to make it better, easier to get to, and of greater benefit to residents and visitors.

a clean and healthy environment that doesn't make members of our community sick.

our great work ethic that is passed on from generation to generation.

quality public services, programs, and places to gather and recreate.

our neighborhoods and commercial areas and want to see them revitalized.

our industrial heritage, which is important to our identity and economy.

our schools, and see education as critical to quality of life.







# Translating community values to guiding principles

pp. 26 - 27







A healthy, green, and sustainable environment.

Vibrant and accessible waterfront that balances both industry and public access.

Repurpose former brownfield sites for reuse in the new economy.

A connected Town that is walkable and served by high quality public transit.

Opportunities to celebrate Tonawanda's unique history, identity and sense of community.

Maintain affordability, but expand amenities that will keep young people and families in the Town for the long run.

Make Tonawanda an inclusive and inviting community that supports opportunity for all.



Competitive wages, benefits and working conditions.

Promote workforce opportunities for all people regardless of age, race, gender, ethnicity, or means of ability.

Career pathways that contribute to positive impacts locally and globally.

Schools and local businesses working together to prepare our young people for the jobs of tomorrow.

Awareness among Town residents, workers and students about jobs of the future and resources that can advance career pathways.

Equip and re-train people for life-long career success.



Jobs that embrace the future, especially renewable energy generation.

A balanced and resilient economy that isn't over-dependent on one or two companies or industries.

Keep our large employers in Tonawanda while growing opportunities for small businesses and new start-ups.

Good corporate citizens that are committed to their workers and the well-being of the community.

# 21st Century Strategies for Tonawanda's Tomorrow

pp. 28 - 49









# **Economy**

# **Strategies for Action**

pp. 32 - 37



Position the Town of Tonawanda as a regional center for sustainable manufacturing and trade.

Extend support services to Tonawanda's small and medium sized businesses to export and expand.

Connect businesses and entrepreneurs to our region's growing innovation ecosystem.



# Workforce

## **Strategies for Action**

pp. 38 - 43



Help businesses with aging workforces cultivate talent and attract new workers.

Strengthen the career pipeline for students to access jobs in Tonawanda.

Create a local workforce network to focus on the unique needs of Town workers and businesses and bring together resources for increasing access to opportunities.



# **Placemaking**

# **Strategies for Action**

pp. 44 - 49



Cultivate tools, programs, and ownership solutions that can pave the way for increased public access to the water.

Revamp zoning code to emphasize walkability, diverse transportation options, mixeduse development, and other design principles attractive to young people and families.

Connect Tonawanda's recreation and tourism attractions and niches to regional destinations and initiatives.



the Town parks

trails are key

What we heard from community meetings and workshops

Connect Tonawanda's recreation and tourism attractions and niches to regional destinations and initiatives.

The Town of Lona offers great es. Town residents and arby communities both remarked on the community survey how much they enjoyed the golf course, the new rails-to-trails, the parks. the pools, the skating rink, and the variety of activities for all ages.

Yet it was clear that there is appetite for more. Many wn's quality of life. suggested carving out space for pocket parks in neighborhoods and connecting them with trails. Others wanted bike trails

that linked the town from east to west and yith the Niagara River Greenway Trail. Some reat opportunities for highlighting heritage opportunities, main Craing areas, and opening up

#### "Emphasize unique history and culture - we have a lot of culture."

Feedback from Community Strategy February, 2017

capitalize on its beautiful natural

reseal/ces

Partnerships with community organizations may help bring some of these ideas to fruition. They can help develop design concepts, get the public and private support needed, and raise the funds to get it done. Coordination with other levels of governry will also be critical as there are many projects that can be aligned to fu



Tonawanda's diverse recreation assets can benefit from better coordination with regional initiatives and programs.

#### Priority Actions and Next Steps

Work with Visit Buffalo Niagara to integrate Town of Tonawanda recreations and attractions into marketing and event recruiting activities.

In coordination with Erie County and nearby communities, invest in the Tonawanda portion of the Shoreline Trail to bring people to the Tonawanda waterfront from Buffalo, Niagara Falls, and other connected communities.

Build off the success of rails-to-trails as a regional recreation asset by fulfilling existing enhancement plans and creating spin-off opportunities at key access

Develop niche waterfront recreation opportunities that build on the Town's strengths, such as fishing.

Examine potential tourist-based re-use options for the former Huntley site. including art and performance venues, an industrial museum, commercial activities, or a sports and recreation complex.

Regional partners, a as nearbu municipai can offer important partnership opportu for elevating Tonau tourism assets.

**Description of** what this strategy means and why it makes sense

for Tonawanda.

County. estrian n a roaring alo Railseniovina



of survey respondents agree that

the Town parks and trails are key

attributes to the Town's quality of life.

References
to feedback
from the
survey and
workshops.

#### Why it matters and what it means

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Feedback from Community Strategy Workshop February, 2017

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#### Partnership Opportunities

Visit Buffalo Niagara Erie County Clean Air Coalition of WNY Cities of Buffalo and Tonawanda Niagara River Greenway Commission

#### Momentum to Build On

#### People flock to Tonawanda trails

The Tonswands Pails-to-Trails opened in 2016 after being in the works for the past 16 years. Built on top of an old rail bed owned by the Niagrar Frontier Transportation Authority with support from the federal government. Ene County, and the New York State Department of Transportation, this 3.9-mile pedestrian and bicycling rail operated by the City and Town of Tonswands has been a roaring success. With 13 different access points and connection to the North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails, town residents and visitors allile can move safely through town, enjoying the outdoors and local retail offerings.





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Detailed action items that advance the strategies

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Feedback from Community Survey November 2016-January 2017

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What we heard from community meetings and workshops

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Examples of existing work that is happening.

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# Next steps for putting Tonawanda Tomorrow into action.

pp. 50 - 55

**Continuing partnerships** 

Immediate targets for action

Evaluation checklist for investments

### Does this business or investment opportunity...



pp. 54 - 55

...build on the Town's economic specializations and regional targets?

...reinvest in the community?

...compensate employees fairly?

...source locally and export globally?

...offer workers opportunities to advance in their careers?

...promote innovation?

...practice inclusivity?

...protect public health and the environment?

### Does this development or project promote...



pp. 54 - 55

...a healthy, green, and sustainable Tonawanda?

...the reuse of land for economic growth?

...local sourcing of labor, goods, and services for construction?

...walkability and diverse transportation options?

...the Town's history and industrial heritage?

...achievement of regional goals?

...revitalization and opportunity of underserved areas?

## Tonawandatomorrow.org/draftplan

Review Tonawanda Tomorrow's draft plan online



Provide feedback by May 31, 2017



Tell us what you think using your stickers and post-it notes.



## Tonawandatomorrow.org/draftplan

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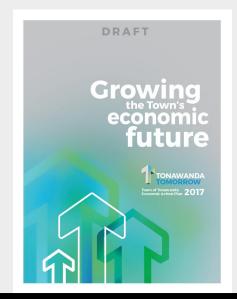
Provide feedback by May 31, 2017



## Tonawandatomorrow.org/draftplan

# Written comments can be sent to:

UB Regional Institute
77 Goodell St. Ste. 302
Buffalo, NY 14203
ATTN: Tonawanda Tomorrow





# PARKER BLVD COMPLETE STREETS INITIATIVE

## WEDNESDAY

MAY 31, 2017 6:30PM-8:00PM

## DFK PAVILION

LINCOLN PARK 1200 PARKER BOULEVARD TONAWANDA, NY, 14223 Parker Boulevard is being envisioned to enhance and balance the pedestrian and bicycling safety and experience. Public input is essential to the design process. This public meeting will be an opportunity to learn about the project and share your thoughts.

TOWN OF TONAWANDA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



# **THANK YOU!**

Stay engaged and follow us online at:



www.TonawandaTomorrow.org