



COMPREHENSIVE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**FINAL
REPORT
AUGUST
2018**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	PROJECT OVERVIEW	10	6.	MARKET ANALYSIS	73
1.2.	TOD Overview	11	6.1.	Introduction	73
1.3.	Buffalo-Niagara Region Economic Benefits from TOD	15	6.2.	Transit-Oriented Growth	77
1.4.	Planning Process	16	6.3.	Fiscal Benefits	81
2.	COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	19	6.4.	Accessibility	85
2.1.	Overview	19	6.5.	Buffalo-Niagara Region Market Trends	87
2.2.	Workshop Series #1: March 2017 Stakeholder Workshops	19	6.6.	Transit-Oriented Development Market Readiness	92
2.3.	Workshop Series #2: June 2017 Focus Groups and Public Workshop	22	6.7.	Implications for Transit-Oriented Development	105
2.4.	Workshop Series #3: October 2017 Public Workshops	25	7.	STATION AREA TOD TYPOLOGIES	111
3.	TOD PEER REVIEW	30	7.1.	Sports & Entertainment District	112
3.1.	Station Area Planning and Zoning	30	7.2.	Urban Core	114
3.2.	Financing Mechanisms	31	7.3.	Urban Campus	116
3.3.	Case Studies	35	7.4.	Urban Neighborhood	118
4.	REVIEW OF CURRENT PLANS AND REGULATIONS	60	7.5.	University Campus	120
4.1.	Review of Prior Plans	60	7.6.	Suburban Neighborhood	122
4.2.	Review of Zoning Regulations	61	7.7.	Mixed-use Center	124
5.	CORRIDOR BASELINE ANALYSIS	66	8.	TOD DESIRABILITY AND READINESS ASSESSMENT	127
5.1.	Study Corridor Overview	66	8.1.	Defining Desirability and Readiness for TOD at a Station Area	127
5.2.	Study Corridor Segment Analysis	67	8.2.	TOD Desirability and Readiness Factors for Assessment	128
			8.3.	TOD Desirability & Readiness Findings	129
			8.4.	Metro Rail Corridor Opportunities and Challenges	129
			8.5.	Conclusion	222
			9.	PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY AND STRATEGIES	225
			9.1.	Priority Infrastructure Investment Strategies	225
			9.2.	General Infrastructure Investments by Typology	233
			9.3.	Recommended New or Amended Policy and Implementation Strategies	236

TABLE OF CONTENTS CONT...

10. FUNDING AND FINANCING MECHANISMS 243

10.1.	Introduction	243
-------	--------------------	-----

11. STATION AREA PLANS 265

11.1.	Introduction	265
11.2.	Station Area Plans	265
11.3.	DL&W	266
11.4.	Summer-Best	278
11.5.	Utica	288
11.6.	LaSalle	300
11.7.	Boulevard Mall	310
11.8.	Audubon	320

FIGURES

Figure 1.	Implementation Milestones of Cleveland HealthLine.....	36	Figure 26.	Median Sale Price Per Square Foot in the City of Buffalo and Town of Amherst, all Residential Types, 1997-2016	99
Figure 2.	Implementation Milestones of Kansas City MAX.....	41	Figure 27.	Average Sale Price Per Square Foot in the Half-Mile Corridor, All Residential Types, 1997-2016	99
Figure 3.	Implementation Milestones of Providence R-Line.....	47	Figure 28.	Multi-family Monthly Asking Rent Per Square Foot, by Segment, 2007-2016.....	100
Figure 4.	Implementation Milestones of Boston Silver Line -- Waterfront Line.....	50	Figure 29.	Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Commercial Sales, 2014-2016	101
Figure 5.	Implementation Milestones of Minneapolis Metro Blue Line.....	52	Figure 31.	Retail Annual Direct Rent (Triple Net) by Segment, 2007-2016.....	102
Figure 6.	Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC) Structure.....	53	Figure 32.	Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Office Sales, 2014-.....	103
Figure 7.	Implementation Milestones of Portland MAX Blue Line.....	54	Figure 33.	Office Annual Gross Rent by Segment, 2007-2016.....	103
Figure 8.	Phoenix Metro LRT.....	55	Figure 34.	TOD Market Readiness by Segment and by Land Use Type	106
Figure 9.	Map of TOD Supportive Zoning.....	65	Figure 35.	TOD Market Readiness Summary	109
Figure 10.	Study Corridor.....	66	Figure 36.	Poor Complete Streets Design and Preferred Transit-supportive Complete Streets Design	226
Figure 11.	Study Corridor Segment Analysis.....	67	Figure 37.	New 34th Street Station in New York City	227
Figure 12.	Segment 1 - Downtown Map.....	68	Figure 38.	Engaging TOD Civic Space.....	228
Figure 13.	Segment 2 - Main Street Map.....	69	Figure 39.	Poor TOD Parking Design and Preferred TOD Parking Design	229
Figure 14.	Segment 3 - Niagara Falls Boulevard/ Eggertsville Map.....	70	Figure 40.	Preferred Mixed-Use Development at the Center of TOD	230
Figure 15.	Segment 4 - UB North Campus/ Audubon Map.....	71	Figure 41.	Montgomery Row near Bethesda, MD Metro Station	230
Figure 16.	Demographic Corridor Analysis.....	72	Figure 42.	Example of TOD Density Distribution	231
Figure 17.	Context Map of Buffalo's Metro Line and its Proposed Extension (Phases 1 and 2).....	76	Figure 43.	Repurposing Vacant and Underutilized Properties	232
Figure 18.	Map of Employment Concentration, Metro Rail Corridor, 2014.....	80	Figure 44.	Examples of Direct Fees.....	244
Figure 19.	Map of Place of Residence of Workers Employed in the Amherst Corridor, 2014.....	86	Figure 45.	DL&W Station Area TOD Framework.....	266
Figure 20.	Map of Place of Work of Employed Residents in the Amherst Corridor, 2014.....	86	Figure 46.	DL&W Station Area Connectivity	268
Figure 21.	Parcels Sampled for Sale Transactions Between 1997 and 2016.....	93	Figure 47.	DL&W Station Area Civic and Open Space	268
Figure 22.	Average Sale Price for All Transactions in Sample, 1997-2016.....	94	Figure 48.	DL&W Station Area Mix of Uses	269
Figure 23.	Total Number of Sale Transactions in Sample, 1997-2016.....	94	Figure 49.	Existing DL&W Terminal Station Area Aerial	269
Figure 24.	Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for All Transactions, 2014-2016.....	96	Figure 50.	DL&W Illustrative Plan.....	270
Figure 25.	Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Residential Sales, 2014-2016.....	98	Figure 51.	DL&W Station Area Massing Concept.....	271
			Figure 52.	Complete Street Treatment for Michigan Avenue.....	276
			Figure 53.	Complete Street Treatment for Perry Street	277

FIGURES CONT...

Figure 54. Summer-Best Station Area Framework.....	278	Figure 84. Existing Boulevard Mall Station Area Aerial.....	313
Figure 55. Summer-Best Station Area Connectivity.....	280	Figure 85. Illustrative Plan.....	314
Figure 56. Summer-Best Stations Area Mix of Uses.....	280	Figure 86. Boulevard Mall Station Area Massing Concept.....	315
Figure 57. Existing Summer-Best Station Area Aerial.....	281	Figure 87. Concept for Complete Street Treatment on Alberta Drive.....	317
Figure 58. Summer-Best Station Area Illustrative Plan.....	282	Figure 88. Concepts for Light Rail Along Niagara Falls Boulevard.....	318
Figure 59. Summer-Best Station Area Massing Concept.....	283	Figure 89. Audubon Station Area Plan Framework.....	320
Figure 61. Existing Main Street 6-Lane Configuration, Goodell to SR 198.....	286	Figure 90. Audubon Station Area Connectivity.....	322
Figure 60. Concept for Complete Street Treatment on Main Street (as taken from Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan).....	286	Figure 91. Audubon Station Area Civic and Open Space.....	322
Figure 62. Utica Station Area TOD Framework.....	288	Figure 92. Audubon Station Area Mix of Uses.....	323
Figure 63. Utica Station Area Connectivity.....	290	Figure 93. Existing Audubon Station Area Aerial.....	323
Figure 64. Utica Station Area Mix of Uses.....	290	Figure 94. Audubon Station Area Illustrative Plan.....	324
Figure 65. Existing Utica Station Area Aerial.....	291	Figure 95. Audubon Station Area Massing Concept.....	325
Figure 66. Utica Station Illustrative Plan.....	292	Figure 96. John James Audubon Parkway Proposed Complete Streets Improvements.....	327
Figure 67. Utica Station Area Massing Concept.....	293		
Figure 69. Existing Main Street 6-Lane Configuration, Goodell to SR 198.....	296		
Figure 68. Concept for Complete Street Treatment on Main Street, as taken from Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan.....	296		
Figure 70. Utica St Proposed Complete Streets Improvements.....	297		
Figure 71. Summer-Best Station and Utica Station Combined Illustrative Plan.....	299		
Figure 72. LaSalle Station Area TOD Framework.....	300		
Figure 73. LaSalle Station Area Connectivity.....	302		
Figure 74. LaSalle Station Area Civic and Open Space.....	302		
Figure 75. LaSalle Station Area Mix of Uses.....	303		
Figure 76. Existing LaSalle Station Area Aerial.....	303		
Figure 77. LaSalle Station Area Illustrative Plan.....	304		
Figure 78. LaSalle Station Area Massing Concept.....	305		
Figure 79. Complete Street Treatment for Main Street in Vicinity of LaSalle Station.....	308		
Figure 80. Boulevard Mall Station Area TOD Framework.....	310		
Figure 81. Boulevard Mall Station Area Connectivity.....	312		
Figure 82. Boulevard Mall Station Area Civic and Open Space.....	312		
Figure 83. Boulevard Mall Station Area Mix of Uses.....	313		

TABLES

Table 1.	Summary of Plan Support for TOD	60	Table 23.	Estimated Sales Tax Revenues, Annual, 2016 Dollars	85
Table 2.	City of Buffalo TOD Zoning Assessment	62	Table 24.	Where Residents of the Existing Metro Rail Corridor Work, 2014	85
Table 3.	Town of Amherst Transit-Oriented Development Supportive Zoning	63	Table 25.	Where Residents of the Total Metro Rail Corridor Work, 2014	85
Table 4.	Town of Tonawanda TOD Zoning Assessment	64	Table 26.	Where Workers in the Total Metro Rail Corridor Live 2014	86
Table 5.	Existing and Forecasted Population, 2015 - 2040	77	Table 27.	Parcels Sampled for the Sale Transaction Analysis, Compared to All Parcels in the Half-Mile Transit Corridor	93
Table 6.	Existing and Forecasted Households, 2015 and 2040	77	Table 28.	Average Sale Price Per Square Foot by Product Type, across the Half-Mile Transit Corridor	95
Table 7.	Existing and Forecasted Household Size, 2015 and 2040	78	Table 29.	Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Residential Sales, by Segment	97
Table 8.	Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Corridor, 2015 and 2040	78	Table 30.	Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Commercial, by Segment	102
Table 9.	Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Corridor, 2015 and 2040	78	Table 31.	Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Office Sales, by Segment	102
Table 10.	Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Total Corridor, 2015 and 2040	79	Table 32.	Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Industrial Sales, by Segment	104
Table 11.	Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Niagara Region, 2015 and 2040	79	Table 33.	DL&W Infrastructure Investment Strategies	272
Table 12.	Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector as a Share of the Buffalo Niagara Region, 2015 and 2040	80	Table 34.	Summer-Best Infrastructure Investment Strategies	284
Table 13.	Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Niagara Region, 2015 and 2040	80	Table 35.	Utica Infrastructure Investment Strategies	294
Table 14.	Land Inventory in the Metro Rail Corridor, 2015	82	Table 36.	LaSalle Infrastructure Investment Strategies	306
Table 15.	Development Opportunity and Total City/Town Land, in Acres, 2015	82	Table 37.	Boulevard Mall Infrastructure Investment Strategies	316
Table 16.	GBNRTC Forecasted Commercial Development Land Demand, 2015-2040	83	Table 38.	Audubon Infrastructure Investment Strategies	326
Table 17.	GBNRTC Forecasted Residential Development Land Demand, 2015-2040	83			
Table 18.	Square Footage and Assessed Value of New Private Development, Metro Rail Corridor	83			
Table 19.	Transit Premium on Assessed Values of Existing Properties, Metro Rail Corridor	83			
Table 20.	Property Tax Revenues in the Metro Rail Corridor, Baseline and TOD Scenarios, 2015 Dollars	84			
Table 21.	Increment in Property Tax Revenues Between Baseline and TOD Scenarios, 2015 Dollars	84			
Table 22.	Sales Tax Analysis Assumptions	84			

INTRODUCTION

This document represents the final report of the Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Plan and provides the following:

- An outline of the goals of the Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Plan;
- An overview of Transit-Oriented Development;
- An overview of the Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Planning process;
- A Peer Review of successful TOD practices along similar transit corridors across the country;
- A summary of current plans, policies, and zoning in place that affect the study corridor;
- The Baseline Analysis of the study corridor and corridor segments;
- A summary of the stakeholder and community outreach efforts;
- TOD Market Analysis;
- Identification of Station Typologies for existing and proposed stations;
- An assessment for each station area of the existing conditions, opportunities, and challenges along with the Desirability and Readiness for Transit-Oriented Development;
- TOD plans for six station areas;
- Priority policy and infrastructure investments to support TOD;
- TOD funding and financing mechanisms.

This report is based on an assessment of available data from various plans and GIS resources, a review of existing plans, policies, and regulations in place, input from the Project Steering Committee, input from participants at three TOD workshops and through follow-up conversations, input from presentations at professional and community organizations, and a professional assessment from the consulting team.

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) Board recently authorized moving forward with the extension of Metro Rail to enhance mobility and connectivity between key activity centers in Buffalo and those located in the Northtowns. The authorization, based on technical results of an alternatives study and feedback from project committees and the public, proposes to extend Metro Rail from the existing terminus at University Station, extending under Bailey Avenue to a portal on Eggert Road where it would run at-grade on Niagara Falls Boulevard to Maple Road to Sweet Home, onto UB North Campus to Audubon Parkway where it would terminate near the I-990.

The Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Planning study demonstrates that the proposed transit investment will not only have the ability to enhance mobility options for the community but also serve to support broader social and economic goals by promoting Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). The study shows that the Metro Rail expansion not only enhances regional mobility, but is part of a larger regional investment strategy to leverage economic and community development opportunities associated with transit investment.

1.1. PROJECT GOALS

The following goals set the stage for what the Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Planning project should accomplish:

- Identify, measure, communicate, and enhance the economic and community development potential and impact of Transit-Oriented Development.
- Comprehensively plan for the transit-land use connection to ensure the proposed Amherst-Buffalo Corridor transit investment meets the purpose and need of the Alternatives Analysis and the goals of the Pilot Program for Transit-Oriented Development Planning grant received by NFTA.
- Delineate a comprehensive and innovative set of strategies; policy, regulatory, and financial tools; and priority infrastructure projects that reflect actual market demand and will significantly enhance TOD opportunities.
- Increase public understanding and awareness of the benefits of TOD and actively engage citizen champions, leaders, developers, and other private sector stakeholders in the planning process.
- Generate support for multi-modal, accessible, mixed-use development that supports transit investments and enables more sustainable forms of redevelopment within existing centers and nodes along proposed Amherst-Buffalo Corridor.
- Assemble a Regional Transit-Oriented Development Committee capable of implementing recommendations of this planning effort beyond the completion of the study.

1.2. TOD OVERVIEW

Transit-Oriented Development, or TOD, aligns investment in transit with a region's vision for growth and economic development. TOD promotes the development of vibrant, walkable, mixed-use communities in and around transit corridors and transit stations. The concept leverages public investment in transit to drive private investment in order to enrich neighborhoods and drive regional smart and sustainable growth. An emphasis of TOD empowers communities to become dynamic places where people live, work, and play. The typical walkshed area around a transit station is 1/4 mile and represents the distance most people are comfortable walking.

TOD in the Buffalo-Niagara Region aligns the investment in Metro Rail and the Metro Rail extension to the Northtowns with the vision of numerous policies and plans, most notably One Region Forward, to promote smart, sustainable growth, regional economic development strategy, and ready the region to compete with other regions for population, employment, and tourism growth.

1.2.1. TOD PRINCIPLES

Planning and implementing successful TOD involves decisions that directly influence land use, public realm, multi-modal transportation, urban form, and overall performance as a place. There are seven basic principles that define the essential characteristics of a successful TOD. While these principles should be applied to create transit-supportive environments around station areas, TOD must be customized to be compatible with a neighborhood's character, the market strength for development, and the community's aspirations for TOD. The principles for making a successful TOD include:

- Medium to Higher Density Development
- Mix of Land Uses
- Compact, High Quality Pedestrian Environment
- Active & Vibrant Center
- Multi-Modal Connectivity
- Limited, Managed Parking



Source: Metropolitan Council, www.metrocouncil.org

Medium to Higher Density Development

Density is about scale, with the goal of creating a compact, walkable, and active district that also is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. TOD has a higher net average density than the community average, with highest densities closest to the transit station. Higher densities increase ridership by providing access to more people and creating an active, vibrant, and exciting place where people want to be.



Source: E&E News, American Energy Innovation Council

Mix of Land Uses

Concentrating a mix of land uses in a TOD provides diversity and variety, allowing people the opportunity to live, work, and/or play in the same place and encouraging people to walk to meet their needs regardless of how they arrive at a TOD. A transit-oriented environment includes a mix of residential, commercial, restaurant and retail, service, employment, and public uses. The key is to locate the various compatible uses close together, making them easily accessible to each other in order to improve walkability and reduce automobile use.



Source: Photo by Fred Frank

Compact, High Quality Pedestrian Environment

Every transit trip starts and ends by walking. Vibrant communities, with or without transit, are convenient and comfortable places for pedestrians. The walkshed of a TOD can be expanded by creating streets that are inviting and comfortable for people. Subtle factors, such as streets being “calmed” by reducing traffic speed and automobile dominance, ground floor uses that are active and inviting, and amenities such as storefront windows, lighting, landscaping, and seating areas help create an inviting and comfortable walking environment.



Source: www.larkinsquare.com

Active & Vibrant Center

Transit is particularly successful in communities and neighborhoods that have defined centers, creating an 18-hour place by offering multiple attractions and reasons for people to frequent the area throughout the day and evening. Having a vibrant, mix of uses near transit is important to creating a center, but it must also have a sense of place and community so that people choose to gather there. A cohesive, active center can be created by planning TOD as a district rather than individual projects.



Source: Photo by Fred Frank

Multi-Modal Connectivity

Successful TOD's allow people to arrive at or depart a TOD without needing to drive. This requires multi-modal connectivity at or near the TOD center in the form of bus, shuttle, taxi, shared mobility, bicycle, or other forms of transportation that allow for easy and comfortable transfers to/ from transit. Multi-modal connectivity allows the catchment area of the TOD to expand by enhancing accessibility to a TOD without needing to drive and connecting the "first-mile/ last-mile". Areas of multi-modal connectivity, or mobility hubs, also help create an area of activity that leads to a vibrant center.



Source: Photo by Fred Frank

Limited, Managed Parking

Parking is a persistent constraint for Transit-Oriented Development. Abundant and inexpensive parking motivates people to drive rather than use transit. By creating a more limited parking supply and moving parking from surface parking lots to parking structures, residents, shoppers, and employees are encouraged to use transit and walk within the TOD.

1.2.2. TOD BENEFITS

Nationally, the market for TOD is strong. The Center for Transit-Oriented Development indicates that 81% of Millennials and 77% of Baby Boomers prefer to live in walkable, active communities; and further indicates that by 2030, 25% of people in the rental and housing market will be seeking housing near transit. TOD reduces the number of automobile trips made and lessens transportation costs, resulting in an increase in discretionary income, allowing people to have more money to spend in the community.

Communities can make significant progress towards improving their quality of life and meeting smart growth goals by linking transit and land use. TOD increases mobility choice and access to employment and services while reducing transportation costs, provides health benefits by making walking and biking more convenient and comfortable, and generates economic development activity around stations.

1.3. BUFFALO-NIAGARA REGION ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM TOD

- The young adult population (ages 20-34) in the Buffalo-Niagara Region increased by 8.3% between 2010 and 2015, and will help drive the demand for TOD.
- The Metro Rail corridor is expected to experience faster population growth (an increase of 5.8% versus 1.3% for the region) and employment growth (an increase of 13.3% versus 12.5% for the region) than the balance of the region.
- 28% of all regional jobs will be located within the Metro Rail corridor, including ¼ of the region's office, health, education, and government jobs which are the driving industries for TOD.
- Future development resulting from the Metro Rail extension is expected to add approximately 8.4 million square feet of commercial (office and retail) and residential space throughout the corridor.
- The assessed valuation of development expected along the Metro Rail corridor is \$1.7 billion.
- Existing properties where current buildings are expected to remain, but may see adaptive reuse should see their cumulative assessed value increase by upwards of \$310 million as a result of their proximity to Metro Rail.
- The Metro Rail extension will result in approximately \$61.5 million in additional property tax revenue for the City of Buffalo and Town of Amherst, 32% more than in a scenario where the Metro Rail extension is not built.
- Retail development linked to the construction of the Metro Rail extension would lead to approximately \$8.7 million in sales tax revenues for the State of New York and \$10.3 million in sales tax revenues for Erie County.
- The Metro Rail extension would provide upwards of 9,950 employed residents with Metro Rail access to their jobs, and would connect many residents with new employment opportunities, thus enhancing job accessibility and reducing vehicle miles travelled.

1.4. PLANNING PROCESS

1.4.1. PROCESS OVERVIEW

In order to develop a TOD plan that is representative of the regional economy and market, outlines the opportunities and challenges associated with TOD implementation, is built with community and stakeholder input, and conveys the benefits of TOD in the Buffalo-Niagara Region, a continuous and engaging community engagement process along with Desirability & Readiness Assessment for TOD are key components of this study. These elements are explained in further detail in the following sections.

1.4.2. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

TOD WORKSHOP 1

Workshop Goals: Corridor assessment for TOD Desirability and Readiness; TOD benefits, impacts, opportunities, and constraints; and corridor market scan for TOD.

On March 29, 2017, nearly 100 people attended a day-long series of workshops held at Seneca One Tower to provide their input on how investment in Metro Rail should guide our region's growth in the form of Transit-Oriented Development. The day-long workshop was broken out into four focus group sessions of 2 ½ hours each, facilitated by the consulting team as follows:

- Development and Real Estate Session – 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM
- State and Local Government – 11:00 AM – 1:30 PM
- Academic, Business, Housing, and Transportation – 2:00 PM – 4:30 PM
- Community Groups and Public – 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Information on the project, including project announcements, materials, and summaries, are being provided on the project website, www.gbnrtc.org/tod.

TOD WORKSHOP 2

Workshop Goals: Define TOD Typologies and develop station area TOD planning concepts through design workshop.

On June 28 and 29, the second round of workshops were held at University at Buffalo Hayes Hall, Room 403.

The 2-day workshop was broken out into four sessions similar to the first workshop:

June 28, 2017

- Academic, Business, Housing, and Transportation - 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
- Community Groups and Public - 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

June 29, 2017

- Development and Real Estate - 8:30 AM - 10:30 AM
- State and Local Government - 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Participants at each session were presented with the station typologies and asked to assess the desire and readiness of TOD at all station areas based on:

- Physical suitability
- Market strength
- Local and community leadership
- Plans and policies in place

Following this discussion, participants were asked to vote on the top station areas that they felt should be the focus of station area planning efforts.

TOD WORKSHOP 3

Workshop Goals: Conduct a charrette style planning exercise for the 6 station areas that were selected for further station area planning.

On October 3 and 4, the third and final round of workshops were held at University at Buffalo Educational Opportunity Center and Weinberg Campus. The 2-day workshop combined all previous session groups to allow for a collaborative effort on station area planning. Participants were engaged in a number of station area charrettes at each session that were held for the following station areas:

- Audubon
- Boulevard Mall
- LaSalle
- Utica
- Summer-Best
- DL&W

The input from these sessions heavily influenced the development of station area plans and priority infrastructure investment strategies.



2. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

2.1. OVERVIEW

A series of stakeholder and community workshops were held in 2017 for various stages of the project (March, June and October) about Smart Growth Transit-Oriented Development along the Metro Rail line in the City of Buffalo and the proposed Metro Rail extension to the Northtowns. The multi-day workshops included presentations by the project team, followed by interactive discussions among stakeholders. In addition to these workshops, the project team attended meetings and shared information about the project with nine community organizations. Stakeholder input was used to help develop strategies for Transit-Oriented Development along the project corridor. A final open house was held on August 29, 2018 to present the Comprehensive TOD Planning vision that community and stakeholder members helped develop.

This chapter includes a summary of the stakeholder workshops and information on other engagement efforts undertaken as part of the project.



2.2. WORKSHOP SERIES #1: MARCH 2017 STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

OVERVIEW

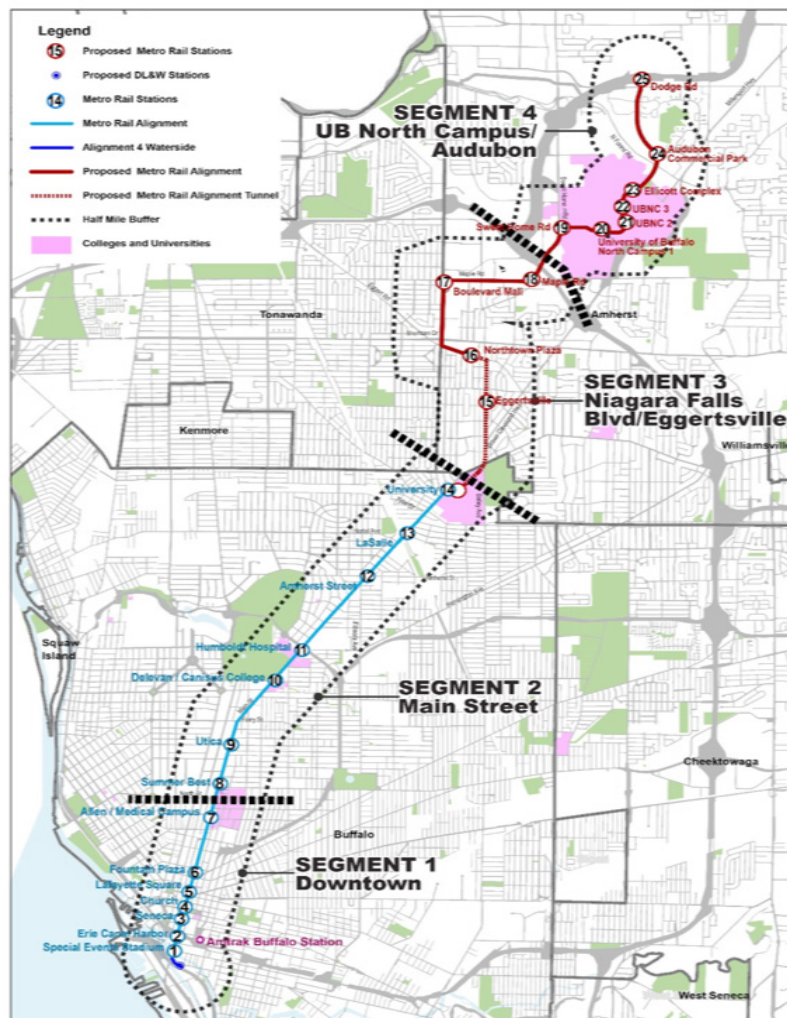
The first round of community workshops were held in March of 2017. Four workshop sessions were held throughout the day and evening of March 29, 2017 at One Seneca Tower in Buffalo. The workshop was divided into four sessions, each tailored to a variety of interests and expertise. The schedule of events is noted below.

- Development & Real Estate Session
- State & Local Government Session
- Academic, Business, Housing & Transportation Session
- Community Groups & Public Session



PURPOSE

The purpose of the first series of meetings was to introduce the project to the public and key stakeholders and collect general feedback and comments specific to the four segments of the project corridor: Downtown, Main Street, Niagara Falls Blvd/Eggertsville and UB North Campus/Audubon.

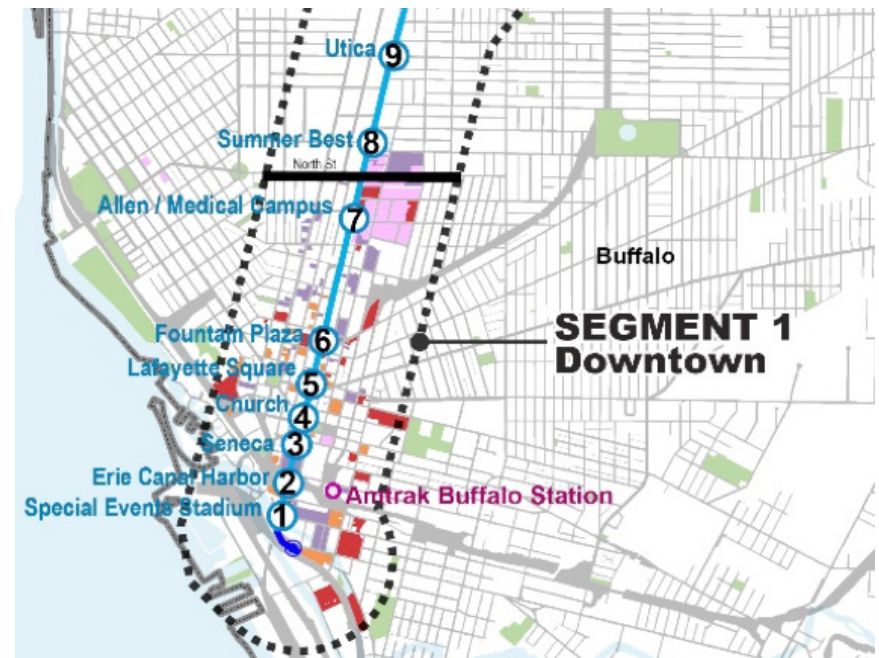


SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

General comments on transit service across the whole of the project corridor noted the importance of improvements to the existing rail corridor in the years before the extension is completed. Stakeholders pointed to improved feeder bus service, branding opportunities and the potential for the college student market among other priorities for the corridor. When discussing development, stakeholder comments focused on financial incentives, building codes and the need to collaborate with local campuses and developers to create regional growth.

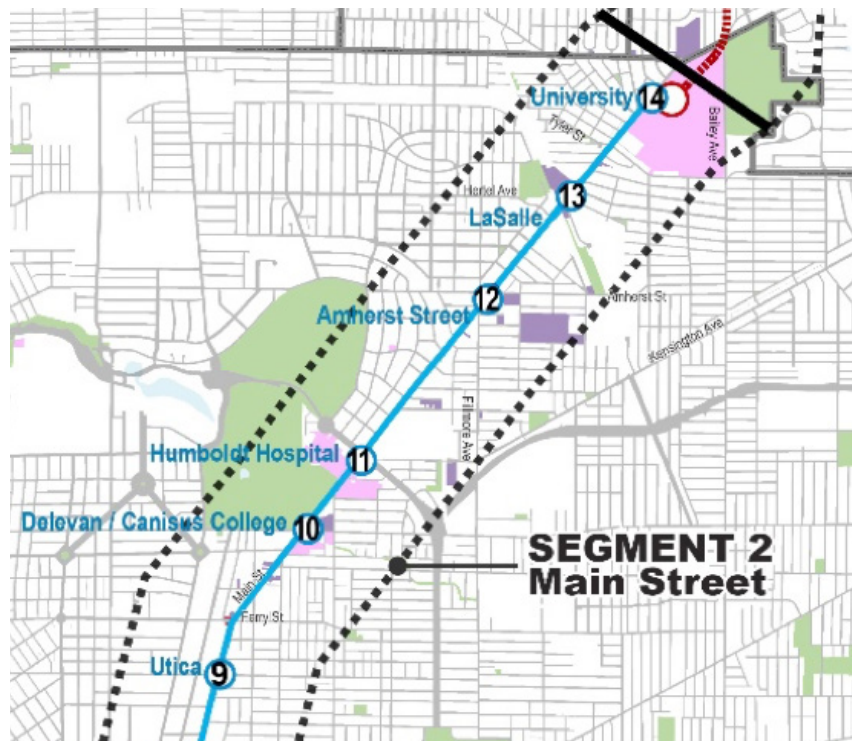
SEGMENT 1 | DOWNTOWN

General comments on Segment 1 focused on the need to maintain Downtown's momentum toward revitalization. Incentives to reduce parking availability and the construction of parking lots were also encouraged. Attendees felt that the retail and street environment south of Lafayette Square needed improvement, and that the area north of Tupper Street was ripe for a complete street redesign. BNMC was seen as a good model for other development with minimized parking and promotion of alternative transportation options.



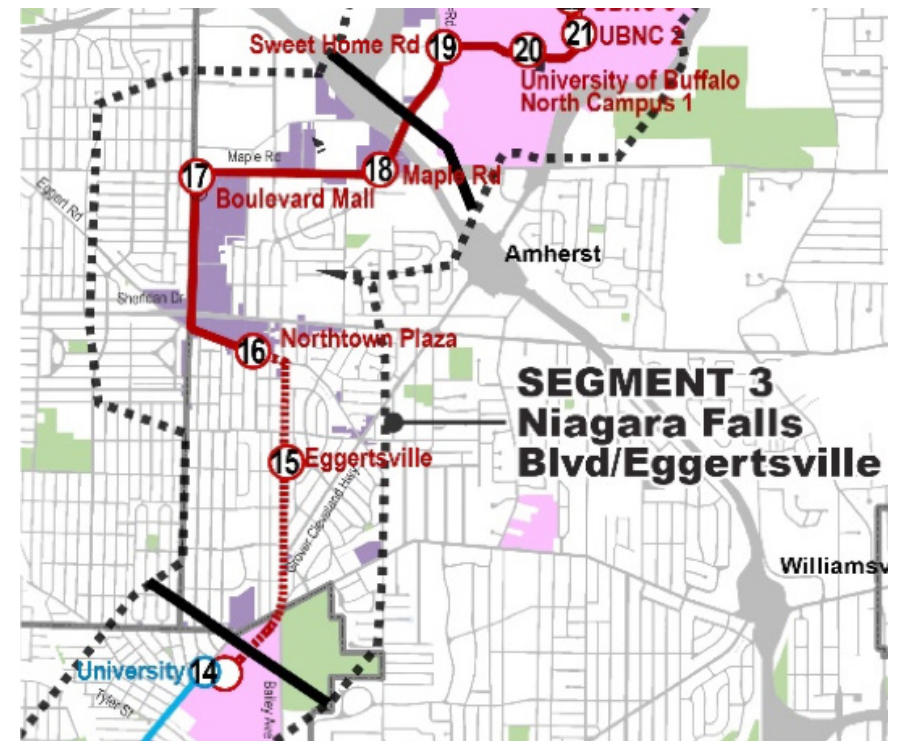
SEGMENT 2 | MAIN STREET

Stakeholders felt that overall the goal for Segment 2 should be to reduce inequities between neighborhoods east and west of Main Street by creating new connections and infill while focusing resources in viable locations. Utica Station, the Humboldt Hospital area and Canisius College were all seen as places with TOD potential. The adjacent recreational trail and parks were seen as an asset that could be leveraged to improve LaSalle Station. With respect to University Station, University Heights was seen as receptive to TOD.



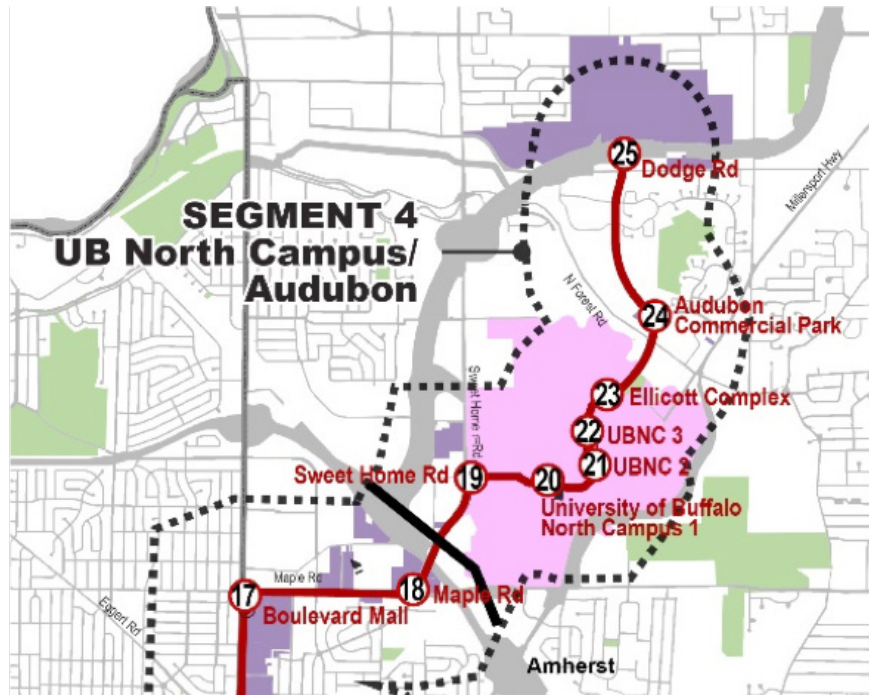
SEGMENT 3 | NIAGARA FALLS BLVD / EGGERTSVILLE

When considering the proposed Eggertsville Station, stakeholders were initially skeptical of the need for a station in this area. It was noted that the area is attractive to students, that demographic change over the next decade will make the area more TOD-friendly and that there would be engineering challenges to re-routing around the area. Opportunities in Segment 3 included rethinking auto-oriented commercial development in the area like Boulevard Mall and Northtown Plaza as well as making Amherst a destination. Stakeholders believed the project in this segment would benefit from collaboration with commercial property owners and engagement with Amherst and Tonawanda community members. There was also discussion of the need to rethink the corridor's alignment and station locations.



SEGMENT 4 | UB NORTH CAMPUS/AUDUBON

General comments on Segment 4 noted the importance of UB North Campus as a source of potential transit users and that the project could enhance connections across I-290. Stakeholders saw the Amherst town services center and proposed stations as potential nodes of development. Some questioned the value of rail service beyond UB North Campus while others saw an opportunity for a Park & Ride connection at I-990.



2.3. WORKSHOP SERIES #2: JUNE 2017 FOCUS GROUPS AND PUBLIC WORKSHOP

OVERVIEW

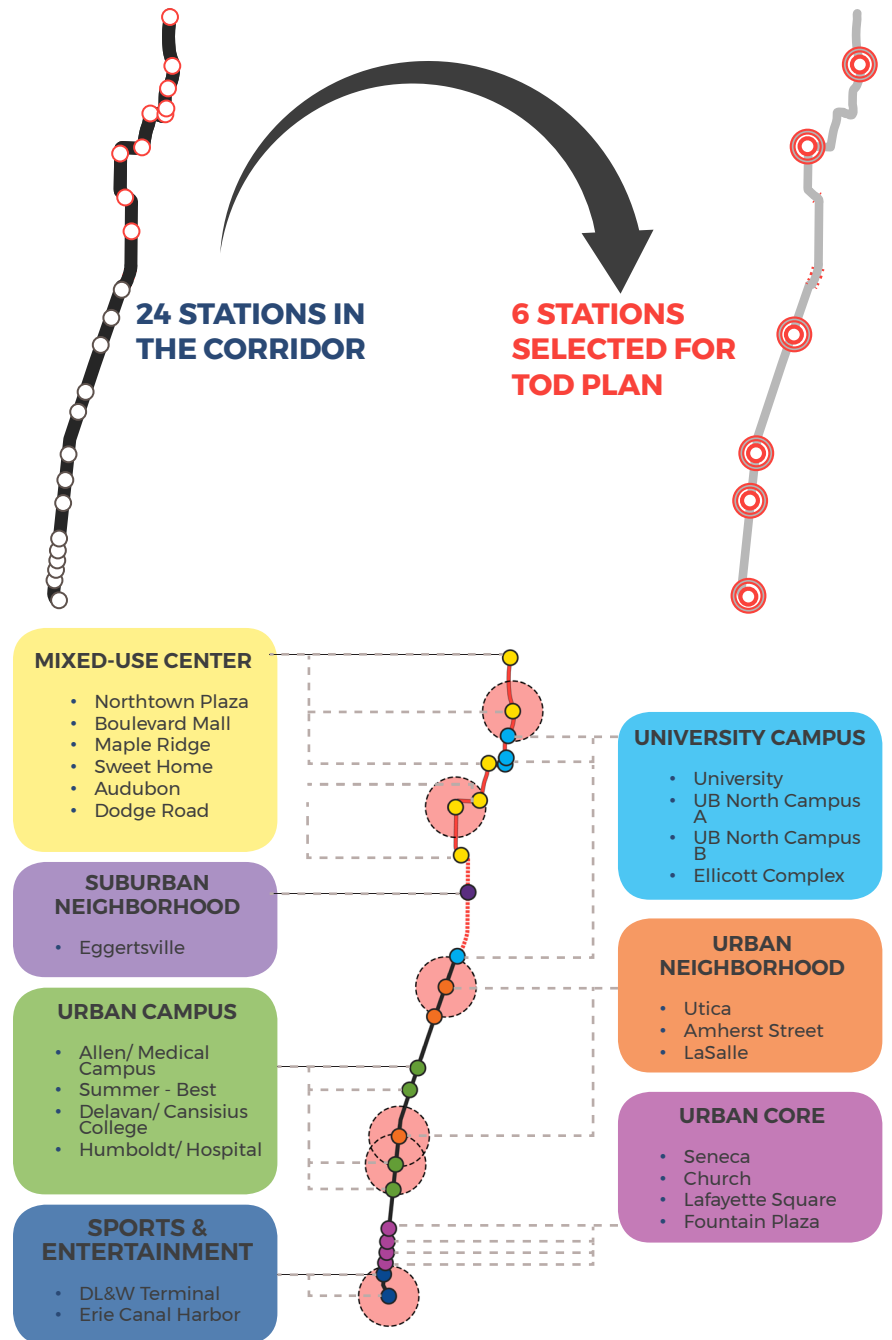
A second round of community workshops were held in June of 2017. Four workshop sessions were held throughout two days and one evening on June 28 and June 29 at the University of Buffalo's Hayes Hall. The workshops were divided into four sessions, each tailored to a variety of interests and expertise, similar to the first round of workshops. The schedule of events is noted below.

- Development & Real Estate Session
- State & Local Government Session
- Academic, Business, Housing & Transportation Session
- Public Workshop



PURPOSE

The purpose of these meetings was to help the NFTA and Steering Committee select six stations (out of 24 stations) for future Transit-Oriented Development master planning. All four meetings were structured to include an introductory presentation, followed by an interactive, small-group exercise. The consulting team described how seven station “typologies” had been developed and applied to the 24 stations and illustrated how each station had been categorized by type (below).



SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Participants were invited to participate in a small group workshop exercise that consisted of ranking each transit station area with the highest potential for successful Transit-Oriented Development and ultimately selecting stations that were most representative of each kind of typology. A summary of the small group exercises is below.

- Participants overwhelmingly chose DL&W for its potential as a hub of sports and entertainment activity.
- Of urban core stations, participants preferred Lafayette Square by a wide margin as well due to its proximity to emerging arts, government, residential, hotel, and restaurant/ retail district.
- Summer-Best overwhelmingly was the favorite urban campus type station because of its potential adjacent to BNMC.
- Both Utica and LaSalle Stations scored well with participants, indicating different opportunities at each.
- University was the most popular urban campus station while Boulevard Mall received the most support of the mixed-use development stations among participants.



Station	First Vote	Second Vote
DL&W Terminal	21	43
Erie Canal Harbor	10	3
Sports & Entertainment Typology	31	46
Seneca	6	7
Church	2	3
Lafayette Square	10	20
Fountain Plaza	2	3
Urban Core Typology	20	33
Allen/ Medical Campus	8	4
Summer-Best	10	20
Delavan/ Canisius College	13	8
Humboldt/ Hospital	9	6
Urban Campus Typology	40	38
Utica	23	21
Amherst Street	10	4
LaSalle	25	22
Urban Neighborhood Typology	58	47
University	17	16
UB North Campus	16	7
Ellicott Complex	0	1
University Campus Typology	33	24
Eggertsville	4	3
Suburban Neighborhood Typology	4	3
Northtown Plaza	18	12
Boulevard Mall	22	23
Maple Ridge	5	6
Sweet Home	3	0
Audubon	9	4
Dodge Road	5	1
Mixed Use Center Typology	62	46

2.4. WORKSHOP SERIES #3: OCTOBER 2017 PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

OVERVIEW

A third round of Transit-Oriented Development workshops were held on Tuesday, October 3 and Wednesday, October 4, 2017 at University at Buffalo's Educational Opportunity Center and Weinberg Campus.

PURPOSE

The final round of TOD workshops focused on neighborhood planning around several Metro Rail Stations. These workshops offered the opportunity for stakeholders to plan for the future of the following Metro Rail station areas: Audubon, Boulevard Mall, LaSalle, Utica, Summer-Best, and DL+W.

SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Audubon

- The area is not considered walkable
- Treat station as a multi-modal node
- Station should be sited north of Sylvan Parkway to incorporate Town Complex as civic space
- Incorporate parking into mixed-use development
- Consider Park & Ride
- Need for retail/ restaurant that serves workforce
- Increase connections with UB
- Improve connectivity with senior housing
- Density should be low to medium, but clustered in a dense node
- Allow for transition of office space to mixed-uses
- Existing office can "build-out" to street (include retail/ restaurant)

Boulevard Mall

- Need significant walkability improvements
- Need for traffic calming
- Balance multi-modal transportation; concern about balance
- Need to ensure comfortable station experience
- Edge treatments are important
- Station located out of median may be more appealing- mixed feeling
- Need for active civic space
- Consider on-street parking
- Relax minimum parking requirements; wary of reducing # of parking spaces
- Promote development at street with parking in rear or structures
- Mixed-use redevelopment of mall is consistent with national mall trends
- Potential for a true mixed-use live, work, play center
- Consider higher densities interior of the site, with lower densities along periphery
- Limit intimidating height/ length in buildings
- Redevelop mall site around university market
- Create a center with 18-hour activity



LaSalle

- Continue Rails-to-Trails to southeast
- Emphasize trail and green space
- Need for improved connection to Hertel
- Improve Main St crossing
- More engaging spaces around station
- Public art
- Mobility hub (electric charging station, bike lockers, bike share)
- Replace surface parking with structured parking
- Mixed residential types not offered in area
- Larger retail not found throughout University Heights
- Development should be complimentary to neighborhood
- Mixed feelings on density distribution
- Maximize density along street and at station, transition to lower density at rear
- Maintain 2-3 story streetscape along Main Street, create a denser node interior to the site
- Create activity hub that generates infill opportunities for nearby storefronts
- Create an active use for Berm



Utica

- Main St needs some Complete Street treatment
- Improve walkability, improve intersection
- Need to keep on-street parking on Main
- Better connectivity to Elmwood Village and nearby communities
- Improved transfer waiting area
- Utica Station could become a community hub
- Bring services “to the people”
- Underutilized surface parking should be redeveloped
- Not likely demand for structured parking yet; push parking to rear
- Provide mixed income housing (not all geared towards BNMC/ students)
- Encourage commercial development
- Can increase density slightly, but only along Main St
- Focus on active streetscape
- Combine multiple smaller parcels to create larger development sites
- Focus on infilling the corners (Main/ Utica)
- Infill vacant, underutilized lots and surface parking



Summer-Best

- Main St needs some Complete Street treatment
- Multi-modal transportation
- Need to keep on-street parking on Main- balance with non-motorized transportation
- Lack of definition of station area
- Incorporate station into development
- Create civic space on Best parcel
- Begin to reallocate surface parking into shared structure
- Parking must accommodate short term parking as well
- Street level activity
- Need for a grocery/ market space
- Increase services for BNMC
- Need for short-term residences/ hospitality
- Not as dense as BNMC, act as a transition to mid-density
- Keep higher density focused along Main St
- Good buildings in area to focus repurposing
- Infill vacant and underutilized lots

DL&W

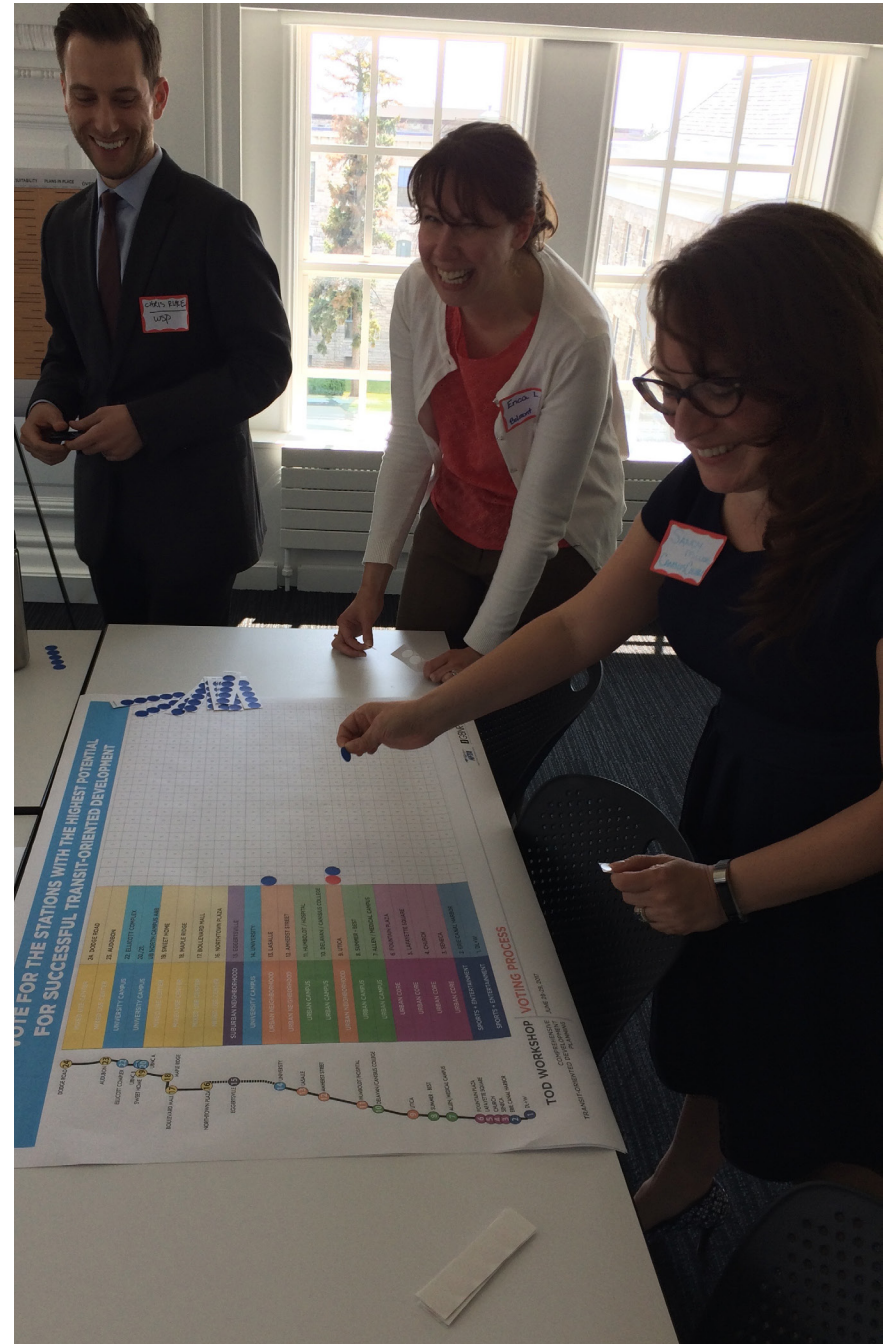
- While technically walkable, environment is not comfortable
- Need for streetscape enhancements
- Focus on improvements to Shoreline Trail- connect Ohio Street and Canalside
- South Park is front door- streetscape enhancements
- Better connections to Outer Harbor and Kelly Island
- Better wayfinding (Canalside is nearby)
- Need for gateway treatments
- Reactivate 2nd floor
- Need green space
- Water access
- Replace surface parking with structured parking
- Focus on residential and entertainment type uses
- DL&W as anchor, complimentary uses around
- Cobblestone streets should contain mid-density development (like Mississippi), focus denser development between Perry and Scott (can capture water views)
- Many infill opportunities; market on all sides of Cobblestone, time to infill



OTHER STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

In addition to workshops, the project team also attended meetings and gave presentations to the following community organizations:

- Eggertsville Community Organization
- Allentown Association
- Buffalo LISC/ National LISC
- Audubon Community
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership
- Buffalo Board of Block Clubs
- Amherst Pro Net
- Leadership Buffalo
- Partnership for Public Good



3. TOD PEER REVIEW

This peer review discusses general Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) practices from across the country and focuses in on several cities (Cleveland, Kansas City, Providence, Boston, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Portland, Phoenix, San Francisco Bay Area, Dallas, Cincinnati, and Charlotte) that have implemented bus rapid transit (BRT) or light rail transit (LRT) service along one or more corridors. In addition to transit improvements, these regions have developed innovative financing, created TOD programs, and/or provided updates to policy and zoning documents that have generated economic benefits and spurred Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). These examples and summary flow charts illustrate the different processes the local governments have followed to generate TOD and economic gains through successful implementation of a rapid-transit system. Material for this peer review was taken from the following resources:

- More Development for your Transit Dollar: An Analysis of 21 North American Transit Corridors, Institute for Transportation & Development Policy at <https://www.itdp.org/more-development-for-your-transit-dollar-an-analysis-of-21-north-american-transit-corridors/>
- Infrastructure Financing Options for Transit-Oriented Development, EPA Office of Sustainable Communities Smart Growth Program at <https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/infrastructure-financing-options-transit-oriented-development>.
- Center for Transit-Oriented Development at <http://ctod.org/>.
- Statewide Transit-Oriented Development Study, Factors for Success in California, California Department of Transportation at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/MassTrans/Docs-Pdfs/TOD-Study-Final-Rpt.pdf>.
- Individual project websites.

3.1. STATION AREA PLANNING AND ZONING

The majority of transit corridors don't realize their full TOD potential without some form of TOD plan and policy in place. Station area plans can be a key catalyst for TOD specific locations, as they are geared towards helping governments and communities identify the scale and type of development that is suitable for the area and helps build support for policy change. The City of Charlotte initiated an extensive station-area planning process prior to constructing the light rail transit around many of the Uptown and South End stations. From these station area plans, the City implemented a TOD Zoning District to accommodate the type of growth it hoped to achieve. This has helped direct over \$800 million in private investment around Charlotte's LRT corridor.

Revising existing zoning codes to provide the highest Floor Area Ratios (FAR) in a select number of areas near transit stations is a first step towards using zoning to encourage TOD. In cities with weak land markets, there is often a conflict between maintaining overly permissive zoning codes aimed at encouraging any and all development, and changing these codes to be more restrictive – allowing higher FARs only near transit and including more restrictive requirements for parking, urban forms, and densities – can be faced with political skepticism. The use of overlay zones can be initiated as a result of specific station area plans. Denver has established overlay zoning requirements based on station typology, designated as Urban Neighborhood, General Urban, Downtown, and Urban Center.

Parking regulations also play an important role in encouraging TOD. The City of Ottawa has implemented parking maximums around transit stations which have in turn helped to minimize parking supply and encourage transit ridership. Other parking management strategies include requiring ground floor parking to be structured or wrapped with ground floor activity. Ideally, surface parking lots are either prohibited altogether or located at the rear of the building away from main commercial streets.

As part of Cleveland's MidTown rezoning efforts, zoning changes included putting a parking maximum in place, which is 1/3 of the previous minimum requirements, and further prohibited locating parking along Euclid Avenue, requiring instead all parking to be located behind buildings.

Incentive zoning requires that a developer provide certain amenities to enhance the community as a result of receiving greater building height and/or density. In Seattle, developers can exceed the allowable FAR if they dedicate 15.6% of a development to affordable housing. The City has also implemented a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that allows landowners in non-transit oriented locations to sell their incremental development rights to a TDR market. Developers in the South Union Lake area are purchasing some of these rights so they can up-zone beyond the existing FAR level permitted by the existing zoning code.

3.2. FINANCING MECHANISMS

There are a range of financing mechanisms used around the country to finance transit and stimulate TOD development, in all types of markets. Financing mechanisms can be broken down into six categories:

- Direct fees
- Debt
- Credit assistance
- Equity
- Value capture
- Grants and other philanthropic sources

DIRECT FEES

User fees and rates are charged for the use of public infrastructure, such as transit, parking, utilities, and bridges. Local governments or agencies are able to issue bonds backed by user fee revenue to pay for new or improved infrastructure. Such fees and rates are typically set to cover a system's yearly operating and capital expenses, including annual debt service for improvements to the system. Congestion pricing manages demand for services by adjusting prices depending on the time of day or level of use.

DEBT

Debt tools are mechanisms for borrowing money to finance infrastructure. Local governments and agencies can access credit through private lending institutions, the bond market, or other specialized mechanisms that the Federal government and states have established for financing particular types of infrastructure, such as revolving loan funds.

CREDIT ASSISTANCE

Credit assistance improves a borrower's creditworthiness by providing a mechanism that reduces the chances of a default. Borrowers can thus access better borrowing terms, which can expedite the implementation of infrastructure projects. Credit assistance tools require some source of revenue to pay back debt; their use is not otherwise linked to the strength of the local real estate market.

EQUITY

Equity tools allow private entities to invest (i.e., take an ownership stake) in infrastructure in expectation of a return. Unless the public sector is willing to directly pay the private partner for constructing, financing, operating, and/or maintaining a facility, equity sources are typically available only for infrastructure that generates a significant return on investment, such as parking facilities, utilities, toll roads, or airports. The availability of equity is not typically tied to the strength of the local real estate market, except where the potential source of revenue is tied to real estate values.

Public-private partnerships are contractual agreements between a public agency and a private-sector entity whereby the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility for the use by the general public. The private entity provides the capital cost to finance the project, then collects some portion of the revenue generated by the project. Typically with TOD public-private partnerships, the private sector or developer bears the construction, design, and financial risks of developing TOD infrastructure; the municipality then reimburses the developer through taxes captured by a special assessment district on new development or other tax revenue or PILOT.

VALUE CAPTURE

Value capture tools capture a portion of the increased value of property or the savings resulting from publicly funded infrastructure. Value capture mechanisms are typically established by a local government or regional governing body in accordance with state law. They sometimes require a vote by the affected property owners. Depending on the tool, value capture can entail the following:

- Creation of a new assessment, tax, or fee (e.g., a special tax or development impact fee);
- The diversion of new revenue generated by an existing tax (e.g., tax-increment financing);
- A revenue-sharing agreement that allows a government agency to share some of the revenue generated by developing publicly owned land (e.g., joint development).

Value capture tools are generally most applicable to strong real estate markets because they depend to some extent on new development or property value appreciation to generate revenue.

Depending on the predictability of the revenue stream, value capture mechanisms can either be used for pay-as-you-go improvements or, when the revenue stream is expected to be consistent over time, as with a special assessment or tax-increment financing, can finance the issuance of revenue bonds. Although state law usually defines how and where these mechanisms can be used, they are typically not confined to revenue-generating infrastructure and can be used to fund all types of TOD infrastructure, including utilities, roads, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and parking facilities.

Development impact fees are charges on new development to defray the cost to the jurisdiction of expanding and extending public service to the development. These fees are generally collected once and are used to offset the cost of providing public infrastructure, are cannot be used for ongoing operations and maintenance.

Special districts are formed around a geographical area in which property owners or businesses agree to pay an assessment to fund a proposed improvement or service from which they expect to benefit directly.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) works differently in each state, but typically captures the increase in property tax revenue (and, in some states, sales

tax revenue) that occurs in a designated area after a set year. The tax increment is collected for a set period (usually between 15 and 30 years) and the tax increment can be used to secure a bond, allowing the issuer to collect the money up front, or it can be done as a pay-as-you-go basis over time. TIF allows the public sector to “capture” the value of growth that results from new development and increasing property values. In New York State, the Municipal Redevelopment Law entitles municipalities to issue tax increment bonds that are payable from and secured by real property taxes in order to establish a TIF district. Further, the Municipal Redevelopment Law (970-1 – 970-r) allows for two or more municipalities to jointly exercise the powers granted for a TIF district by designating the legislative body of one of the municipalities to act as agent for all of the interested municipalities.

A TIF can also be established as a PILOT Increment Financing (PIF). PIF is the difference between the current amount of PILOT payment that is paid to the Affected Tax Jurisdiction under a PILOT agreement and the amount of taxes that would have been paid if the property were on the tax rolls. This “increment” is collected from the developer with some or the entire amount used to retire the debt from financing certain improvements or costs that are essential to the project. PIF dollars can be used for acquiring land and preparing it for development, job training for companies within a PIF, renovation, demolition, and rehabilitation of existing buildings, or financing and interest subsidies for the loans a developer takes out to pay for a project.

Joint development is a value capture mechanism commonly used by transit agencies. It is generally a real estate development endeavor that involves coordination among multiple parties to develop sites near transit, usually on publically owned land, and can take many forms, ranging from agreements to develop land owned by the transit agency to joint financing and development of a project that incorporates both public facilities and private development.

GRANTS AND OTHER PHILANTHROPIC SOURCES

Grants are funds that do not need to be paid back and are typically provided by a higher level of government to a lower level of government (e.g., from the federal government to states or localities, or from states to local governments) or by a philanthropic entity. The most common federal grants that are commonly applied to TOD projects are listed below:

- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Urbanized Area Formula Funding Program
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants

EMERGING TOOLS

In addition to the established financing tools outlined above, several new concepts for making TOD infrastructure possible are emerging, including:

- **Anchor Institution Partnerships** – It is becoming increasingly popular for local government and transit agencies to urge anchor institutions, non-profit or private entities such as universities, hospitals, and corporations that are inextricably tied to their locations because of real estate holdings, to orient their development decisions and day-to-day operations around improving the economic health of surrounding neighborhoods and encouraging transit use and TOD. These anchor institutions bring new funding sources to the table and can facilitate infrastructure development by providing upfront funding for and/or by championing transit, public infrastructure, and TOD investment. As part of the Woodward Corridor in Detroit, the Detroit Medical Center, Henry Ford Health System, and Wayne State University offer incentives for their employees to move to the Midtown neighborhood that surrounds the campuses and have established pilot programs
- **Structured Funds** – A loan fund that pools money from different investors with varying risk and return profiles. Structured funds have a dedicated purpose, which is clearly defined before the fund is formed, and are managed by professionals with fund formation and loan underwriting experience. Communities have been increasingly interested in using structured funds as a property acquisition tool to support affordable housing development, particularly near transit. Following up on the Woodward Corridor above, the Woodward Corridor Investment Fund, led by Capital Impact Partners with partners The Kresge Foundation, MetLife, PNC Bank, Prudential, M&M Fisher, Calvert Foundations, and Living Cities, is a \$30 million fund that offers long-term, fixed rate loans for the building and renovation of multi-family and mixed-use properties in the neighborhoods along the Woodward Corridor.



Woodward Corridors Investment Fund

- **Parking Management** – Such as creating parking districts in which developers can choose to pay a special, annual tax to the parking district rather than meet minimum parking requirements on site. The revenue from the tax flows into an enterprise fund in each parking district and funds public parking construction and operations. Each parking district enterprise also receives all public parking revenue collected within the district's boundaries, including revenue from meters, parking lots/ garages, sale of parking permits, and parking fines. Parking district funds can also be used to fund transportation management programs, public transit, and related public infrastructure such as lighting, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements. Creating a corridor-level parking management model would set parking prices and manage parking demand across a transit corridor, including both transit station parking and surrounding on-and off-street parking. Revenue from parking fees throughout the corridor are pooled to finance structured parking or other improvements along the transit system, generating more revenue than a station by station approach.
- **Land Banks** – Land banks are not funding or financing sources, but communities' interest in their applicability to TOD has been growing because they are used to acquire property and are often linked to a social mission, such as neighborhood stabilization or affordable housing. Land banks can be used in TOD to assemble developable land in station areas to make TOD and the associated infrastructure projects more feasible.

3.3. CASE STUDIES

3.3.1. CLEVELAND HEALTHLINE

From as early as 1995, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transportation Authority (GCRTA) looked to connect Cleveland with a reliable mode of transportation. BRT was among the many modes that were studied by GCRTA for implementation in the city. In 1999, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for five counties in northeastern Ohio, developed a plan to connect Cleveland's Downtown and University Circle along Euclid Avenue with BRT. The number 6 standard bus route, already in operation along Euclid Avenue, proved to be an excellent candidate for a BRT conversion due to its connectivity and need for operational improvements. The GCRTA maintained their initial vision of the Euclid corridor (the "Corridor") as more than just a BRT line. The 7.1-mile Corridor would include a 2.3-mile transit zone, in addition to the GCRTA proposing to bury power lines, install fiber-optic cables, rebuild sewer and water lines, and add streetscape improvements such as better sidewalks, bicycle facilities, and public art. In total, the project cost approximately \$200 million, with the buses and stations costing \$50 million and streetscape and roadway improvements cost \$150 million, which came from a series of funding streams including the New Starts grant, the State of Ohio, GCRTA, NOACA, and the City of Cleveland.

As plans for the HealthLine developed, Midtown Cleveland, Inc., a local Community Development Corporate (CDC), developed a new master plan, which was adopted by the City in 2005, entitled, Beyond 2005: A Vision for MidTown Cleveland. The plan proposed a higher-density, mixed-use area that would be pedestrian-oriented, with the BRT system as the centerpiece. The MidTown master plan also proposed changes to the zoning code. Changes to the code were adopted in 2005 to ensure that new development fostered a walkable, transit-oriented urban environment. Specifically, the new code created a special zoning district, the MidTown Mixed-use District 1, which spanned from East 40th Street to East 79th Street. The new code laid out design principles to be met in addition to designating the Corridor as a "Design Review District," where new development would be subject to approval by a board of architects and urban designers.

In 2007, the City of Cleveland developed a citywide comprehensive plan entitled, Connecting Cleveland 2020, which connected to the MidTown



Cleveland HealthLine



master plan crafted two years prior. The Connecting Cleveland 2020 plan emphasized development along Euclid Avenue and supported the concept of a transit and pedestrian-oriented MidTown district. The HealthLine branding was developed in 2009 when the City hired a consulting firm to eventually develop a strategy for the MidTown section of the Euclid corridor. The section of the Corridor was proposed as a “Health-Tech Corridor” due to the area’s connection to the Cleveland Clinic, the University hospitals, several medical centers, and universities with health-related research centers. These uses were envisioned to harness and attract additional health-related development in the future.

Further, the Greater University Circle (GUC) Initiative brought together anchor institutions along the HealthLine, including Western Reserve University, Case Institute of Technology, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Cleveland Botanical Gardens, University Hospitals, and dozens of other non-profit organizations, to invest in local infrastructure needs and set the stage for TOD. The district is the fastest growing employment center in Cleveland, however, some of the surrounding neighborhoods are some of the poorest in the metropolitan area. The institutions help fund transportation and public infrastructure projects, spur economic development in surrounding neighborhoods, encourage employees to purchase goods and services from neighborhood businesses, and incentivize employees to live in surrounding neighborhoods.

The following flow chart presents the process by which the HealthLine was developed and implemented.

DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

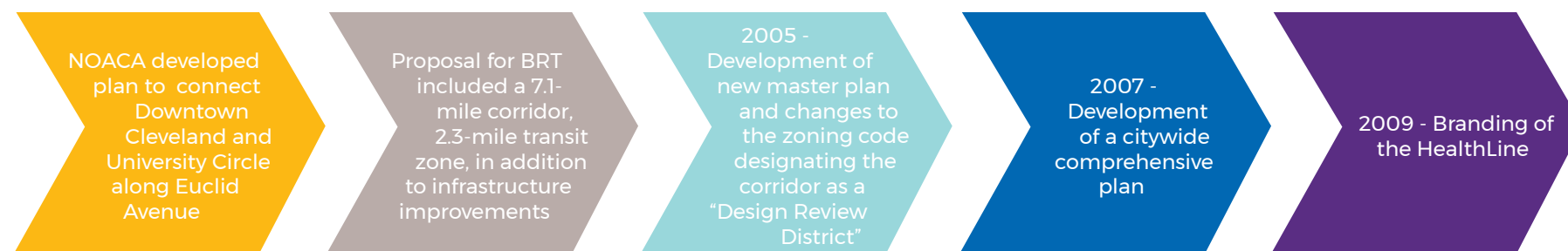


Figure 1. Implementation Milestones of Cleveland HealthLine

The following development incentive programs were put in place to stimulate investment in new development or redevelopment in Cleveland.

Residential Tax Abatement

Cleveland’s Residential Tax Abatement program is the temporary elimination of 100% of the increase in real estate property tax for eligible projects. The term of abatement varies from 10 to 15 years depending on the type of project and is available to both homeowners and developers. Work must be completed under a permit issued by the City of Cleveland Department of Building and Housing and the property must be located in the City of Cleveland. Developments that may qualify include:

- New construction of single-family homes or multi-family investor-owned properties (15 years);
- Conversion of nonresidential buildings to residential units (10 years or 12 years for 3 or more units);
- Rehabilitation of existing one and two-family homes which increases market value (10 years);
- Rehabilitation of multi-family (three or more units) structures costing over \$15,000 per unit or \$500,000 total (12 years); and
- Improvements, costing over \$2,500, of one and two-family homes that increase the assessed value of the property (10 years).

Storefront Renovation Program (SRP)

The SRP program helps neighborhood retail districts become more attractive, economically viable, and diverse places to visit and shop by assisting in the design and funding of signage and the rehabilitation of traditional storefront buildings. The program offers financial incentives,

in the form of rebates, combined with free city design assistance for commercial building rehabilitation and façade improvements including:

- Bringing them into Building Code compliance,
- Correction of maintenance items and code violations,
- Renovation of architectural/historic details,
- Site improvements, and
- Design and installation of new signage.

Traditionally commercial buildings (originally constructed with display windows) and commercially zoned retail and service buildings are eligible for the SRP program.

Vacant Property Initiative

The Vacant Property Initiative was created by the City of Cleveland Department of Economic Development to help developers overcome the costs of urban redevelopment that do not add value. Costs include asbestos abatement, other brownfield cleanup issues, renovation and/or demolition. The program also offers short-term construction loans and a forgivable loans, based on the potential for job creation. Developments that have benefited from this initiative include the MidTown Tech Park, Cleveland Agora, and the Victory Building.

TOD Planning and Zoning

The following zoning districts help to promote a mix of uses, and establish and maintain economic viability of neighborhoods in Cleveland.

City of Cleveland Zoning Code

Midtown Mixed-Use District (MMUD):

The MMUD and its regulations were established to permit and encourage an intensity and mix of development that is consistent and works to implement the development policies that have been established for this area by the City of Cleveland, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA), and Midtown Cleveland, Inc. The MMUD's intention is to permit specific uses, at a development intensity and with an urban form that:

- Encourages a pedestrian-oriented mix of uses including retail, residential, offices, and light industrial;
- Expands the available economic development options while strengthening the existing uses found in the Midtown District;
- Encourages a compact land development pattern that increases resident and employment densities to support the GCRTA's Euclid Corridor Transportation Project investment and facilitates transit usage to/from the Midtown area;
- Ensures that new development and/or redevelopment will occur in a unified manner consistent with the Midtown Cleveland Inc. Strategic Plan as adopted by the Cleveland City Planning Commission; and
- Establishes design criteria for new development or redevelopment to ensure that an aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian friendly environment is provided.

The Euclid Corridor Development Sub-Area (MMUD-1) provides for a mix of land uses to be built at higher densities; requires the siting of buildings closer to the front property line and to each other; facilitates pedestrian access to proposed transit stops and buildings; and encourages the location of retail shops, plazas, and other pedestrian amenities at the ground level of buildings.

Pedestrian Retail Overlay (PRO) District:

The PRO District was established to maintain the economic viability of older neighborhood shopping districts by preserving the district's pedestrian-oriented character and promoting public safety by minimizing conflicts between automobile traffic and pedestrians in neighborhood shopping districts. This zoning overlay is used to preserve the pedestrian-oriented character of historic neighborhoods.

Live-Work Overlay (LWO) District:

The LWO District was designed to foster combinations of residential and employment land uses in designated areas. The district was established to permit and promote shared occupancy by residential uses in combination with work activities in suitable locations. The district is intended to assist in revitalizing areas impacted by the presence of underutilized and deteriorated buildings suitable for reuse as live-work space.

Planned Unit Development (PUD) Overlay District:

The PUD Overlay District was established to provide greater flexibility to land use control in order to achieve a higher quality of development and facilitate development that is sensitive to special site constraints. The PUD Overlay District is intended for special situations in which adequate space, light, air, and other objectives of city land use regulations can be achieved without the literal application of such regulations. This leads to more flexible planning than what is permitted by traditional zoning requirements.

Beyond 2005: A Vision for MidTown Cleveland

The updated MidTown master plan, Beyond 2005: A Vision for MidTown Cleveland, was adopted in 2004 and is an extension of the MidTown 2000 plan that was developed in 1997. The MidTown planning effort was guided by stakeholder involvement through the MidTown 2000 Task Force, the MidTown Development Committee, and information collected through public surveys distributed to 600 MidTown businesses. The MidTown district is located along the Euclid Corridor between East 28th Street and East 79th Street. The overarching goals of the previous plan and subsequent revisions were to:

- Position MidTown as a competitive regional center,
- Develop long term appreciation of real estate value,
- Establish a sense of place, and
- Change zoning laws to maximize the neighborhood as a destination for mixed-use and high-technology opportunities.

The MidTown plan is an area-specific plan compared to Cleveland's Citywide Plan that was published in 2007. The effort of the MidTown plan was to put forth improvements and development strategies that would benefit the entire community. The benefits of creating a more localized plan is that TOD efforts can be described in more detail with connections made back to a broader comprehensive plan.

Connecting Cleveland 2020 Citywide Plan

The Connecting Cleveland 2020 Citywide Plan is Cleveland's comprehensive plan that was adopted in 2007 and connects back to the MidTown master plan that was developed two years prior. This comprehensive plan seeks to create great neighborhoods by creating "connections" between people, places, and opportunities. The vision focuses on implementing TOD in

downtown Cleveland with the new BRT system, emphasizing connectivity and accessibility to transit. The Plan proposes to achieve its goals of sustainability through the following actions:

- Create high-density, mixed-use districts that promote travel by transit, walking and bicycling;
- Amend building and zoning codes and add incentives to encourage "green building;"
- Design safe routes for walking and bicycling, accessible to all residents;
- Reduce use of energy and water in City facilities and vehicles; and
- Clean contaminated "brownfield" sites and promote beneficial re-use.

More specifically, the plan proposes capital improvements related to TOD, identifying specific recommendations for maintaining and improving Cleveland's transportation and transit infrastructure. In this section of the Plan, major goals are presented for transportation and transit systems. Goals most specific to the HealthLine and TOD include:

- Strengthening the corridor between Downtown and Euclid Avenue, two of the City's major employment centers;
- Improving TOD opportunities;
- Expanding rapid transit opportunities to more neighborhoods; and
- Accommodating inter-city rail transportation.

Learning from the Cleveland's comprehensive plan, Rochester should also identify the type and location of capital improvements related to TOD, as these improvements will ultimately have a direct impact on the future pattern of land use and zoning, investment, and development. Rochester should also define and map specific corridors in order to better focus TOD recommendations.

HealthLine Development Success

The HealthLine's success can be measured through the investment and development that has since taken place in Downtown, University Circle, and along the Euclid Avenue corridor. To date most of the development along the HealthLine has been in downtown or University Circle; this has reinforced the economic strength of these two employment hubs. University Circle is responsible for the bulk of TOD investment so far including a \$7 million corridor revitalization initiative along Euclid Avenue that upgraded pedestrian facilities, built the University Circle Visitor and Living Center, and

funded streetscape enhancements such as lighting, benches, and flower beds. One of the most noteworthy development successes was the \$28 million MidTown Tech Park, which opened in summer 2011 in the MidTown district. The MidTown Tech Park contains 128,000 square feet of state-of-the-art incubator space located on a site formally used by a car dealership in MidTown, once one of the most underdeveloped neighborhoods along the Euclid Corridor. Initial infrastructure improvements and development interest in the district took place even before the HealthLine was completed.

The creation of specialized zoning requirements ensured the land use plan complemented Euclid Avenue infrastructure. Through development incentive programs in addition to zoning and overlay districts such as the MMUD that specifically targeted Euclid Avenue, the HealthLine has seen the following benefits:

- \$5.8 billion of investment
- 13.5 million square feet of building/renovation
- 6,800 residential units
- 13,000 new jobs
- New projects announced regularly
- \$62 million generated in local taxes
- \$180 million invested by Cleveland State University
- \$500 million invested by University Hospital
- \$350 million invested by Cleveland Museum of Art
- \$506 million invested by Cleveland Clinic Heart Center
- \$27.2 million invested by Museum of Contemporary Art

3.3.2. KANSAS CITY MAX

In 2003, Kansas City and the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) expressed a mutual interest in developing a transit plan, ultimately agreeing upon implementing BRT along select city streets. The first BRT line, the Metro Area Express (MAX), in Kansas City was implemented in July 2005 along Main Street linking key areas such as the River Market, Government Complex, Convention Center, Crown Center, and Country Club Plaza. The MAX system's fast, frequent, and reliable service along Main Street lead to its expansion in 2011 along the Troost corridor, which connected the Bannister Mall area with downtown. The City, in partnership with KCATA, has planned to expand BRT through the Prospect MAX line due to the success of the two existing lines. The approximately \$53.8 million total project cost will be funded through \$29.9 million of federal funding through the Federal Transit Administration's 5309 Small Starts Program, an additional \$8 million of federal Surface Transportation Funds, and local funding through KCATA (\$3.5 million), and City of Kansas City (\$12.4 million).



Kansas City MAX



Green Technologies

- Rain gardens at several MAX stations to capture and filter water run-off
- Solar-powered lighting
- Recycling receptacles
- Solar-powered trash compactors
- Pervious concrete at park-and-rides that allow water to soak through to the subsoil, reducing the amount of polluted water that runs off of the pavement surface

Troost MAX at a Glance

- Service 7 days a week
- 13 miles: Downtown to Bannister and Hillcrest
- 4:30 a.m. to 1 a.m.
- Service every 10 minutes all day
- 14 vehicles (5 hybrid)
- 47 Stations
- Park-and-Rides
 - 31st & Troost
 - 95th & Troost
 - Bannister & Hillcrest
- Cost: \$30.6 million (80% federal, 20% local)



Through the adoption of the Greater Downtown Area Plan in 2010, the City has focused on encouraging transit and pedestrian-oriented development along the MAX corridors. The zoning code, amended in 2011, outlines Special Review Overlay and Urban Redevelopment Overlay districts that accommodate varying development densities at an appropriate scale and intensity. Kansas City has experienced significant development over the past ten years through strong public and private institutions and financing mechanisms that have encouraged new development in an emerging downtown due to zoning updates and a detailed TOD Policy that outlines station area typologies and levels development density. In addition, a draft TOD Policy was approved in April 2016 in order to expand walkability and livability by providing opportunities for economic development, increasing housing choices, and expanding mobility options along transit corridors and at existing and future transit stations.

The Kansas City MAX system began on one corridor, has been developed on a second corridor, and will add a subsequent line proposed for operation in 2020. The following flow chart presents the process by which the Kansas City MAX was developed and implemented.

DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Incentive programs utilized to promote TOD should encourage TOD-preferred uses. The following recommendations were presented by Kansas City Department of City Planning & Development as a potential set of tools that would further the strategic vision for economic development in the City.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Kansas City uses TIF as an economic development tool to attract and retain businesses and jobs. TIF has a dual purpose of reducing adverse conditions

like blight while enhancing the tax base. The various incentive programs offer partial or total abatement for up to 25 years in Missouri.

TOD Fund

TOD funds are utilized in many cities throughout the Country including Seattle, Denver, Chicago, Washington D.C., Atlanta, and San Francisco as a way to steer and incentivize TOD priorities. "TOD funds "silo the silos" by amalgamating private and governmental investments that are used to make low-interest sub-loans and provide revolving lines of credit that are largely non-recourse. TOD loans are typically made on a 90 percent loan-to-value ratio and on an "as-is" basis." TOD funds are critical to providing the type of risk-tolerant capital that is needed to incentivize emerging TOD.

TOD Development Bonuses

Development bonuses are a zoning tool that permits developers to build greater than what is normally allowed such as a greater number of housing units, taller buildings, or more floor space in exchange for a monetary contribution or an improvement that could be seen as a public benefit. Additional bonuses could be provided to developers who build on pervious surfaces or other places that would benefit from TOD programming. In addition, a city could create a TOD density bonus program, which would allow developers to contribute to a housing fund instead of partaking in TOD.

Targeted Parking Incentives

TOD development costs could be lowered through the City adopting parking standards that reflect the greater likelihood that residents in well-designed, TODs will use transit. Granting developers with lower or no parking minimums for TOD could help entice developers by offering lower



Figure 2. Implementation Milestones of Kansas City MAX

development costs. The City could also consider implementing a parking benefit district in higher density areas. Revenue collected through on-street parking meters or non-resident passes could fund maintenance, security, streetscape beautification, and shared parking facility improvements.

Community Improvement District (CID)

CIDs are designed to help better a specific community through improving existing conditions for businesses and attracting new growth. CIDs can help benefit community safety, beautification, business retention, economic growth, and capital improvements. Each CID has a different focuses, depending on the needs of the community they're serving. There are two types of CIDs in Missouri: 1) Political subdivisions, which are funded by the public through sales tax assessments, and 2) Not-for-profit, which are funded by property tax or special assessments. The Main Street CID was established in 2006 and is a not-for-profit CID located along a portion of the Main Street MAX corridor.

Equity Policies

Equity policies are enlisted to ensure land within TOD priority areas can attract and accommodate affordable and mixed-income developers, creating an environment for them to be profitable. As such equity policies should:

- Target direct financial grants to projects that promote affordability;
- Prioritize infrastructure investments in areas that support TOD affordable projects;
- Procure land that will be sold or leased long-term for TOD affordable and mixed-income projects and projects developed by development entities that are majority owned and controlled by minority-owned businesses;
- Judiciously use and target tax increment financing;
- Offer below-market rate conveyance and lease of government owned land to TODs; and
- Expedite building permits and reduced permitting costs for TOD projects.

Adopting an equity policy would communicate a city's strong commitment to TOD, but with a long-term preference toward equitable TOD.

TOD PLANNING AND ZONING

Downtown Kansas City, the majority of which is served by the Main Street MAX, has experienced significant development over the past ten years, primarily due to the emerging downtown land market and the strong government interventions that have encouraged land development downtown. Several governmental and non-governmental organizations in Kansas City have helped to bring about increased TOD planning and implementation. Specific policies and plans, such as the adopted Greater Downtown Area Plan, which focuses on encouraging transit- and pedestrian-oriented development, and the Kansas City Zoning & Development Code provides examples of successful policy interventions that promote TOD through connectivity, density, diversity, and design.

Kansas City Zoning and Development Code

The Kansas City Zoning & Development Code includes key tools to support transit and TOD, including permitting and encouragement of quality mixed-use development in many base zoning districts. The Zoning & Development Code, amended in 2011, also has an overlay mechanism that provides for additional development guidance in specific areas. The Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay, Historic Overlay, Special Review Overlay (SRO), and Urban Redevelopment (UR) Overlay districts support in general terms development and redevelopment along the MAX corridor.

The Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay district is intended to preserve and enhance the character of pedestrian-oriented streets and, in turn, to promote street-level activity, economic vitality, and pedestrian safety and comfort.

As outlined in the Kansas City Zoning & Development Code, the Historic Overlay district is used to help protect, preserve, and enhance places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and other features having a special historical, architectural, cultural, or aesthetic value. The HO district is further intended to:

- Stimulate revitalization and preservation of residential, civic, and business areas;
- Promote economic progress through heritage tourism; and
- Provide for the designation protection, preservation, rehabilitation, and restoration of historic districts and properties; and facilitate the city's efforts to participate in federal or state historic preservation programs.

The SRO district is intended to:

- Stabilize property values and reduce investment risks;
- Maintain and promote the economic vitality of an area;
- Encourage preservation of an area's rare, unique, or distinctive character; and
- Promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the city.

As discussed in the Kansas City Zoning & Development Code, the purpose of the UR district is to promote development and redevelopment of underdeveloped and blighted sections of the City and to accommodate flexibility in design to help ensure realization of the stated purposes of an approved plan for redevelopment.

UR districts are further intended to promote the following objectives:

- A more efficient and effective relationship among land use activities;
- Preservation and enhancement of natural, cultural and architectural resources and features;
- Enhancement of redevelopment areas to accommodate effective redevelopment; and
- Seamless and compatible integration of redevelopment projects into the development patterns that exist or that are planned to exist within the subject area.

Greater Downtown Area Plan

The City adopted the Greater Downtown Area Plan in 2010 as a collective vision that focuses on encouraging transit- and pedestrian-oriented development. The Plan serves as a guidance document for downtown development and applies the concepts of TOD along transit corridors and adjacent to future transit stations. In particular the Plan encourages the following outcomes:

- Focus density around transit;
- Encourage a variety of uses and housing types and prices;
- Create an environment that is designed for cycling and walking, with adequate facilities, and attractive street conditions;
- Reduce parking requirements to be comparable with conventional development;

- Ensure that transit stops and stations that are convenient, comfortable and secure; and
- Proactively apply incentives to encourage TOD.

The Greater Downtown Area Plan focuses on 18 separate areas and recommends strategies to help realize the community's long-range vision for the future, providing guidelines for public policies on land use, housing, infrastructure, community development, and public services. The City of Rochester can learn from this strategy of planning for specific areas since Rochester is also split into planning areas. The Plan's focus on proactive, identifying actions and strategies, and reactive, providing criteria to evaluate proposal and assist in decision-making, development strategies is another policy tool developed by Kansas City that Rochester can learn from.

In conclusion, Rochester should also reference Kansas City's ambitious public outreach and stakeholder engagement plan that helped to formulate recommendations. Through surveys, traveling workshops, public meetings, a website, newsletters, steering committee meetings, and neighborhood meetings, a diverse range of people from the downtown area became involved in the process. Common interests in pedestrian connections between neighborhoods, green solutions, increasing opportunities for local businesses, improving public transit, creating better gathering spaces, and improving safety were some of the goals that that came out of the community outreach process.

TOD Policy

A TOD policy was approved by the Kansas City Plan Commission on April 19, 2016. The document identifies the critical elements of a successful TOD and provides a program of initiatives to implement TOD in Kansas City. The TOD Policy is intended to provide a foundation to guide both public and private investment at transit stops and along transit corridors. The initiatives in the TOD Policy range from high-level citywide policy recommendations to specific design standards and the reprioritization of the City's capital improvement program. The TOD Policy is intended to apply to all potential TOD locations citywide and for all modes of transit (bus, streetcar, and other rail).

The Policy recommends the establishment of a TOD overlay to address specific code-related issues for TOD, including the following:

- Minimum Density in TOD Areas
- Boundaries and Transitions
- TOD Locations
- Active Ground Floor Uses
- Incompatible Uses
- Affordable Housing Requirement in Designated Areas
- Limiting Building Demolition Permits
- Public Space Amenities
- Street / Building Interface
- Manage Curb Cuts
- Building Massing and Orientation
- Accommodation of Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Facilities
- Parking Lot Location
- Integration of Parking Structures
- Parking Limits

In summary, the TOD Policy is designed to assist with the implementation of existing recommendations in adopted Kansas City plans and provide a coherent vision for leveraging transit investments throughout the City. The City of Rochester could benefit from the implementation of a TOD Policy, which may act as an extension of other planning and policy documents that prioritize TOD, to guide public and private investment along key transit corridors.

MAX Development Success

The MAX BRT system's success can be measured by the high customer satisfaction and positive community reaction in addition to the nearly doubling of ridership. BRT stations can provide a focal point for TOD; the Main Street and Troost Avenue MAX corridors have undergone a corridor

image improvement process, which has made TOD more attractive. As noted by the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA), TOD has been occurring at the same scale as the MAX project. The project's success is directly related to the benefits of integrating BRT into several corridors. Development success can be measured by the introduction of community improvement districts and streetscape/MAX design elements along the Main Street corridor; and KCMO public health clinics, senior housing, retail, and institutions in addition to the creation of the Green Impact Zone Initiative along the Troost Avenue corridor. Sidewalk and corridor streetscape improvements, bike share and Bike on Bus programs, and regional trail connections have been implemented system-wide.

In particular, the Troost Avenue MAX has shown much success in TOD. The Troost Avenue MAX began to show how BRT can play an important role in redevelopment early in its operation. Connecting with more than 20 other routes and serving a diverse demographic population, including many transit-dependent riders, the Troost Avenue Max is one part of the comprehensive and coordinated neighborhood revitalization initiative called the Green Impact Zone. Development projects that have incorporated MAX service include:

- An expansion of the University of Missouri-Kansas City Medical School,
- A joint development that combines a transit center and a YMCA daycare center,
- Revitalization of a block of 1920s-era commercial storefronts,
- The 13.5-acre redevelopment project for senior housing and commercial uses tied to the Brookside Medical Center, and
- A mixed-use development at Rockhurst University.

The redevelopment of Brookside Medical Center, which is anticipated to be completed in 2018, has utilized tax increment financing for innovative adaptive reuse.

3.3.3. PROVIDENCE R-LINE

The Providence R-Line was originally identified as one of 10 recommendations of the Transit 2020 and the Metropolitan Providence Transit Enhancement Study that was published in 2009. This study set forth ten recommendations for improving the network of transit services, as well as providing the opportunity to realize the range of potential mobility, livability, development, and health benefits. Specifically, one recommendation focused on initiating rapid bus service from Providence to Cranston and Pawtucket along the 11 and 99 bus lines, two of the busiest bus routes in state. The study also looked at ways of capitalizing on TOD.

In order to implement the R-Line, funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in 2010 provided \$1.9 million to implement specific, large components of the rapid bus system. Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) partnered with the City of Providence in 2011 for a Community Challenge Grant out of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Housing and Communities. Other funding sources included RIPTA (\$200,000), City of Providence (\$450,000), City of Pawtucket (\$25,000), Federal Transit Administration (\$1,320,000), and CMAQ (\$230,000). Investments in the R-Line were split between passenger amenities (\$2.2 million) and operational improvements (\$1.5 million).

The new R-Line service runs along the same route as the 11 and 99 local bus routes, connecting Pawtucket and South Providence along Broad Street and North Main Street. Originally, the rapid bus service was conceived as an inexpensive way to improve service on these two busy routes as well as increase capacity. The R-Line includes uniquely branded stops, frequent service, and amenities that have dramatically improved the speed and attractiveness of bus service in Providence.

As opposed to other cities with successful transit systems and booming transit corridors, the adoption of the R-Line was not implemented to catalyze development. There was also no push from the City to attract developers in order to generate growth in these areas; this was partly due to the City's existing resources and the limited demand for new construction in areas such as Upper Broad Street and North Main Street. However, development along this transit corridor was not completely unsupported. The City incorporated discussion of rapid bus service in the 2012 Providence Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan. In addition, through the creation of a TOD Overlay District in the City's 2014 zoning ordinance, the City encouraged higher density development on the R-Line corridors while discouraging the siting of auto-oriented uses in transit-concentrated areas.

Initially, these TOD Overlay Districts were implemented as pilot projects to see if developer interest would be generated based on the implemented zoning guidelines.

The R-Line is a project without the large-scale TOD implementation success that is seen in other cities with successful BRT or LRT systems. This is in part due to its recent adoption as well as the limited availability and demand for new development along the corridor. The City hopes to develop additional BRT lines, utilizing existing bus routes, in the future. The following flow chart presents the process by which the Providence R-Line was developed and implemented.

DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

RIPTA is seeking ways to promote development projects that are higher-density, mixed-use, and within walking distance of significant transit services. In order to promote TOD, the local government should provide incentives to developers that encourage increased density and mixed-use growth around transit stations. Generating TOD may require modifications to the existing zoning ordinance in order to allow for density bonuses to reduce or eliminate off-street parking. Although the state's business development tax credit program and the Rhode Island Jobs Growth Act also support TOD, there are currently no specific TOD incentive programs. Looking forward, RIPTA seeks to build partnerships with local municipalities, land owners, developers, community stakeholders, and organizations such as Grow Smart Rhode Island and the recently formed Coalition for Transportation Choice to support TOD with programs such as location-efficient mortgages or parking district benefits.

As the R Line is a relatively recent rapid bus service program, TOD-specific development incentive programs have not been developed. Although the City of Rochester cannot reference TOD incentive programs from this case study, RIPTA acknowledges that future TOD incentives should be supported in conjunction with the Rhode Island Land Use 2025 Plan.

TOD PLANNING AND ZONING

The following zoning districts help to promote a mix of uses, and establish and maintain economic viability in downtown Providence. Although not as widely implemented compared to Cleveland and Kansas City, the City of Rochester could reference Providence's zoning ordinance as a way to develop their own TOD zoning districts or overlay districts to promote their proposed "urban village" concept. In addition, the Transportation Corridors

in Livable Communities and Providence Downtown and Knowledge District plans provides Rochester with two accompanying policy documents that proposes capital improvements related to TOD in collaboration with what is proposed in the zoning ordinance.

City of Providence Zoning Ordinance

The 2014 zoning ordinance outlines two zoning districts, which promote TOD in targeted areas of Providence. The D-1 Downtown District and the TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District are two districts that directly support compact development along transit corridors.

D-1 Downtown District

According to Providence's zoning ordinance, the purpose of the D-1 district is to encourage and direct development in the downtown to ensure that:

- New development is compatible with the existing historic building fabric and the historic character of downtown;
- Historic structures are preserved and design alterations of existing buildings are in keeping with historic character;
- Development encourages day and nighttime activities that relate to the pedestrian and promote the arts, entertainment, and housing;
- Greenways and open spaces are incorporated into the downtown; and
- The goals of the comprehensive plan are achieved.

Based on street designation, buildings that front designated main streets are subject to more stringent design and development regulations; a majority of these streets are within the TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District. Development standards within D-1 districts include increased building height bonus for eligible active ground floor uses, publicly accessible open space, and parking structures.



Providence R-Line



Special Purpose Districts

TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District

According to Providence's zoning ordinance, TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay Districts are established for areas where more permissive height regulations and more stringent parking regulations are appropriate because of close proximity to existing and anticipated future public transportation infrastructure. As described below, two neighborhoods along the R Line have already been zoned with this overlay in order to encourage TOD. The TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District intends to:

- Encourage the location of uses and forms of development that maximizes access to transit and encourages transit ridership;
- Promote new, well-integrated residential and commercial development around existing and potential future transit stations; and
- Ensure that new development occurs in the form of compatible, higher density, transit-friendly design in close proximity to transit systems, encourage a pedestrian-orientation in new development, decrease reliance on automobiles, and encourage multi-modal mobility.

The Trinity Square neighborhood in Upper South Providence and the northern section of North Main Street at the Pawtucket line were identified as the City's first two TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay Districts in its zoning rewrite. The new zoning overlay districts proposed for Trinity Square and North Main Street allow new building heights up to 70 feet from 45 feet in the base Commercial-2 zones where both are located along the R Line. Parking minimums would be eliminated in overlay districts for

new residential units; in addition, the first 5,000 square feet of commercial construction would also be exempt from providing off-street parking.

Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities

In 2010, the City and RIPTA were awarded a Community Planning Challenge Grant through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities to conduct the Transportation Corridors to Livable Communities study. Preceding the zoning rewrite in 2014 that established the TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District, this project focused on the highest ridership bus routes in the city— Broad Street, Chalkstone Avenue, Elmwood Avenue, Manton Avenue, and North Main Street, which comprised approximately 15,900 riders. The Study chose these routes not only for their high ridership, but their availability of developable land for housing and new businesses, creating activity hubs near transit stops.

The Study worked to enhance transit, land use, and art and cultural opportunities and is expected to improve bus service, encourage mixed-income housing, create jobs, and build on the City's reputation as the «The Creative Capital» of Rhode Island through showcasing arts and cultural opportunities. The City in collaboration with RIPTA has identified opportunities to enhance transit service, improve bus stops, add pedestrian amenities, encourage the development of mixed-income housing and create opportunities for good jobs and the arts on each of the five project corridors.

In connection with the completion of this Study, the City proposed a TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District within the Trinity Square hub. As discussed earlier, areas zoned with this overlay district have more permissive height and stricter parking regulations due to their close proximity to existing and anticipated public transportation infrastructure



Figure 3. Implementation Milestones of Providence R-Line

and improvements. In addition, design standards reinforce a pedestrian-scale streetscape as a part of this district.

The establishment of the TOD Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District was a direct response to the completion of the Study's build-out analysis. The coordination between this Study and the zoning ordinance rewrite that took place in 2014 present the City of Rochester with a successful example of how policy and zoning can work in collaboration with one another.

Providence Downtown and Knowledge District Plan

The Providence Downtown and Knowledge District Plan was developed in 2012. The Plan describes planning strategies such as pedestrian circulation, vehicular circulation and parking, of open space and views of new building development, and the massing and uses of that new development. The guiding principles related to TOD include the following provisions:

- Provide direct, convenient, and attractive connections to future transit stations and platforms;
- Establish a street hierarchy that promotes a balanced mix of transportation modes including walking, bicycling, mass transit, and motoring. Reduce parking demand by encouraging use of mass transit and non-motorized transportation; and
- Discourage the use of surface parking lots and site necessary parking structures in strategic locations to intercept vehicles at the edges of the District to minimize internal traffic congestion.

Although this Plan references the previously proposed streetcar line, which is now the Downtown Enhanced Transit Corridor, it does provide some focus on improving and integrating transit systems as to reduce

road congestion significantly and provide a higher return for developers through more efficient and higher density development. Compared to the Transportation Corridor to Livable Community Plan, this Plan is an example of a study that does not entirely focus on the integration of TOD and new BRT or rapid bus systems.

R LINE DEVELOPMENT SUCCESS

As the R Line is only on its third year and the Downtown Enhanced Transit Corridor is not yet operational, development success is more difficult to document. Along North Main Street, the R Line has not promoted many large-scale redeveloped projects. The Pawtucket-Providence L.A. Fitness project is one example of a redevelopment project along the R Line corridor that has not gained much support. The L.A. Fitness project was developed as a suburban style big box with a surface parking lot that is oriented to the street.

There is potential for infill development along the R Line corridor with the redevelopment of vacant lots and surface parking lots. One development, completed in 2014, is a small mixed-use project that is an experiment in bringing back residential buildings to a busy commercial corridor overrun with parking lots, big box stores, and single-entity retail. Feedback for this type of development has been positive with the building fully leased and the project well-received by the community. This is one example of a mixed-use urban infill project that has positively shaped the R Line corridor.

Although development has taken place along North Main Street since 2014, it is difficult to say whether the R Line is responsible. Overall, since the R Line's opening it is not clear whether a larger TOD plan has been promoted along the corridor to guide redevelopment strategies.

3.3.4. BOSTON SILVER LINE - WATERFRONT LINE

The Boston Silver Line, Boston's first BRT line, was implemented in July 2002, connecting neighborhoods that once relied on the Orange Line service. The route was developed in three phases; Phase I built the Washington Street service and connected Dudley Square to Downtown Crossing; Phase II, the Waterfront Line, connected Boston South Station to South Boston Waterfront district; and Phase III, an expansion to connect both sides of the Silver Line. However, Phase III was deemed too costly and funding was removed in 2009. The introduction of the Silver Line Waterfront Line led to an initial 24% increase in overall public transit ridership to Logan Airport. In addition, transit ridership to the Waterfront area increased by nearly 100% compared to the previously used conventional bus and private shuttle service to the area.

Phase II had a total estimated capital cost of approximately \$625 million for the Silver Line Waterfront Line. In return, the line has helped to generate nearly \$700 million in development in the surrounding area. Approximately four million square feet of new development was generated for use in the South Boston Waterfront area between 1998 and 2006. As of 2007, nearly 9 million square feet of additional development was planned for South Boston within a half-mile of the Silver Line Waterfront Line. Development along the Waterfront Line was supported by TOD policy and zoning. In

March 2017 the City released Go Boston 2030 Vision and Action Plan, the City's long term mobility plan. Through intensive public involvement, the plan documented challenges and solutions to the most important transportation issues in Boston.

Other resources, which have supported the success of the Waterfront Line, included the TOD Infrastructure & Housing Support Program (TOD Bond Program), a program that provides financial assistance for pedestrian improvements, bicycle infrastructure, housing projects, and parking facilities within ¼-mile of transit stations. The Commercial Area Transit Node Housing Program (CATNHP), Priority Development Fund, and Smart Growth Incentive Zoning are three other programs that have allowed for continued development along the Silver Line corridors.

The Boston Silver Line - Waterfront Line is a single phase out of a three phase implementation plan. The area surrounding the Waterfront Line has experienced tremendous return on investment in the form of over 13 million square feet in development generated in the South Boston Waterfront area. The successful implementation of this project was due in part to the City's financial and zoning programs. The following flow chart presents the process by which the Waterfront Line was developed and implemented.

3.3.5. MINNEAPOLIS METRO BLUE LINE

When the light rail was first proposed in the Minneapolis metro region it was met with negative response and skepticism. The community of Minneapolis related the light rail to a recent highway project that had divided homes from the retail district, resulting in hundreds of evictions. However, after addressing public opposition, residents and business owners saw the light-rail transit (LRT) project as a driver of economic development. The Blue Line, which began operation in 2004, was the region's first LRT corridor. The 12-mile long Blue Line connects Target Field to the Mall of America, linking Downtown Minneapolis, U.S. Bank Stadium, Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, and Bloomington's South Loop district. There are multiple regional transit routes that converge at Target Field Station and Mall of America Station transit hubs. The Blue Line Extension project is proposed to connect communities and employment in the northwest to southern destinations, providing a single connection between Brooklyn Park, the airport, and the Mall of America. The 13-mile Blue Line Extension is expected to open in 2021.

The 2030 Regional Development Framework and 2030 Transportation Policy Plan reference the need to coordinate land use and transportation. In 1995, the Metropolitan Livable Communities Act (LCA) was passed, providing the Metropolitan Council with the financial tools to implement the 2030 Regional Development Framework. Since 2004, when the first LRT was opened, the Metropolitan Council has supported more development around high-frequency transit lines to support transit ridership and regional development goals. In 2011, the Metropolitan Council created the Livable Communities TOD grant (LCA-TOD), which has directed over \$26.2 million in funding to development projects within established and emerging station areas. In addition, Regional Transitway Guidelines have also been issued that support the completion of land use plans along

transit corridors in order to reflect best practices in TOD planning and design. With the implementation of LRT, the Metro Transit TOD office, a branch of the Metropolitan Council, was founded in 2013 in coordination with the region's TOD Policy. The purpose of the policy is to guide activities to advance TOD through operation of transit systems, guiding regional development and transportation investments, supporting equity, and providing regional access.

Through the implementation of policy and funding sources, development along the region's first line, the Metro Blue Line, has totaled over \$700 million. Development along the Blue Line Extension, which will open in 2021, has generated approximately \$489 million in new development, with commercial and industrial development occurring at the line's northernmost area.

The Metro Blue Line, part of the Minneapolis metro region's light rail system, has experienced successful implementation of TOD. This can be attributed to the system's integration into regional plans, and use of regional guidelines and a TOD-focused grant to fund development projects within existing and new station areas. The Blue Line emphasizes development success due to regional connectivity. The following flow chart presents the process by which the Metro Blue Line was developed and implemented.

3.3.6. MINNEAPOLIS/ ST. PAUL GREEN LINE

The Minneapolis/ St. Paul Green Line

The Central Corridor (Green Line) is an 11-mile light rail corridor between downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis, MN. The Metropolitan Council secured funding guarantees from local and state agencies, including the State of Minnesota, Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, the City of St. Paul,



Figure 4. Implementation Milestones of Boston Silver Line -- Waterfront Line

and newly formed Counties Transit Improvement Board, with FTA paying half of the cost of construction.

The Central Corridor Development Strategy was developed to address the related land uses, economic, and social development impacts that may result from the construction of the Green Line. The Strategy helps frame dozens of individual decisions that will be made in the Corridor over the next decade. Several task force groups have been developed to guide how the Central Corridor will grow.

In 2012, the Corridor had nearly 800 acres of underutilized land that could benefit from TOD. In 2007, the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC), a partnership of 12 local and national philanthropic organizations, was formed to catalyze change along the new Green Line by promoting affordable housing, strong local economy, vibrant TOD, and effective communication and collaboration. CCFC created a Catalyst Fund through which since 2008 has made more than 160 grants, totaling nearly \$12 million and leveraging more than \$54 million of additional investment.

In addition to the Catalyst Fund, other funds supporting TOD along the Central Corridor include:

- **Land Acquisition for Affordable New Development Fund:** Minnesota Housing, the Metropolitan Council, and the Family Housing Fund (a community development corporation) collaborated to create an \$11-million pilot fund to support land acquisition by cities, community development corporations, or housing authorities with preference given to projects near transit. The fund is intended to support mid-term project-level investments. The acquired parcels cannot have ready-to-go projects, and funds must be spent within one year and repaid within five years. Any appreciation in the value of land acquired through the program can be rolled into the project to support affordable housing, and any losses in land value will be covered by the fund. A pilot loan program started in 2009, when the City of St. Paul borrowed \$2 million to make a strategic property purchase along the light-rail alignment.
- **Twin Cities Community Land Bank:** The Family Housing Fund and other regional stakeholders have formed a land bank to acquire foreclosed properties, partner with nonprofit and socially-minded for-profit housing developers, and lend to those developers for affordable housing projects. The land bank received funding from HUD's Neighborhood Stabilization Program.



Minneapolis Blue Line



- **Transit Improvement Area Accounts:** This new state program was created to make public improvements and acquire property for TOD in Minnesota. The program allow loans of up to \$2 million with up to 10-year terms at low or no interest rates for a range of eligible uses. To be eligible, an area must have a transit improvement area plan that incorporates transit with commercial, residential, or mixed-use development.
- **County Bond Funds:** Hennepin County provides \$2 million in grants each year on a two-year cycle for TOD projects that enhance transit use and increase density along transit corridors.
- **Family Housing Fund's Home Prosperity Fund:** This fund loans at below-market interest rates to community development partners for the creation of affordable housing.
- **Neighborhood Development Center's Real Estate Development Initiative:** This \$1 million program is designed to give entrepreneurs business training and help buying commercial property. The Neighborhood Development Center has collaborated with community development corporations and has partnered with the Community Reinvestment Fund to develop a standard loan package for the program.
- **Local Initiatives Support Corporation Acquisition and Predevelopment Funds:** The Twin Cities LISC supports nonprofit developers in the Big Picture Project. The Big Picture Project aims to accelerate development at Green Line stations along the Eastern stretch of University Avenue, where the market for TOD is weaker than other areas by offering short-term acquisition loans and predevelopment recoverable grants that provide money for expenses incurred before permanent construction financing is secured. Twin Cities LISC is focusing \$13 million in grants

and favorable financing to support projects that serve transit riders and walkers, provide workforce housing, create public space and pocket parks, and preserve the identify of neighborhoods. The grants are repaid at 0% interest from construction or permanent financing proceeds. The amount of funding and terms vary annually. Following the opening of the Green Line, rents along the corridor have risen 46%. The Big Picture Program looks to support equitable TOD and help retain the affordable housing base that exists in several neighborhoods.

3.3.7. PORTLAND MAX BLUE LINE LRT

The Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon (Tri-Met) provides transit service throughout the greater Portland Area. The idea of the Metropolitan Area Express (MAX) light rail line was introduced by Tri-Met in 1986. Both Tri-Met and the local government of Portland have implemented a range of policy tools to plan and promote compact transit-focused urban development and land use patterns around light rail stations. Prior to the start of light rail service in 1986, Tri-Met, the Metropolitan Service District, the City of Portland, the City of Gresham, and Multnomah County developed a Transit Station Area Planning Program (TSAPP), which was meant to build support for TOD along the light rail line and promote opportunities for increased ridership.

The multi-phase TSAPP received more than \$1 million in federal funding from the Federal Transit Administration. The first phase of the program included the development of goals and policies, collection and analysis of data, and assessment of alternative locations; and the second phase created concept plans for each station area that addressed land use, urban design, pedestrian accessibility, and traffic circulation. The third phase, which was never funded or completed, sought out to prepare

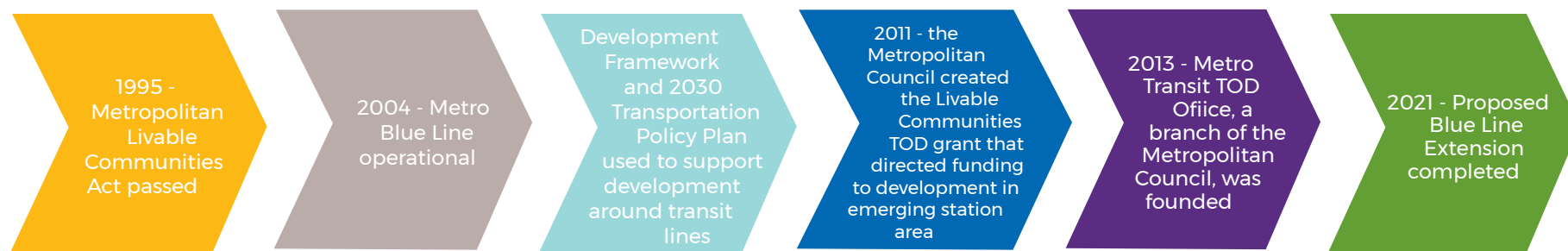


Figure 5. Implementation Milestones of Minneapolis Metro Blue Line

detailed plans for station area development, including specific strategies for financing and implementation.

Local governmental support for TOD along the MAX corridors has included instituting transit-supportive zoning around light rail stations, overlay districts, tax abatement programs, parking restrictions, station area planning, and other public investments. As a result, the 33-mile MAX Blue Line has stimulated development in previously under-utilized areas of Portland, like the Lloyd District, since its opening. The MAX Blue Line has generated \$6.6 billion in new development, creating jobs and revitalizing corridors. The MAX system was the first project of its kind in the Country that identified, created, and promoted opportunities for TOD along a regional light rail corridor.

The Portland MAX Blue Line is a regional light rail system that was successfully implemented in 1986. Development success along the Blue Line is due in part of local governmental support, changes to the zoning code, planning, and financial investments. The development of a TSAPP is the type of program that can be used as an example for developing citywide or regional programs that build support for TOD along transit corridors. The following flow chart presents the process by which the MAX Blue Line was developed and implemented.

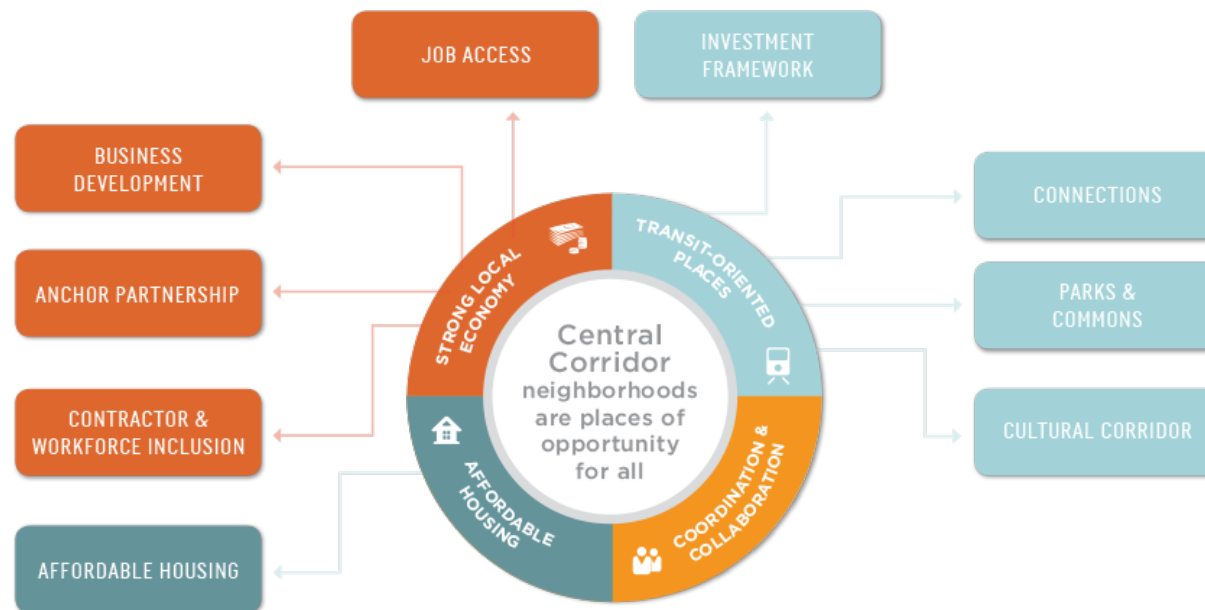


Figure 6. Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC) Structure

Source: www.funderscollaborative.org

3.3.8.PHOENIX METRO LRT

LISC Phoenix is playing an important role in helping the region prepare for the continued Phoenix Metro LRT investment and the TOD opportunities that follow. The Phoenix LISC 2013-2016 strategic plan, Our Future is on the Line, recognizes the opportunities for sustainable and equitable development created by the light rail system in the region. LISC Phoenix established a \$20 million regional fund called the Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) to “incentivize, leverage, and guide development of equitable TOD in areas well served by high capacity transit.” A TOD Guidebook was prepared in order to help evaluate development along the Phoenix Metro LRT and to identify which projects would be eligible for the Sustainable Communities Fund. The Guidebook is driven by six principles:

- Near the Light Rail – Projects should be within a ¼ mile of a light rail station, and no more than ½ from a station.
- Connected to Neighborhoods – Development should provide safe and inviting routes for walking, biking, and transit of all kinds.
- Provide Housing Choices – Housing should appeal to all income levels and offer choices for all family types and individuals.
- Compact Development – Developments should support light rail and provide the added housing, office space, retail, and other uses to support a healthy community and economy.
- Community Participation – Developers and cities engage the community in the planning and decision making process, ensuring that projects meet the needs, values, and desires of the community.
- Desert Friendly Design – Projects should be designed with the local environment in mind, and should use water and energy carefully.



Figure 7. Implementation Milestones of Portland MAX Blue Line

3.3.9. SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

TRANSPORTATION FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES (TLC) PROGRAM

The Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Transportation for Livable Communities (TLC) grant program funds projects that support TOD, including streetscape improvements, non transportation infrastructure, transportation demand management projects, and land banking or site assembly. The TLC program has allowed the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to use state and Federal transportation funds (including CMAQ and Transportation Alternatives funds) creatively to support compact housing and mixed-use projects close to transit.

This type of grant program, which directs federal and sometimes state transportation funding to support TOD, is usually implemented at the regional level by an MPO, which allocates most state and Federal transportation funds in metropolitan areas. The ability to create such a program depends on the level of discretion that the state legislature and department of transportation allow MPOs in allocating state and federal transportation funds, as well as on the willingness of the MPO's board members and other regional stakeholders to prioritize TOD infrastructure over other types of transportation improvements. Other MPOs, including Portland Metro in Oregon and North Central Texas Council of Governments in Dallas-Fort Worth, have similar programs that support TOD.

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA TRANSIT-ORIENTED AFFORDABLE HOUSING ACQUISITION FUND

The San Francisco Bay Area Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing (TOAH) Acquisition Fund is a \$50-million structured fund (that pools money from different investors with varying expectations of risk and return for a dedicated purpose) that provides financing for acquiring land for affordable housing development near transit. The structured fund is tailored to overcome specific barriers to equitable TOD in the Bay Area, including scarcity of development sites near transit, relatively high land costs, and the difficulty of acquiring property before securing project financing. The Bay Area TOAH offers five types of loans for affordable housing:

- Predevelopment loans – For costs incurred in predevelopment, including design, appraisals, insurance, taxes, financing fees, and debt service expenses.

CHECKLIST ITEMS

Use this checklist when evaluating a project in your area. You may make copies of it for future projects or download additional checklists at: slhi.org/tod.



NEAR THE LIGHT RAIL

- ☐ This project is within ¼-mile (better) or no more than ½-mile (good) of a light rail station
- ☐ It is easy and safe to walk or ride a bike to and from the light rail station from the project



CONNECTED TO NEIGHBORHOODS

Public paths and sidewalks:

- ☐ Are lit at night
- ☐ Offer shade during the summer
- ☐ Have seating
- ☐ Are pleasant to walk along
- ☐ Are connected to other paths, bike lanes and transit
- ☐ Main entrances face the street



PROVIDE HOUSING CHOICES

- ☐ This project offers housing for people of low to moderate income households
- ☐ Doorways are wide enough to accommodate wheelchairs in most areas
- ☐ Front doors and entryways can be entered without steps



COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Allows more people to live and work near light rail
- ☐ Increases neighborhood amenities
- ☐ Does not feel imposing when walking by
- ☐ Fits in well with the neighborhood, while increasing density



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

- ☐ Community members are engaged in early planning and design meetings
- ☐ Community members remain involved as project moves forward
- ☐ Local businesses, clubs and groups are invited to be involved in the project



DESERT FRIENDLY DESIGN

- ☐ Uses less energy and costs less to own or maintain
- ☐ Uses less water
- ☐ Provides shade and cool spaces during the hottest months
- ☐ Collects rainwater

Figure 8. Phoenix Metro LRT

Source: A Guide for Evaluating Transit Oriented Development Near Valley Metro Rail

- Acquisition loans – To acquire vacant land or operating housing or commercial property and to cover lot development expenses.
- Construction bridge loans – To bridge the time period between construction funding and either larger or longer-term financing.
- Construction-to-mini-permanent loans – For construction financing (new or rehabilitation) followed by a small permanent loan to pay off the short-term construction loan.
- Leveraged loans – To fund eligible predevelopment, acquisition, construction, and mini-permanent financing to leverage an investment into a new market tax credit-eligible transaction, which could be community facilities, neighborhood retail, fresh food markets, child care centers, or similar facilities.

JOINT DEVELOPMENT

In 1984, with the enactment of a Station Area Development and Implementation Policy, BART initiated an active transit Joint development program. The Program established a “one-for-one” parking replacement policy, which has been a major factor in shaping the nature of development on BART property in suburban portions of the system. The Policy requires that proposed TOD projects provide a competitive investment return to BART’s land value. Thus, projects that could not at least pay for the cost of replacing BART surface parking were not implemented.

One specific project, the West Dublin BART Station, is an example of providing TOD infrastructure through a joint development and paid parking strategy. The station is located in the median of a major freeway on the border of the City of Dublin and City of Pleasanton in Alameda County. BART’s property acquisition team solicited interest from private property developers for development in the station area on BART-owned land. BART ground-leased a 3-acre parcel to a group of private developers for 99 years for a one-time payment of \$15 million. BART and the developers also agreed to a covenant for a transit district transactional fee whereby a percentage of every sale of residential units in the development would be remitted to BART, allowing the agency to collect more revenue based on the level of development (i.e., the number of residential units and sale price of the land). The development plan calls for a transit village consisting of over 300 residential units, a hotel, and space for retail.



West Dublin BART Station Area

Source: Google Maps

3.3.10. DALLAS, TX

In some instances, areas require investment in public infrastructure immediately in order to unlock the development potential of an area. While a TIF or PIF allows a public agency to “capture” the value of growth that results from new development and increasing property values, some station areas require public investment in order to unlock this development potential. A corridor-wide or multi-station TIF district helps address the issue of needing up-front capital to unlock development by capitalizing on increases in property values in one area to make improvements in another area. This type of TIF district is an appealing alternative along a transit corridor, where real estate market conditions and community needs vary greatly among different station areas.

The Dallas area implemented a multi-station TIF district in cooperation with several overlapping jurisdictional boundaries. In 2008 the city of Dallas approved a Transit-Oriented Development Tax Increment Financing district (TOD TIF District) along a Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) light rail corridor. The process of planning, developing new policies, and conducting negotiations between the city and multiple partners and stakeholder groups, including DART, Southern Methodist University, and a local real estate firm, to establish the district took four years. As originally approved, the TOD TIF District covered 558 acres. In 2010, the TOD TIF District was expanded to include 1,167 acres in four subdistricts.

A primary purpose of the TOD TIF District is to encourage high-density,

mixed-use, walkable station areas along the existing DART line. To that end, the TIF revenue is being used to pay for the public infrastructure needed to support new development and to improve access and connections between the existing DART station areas and surrounding institutional uses, including Southern Methodist University, the George W. Bush Presidential Library, the Trinity River, and Veterans Memorial Hospital.

Over its 30-year life, the TIF district is projected to generate over \$185 million in tax increment (in 2009 dollars). Ultimately, the Dallas TOD TIF District allows revenue from the neighborhoods in the northern portion of the corridor, which have higher land values and greater potential for growth in the increment, to be used in less-developed areas in the Lancaster Corridor area south of the Trinity River, which has more infrastructure needs. The TIF will also provide infrastructure and pedestrian improvements around DART stations that would not otherwise be possible, as well as funding for affordable housing throughout the district.

In addition to funding infrastructure, the increment can be used for grants to help finance TOD projects in the district. The TIF revenue will be used for the infrastructure improvements needed for individual development projects and to improve pedestrian connections to DART stations from the surrounding

3.3.11. CINCINNATI, OH

The recently opened Cincinnati Bell Connector Streetcar is a 3.6-mile loop connecting key employment center and destinations throughout Downtown Cincinnati and the Over-The-Rhine neighborhood. The \$148 million project was funded through a number of financing mechanisms, including property and income tax, Tax Increment Financing, development funds, parking meter revenue, and Duke Energy and other private contributions, in addition to the FTA, CMAQ, and TIGER grants provided by the Federal government.

A new special improvement district was created for neighborhoods covered by the Cincinnati Bell Connector, whereby property owners pay an assessment based on their street frontage. Known as the Haile Fund, this special improvement district is essentially an expansion of the already existing Downtown Cincinnati Inc. Improvement District. Approximately 50% of the \$5 million generated each year from the special assessment goes towards the streetcar operations and maintenance.



Source: www.cincinnati-oh.gov/streetcar

3.3.12. CHARLOTTE, NC

The Red Line Regional Rail Project is an initiative to upgrade an existing 25-mile section of the Norfolk Southern Railroad “O” Line from Charlotte to the northern suburbs in order to upgrade the corridor for both freight and passenger rail. The capital construction cost of the Project was set at \$452 million, with the local share of funding coming from value capture mechanisms.

The most important aspect of the value capture financing plan was approval by the Red Line Task Force (RLTF) for a unified value capture approach. Earlier efforts had relied on each jurisdiction to make separate (but coordinated) contributions to the project in proportion to the number of stations in their jurisdiction. This segmented approach introduced a number of complexities and inefficiencies, and ultimately failed to generate

the cohesion necessary to advance the project. The unified approach provides a structure wherein revenues created and captured anywhere within the unified benefit district are allocated wherever needed to fulfill the needs of the project through a single entity. This unified approach enhances the viability of whatever funding approach is instituted, and permits capital markets to see the added security of a single entity and revenue stream to support the bond financing.

This single entity is a Joint Powers Authority that would provide the necessary governance as a regional governing body, formed and controlled by the eight governing bodies along the corridor. The Joint Powers Authority provides the legal mechanism to receive funds, sell bonds, provide debt coverage, and build/ operate/ maintain the project.

The following table summarizes various transit systems across the country and their ability to spur economic investment and TOD.

	Type of Service	City Population*	Metro Population	Years Open (by 2013)	Land Potential	Regional Real Estate Market Strength	Corridor Real Estate Market Strength	TOD Investment	TOD Investment per Dollar of Transit Investment	Average Daily Ridership (Weekday)	Riders per Mile	Government Support*	Included in Comprehensive Plan?	Downtown Entry?
Buffalo	LRT	258,071	1,135,230	30	Emerging	Fair	Emerging			21,564	3,370		No - TOD Plan Under Development	Yes
Cleveland Healthline	BRT	396,815	2,064,725	5	Emerging	Generally Poor	Emerging	\$5.8 B	\$114.54 M	15,800	2,225	Strong	Yes	Yes
Kansas City Main Street Metro Area Express (MAX) Bus	Express Bus	459,787	2,159,159	8	Strong	Fair	Strong	\$5.2 B	\$101.96 M	5,400	450	Strong	No - Part of separate plan	Yes
Portland MAX Blue Line	LRT	632,309	2,389,228	26	Emerging	Generally Good	Emerging	\$6.6 B	\$3.74 M	66,370	2,011	Strong	Yes	Yes
Las Vegas Strip & Downtown Express	BRT	623,747	1,951,269	3	Strong	Generally Poor	Strong	\$2 B	\$42.28 M	16,789	6,716	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Boston Waterfront Silverline Bus	BRT	667,307	4,628,910	9	Moderate	Generally Good	Strong	\$1 B	\$1.39 M	13,602	1,528	Moderate	No	Yes
Denver Central Corridor	LRT	682,545	2,841,330	19	Moderate	Generally Good	Strong	\$2.55 B	\$14.88 M	62,782	11,845	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Eugene Emerald Express Green Line (EmX)	BRT	156,185	362,895	6	Moderate	Fair	Emerging	\$100 M	\$3.96 M	10,000	2,500	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Pittsburgh MLK East Busway	BRT	304,391	2,360,867	30	Moderate	Fair	Emerging	\$903 M	\$3.59 M	24,000	2,637	Moderate	No - Part of separate plan	No
Phoenix Metro	LRT	1,563,025	4,574,351	5	Moderate	Fair	Emerging	\$2.82 B	\$1.99 M	41,784	2,089	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Ottawa Transitway	BRT	883,391	1,236,325	30	Moderate	Generally Good	Emerging	\$1 B	\$1.71 M	244,000	12,842	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Charlotte Lynx	LRT	827,097	2,380,314	6	Moderate	Generally Good	Emerging	\$810 M	\$1.66 M	14,000	1,505	Moderate	Yes	Yes
Denver Southwest Corridor	LRT	682,545	2,841,330	13	Moderate	Generally Good	Moderate	\$160 M	\$0.71 M	17,746	2,039	Moderate	Yes	Yes

Notes:

City Population: Based on latest Census Bureau figures (2015)

Regional Real Estate Market Strength: Based on Pricewaterhouse-Coopers map from Emerging Trends in Real Estate (2013)

Strong Govt Support: The government used its powers to promote TOD along significant parts of the transit corridor. This includes most of the following: rezoning, creating a comprehensive plan with a specific focus on the corridor, pro-active outreach to developers, environmental clean-up, land assembly, extensive marketing of the corridor, and a range of financial incentives.

Moderate Govt Support: Some effort was made by the government to promote development at a few sites through rezoning, investing into related infrastructure, some financial incentives, environmental clean-up, land assembly, or marketing activities.

4. REVIEW OF CURRENT PLANS AND REGULATIONS

4.1. REVIEW OF PRIOR PLANS

The following provides an overview of the relationship between existing plans in place for the Buffalo-Niagara Region, City of Buffalo, Town of Amherst, and Town of Tonawanda and the Comprehensive Transit-Oriented Development Planning effort. The review of the plans was focused on identifying those elements that fit with the goals of the study and key concepts of TOD.

The following table offers some insight into the level of support (with accompanying color coding) each plan has for the extension of Metro Rail to the Northtowns and planning for the elements associated TOD. The general support of plans is identified as follows:

Offers Very High Support	Blue
Offers High Support	Green
Offers Moderate Support	Yellow
Offers Low Support	Orange
Doesn't Offer Support/Or is Largely Outside of Scope	Red

Table 1. Summary of Plan Support for TOD

Plan	Level of Support
City of Buffalo Queen City Hub Plan	Offers High Support
Buffalo-Niagara Medical Campus Master Plan	Offers Very High Support
City of Buffalo Consolidated Plan 2013-2017	Offers Moderate Support
City of Buffalo 4-10 Year Capital Plan	Offers Moderate Support

Plan	Level of Support
Buffalo Bike Master Plan	Offers High Support
Buffalo Building Reuse Project	Offers Very High Support
Downtown Buffalo Infrastructure and Public Realm Master Plan	Offers Very High Support
Four Neighborhoods/ One Community Plan	Offers Very High Support
ECHDC Canalside Master Plan and GPP	Offers High Support
Amherst Comprehensive Plan	Offers Moderate Support
Eggertsville Action Plan	Offers Moderate Support
Imagine Amherst	Offers High Support
Town of Amherst Market Analysis	Offers High Support
Williamsville Comprehensive Plan	Offers Moderate Support
Main Street Corridor Market Study	Doesn't Offer Support
Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan	Offers Moderate Support
One Region Forward	Offers Very High Support
Erie Niagara Regional Framework	Offers High Support
WNY Regional Strategic Economic Plan	Offers High Support
2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan	Offers Very High Support
Transportation Improvement Program	Offers Moderate Support
WNY Sustainability Plan	Offers High Support
Buffalo Billion Investment Development Plan	Offers High Support
Dollars and Sense Buffalo Niagara	Offers High Support
UB 2020	Offers Very High Support
Tonawanda-Cheektowaga-Amherst CDBG Plan	Doesn't Offer Support

4.2. REVIEW OF ZONING REGULATIONS

For the review of zoning codes, about 1,000 pages worth of zoning was reviewed for the City of Buffalo (Green Code/ Unified Development Ordinance), Town of Amherst, and Town of Tonawanda. In order to understand each municipality's zoning, a spreadsheet was prepared that scores each zoning district based on requirements that are industry-wide accepted to be supportive of Transit-Oriented Development. The exercise is similar to an exercise conducted in the City of Denver to measure TOD supportive zoning districts. It allows for a glimpse into which are the most supportive zoning districts for Transit-Oriented Development that currently exists in Buffalo, Amherst, and Tonawanda.

The elements that were used in factoring TOD supportive zoning districts include:

- Building Form
 - Activated ground floor space
 - Upper floor uses
 - Density bonuses or incentives around transit
- Lot Coverage
 - Minimal front and side setback (build to line)
 - Building lot coverage
 - High floor area ratio
 - Lot frontage is for building space
- Active Transportation
 - Requirements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Access to Transit
 - Building orientation to transit stations
 - Accommodations for transit riders
- Streetscape
 - Requirements for public realm improvements/ amenities
 - Pedestrian scale lighting and signage
- Roadway
 - Complete streets elements/ preference for transit, bicycle, and

- pedestrian transportation
 - Traffic calming elements
 - Frequent safe street crossings
 - Parking
 - Parking location under, within, or behind building
 - On-street parking permitted
 - No parking minimum requirements
 - Facilitates shared parking
 - Block Size/ Layout
 - Small block sizes with frequent intersections
 - Public Spaces
 - Plazas and open space that facilitate transit access

Design that requires “eyes-on” principles

Within the body of the spreadsheet are values from 0 to 2 that were used to evaluate the TOD supportive elements of the specific zoning district (0=that characteristic is restricted, 1=characteristic isn't restricted but zoning code does not have specific language surrounding it, 2=the characteristic is required) and «N/A» which indicates the code did not mention the characteristic or the general area or category of that characteristic. The “summary” column provides a summation of the transit supporting values for each zoning district, and is shown in Tables 2, 3, and 4. The sum of the transit supportive values places each zoning district into a category as follows:

40+	Most TOD Supportive
30-39	TOD Supportive
20-29	Less TOD Supportive
<20	Not TOD Supportive
Note: Out of 66 Possible Points	

The map on page xx portrays the level of TOD supportive zoning within the City of Buffalo, Town of Amherst, and Town of Tonawanda.

4.2.1. CITY OF BUFFALO GREEN CODE

MOST TOD SUPPORTIVE ZONING

Downtown Regional Hub, Mixed-use Core, Secondary Employment Center, Mixed-use Center (N-2C, N-3C), Mixed-use Edge (N-2E, N-3E)

Since the Green Code looks to be built around the principles of TOD and good urbanism, it is no surprise that so many of the zones and districts scored so well. The mix of uses, the special attention to transportation and streetscape, and corridor overlays in this code all make it a very TOD supportive zoning code.

C-M METRO RAIL ZONE

The C-M Metro Rail Zone is an overlay along Main Street intended to facilitate an elevated level of urban intensity and transit orientation. The C-M is an overlay zone, so all development within the C-M Zone must comply with the underlying zoning as well. Specific requirements of the C-M Zone are:

- The minimum building height is three stories where the underlying zone is N-1C, N-1S, N-2C, N-2E, or N-2R; and two stories where the underlying zoning is N-3C, N-3E, or N-3R.
- A development that involves new construction with a residential component must meet a minimum density of 36 dwelling units per acre where the underlying zone is N-1C, 24 dwelling units per acre where the underlying zone is N-2C or N-2E, and 18 dwelling units per acre where the underlying zone is N-3C or N-3E.
- Any accessory surface parking lot must be located wholly within a rear yard.

Because the overlay is specific to Metro Rail Stations, and does not include bus stations, the zones impacted by this overlay received a 1 score instead of 2 for height and density bonus near transit station criteria. This means density and height bonuses near transit stations for impacted zones were considered to be allowed but not required.

KEY FINDINGS

This is a very multi-dimensional code where allowable building form, allowable uses, building type, and adjacent corridors all shape development are offer TOD supportive zoning along much of the Metro Rail Corridor.

Table 2. City of Buffalo TOD Zoning Assessment

City of Buffalo Green Code		
Zoning District	Name	Score
N-1D	Downtown Regional Hub	41
N-1C	Mixed-Use Core	41
N-1S	Secondary Employment Center	39
N-2C	Mixed-use Center	39
N-2E	Mixed-Use Edge	39
N-2R	Residential	37
N-3C	Mixed-Use Center	39
N-3E	Mixed-Use Edge	39
N-3R	Residential	37
N-4-30	Single Family	32
N-4-50	Single Family	32
D-R	Residential Campus	37
D-M	Medical Campus	32
D-E	Educational Campus	30
D-S	Strip Retail	35
D-C	Flex Commercial	33
D-IL	Light Industrial	26
D-IH	Heavy Industrial	25
D-OS	Square Space	26
D-OG	Green Space	22
D-ON	Natural Space	21

4.2.2. TOWN OF AMHERST ZONING

In general, the existing neighborhood character in Amherst in the Eggertsville neighborhood is conducive to being transit supportive; that is it consists of manageable block sizes, walkable streets, neighborhood density, and numerous access points to proposed transit stations that would support transit access to/from the Eggertsville neighborhood. However, the zoning regulations that are in place trend towards reducing the TOD supportive nature by introducing automobile oriented land use patterns and lower density/ single use land uses.

MOST TOD SUPPORTIVE ZONING

New Community District, Planned Residential District, Planned Development District

The three aforementioned districts rose to the top mostly because of their flexibility and loose commitment to active and alternative transportation. The purpose of the New Community District, for example, is... “To provide flexible land use and design regulations through the use of performance criteria so that small-to-large scale multi-use neighborhoods may be developed on relatively large tracts within the Town, in a manner which incorporates a variety of residential types and nonresidential uses and services.” While not specifically calling out or requiring TOD supportive elements, these districts would allow, by right, a development that is transit supportive.

The Traditional Neighborhood Business Overlay District has some elements that support transit, but received a score that just places it within the “Less TOD Supportive” range.

KEY FINDINGS

In general, the Amherst zoning code scored slightly less high because most of the zones/districts fail to address issues related to the ROW—streetscape, active/alternative transportation, and the roadway. The Town of Amherst does have a Complete Streets guide that aims to make some streets more accommodating for alternative modes of transportation, but it is a guide and not codified.

The recently created Traditional Neighborhood Development District (TND) has the transit-supportive land use regulations that promote the mix of uses sought in a TOD, however, the district lacks parking management regulations, doesn’t address orientation towards transit, and doesn’t address the public realm treatment, all things that helped to bring down its overall TOD supportive zoning score.

Table 3. Town of Amherst Transit-Oriented Development Supportive Zoning

Town of Amherst Zoning Code		
Zoning District	Name	Score
§ 5-2	New Community District (NCD)	36
§ 5-4	Planned Development District (PDD)	36
§ 5-3	Planned Residential District (PRD)	35
§ 5-7	Traditional Neighborhood Business Overlay District (TNB)	20
§ 5-6	Traditional Neighborhood Development District (TND)	18
§ 4-2	Office Building District (OB)	16
§ 4-3	Neighborhood Business District (NB)	16
§ 4-4	General Business District (GB)	16
§ 4-5	Commercial Service District (CS)	16
§ 4-6	Motor Service District (MS)	16
§ 4-7	Shopping Center District (SC)	16
§ 3-11	Multi-family Residential District Five (MFR-5)	14
§ 3-12	Multi-family Residential District Six (MFR-6)	14
§ 3-13	Multi-family Residential District Seven (MFR-7)	14
§ 4-9	Research and Development District (RD)	14
§ 4-11	General Industrial District (GI)	14
§ 5-5	Community Facilities District (CF)	14
§ 3-7	Cluster Residential District Three-A (CR-3A)	13
§ 3-10	Multi-family Residential District Four-A (MFR-4A)	13

Town of Amherst Zoning Code		
Zoning District	Name	Score
§ 3-14	Manufactured Home Residential District Eight (MHR-8)	13
§ 5-8	Live-Work District 1 (LW-1)	13
§ 3-8	Traditional Single-Family Residential District (TR-3)	12
§ 3-9	Residential District Four (R-4)	12
§ 4-10	Science Technology District (ST)	12
§ 3-2	Rural Residential District (R-R)	11
§ 3-3	Suburban Agricultural District (S-A)	11
§ 3-4	Residential District One (R-1)	11
§ 3-5	Residential District Two (R-2)	11
§ 3-6	Residential District Three (R-3)	11
§ 5-9	Recreation Conservation District (RC)	10
§ 5-1	Agricultural (AG)	7

4.2.3. TOWN OF TONAWANDA ZONING

In general, the existing neighborhood character in Tonawanda is conducive to being transit supportive; that is it consists of manageable block sizes, walkable streets, neighborhood density, and numerous access points to proposed transit stations that would support transit access to/from the adjacent neighborhoods. However, the zoning regulations that are in place trend towards reducing the TOD supportive nature by introducing automobile oriented land use patterns and lower density/ single use land uses.

MOST TOD SUPPORTIVE ZONING

- Traditional Neighborhood Design District, Neighborhood Business District, Commercial District

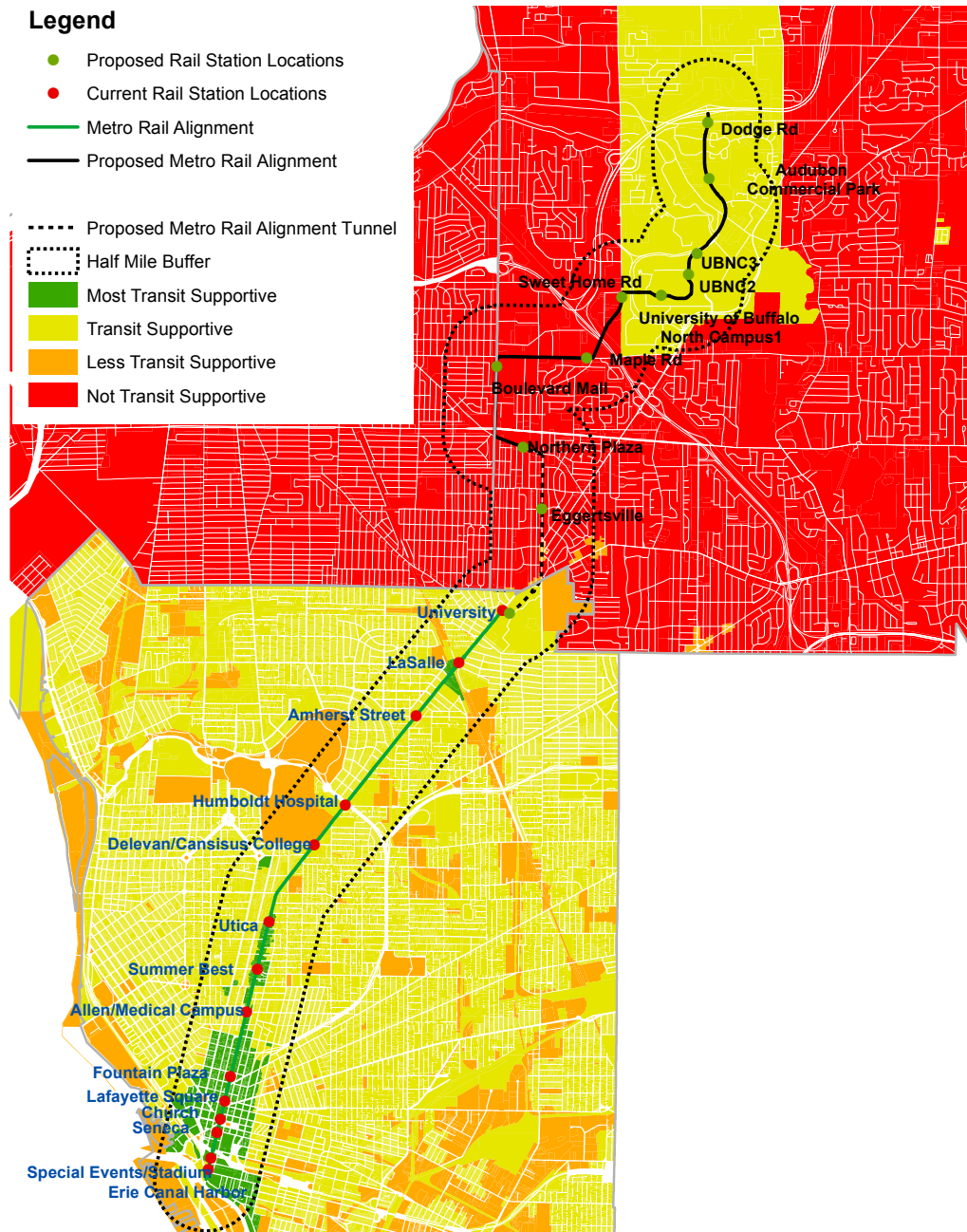
While none of the zoning districts in Tonawanda fall within a TOD Supportive category, the above districts scored the highest in this analysis mostly because of the traditional neighborhood characteristics in the zone like allowing mixed-use, commercial ground floor uses, and efficient lot coverage and because of the particular attention paid to landscaping and parking approaches.

KEY FINDINGS

Table 4. Town of Tonawanda TOD Zoning Assessment

Town of Tonawanda Zoning Code		
Zoning District	Name	Score
TND	Traditional Neighborhood Design District	17
C-2	C-2 Commercial District	16
NB	NB Neighborhood Business District	16
C-1	Restricted Business District	15
C	General Business District	15
P-S	P-S Performance Standards Use District	12
M-F	M-F Multi-family Dwelling Districts	7
R	Residential Districts	3

Figure 9. Map of TOD Supportive Zoning



5. CORRIDOR BASELINE ANALYSIS

5.1. STUDY CORRIDOR OVERVIEW

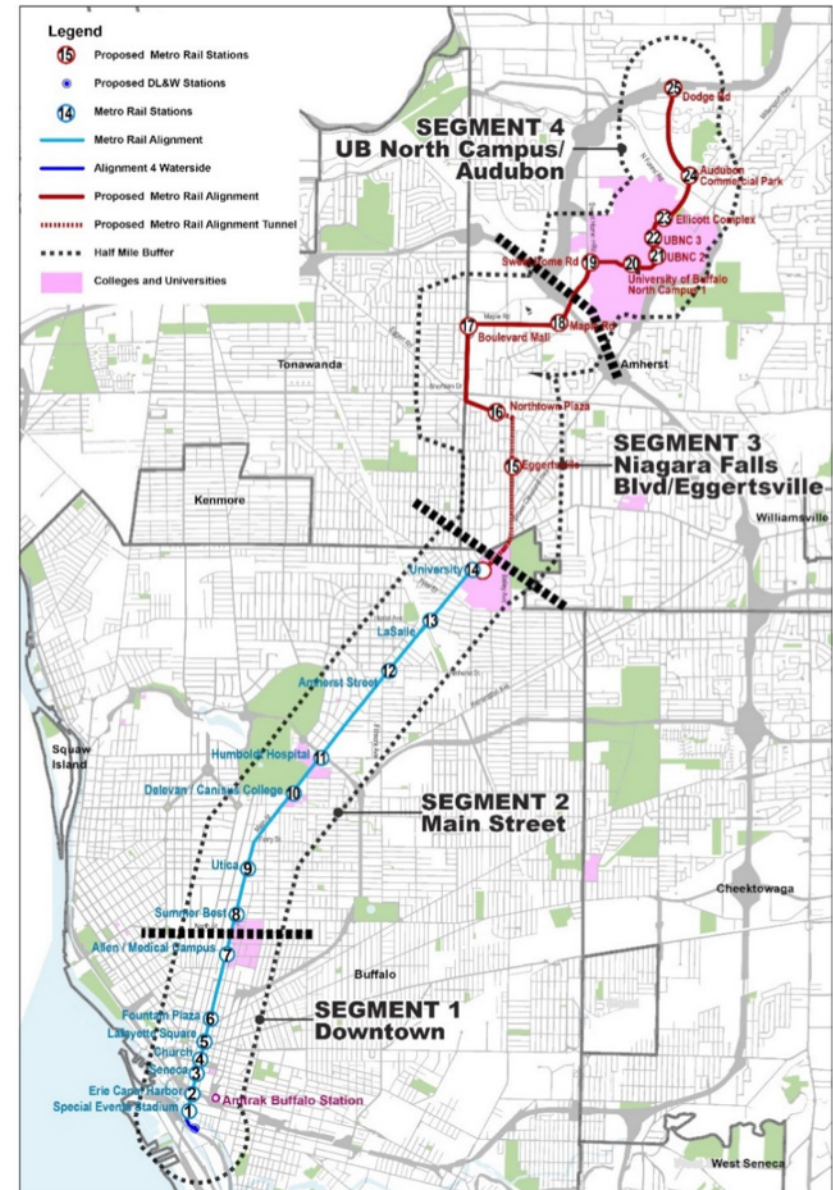
The Study Corridor is centered on the Metro Rail Corridor, which includes both the existing Metro Rail line, running from the future DL&W Terminal Station at the southern end, to University Station, as well as the Metro Rail extension, running from University Station through the University at Buffalo North Campus to the area near I-990 and Dodge Road. The entire alignment is shown in Figure 10, with the existing Metro Rail line and stations in blue and the proposed Metro Rail extension and stations in red.

The proposed Metro Rail extension to the Northtowns generally follows an alignment from the existing University Station, extending underground along Bailey Avenue to a portal near Eggert Road, where it would surface and run at-grade on Eggert Road to Niagara Falls Boulevard to Maple Road to Sweet Home Road, through the University at Buffalo North Campus, to Audubon Parkway where it would terminate near the I-990.

For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that a new permanent station will be located at DL&W Terminal and that the Special Events Station will be eliminated, meaning Metro Rail service would operate from DL&W Terminal to an area on Audubon Parkway near I-990, approximately 13 miles of light rail line.

Also, to simplify the assessment and portraying of the study corridor conditions, the study corridor was partitioned into four somewhat geographically equal segments: Segment 1 – Downtown (extending from DL&W Terminal to just north of Allen - Medical Campus Station); Segment 2 – Main Street (extending from just south of Summer - Best Station to University Station); Segment 3 – Niagara Falls Boulevard/ Eggertsville (extending from University Station to just north of the proposed Maple Ridge Station); and Segment 4 – UB North Campus/ Audubon (extending from just north of the proposed Maple Ridge Station to the proposed terminus at Audubon and I-990). The following pages summarize general conditions of the four segments.

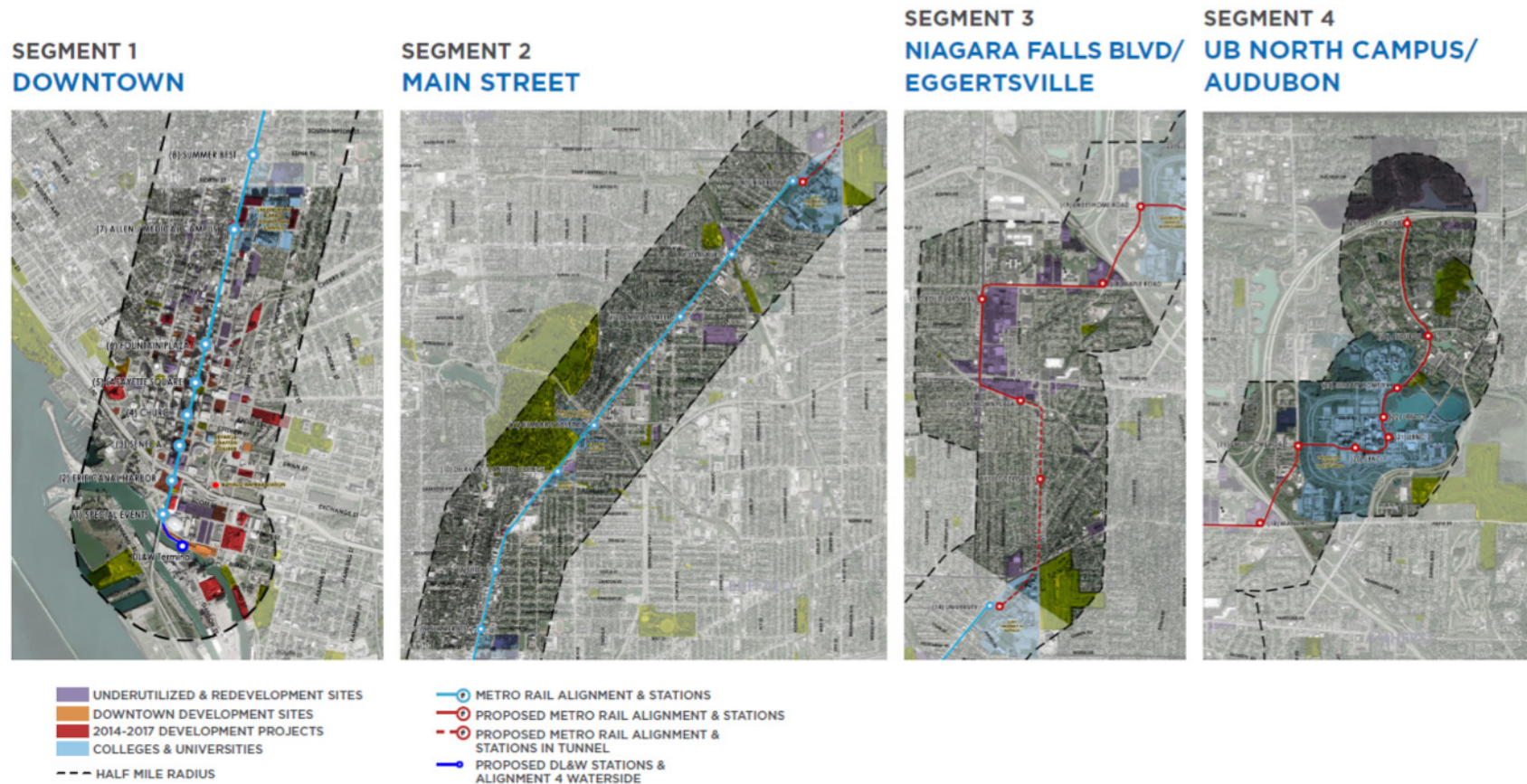
Figure 10. Study Corridor



5.2. STUDY CORRIDOR SEGMENT ANALYSIS

For the purposes of presenting the baseline conditions throughout the Metro Rail Corridor, the corridor was divided into four segments based on geography and character to show more generalized baseline conditions and into station areas to show more specific baseline conditions. The following pages indicate the general conditions that exist in these four segments, with the more detailed station area analysis in the following section.

Figure 11. Study Corridor Segment Analysis



5.2.1. SEGMENT 1 - DOWNTOWN

Segment 1- Downtown encompasses the area from the proposed DL&W Terminal station north to the Allen/ Medical Campus station. The segment captures what is generally identified as the Downtown Buffalo Central Business District, the region's densest employment center.

The portion of Metro Rail between DL&W Terminal and Fountain Plaza operates above ground along Main Street and is in the Fare Free Zone. Metro Rail operates underground north of Fountain Plaza to University station and requires a fare to ride.

The dominant land uses across the segment include the following:

- Sports-, recreation-, and entertainment-related uses near the DL&W Terminal and Erie Canal Harbor stations
- Commercial, mixed-use, community and public service, and entertainment uses near the Seneca, Church, Lafayette Square, and Fountain Plaza stations
- Hospitals, medical office, residential, and institutional uses near the Allen/ Medical Campus station.

The area has seen growth in both employment and residential population, with the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and a number of adaptive reuse projects driving the development market. Several large development projects have been built, are under construction, or are proposed that will continue to add employment and residential base, as well as add additional retail space. The redevelopment of the Seneca One Tower will reactivate approximately 1 million square feet of space immediately over the Metro Rail line.



Figure 12. Segment 1 - Downtown Map

5.2.2.SEGMENT 2 – MAIN STREET

Segment 2 – Main Street captures the area along Main Street from the Summer – Best Station north to University Station. This segment is outside of the area generally identified as the central business district and north of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, but is definitely influenced by activity in each. The segment is home to several major activity centers such as Canisius College, Sisters Hospital, and University at Buffalo South Campus.

Metro Rail operates underground along this segment and requires a fare to ride. Stations are stand-alone buildings set on individual parcels owned by NFTA. The University Station and adjacent park-and-ride is on land leased from the State University of New York and the westernmost Humboldt/ Hospital Station is on land leased from the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority.

The segment is characterized by shallow-depth commercial parcels fronting Main Street with adjacent medium-density residential neighborhoods. Main Street is a six-lane roadway from Goodell Street to State Route 198, and a four-lane roadway with median from State Route 198 to Kenmore Avenue. On-street parking is generally available on both sides of Main Street and most nearby streets.

Several adaptive reuse projects between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and Ferry Street have added residential space to once vacant buildings. The Highland Park development is converting the former Central Park Plaza into a new neighborhood, and student housing development has been occurring around the LaSalle Station. Metro Bus routes that operate along Best (#22), Utica (#12), Delavan (#26), Amherst (#32), and Kenmore (#5) offer good east-west connectivity from nearby neighborhoods to Metro Rail, evident in the high number of transfers at these bus stops.



Figure 13. Segment 2 -Main Street Map

5.2.3.SEGMENT 3 – NIAGARA FALLS BOULEVARD/ EGGERTSVILLE

Segment 3 captures the Metro Rail stations proposed as part of the extension from University Station north to the proposed Maple Ridge Station. Metro Rail is proposed to operate underground between University Station and Eggert Road, where it will emerge from a portal near the proposed Northtown Plaza Station and operate at-grade.

The Eggertsville Community is characterized by a mix of small-scale, shallow, commercial and residential use fronting Bailey Avenue. Medium-density single family residential surrounds Bailey Avenue encompassing a traditional grid street pattern, offering good connectivity. At Eggert Road, the character changes to more suburban commercial and includes a mix of small and regional retail and commercial establishments. The commercial lots fronting Niagara Falls Boulevard on the Tonawanda side are much shallower than adjacent properties in Amherst. Medium-density, mainly single-family, residential neighborhoods surround the commercial streets, with some multi-family areas mixed in. The major roadways are predominately automobile oriented, with most establishments offering plentiful off-street parking.

There are several major retail anchors in the area as well as several retail centers that are undergoing redevelopment or are for sale:

- The Boulevard Consumer Square has attracted major retail anchors (south of the I-290, just north of Maple Road along Niagara Falls Boulevard).
- A WalMart Supercenter recently opened on Sheridan Drive.
- The Tops and Wegmans near Maple Road and Bailey Avenue are major activity centers, especially for UB students.
- Northtown Plaza is undergoing redevelopment.
- The Boulevard Mall is currently up for sale, with Sears and Macy's recently closing stores.

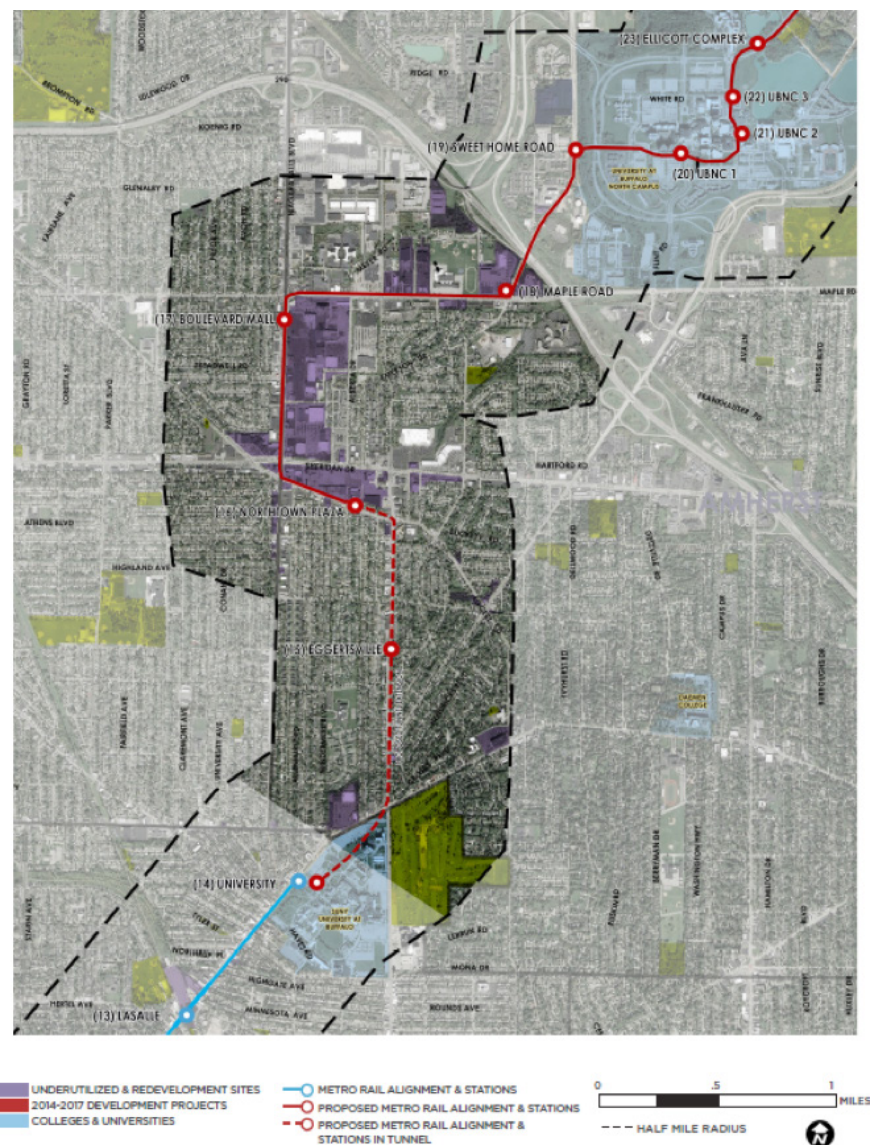


Figure 14. Segment 3 - Niagara Falls Boulevard/ Eggertsville Map

5.2.4.SEGMENT 4 – UB NORTH CAMPUS/ AUDUBON

Segment 4 captures the proposed Metro Rail stations as part of the extension from the proposed Sweet Home Station north to the proposed Dodge Road Station. Metro Rail would operate at-grade in this segment.

The segment is focused on the UB North Campus and the Audubon Community, as well as their surrounding environments. Areas along Sweet Home Road include a mix of commercial, student housing, and educational uses. The UB North Campus consists of educational uses with student housing and recreational uses. The Audubon Community is a planned community consisting of office and commercial space along Audubon Parkway and in nearby office parks, with residential neighborhoods setback from Audubon Parkway. The area is suburban in character with separated uses, large lots, large setbacks, and plentiful off-street parking. The major roadways are predominately automobile oriented, and often lack pedestrian facilities and amenities.

Development activity in the area has been predominately student housing and related services driven by UB. The office vacancy rate of Audubon commercial buildings has been on the increase; however, there is still a large employment base in the area. The proposed Muir Woods development at the north end of Audubon Parkway would add additional residential and commercial space.

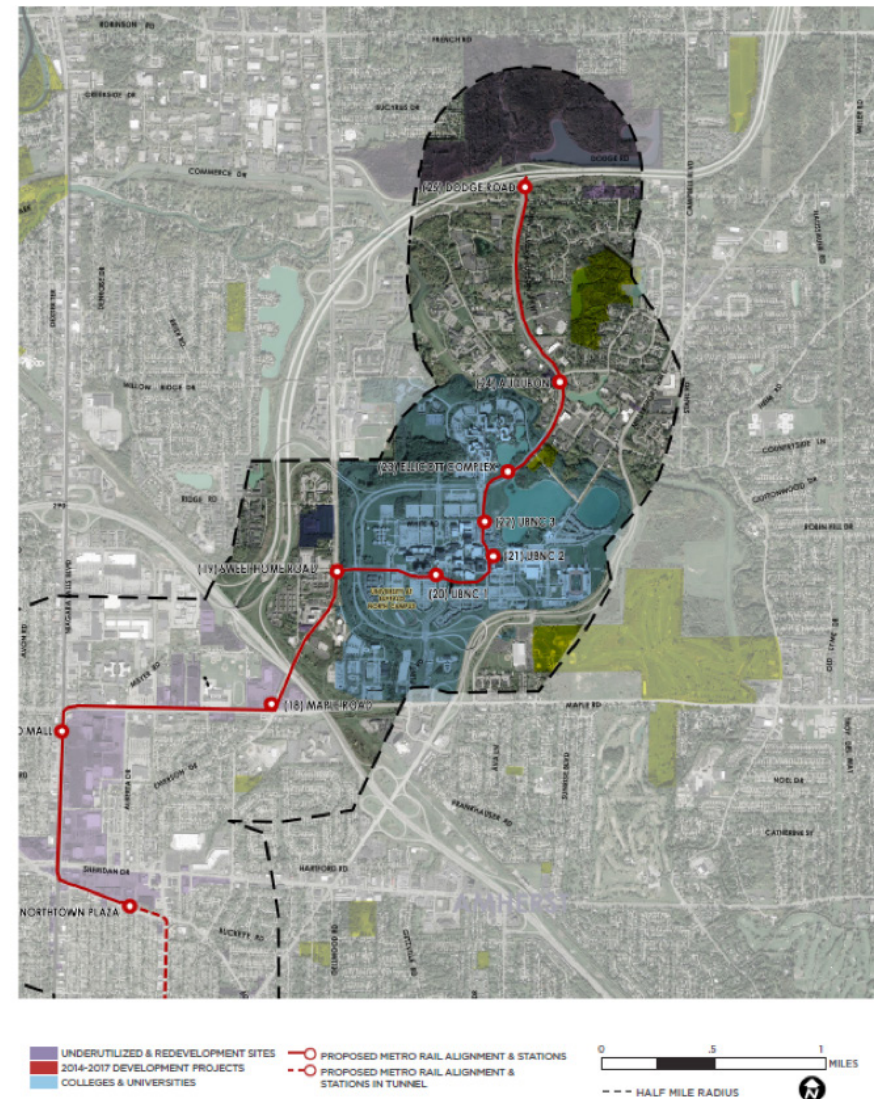


Figure 15. Segment 4 - UB North Campus/ Audubon Map

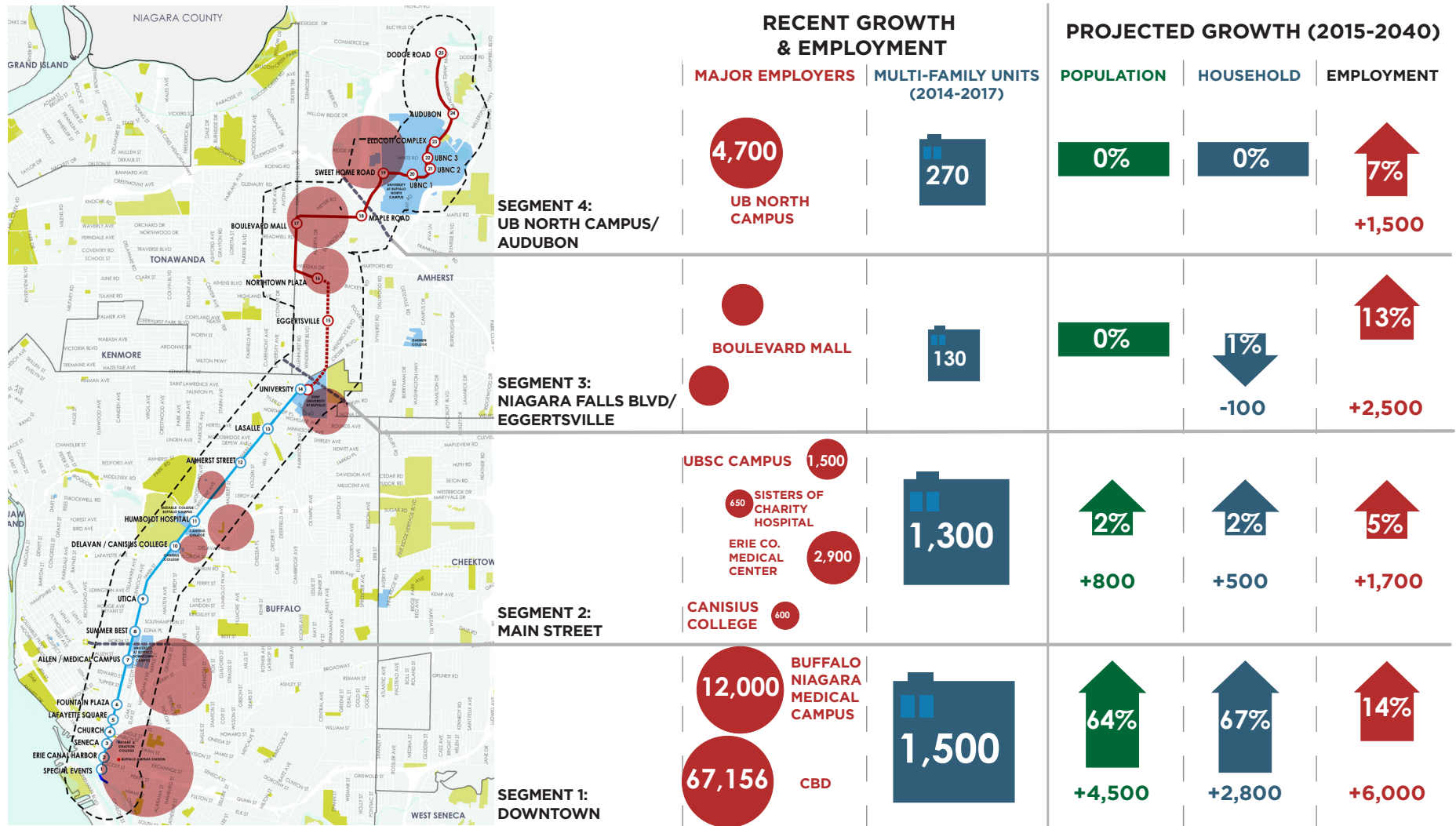


Figure 16. Demographic Corridor Analysis

6. MARKET ANALYSIS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

NFTA needed an economic and fiscal impact analysis and narrative on the breadth of likely impact of the design and construction of the recommended Metro Rail extension alignment on the region in order to get acceptance from the NFTA Board for the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to move forward. This section quantifies the anticipated economic and fiscal benefits associated with of extending the existing Metro Rail line to the Northtowns.

This section is provided in two parts- the first part focuses on the high-level economic and fiscal impacts of the Metro Rail extension; the second part focuses on the market readiness for Transit-Oriented Development along the corridor.



6.1.1. ECONOMIC AND FISCAL BENEFITS FINDINGS

This analysis focuses on the transit-oriented growth patterns of the Metro Rail extension's corridor, the economic and fiscal benefits created by the construction of the Metro Rail extension and associated Transit-Oriented Development, and benefits in terms of job accessibility for households in the region. The main findings are:

- The Metro Rail Corridor is projected to grow faster than the region.
- Employment in the Metro Rail Corridor represents about a fifth of all regional jobs, and almost a fourth of all office and health, education, and government jobs in the region.
- Employment growth is projected to be stronger, on average, in the Metro Rail Corridor than in the total region, particularly for office jobs.
- The land supply of available vacant, underutilized, and/or redevelopment parcels in the Metro Rail Corridor is more than sufficient to accommodate the projected household and employment growth expected to occur in the corridor through 2040.
- Future development resulting from the extension of Metro Rail is expected to add approximately 8.4 million square feet of commercial (office and retail) and residential space throughout the Metro Rail Corridor, worth a total assessed valuation of approximately \$1.7 billion. Existing properties where the current buildings and uses are expected to remain should see their cumulative assessed value increase by upwards of \$310 million as a result of their proximity to the Metro Rail extension.
- In the scenario where the Metro Rail extension is built, the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst would collect approximately \$61.5 million in property tax revenues from properties in the Metro Rail

Corridor, 32 percent more than in a scenario without the Metro Rail extension project.

- The retail development linked to the construction of the Metro Rail extension would lead to approximately \$8.7 million in sales tax revenues for the State of New York and \$10.3 million in sales tax revenues for Erie County.
- Employed residents both living and working within the Metro Rail Corridor could benefit from a significant reduction in transportation costs. Currently, almost 5,000 employed residents living in the existing Metro Rail Corridor also work in the corridor. Considering the Metro Rail extension, and not assuming any new residents in the corridor, this number would increase by 3,656. Moreover, based on projected future growth, and conservatively assuming current patterns of location of workers, an additional 1,339 workers could both live and work in the corridor by 2040, reaching a total of 9,942. This figure is likely to be higher as residential and commercial development intensifies within half a mile of Metro Rail stations.

6.1.2. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT MARKET READINESS FINDINGS

- The corridor's basic market activity – as measured by the total number of sale transactions – grew significantly in the past two decades.
- Between 1997 and 2016, market activity in Segments 1, 2, and 3 multiplied at comparably high speeds.
- Transaction activity in the corridor has been moderately responsive to broader economic trends, and has slowed down during major recessions.
- Despite various fluctuations, between 1997 and 2016 the corridor showed a 75% increase in the sales value of all real estate product types.

6.1.3. MEASURING THE BENEFITS OF TRANSIT

The anticipated economic and fiscal benefits pertaining to the Metro Rail extension are focused on the following three elements:

TRANSIT-ORIENTED GROWTH

The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) provided 2040 projections for Households and Jobs in the region and for the Metro Rail Corridor, including both the existing Metro Rail line and the extension. These figures were produced as part of the process to translate the One Region Forward initiative into the region's mandated Long Range Transportation Plan. Every major region in the United States is required by Federal law to complete such a plan, which typically gets updated every five years and has at least a 20-year time horizon. A key part of this planning process is to generate socio-economic projections that then become the basis for modeling future transportation demand. This demand will, in turn, drive future transportation investment decisions. In the Buffalo-Niagara region, GBNRTC is responsible for preparing these mandated projections. In fact, GBNRTC is in the process of updating its population, household, and employment growth for the region through 2040.

Total projections were then allocated to subarea geographies to form the basis for the transportation demand modeling. The GBNRTC preliminary projections, including growth allocations to specific subareas, assumes that there will be a transit project in the general vicinity of the proposed Metro Rail Corridor. Thus, these projections reflect a "Transit-Oriented" growth pattern for the region. Such a growth pattern would accomplish two objectives. First, focusing more future growth in the region's core is more fiscally and environmentally sustainable, as was demonstrated through the One Region Forward process. And, secondly, this allows the Buffalo region to be more competitive with other regions for economic expansion. While in past decades most parts of the U.S. have focused growth in expanding suburban locations, economic and demographic trends are now reshaping demand for employment and housing options that would allow some segment of the region's businesses and their workers to use transit as an alternative to driving to work. Work trips are an essential part of future transportation demand modeling, so including this transit expansion in the GBNRTC model was done to reflect the impact of future transportation investments and ensure that the region is maintaining its fiscal viability and economic competitiveness.

Because most of the economic benefits coming from a transit investment are driven by future development and property and sales tax, it is essential to understand the relationship between future population and employment growth and how this growth translates into demand for housing units and commercial space. For purposes of this analysis, the GBNRTC 2040 population, household, and employment projections were used as the basis for estimating future development activity. However, because this analysis is a one year snapshot of potential future change, not a cumulative estimate of all potential impacts from the transit investment, the 2040 projections are used in this report as a "Transit-Oriented growth scenario." This approach creates a relatively simple way to measure the potential change in conditions along the Metro Rail Corridor by comparing the existing conditions to a single future year.

Fiscal Benefits: The biggest monetary benefits from the Metro Rail extension will be realized in increased assessed valuations and revenues to the City of Buffalo, the Towns of Amherst and Tonawanda, Erie County, and New York State. These benefits are directly reflected in increased property and sales tax valuations from new development, as well as in increased assessed valuations from new development and an increase in value of existing property located near transit that will not change use. There is consistent evidence from all over the U.S. that light rail transit has a positive impact on property values, and increases the likelihood of future development.

Accessibility: Based on research showing that transit has higher economic benefits when it connects major employment centers, this analysis also measures how many people would have an increased accessibility to jobs based on their ability to both live and work near Metro Rail. One of the significant strengths of the Metro Rail extension project is that it connects many of the region's most significant employment, institutional, shopping, and entertainment concentrations including: Downtown Buffalo, the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, all of the UB campuses, attractions in and around Canalside (including KeyBank Center and HARBORCenter), colleges (i.e., Canisius College, Medaille College, and Erie Community College City Campus), the Theatre District, important retail locations such as the Boulevard Mall and Northtown Plaza, and suburban office locations such as the Audubon Office Park, as well as the planned Muir Woods mixed-use project.

6.1.4. STUDY GEOGRAPHIES

This section refers to several geographies on which the analysis is based. The terms used are defined below:

BUFFALO CORRIDOR

This refers to the existing Metro Rail line and the area surrounding the existing Metro Rail stations located in the City of Buffalo, and displayed as blue circles in Figure 17. See the “half mile buffer” discussion below for further explanation.

AMHERST CORRIDOR

The Amherst Corridor refers to the area around proposed Metro Rail line and stations, represented for the as black circles in Figure 17: these stations are all located in the Town of Amherst, except for one, which is located on the border of the Towns of Tonawanda and Amherst. See the “half mile buffer” discussion below for further explanation.

TOTAL CORRIDOR

The combined Buffalo Corridor and Amherst Corridor. The impacts at the Total Corridor level were analyzed because the area surrounding existing Metro Rail stations in Buffalo is expected to achieve additional benefits from the expanded Metro Rail line that will connect the City to major activity centers, including Boulevard Mall, UB North Campus, the Audubon Business Park, and the planned Muir Woods project.

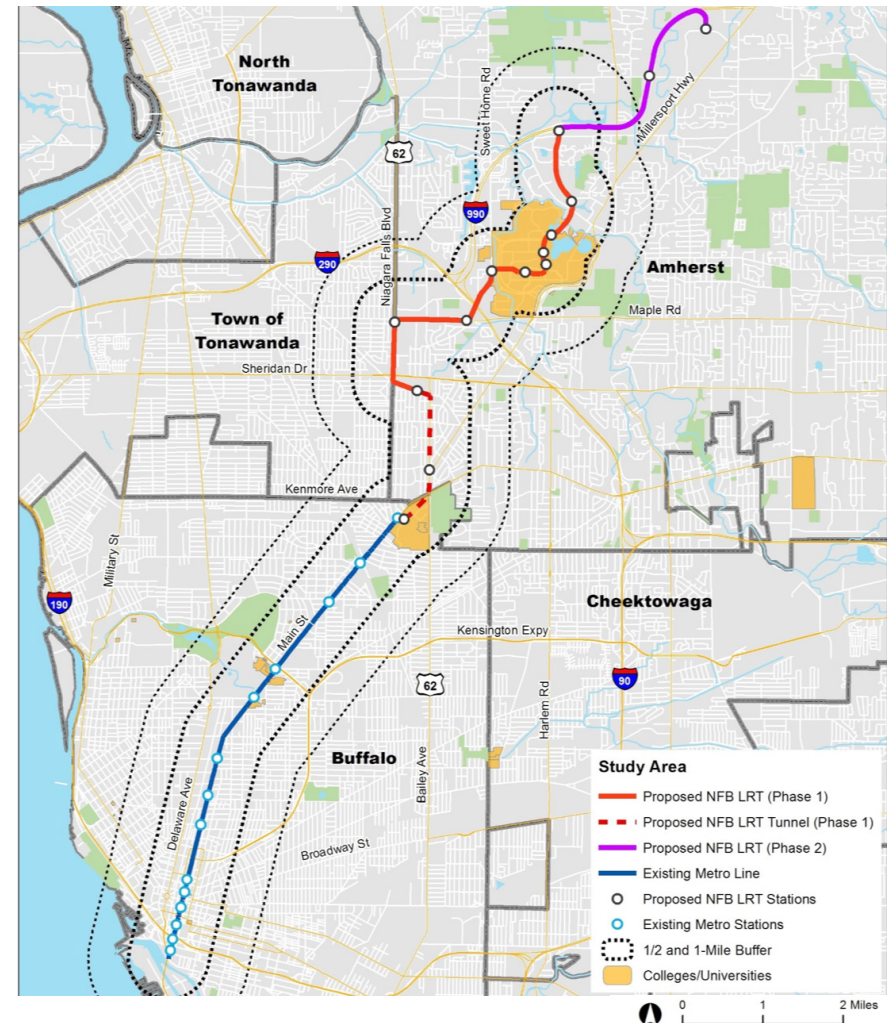
HALF-MILE BUFFER

The half-mile buffer surrounding a station is the standard radius for measuring transit impacts, as they are most concentrated in this area. A half-mile buffer around existing and proposed Metro Rail stations was created to perform the analysis at this scale. For parcel-level data, each parcel that was located within, or was contiguous with, the buffer was selected. For data at the Census block group level, due to their irregular shape, block groups were kept in the selection when most of their surface was located within the half mile buffer.

ONE-MILE BUFFER

National research has shown that the impact of light rail transit extends well beyond the half-mile buffer. A one-mile buffer was created to analyze the increase in property values for properties located within this distance of the Metro Rail line. The selection area was defined using the same method as for the half-mile buffer.

Figure 17. Context Map of Buffalo's Metro Line and its Proposed Extension (Phases 1 and 2)



Source: NFTA, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

6.2. TRANSIT-ORIENTED GROWTH

GBNRTC projections for the region's future population, households, and employment by sector for 2040 are used for transportation demand modeling purposes, and serve the goal of helping the region plan for more sustainable, transit-oriented growth. Total population, households, and employment growth is projected at the regional level and then allocated to smaller geographies to understand travel demand at the local scale. The production of these projections, and their allocation to smaller areas, relies on several assumptions. Among these, the results of the projections reflect the assumption that an enhanced transit project will be built in the region, and that the increased accessibility to more jobs and households that enhanced transit creates will in turn intensify development near transit stations.

The tables below show the allocation of population, households, and employment growth for both Metro Rail Corridors separately, together, and for the region. 2015 is the baseline year, and 2040 the furthestmost year for which projections were produced; the geography that was analyzed is the half mile buffer around existing and proposed stations. The Total Corridor 2040 projection was used as a benchmark assumption about how much future development is likely to occur in the corridor, which was essential for the analysis of property tax impacts presented in the next section. This section presents the findings from the analysis of demographic and employment projections:

- The Metro Rail Corridor is projected to grow faster than the region.**
 As shown in Table 5 and Table 6 the Total Corridor's population growth is projected to be much higher than the region's: the Total Corridor is forecasted to increase its population by 5.8% between 2015 and 2040, while the region's population increase during the same period is projected at 1.3%.

Table 5. Existing and Forecasted Population, 2015 - 2040

Geography	2015		2040		2015-2040	
	Number of Residents	Share of Region	Number of Residents	Share of Region	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Buffalo Corridor	63,084	6%	68,917	6%	5,833	9.20%
Amherst Corridor	36,093	3%	36,008	3%	-85	-0.20%
Total Corridor	99,177	9%	104,925	9%	5,748	5.80%
Buffalo Niagara Region	1,136,272	100%	1,150,512	100%	14,240	1.30%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 6. Existing and Forecasted Households, 2015 and 2040

Geography	2015		2040		2015-2040	
	Number of Households	Share of Region	Number of Households	Share of Region	Numeric Change	Percent Change
Buffalo Corridor	31,753	6%	35,064	7%	3,311	10.40%
Amherst Corridor	17,771	3%	17,718	3%	-53	-0.30%
Total Corridor	49,524	9%	52,782	10%	3,258	6.60%
Buffalo Niagara Region	521,782	100%	528,596	100%	6,814	1.30%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 7. Existing and Forecasted Household Size, 2015 and 2040

	2015	2040	2015-2040	
Geography	2015		Numeric Change	Percent Change
Buffalo Corridor	1.99	1.97	-0.02	-1.10%
Amherst Corridor	2.03	2.03	0	0.10%
Total Corridor	2	1.99	-0.01	-0.70%
Buffalo Niagara Region	2.18	2.18	0	-0.10%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

- **The Metro Rail Corridor has smaller households than the rest of the region, and their size is projected to continue reducing.** Table 7 indicates that households in the corridor were composed of two people on average in 2015, compared to 2.18 in the region. Household size in the Total Corridor is projected to decrease further between 2015 and 2040, and faster than the decrease projected for the region: the corridor will experience a 0.7% decrease over the period, compared to a 0.1% decrease in the region. It should be noted that this is consistent with typical Transit-Oriented growth scenarios because households living near transit tend to be smaller than households living at larger distances from transit.

Table 8. Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Corridor, 2015 and 2040

	2015	2040	2015-2040	
Employment Sector			Numeric Change	Percent Change
Industrial	8,407	7,671	-736	-8.80%
Retail	2,371	2,509	138	5.80%
Office	29,832	41,363	11,531	38.70%
Health/ Education/ Government	32,011	32,018	7	0.00%
Services	11,512	11,999	487	4.20%
Total Employment	84,133	95,560	11,427	13.60%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 9. Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Corridor, 2015 and 2040

	2015	2040	2015-2040	
Employment Sector			Numeric Change	Percent Change
Industrial	1,294	1,301	7	0.50%
Retail	6,609	7,022	413	6.20%
Office	12,190	16,698	4,508	37.00%
Health/ Education/ Government	15,435	15,486	51	0.30%
Services	6,806	7,221	415	6.10%
Total Employment	42,334	47,728	5,394	12.70%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 10. Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Total Corridor, 2015 and 2040

	2015	2040	2015-2040	
Employment Sector			Numeric Change	Percent Change
Industrial	9,701	8,972	-729	-7.50%
Retail	8,980	9,531	551	6.10%
Office	42,022	58,061	16,039	38.20%
Health/ Education/ Government	47,446	47,504	58	0.10%
Services	18,318	19,220	902	4.90%
Total Employment	126,467	143,288	16,821	13.30%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 11. Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Niagara Region, 2015 and 2040

	2015	2040	2015-2040	
Employment Sector			Numeric Change	Percent Change
Industrial	124,598	122,018	-2,580	-2.10%
Retail	75,037	78,323	3,286	4.40%
Office	168,317	209,715	41,398	24.60%
Health/ Education/ Government	194,106	213,002	18,896	9.70%
Services	99,864	121,448	21,584	21.60%
Total Employment	665,613	748,660	83,047	12.50%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

- **The corridor has an important concentration of office and health, education, and government jobs.** Table 8 through Table 11 present the existing (2015) and projected (2040) jobs by employment sector for both corridors separately, together, and for the region. As shown in Table 7, health, education, and government, as well as office jobs, are the major employment categories of jobs present in the corridor. As shown by national research, workers in these employment categories are more likely to ride transit to work. In addition, these industries drive growth for the entire region.
- **Employment growth is projected to be stronger, on average, in the Metro Rail Corridor than in the total region.** Table 8 and Table 9 show that employment in the Metro Rail Corridor is expected to grow by 13.3% between 2015 and 2040, compared to a 12.5% for the region.
- **The Metro Rail Corridor is projected to have strong growth in office jobs, above the growth projected regionally.** As Table 8 and Table 9 show, GBNRTC projects a 38.2% increase in office jobs between 2015 and 2040 for the Total Corridor; this growth is much higher than the growth in office employment in the region, projected at 24.6%. Office jobs – as well as health and education jobs – are drivers of local economic growth and have stronger ripple effects in terms of employment creation in other sectors.
- **The Metro Rail Corridor is the heart of the Buffalo-Niagara Region's employment and represents about a fifth of all regional jobs.** As shown in Table 10 and Table 11, the Total Corridor represents 19% of all employment in the region, which is mapped in Figure 18.
- **The Metro Rail Corridor contains almost a fourth of all office and health, education, and government jobs in the region.** Office and health, education, and government jobs in the Total Corridor represent, respectively, 25 and 24% of the region's total jobs in those sectors, as shown in Table 9.
- **Regional office jobs are projected to be even more concentrated along the Metro Rail Corridor in the future.** Table 11 indicates that 25% of office jobs in the Buffalo-Niagara Region are located in the Metro Rail Corridor; by 2040, this proportion is set to reach 28%.

Table 12. Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector as a Share of the Buffalo Niagara Region, 2015 and 2040

	<i>Buffalo Corridor</i>		<i>Amherst Corridor</i>		<i>Total Corridor</i>	
Employment Sector	2015	2040	2015	2040	2015	2040
Industrial	7%	6%	1%	1%	8%	7%
Retail	3%	3%	9%	9%	12%	12%
Office	18%	20%	7%	8%	25%	28%
Health/ Education/ Government	16%	15%	8%	7%	24%	22%
Services	12%	10%	7%	6%	18%	16%
Total Employment	13%	13%	6%	6%	19%	19%

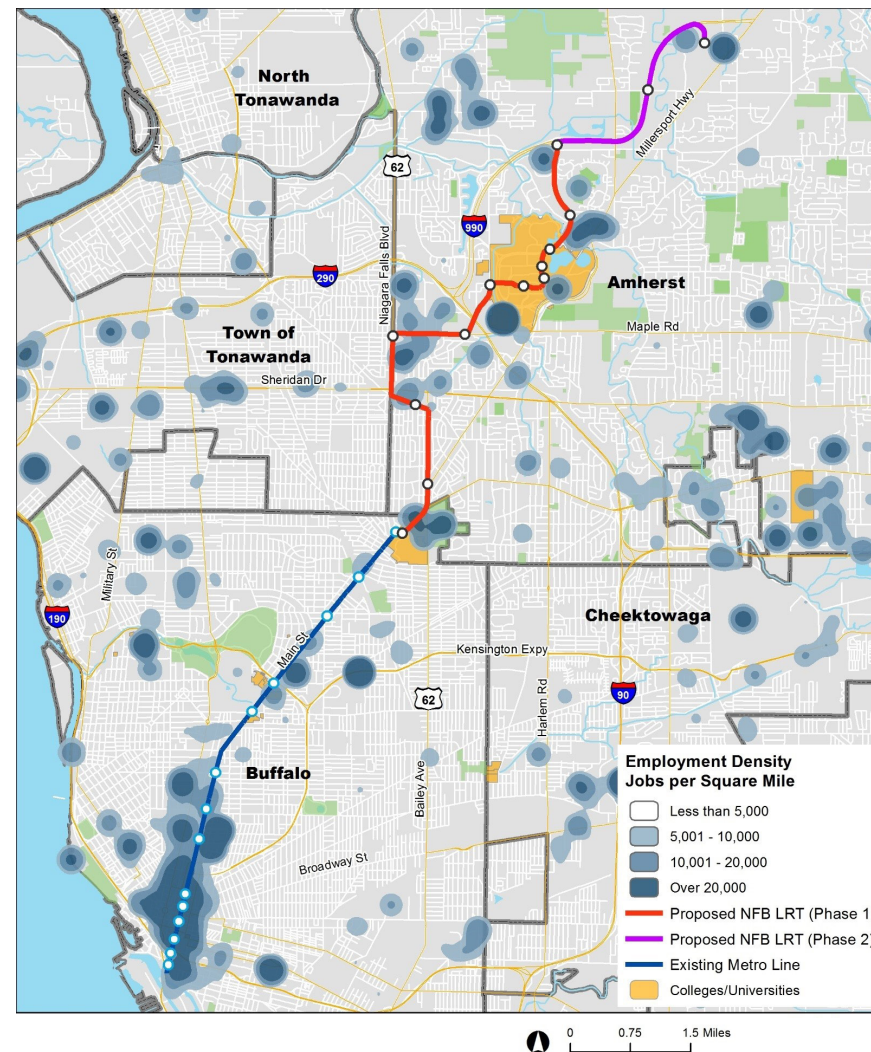
Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 13. Existing and Forecasted Jobs by Sector, Buffalo Niagara Region, 2015 and 2040

	<i>2015</i>		<i>2040</i>		<i>2015-2040</i>	
Geography	Number of Jobs	Share of Region	Number of Jobs	Share of Region	Nu- meric Change	Percent Change
Buffalo Corridor	84,133	13%	95,560	13%	11,427	13.60%
Amherst Corridor	42,334	6%	47,728	6%	5,394	12.70%
Total Corridor	126,467	19%	143,288	19%	16,821	13.30%
Buffalo Niagara Region	665,613	100%	748,660	100%	83,047	12.50%

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Figure 18. Map of Employment Concentration, Metro Rail Corridor, 2014



Source: LEHD, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2016.

6.3. FISCAL BENEFITS

This section of the analysis includes the estimated fiscal benefits associated with the Metro Rail extension. To calculate these fiscal benefits, a baseline scenario based on 2015 data was compared to a Transit-Oriented Development Scenario (TOD Scenario), which corresponds to annual fiscal revenues in a scenario where the Metro Rail extension is built and development and increased activity occurs in its proximity. All results are in 2015 dollars.

Although the population, households, and employment projections are shown for the Buffalo and Amherst Corridors separately in GBNRTC's projections, the analysis of fiscal benefits provides results at the corridor level, and assumes that a portion of the projected growth may reallocate itself between Buffalo, Amherst, and Tonawanda due to the presence of the Metro Rail extension. GBNRTC's projections for the Total Corridor, presented in the previous section, were used as the "control total" for the TOD Scenario in this section of the report. This control total indicates the total number of new households and jobs that the corridor can receive in a scenario where the Metro Rail extension is built.

The TOD Scenario translates into two major fiscal benefits to local jurisdictions, Erie County, and New York State: increases in property tax revenues and increases in sales tax revenues.

PROPERTY TAX REVENUES

To calculate the increase in property tax valuation that the Metro Rail extension could bring, the property value increase that would accrue to existing properties and the property values associated with new development that would locate near the Metro Rail line were estimated separately. The following discussion presents the steps taken to arrive at the results.

For existing development, based on a review of the literature on the property value impacts of light rail transit, it was assumed that the impact

of light rail transit on property values extends to a one mile buffer around existing and proposed stations, but that higher property value increases are observed closest to light rail transit stations. To this end, different property value increase factors (expressed as a percent of total value) were applied to parcels between zero and a quarter mile, a quarter mile and half a mile, and half a mile and one mile from stations (see Appendix C). These factors were higher around proposed stations than around existing stations. The reason for this is because even though existing stations have been in operation since the 1980s, and most of their property value premium has already been realized, the extension of Metro Rail into Amherst and Tonawanda will still add some value due to the increased connectivity to regionally significant employment destinations.

For new development, it was conservatively assumed that new development would only happen on parcels that are within a half mile of existing and proposed Metro Rail stations. Within this area, the potential land supply available for future development, based on assessment data provided by the City of Buffalo and the Towns of Amherst and Tonawanda, was composed of the following:

- **Vacant parcels:** The analysis excluded parcels that were smaller than a quarter of an acre, as they are less likely to be developed.
- **Underutilized parcels:** They were defined by calculating a ratio of assessed improvements to assessed land values (ILR): any parcel for which land is worth more than the value of the assessed improvements (i.e., with an ILR lower than 1), is considered as underutilized. Parcels with residential units, parks, open space, public/quasi-public, and any parcel under one quarter of an acre were excluded from this analysis.
- **Redevelopment parcels:** These sites were identified by NFTA and GBNRTC as having potential for redevelopment in the long term, in the TOD Scenario. Input from NFTA, GBNRTC, and planning staff from the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst was used to ascertain that the parcels that were selected were viable sites for potential development or redevelopment in the TOD Scenario.

LAND SUPPLY AND DEMAND

An important benchmark for this analysis is to test whether the land identified for potential development or redevelopment (the land supply) is sufficient to accommodate the future 2040 growth projected by GBNRTC in the Total Corridor. Table 14 displays the land inventory in the Metro Rail Corridor and shows that the corridor's development opportunity, or land supply, is 864 acres, composed of 383 acres in the Buffalo Corridor and 481 acres in the Amherst Corridor. While these figures seem substantial, they only represent 2% of the total acreage in the jurisdictions of Buffalo and Amherst, as shown in Table 15. Using conservative measures of dwellings per acre, employees per square foot, and floor-to-area ratios (FAR) by development type, the land demand associated with the GBNRTC 2040 projections for the Metro Rail Corridor was calculated. As Tables 12 and 13 show, the jobs projected in the Metro Rail Corridor by 2040 are estimated to require 332 acres of commercial land, while new households are estimated to require 109 acres of land. As land demand is lower than the identified supply (441 acres of demand, 481 acres of supply), it does not appear that there is or will be a land supply constraint in the corridor. Moreover, many of the new workers and households that will be in the Metro Rail Corridor by 2040 will likely occupy vacant commercial and residential space, and therefore will not all necessitate the construction of new space. As an example, Downtown Buffalo currently has approximately 1,685,200 square feet of vacant office space (class A and B)¹, which could be occupied by new workers.

¹ Source: Interview with Robert Dimmig, CBRE, October 2016.

Table 14. Land Inventory in the Metro Rail Corridor, 2015

	Total Land In Corridor	Developed Land Remaining in Existing Uses		Development Opportunity						Development Opportunity	
				Vacant Land		Underutilized Land		Land to be redeveloped		Acres	Percent
Land Use	Acres	Acres	Per- cent	Acres	Per- cent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent		
Buffalo Corridor	3,746	3,362	90%	196	5%	113	3%	75	2%	383	10%
Amherst Corridor	3,905	3,425	88%	54	1%	82	2%	344	9%	481	12%
Total Corridor	7,651	6,787	89%	250	3%	195	3%	419	5%	864	11%

Table 15. Development Opportunity and Total City/Town Land, in Acres, 2015

	<i>Buffalo</i>		<i>Amherst</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Development Opportunity in the Corridor	383	2%	481	2%	864	2%
Total Land in Jurisdiction	21,334	100%	28,820	100%	50,154	100%

Sources: City of Buffalo, 2015; Town of Amherst, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 16. GBNRTC Forecasted Commercial Development Land Demand, 2015-2040

Sector	Square Feet	Acres
Office	4,811,700	276
Retail/Services	726,500	56
Total	5,538,200	332

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 17. GBNRTC Forecasted Residential Development Land Demand, 2015-2040

	Square Feet	Acres
Households	2,861,800	109

Sources: GBNRTC, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The previous subsection shows land demand in acres, which is the correct metric for matching future land demand against supply. However, to measure assessed value and property tax revenues, it is necessary to translate future demand into built space and then apply a dollar figure by land use. Table 16 and Table 17 show the total future development potential along with estimated total assessed value of future development. Based on the GBNRTC projections and applying measures of dwellings per acre, employees per square foot, and FAR by development type, future development resulting from the extension of Metro Rail is expected to add approximately 8.4 million square feet of new development or substantial redevelopment by 2040, including both residential and commercial space. This anticipated future development is expected to result in a total assessed valuation of approximately \$1.7 billion. Existing properties where the current buildings and uses are expected to remain should see their

Table 18. Square Footage and Assessed Value of New Private Development, Metro Rail Corridor

Geography	Square Feet of New Development	Assessed Value of New Development
Buffalo Corridor	5,100,000	\$1,164,500,000
Amherst Corridor	3,300,000	\$527,400,000
Total Metro Rail Corridor	8,400,000	\$1,691,900,000

Sources: Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 19. Transit Premium on Assessed Values of Existing Properties, Metro Rail Corridor

Geography	Transit Premium on Assessed Values of Existing Properties
Buffalo Corridor	\$146,400,000
Amherst Corridor	\$164,500,000
Total Metro Rail Corridor	\$310,900,000

Note: The transit premium calculations exclude buildings classified as public or quasi-public.

cumulative assessed value increase by upwards of \$310 million as a result of their proximity to the Metro Rail extension, which connects with major employment centers.

Property Tax Revenues Results

As shown, the land supply in the Metro Rail Corridor is sufficient to meet the land demand associated with projected net new employment and households. In order to calculate property tax revenues, critical assumptions were made on the proportion of land labeled as “development opportunity” that would develop.² These assumptions were made by land use and by development opportunity type (vacant, underutilized, redevelopment), and calibrated to reach a total amount of development that is consistent with GBNRTC’s total 2040 employment and household projections for the entire Metro Rail Corridor.

Property tax rates were applied by land use for the City of Buffalo and the

² These assumptions are documented in the Appendix C.

Town of Amherst, excluding land use categories that are partly tax exempt. The analysis led to the following findings:

- **In the TOD Scenario, the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst would collect approximately \$61.5 million in property tax revenues in the Metro Rail Corridor.** Table 20 presents the total property tax revenues from properties located in the half mile buffer around existing and proposed Metro Rail stations, in 2015 dollars, both for the Baseline Scenario and the TOD Scenario. As shown, in the TOD Scenario, property tax revenues from the properties located in the Metro Rail Corridor would total approximately \$61.5 million on an annual basis, compared to \$46.5 million in the Baseline Scenario.³ Figures for the TOD Scenario are presented as annual revenues assuming the construction of the extension and future development.
- **In the TOD Scenario, property tax revenues in the Metro Rail Corridor would increase by about one third.** Table 21 shows that the increment in property tax revenues from the Metro Rail Corridor in the TOD Scenario is of \$15 million, which represents a 32 percent increase from the Baseline Scenario.

Table 20. Property Tax Revenues in the Metro Rail Corridor, Baseline and TOD Scenarios, 2015 Dollars

	Buffalo Corridor	Amherst Corridor	Total Corridor
Baseline Scenario	\$39,105,956	\$7,368,396	\$46,474,351
TOD Scenario	\$52,213,595	\$9,278,713	\$61,492,308

Sources: City of Buffalo, 2015; Town of Amherst, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2016.

³ Property tax revenues are much higher in the Buffalo Corridor than in the Amherst Corridor for several reasons: the tax base in the Buffalo Corridor is higher than in the Amherst Corridor (\$5.2 billion versus \$4 billion), and the City of Buffalo's overall tax rate is higher than the Town of Amherst's. Although Strategic Economics applied a lower premium coefficient to existing properties in the Buffalo Corridor than in the Amherst Corridor (as much of the value of transit has already been capitalized), these reasons lead to higher property tax revenues, and a higher increment in the TOD Scenario, in Buffalo.

Sales Tax Revenues

The amount of sales tax revenues that are associated with the net new retail development and sales occurring in the Metro Rail Corridor in the TOD Scenario (approximately 1.3 million square feet) were estimated. The list of assumptions used to calculate sales tax revenues is presented in Table 22, while results are shown in Table 23. As shown in Table 22, it was assumed that new retail development would have the same level of sales per square foot (\$339 per square foot) as Amherst's Boulevard Mall had in 2016. To account for the fact that some of the new development will not directly generate sales, and a portion of sales (such as groceries) are not taxable, 50% of sales associated with new retail development were discounted in the calculation of sales tax revenues. The analysis produced the following findings:

The TOD Scenario would lead to approximately \$8.7 million in sales tax revenues for the State of New York and \$10.3 million for Erie County. Table 22 shows that State and County sales tax revenues in the TOD Scenario would amount to approximately \$19 million. As in the previous section, this figure corresponds to annual sales tax revenues assuming the construction of the extension and future retail development.

Table 21. Increment in Property Tax Revenues Between Baseline and TOD Scenarios, 2015 Dollars

	Buffalo Corridor	Amherst Corridor	Total Corridor
Increment	\$13,107,640	\$1,910,318	\$15,017,957
Percent Increase	34%	26%	32%

Sources: City of Buffalo, 2015; Town of Amherst, 2015; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 22. Sales Tax Analysis Assumptions

Sales tax rate	8.75%
NY State share	4.00%
Erie County share	4.75%
Sales per square foot	\$339
Estimated New Retail Square Feet	1,282,840
Percent Taxable	50%

Sources: Boulevard Mall for Sale in Amherst, Buffalo Business First, July 29, 2016, <http://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/news/2016/07/27/boulevard-mall-up-for-sale.html>; Erie County Comptroller, 2016; International Council of Shopping Centers, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 23. Estimated Sales Tax Revenues, Annual, 2016 Dollars

Estimated Taxable Sales	\$217,441,380
New York State Sales Tax Revenues	\$8,697,655
Erie County Sales Tax Revenues	\$10,328,466
Total Sales Tax Revenues	\$19,026,121

Source: Strategic Economics, 2016.

6.4. ACCESSIBILITY

This section considers the increased accessibility benefits the Metro Rail NFB LRT extension would offer to people who either live in the corridor now, or could do so in the future. This benefit typically accrues to households in the form of lower transportation costs. The Federal Highway Administration⁴ estimates that households living in auto-oriented suburban locations typically spend as much as 25% of household expenditures on transportation. However, households living in locations with enhanced transit and where certain destinations can also be reached by biking and walking, typically spend as little as 9% of household expenditures on transportation. This difference in costs represents a significant benefit to households located in places with access to enhanced transit and other local amenities. For purposes of this analysis, the measure used to determine if a household is likely to have reduced transportation costs is the number of people who are both living and working in the Metro Rail Corridor. Although these people may not necessarily commute to work via transit, they can, or will, have the option to do so, thus potentially reducing overall transportation related expenditures.

As Table 24 shows, in 2014, 26% of the employed residents living in the existing Metro Rail Corridor also worked in the corridor. However, when the Metro Rail extension is factored in, as shown in Table 25, 30% of the employed residents in the total corridor also work in the corridor. This represents an additional 3,656 workers who, without having to move or change jobs, could substantially reduce their transportation costs if light rail transit were available today with current development patterns. These figures would likely be higher after the construction of the light rail extension, as more households and jobs will locate near transit stations.

⁴ Source: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/livability/fact_sheets/transandhousing.cfm

Moreover, as Figure 19 shows, a high number of workers who work in the Metro Rail Corridor live just outside the half mile buffer. To the extent that these people may be willing to walk slightly longer distances to ride Metro Rail as an alternative to driving to work, a potentially significant number of existing households could also achieve some form of accessibility benefit associated with reduced transportation costs. Similarly, many workers residing in the Metro Rail Corridor, as shown in Figure 20, work in Downtown Buffalo, at locations close to existing Metro Rail stations. The construction the Metro Rail extension would allow a portion of them to opt to use transit to reach their place of work.

This benefit could accrue to many more workers in the TOD Scenario which projects an increase of 16,821 jobs in the Total Corridor. Currently, as Table 26 shows, 8% of workers employed in the Total Corridor also live in the corridor. If this existing capture rate is applied to future workers employed in the Total Corridor, an additional 1,339 workers in the Total Corridor would also live within a half mile of transit, reaching a total of 9,942 residents who both live and work in the Total Corridor. However, this figure assumes that the current pattern holds; given that the Total Corridor has sufficient land capacity, a larger number of workers could reside within the half mile buffer and receive the accessibility benefits of enhanced transit, including reduced transportation costs.

Table 24. Where Residents of the Existing Metro Rail Corridor Work, 2014

	Number	Percent of Total
Living and Employed in the Existing Metro Rail Corridor	4,947	26%
Living in the Existing Metro Rail Corridor but Employed Outside	14,030	74%
Living in the Existing Metro Rail Corridor	18,977	100%

Sources: US Census, Longitudinal Employment Household Dynamics Data, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 25. Where Residents of the Total Metro Rail Corridor Work, 2014

	Number	Percent of Total
Living and Employed in the Total Metro Rail Corridor	8,603	30%
Living in the Total Metro Rail Corridor but Employed Outside	20,458	70%
Living in the Total Metro Rail Corridor	29,061	100%

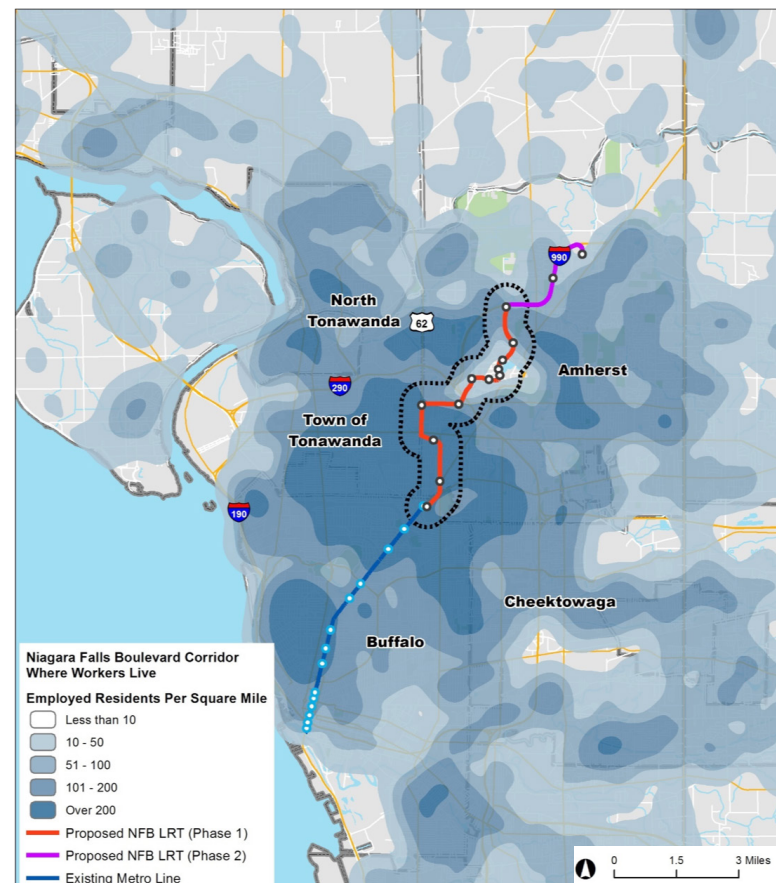
Sources: US Census, Longitudinal Employment Household Dynamics Data, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Table 26. Where Workers in the Total Metro Rail Corridor Live 2014

	Number	Percent of Total
Employed and Living in the Total Metro Rail Corridor	8,603	8%
Employed in the Total Metro Rail Corridor but Living Outside	99,492	92%
Employed in the Total Metro Rail Corridor	108,095	100%

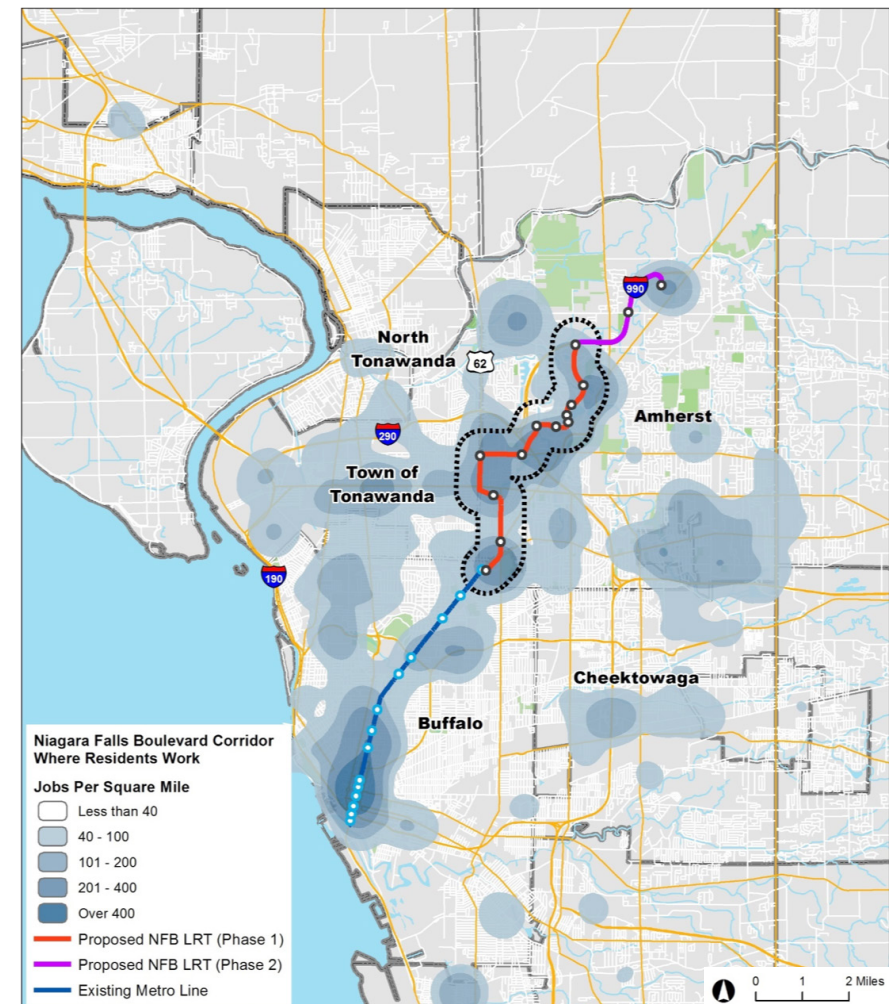
Sources: US Census, Longitudinal Employment Household Dynamics Data, 2014; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Figure 19. Map of Place of Residence of Workers Employed in the Amherst Corridor, 2014



Note: Map shows where workers in the Niagara Falls Boulevard half-mile corridor commute from (home locations).
Source: LEHD, 2014; NFTA, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

Figure 20. Map of Place of Work of Employed Residents in the Amherst Corridor, 2014



Note: Map shows where workers in the Niagara Falls Boulevard half-mile corridor commute from (home locations).

Source: LEHD, 2014; NFTA, 2016; Strategic Economics, 2016.

6.5. BUFFALO-NIAGARA REGION MARKET TRENDS

OVERALL OFFICE MARKET

In 2016, the Buffalo Office Market vacancy rate continued its decrease to 12.5%, a considerable reduction from the previous year's rate of 13.5%. In contrast to last year, the market is outperforming the national office vacancy rate of 13% (CBRE Research, Q3 2016). The market showed positive net absorption with 337,154 sq. ft. absorbed. Downtown continues to be a bright spot with strong activity and interest by tenants, while the suburban submarkets were generally flat. Over 300,000 sq. ft. in completions were added to the office inventory with 257,824 sq. ft. projected. Projected construction has slowed leading into 2017, but projects have been announced and will enter the pipeline in coming years.

An increase in activity was experienced throughout the second half of 2016. High density office tenants seeking efficient layouts and parking remain drawn to the suburban options. The back-office industry continues to thrive in Western New York and has become a critical element in the overall stability of the office market. The healthcare industry remains a major driver in medical office building construction nationally and the same is true for Buffalo. Tenants continue the "flight to quality" and are becoming drawn to the overall "live, work, play" experience with amenity filled buildings which help attract and retain employees.

Unemployment declined in 2016 for the Buffalo-Niagara area while the workforce continued to shrink. Tenants both locally and nationally are competing for skilled workers and this will be reflected in office space requirements. The suburban markets resiliency is matched with the concerns over employee parking and the region's success in attracting back office service operations. Tenants will continue to shift throughout the submarkets searching for the right deal as leases expire and real estate costs are questioned. The next few years will be closely watched as Buffalo continues its drive to attract new businesses from outside the area.



Recently redeveloped One Canalside with office, hotel, and retail, and Seneca One Tower that is currently undergoing redevelopment from office to mixed-use.

SUBMARKET - BUFFALO

The Buffalo market is poised for positive growth in 2017. Downtown momentum is here to stay with projects planned both in the CBD and outside the city. The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) evolution continues with over 250,000 sq. ft. planned in future development and firms increasingly being drawn to the campus address.

Downtown options continue to grow with redevelopments stretching outside the growing central business district (CBD) and creating new hot spots of development. Tenant confidence is growing but shrinking footprints and rightsizing continues. While not accounted for in this report, sublease space is still prevalent throughout the submarkets. Tenants are becoming increasingly interested in acquiring quality space as rental rates in the city reach all-time highs.

The uncertain future of the vacant One Seneca Tower no longer remains a mystery with the notable sale of the office building to Douglas Development from Washington, D.C. The redevelopment plan removes a large amount

of office space for conversion into other uses. This plan affected the change in vacancy but is not considered absorbed office space. This was reflected in the CBD submarket with the Class A vacancy decreasing by 4.6% to 16.9% and a drop in overall vacancy from 17.8% to 14.7%, down 3% from the prior year. The Class B vacancy rate also decreased and is now 13.2% from last year's 14.6%.

The City Other Submarket remained fairly level with little change as the overall vacancy rate went from 11.5% to 11.6% with 125,929 sq. ft. of positive net absorption. The Class A product continued to attract tenants with vacancy dropping 2.6% to 1.1%. Vacancy increased for Class B product to 21% as new inventory was added outside the CBD. Flex office vacancy dropped to 8.9% from 12% with 23,855 sq. ft. being absorbed. The City Other submarket occupancy improved as more and more outdated buildings are being redeveloped and residential projects bring new life to stagnant areas. Rents in the popular Larkin and Hydraulics District push upward with tenants showing a willingness to pay more for quality, amenity filled buildings.

SUBMARKET AMHERST

Buffalo's suburban submarkets continued their historic overall stability. With the revitalization and growing demand for space downtown, it was questioned whether the suburban market would feel the impact in 2016. Any concerns were met with minimal changes in vacancy throughout the product types and in each submarket.

The North Submarket Class A vacancy increased slightly to 19.3% with a negative absorption of 4,824 sq. ft. Class B vacancy also rose up 1.9% to 9.2%. The flex office vacancy decreased, down 1.8% to 11% with just under 50,000 sq. ft. of positive absorption. The overall vacancy rate had little change, now 12.4% from 12.2%. Rental rates were largely flat, however reduced rents were seen for space that had been vacant for some time. Crosspoint Business Park continued its expansion with single tenant new builds coming online. The Getzville park has been able to secure new tenants while accommodating growth of large back office employers with high density parking needs.

OVERALL RETAIL MARKET

A four-year trend of declining retail vacancies came to an end for the Western New York retail real estate market in 2016. After recording the lowest retail vacancy rate in 15 years in 2015, Western New York experienced a slight increase of approximately 0.7% in 2016 with an overall retail vacancy rate of 10.3%.

The 2016 Western New York retail vacancy rate is 3% above the 2016 Q3 US National rate of 7.3% (CBRE-EA Research Q3 2016). The gap between the two numbers isn't overly alarming given the fact that the Western New York retail real estate market is still considered stable at 10.3%. Additionally, the local labor market is very strong and is experiencing increased traction in wage growth and other key economic indicators.

While vacancies were up slightly in 2016, activity remained strong and spread across the various sectors and trade areas. The enclosed mall sector experienced the announcement, closure, and subsequent sales of three Macy's big box locations at two different properties. Macy's closed their 128,000+ sq. ft. department store situated on over 10 acres at the Eastern Hills Mall in Williamsville. The building and its associated land was purchased from Macy's by the mall owners, Mountain Development Corporation. As previously announced in early 2016, the owner's plan for the Mall is to redevelop it into a lifestyle center. In the Southtowns at the McKinley Mall, Macy's closed two stores. The department store operations were housed in a 92,000 sq. ft. retail box on 10 acres of land and the home store operations were in a 35,000 sq. ft. building which included approximately 8 acres of land. Macy's sold both of these properties to Benderson Development in 2016. Also, for the first time since developing it in 1962, the Cleveland-based Forest City Development company put the 900,000+ sq. ft. Boulevard Mall in Amherst up for sale in mid-2016. Macy's also recently closed a store at Boulevard Mall.

Also announced in late 2016, Sears will be closing two of their big box department stores located at The Boulevard Mall (Amherst, NY) and the Walden Galleria Mall (Cheektowaga, NY). These future closures are not factored in the calculations for 2016.

National retailers, especially those that are food related, continued their expansion into Western New York in 2016. Qdoba Mexican Cantina entered the market in 2016 with two locations, Tim Hortons continues to add to its store count, and Sonic announced plans for their second WNY location. Just east down Interstate 90, Chick-fil-A announced plans to open stores

in the Rochester and Albany markets. It's highly probable that the Buffalo market is on Chick-fil-A's radar screen for the near future.

SUBMARKET - BOULEVARD TRADE AREA

The Boulevard trade area was active in 2016. From a vacancy perspective, the overall rate of 9.7% dropped approximately 1.4% from the previous year. A contributing factor to this decrease was the sale of the former Walmart on Niagara Falls Boulevard to a company that recently opened a large scale indoor Asian market in the former big box store. The construction of Western New York's first Whole Foods Market on the site of the former Northtown Plaza continued in 2016. The projected opening for Whole Foods was in the fall of 2017. The developer of the site, WS Development, also has plans to add an adjacent retail redevelopment with higher-end retail stores including an upscale pub/restaurant. The overall development will have an emphasis on leisure and a relaxed shopping experience with large green areas that will be transformed for seasonal recreational uses like an ice rink during cold weather months.



Boulevard Mall on Niagara Falls Boulevard

SUBMARKET - BUFFALO TRADE AREA

As anticipated, the Buffalo trade area was very active in 2016. A good indicator is that the vacancy rate dropped by 5.3% to an overall rate 11.5% for 2016. A contributing factor to the significant reduction of vacant space was the reclassification of older retail property that is no longer on the market for a traditional retail lease. Aside from this "reclassification," the Buffalo trade area continues to be very active especially in the restaurant category. Some newcomers to the Buffalo scene in 2016 were The Dapper Goose in Black Rock on Amherst Street, Thin Man Brewery on Elmwood Avenue, Billy Club on Allen Street, Sport City Pub on Niagara Street, SEAR and Patina 250 on Delaware Avenue, and a locally-inspired food hall called EXPO which opened on Main Street adjacent to the Market Arcade.

Another indication the restaurant sector is experiencing a growth spurt is the opening of a Gordon Restaurant Market, a wholesale restaurant supply store, on Elmwood Avenue in the former Office Depot.

U.S. MARKET - OVERVIEW

The overall U.S. retail market continued its positive trending in 2016. Retail vacancies fell to 7.3% (CBRE-EA Research Q3 2016) at the end of Q3 2016. The overall U.S. retail market has seen availability either decrease or remain the same for 23 consecutive quarters dating back to Q1 2011. Continued improvement in U.S. retail market fundamentals is anticipated for 2017 given the nations healthy job market and growing consumer confidence.

OVERALL MULTI-FAMILY MARKET

Multi-family property sales in Western New York continued the strong trends of per unit price appreciation and brisk volume of units sold that have been evident throughout the 12-year period CBRE-Buffalo has been tracking such results. There were 185 transactions representing 2,867 apartment units sold in 2016 for a total consideration of \$147,450,798.

The 185 transactions in 2016 represents the highest annual total for Western New York since the deep economic recession period which commenced in 2008, and far exceeds the 135 per year average number of transactions for the 2009-2015 period.

Two factors affected transaction volume in our region. The first factor is the continuation of record low interest rates, in particular over the past year. Undoubtedly investor anxiousness to make new purchase and mortgage

commitments before rates begin their inevitable rise has affected volumes. The 10-year Treasury yield, considered a benchmark measure for mortgage rates in general, stood at 2.28% on December 15, 2015, fell below 2% on January 28, 2016, and continued sliding downward, remaining comfortably below 2% until breaking above on November 9, 2016. The U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) on December 14, 2016 announced its first Federal Funds rate increase of 2016 (and only the second one since 2008) by a quarter of a percent to between 0.50% and 0.75%. All interest rates are driven by Fed policy and in December 14th trading, the 10-year Treasury yield jumped to 2.60%. The Fed, in their accompanying announcement, predicts a median Federal Funds rate around 1.4% by the end of 2017, rising further to 2.1% by the end of 2018 and as high as 2.9% by the end of 2019.

The second factor affecting transaction volume is that Western New York, being a smaller market population-wise by national standards, is attractive to investors from both within and far beyond our region. The supply/demand element cannot be understated; we have experienced this throughout the history of our MarketView reporting through dialogue with investors and



University Place on Sweet Home Road contains mixed-use development with hotel, multi-family residential, and retail

observations of investor appetite regardless of underlying economic cycles and interest rate trends. The \$51,556 average sale price per unit in 2016, while slightly below the record \$53,274 set in 2015, represents a more than 43% increase over the average of the prior eleven years.

Largest Transactions: With Western New York being a tertiary market by U.S. comparative population measures, wide swings in the numbers of multi-family and commercial property transactions are the norm. Typically, a relatively small percentage of overall transactions can comprise the bulk of total dollar consideration, in effect driving our market and pricing therein. In 2016, 30 of the 185 transactions (1,969 of the 2,867 units sold) and \$111.6 million, or approximately 75% of the \$147.5 million total consideration, represented what CBRE|Buffalo considers the largest, most significant transactions in our market. Largest transaction criteria is 40 or more units and/or greater than \$1 million per transaction. Of the 30 largest transactions, seven were in the City of Buffalo, 21 were in Erie County outside the City, and two were in Niagara County. The total of 30 larger transactions for the Western New York market is extraordinary since the number per year has averaged less than half that total for as long as we have compiled our report.

Western New York has traditionally been a long-term hold market for multi-family investors. A static population base along with rental rate increases limited to approximating the Consumer Price Index, means short term ownership periods of a few years or speculative build projects have been and continue to be largely nonexistent. This is particularly the case with larger properties of a few dozen or more units and/or those that have been privately held by the same family or investor group. More than half of the largest transactions in 2016 can be attributed to sellers who had been long term owners and had reached the end of their investment cycles, with the distribution of proceeds among individuals moving their investment focus to other asset categories and/or other regions.

SUBMARKET - BUFFALO TRADE AREA

In 2016, for the second year in a row the average sale price per unit for City of Buffalo properties as a submarket have outpaced the levels for the balance of Erie County and the Western New York region as a whole. Whether or not this will continue as a long-term trend remains to be seen, but with more people seeking a “city lifestyle,” new development, adaptive reuse, and overall redevelopment within the City is likely to continue. This increased demand, coupled with higher rents, has been reflected in pricing as properties are resold.

Beginning with CBRE-Buffalo’s first MarketView report more than a decade ago, the adaptive reuse of functionally obsolete properties such as warehouses, offices, schools and churches into viable multi-family and mixed-use projects has been discussed. What essentially started with the conversion of the former Berger’s department store on Main Street into The Belesario apartments in the 1990s, and conversion of the Elk Terminal

on Scott Street into the Lofts @Elk Terminal apartments in the early 2000s, has now reached into many diverse areas of the City of Buffalo and its established suburbs.

Two of the City’s most notable and creative current rental apartment developments provide direct waterfront access (Freight House Landing at 441 Ohio Street), or water views (Crescendo Lofts at 1502 Niagara Street). Freight House Landing, a mix of one and two-bedroom units plus first floor commercial space and covered parking, will provide boardwalk access and kayak/canoe launch availability for residents from its Buffalo River frontage.

Crescendo Lofts, on Niagara Street near the foot of Potomac Avenue, is nearing completion and will include 47 one and two-bedroom apartments, fitness center, on-site parking and a restaurant. A development team led by Angelo Natale is pioneering this venture to transform part of an industrial district dating back to the early 20th century.



Fenton Building Adaptive Reuse into apartments and retail.

6.6. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT MARKET READINESS

This section presents key findings from the assessment of market readiness for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) along both the existing Metro Rail Corridor and near the stations on the proposed Metro Rail extension to the Northtowns. This is a follow-up to previous work on the economic benefits of a Metro Rail expansion in the Buffalo region, which found that the entire Metro Rail Corridor, including the existing and extended rail line, could support approximately 3,200 new housing units and almost 17,000 new jobs by 2040. At an aggregate level, this suggests strong demand for TOD. However, translating this demand into actual investment in either existing buildings or new construction will require many steps, including an understanding of how future TOD demand translates into future TOD supply.

This section provides insights into this process by analyzing “market readiness” for investment using real estate transactions as a measure of the relative market value of various locations along the corridor. The assumption is that as market values increase for various uses, the financial return to investors will be sufficient to warrant investment in one of three types of TOD: 1) reinvestment in existing buildings for similar uses; 2) reuse of existing buildings for new uses; and, 3) redevelopment of existing properties for more intensive use. By identifying areas of market strength and weakness, this analysis identifies where the market has already, or will likely, support transitions in land use and/or development densities, and how and where transit is likely to have a positive impact on the market.

Because this analysis is measuring TOD market readiness for the entire corridor, not for individual properties, or even station areas, the findings identified herein are relatively general. Real estate sales transactions over time by use and by corridor segment are used as the proxy for investment value, and as sales prices have increased to match or exceed prices within broader geographies, segments along the corridor have been deemed more or less market ready for TOD.

More specifically, this analysis examines TOD market readiness within the half-mile “buffer” including both the current Metro Rail line and its proposed future alignment – spanning from Downtown Buffalo to the Northtowns. To understand variation along the corridor, the study area is divided into four segments:

- Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo, from DL&W Terminal to Allen/Medical Campus station
- Segment 2 Main Street, from Summer-Best to University station
- Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd/Eggertsville, from University to Maple Ridge station
- Segment 4 University at Buffalo/Audubon, from Maple Ridge to Dodge Road station

TOD READINESS METHODOLOGY

The findings of this analysis are based primarily on a time-series analysis of parcel-level sale transactions. The dataset used consists of all sales transactions that occurred between 1997 and 2016 for all product types within a specific sample of parcels located in the half-mile corridor ⁵.

The change in average sale price per square foot is the main metric used to compare relative market strength – both across segments and across product types (residential, commercial/retail, office, and industrial uses). This measure is used as a proxy for market performance. The advantage of this measure is that it allows standardized comparisons across segments, despite differences in their respective sample size and land use composition.

The product types used are defined below:

- Residential: single-family, multi-family apartments (including student housing), condominiums, and all other residential uses
- Commercial: retail, eating/drinking places, personal services, hotel, auto-oriented, and arts/entertainment uses
- Office: office and R&D uses
- Industrial: manufacturing, warehouse, distribution, and other general industrial uses

Nearly 8,000 unique parcels located within the half-mile corridor were tracked for this analysis. Areas along key commercial avenues and in major residential areas were more heavily sampled, to increase the likelihood of

⁵ This dataset was collected and provided by Landmax; subsequently refined by CBRE and WSP; and finally analyzed by Strategic Economics.

capturing major transactions and trends. Table 27 summarizes the number of parcels sampled for each segment as a share of all parcels found within that given segment. Although parcels were not sampled randomly⁶, the sample size is large enough to offer robust big-picture trends over time. Furthermore, all findings are aggregated by segment or by product type, thus also ensuring more robust conclusions. Finally, the sale transaction analysis described above was supplemented by other data relating to market conditions in the corridor and the region, including: office and retail lease rates from 2007-2016 (from CoStar); residential multi-family rents from 2007-2016 (from CoStar); as well as residential median sale price from 1997-2016 (from Zillow).

The combination of sale price analysis and lease rate analysis paints a picture of the market from both an investor's perspective – looking at products as long-term assets – and from a local market perspective – understanding the current conditions and valuation of real estate products. Together, these measures characterize the relative performance and strength of various markets.

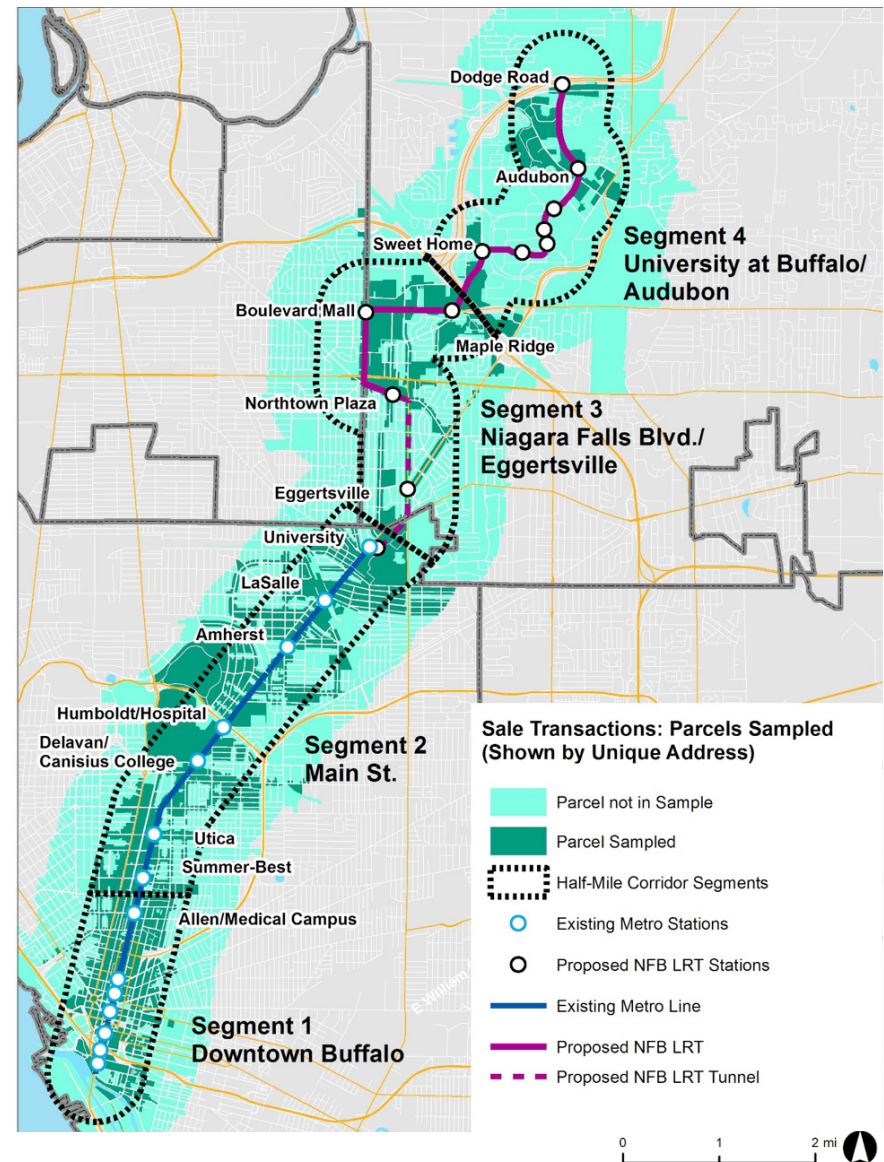
Table 27. Parcels Sampled for the Sale Transaction Analysis, Compared to All Parcels in the Half-Mile Transit Corridor

	<i>Total Parcels in Segment*</i>	<i>Parcels Sampled</i>	<i>Percent of All Segment Parcels</i>	<i>Percent of All Sample Parcels</i>
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo	2,872	1,393	49%	18%
Segment 2 Main St. Buffalo	11,006	5,235	48%	66%
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd./ Egbertsville	6,725	1,196	18%	15%
Segment 4 University at Buffalo/ Audubon	684	133	19%	2%
Total Half-Mile Corridor	21,287	7,957	37%	100%

*Sample parcel count is based on unique parcel address (Erie County Assessor Data).

⁶ As seen in Table 27, approximately half of all parcels found in Segment 1 and Segment 2 were sampled, while 20 percent of parcels in Segment 3 and 4 were sampled. Furthermore, due to the large number of parcels and sample parcels in Segment 2, transactions from this segment represent a large share (66 percent) of the total sample. It is also worth noting that parcels were not sampled proportionally to the land use makeup of the segment.

Figure 21. Parcels Sampled for Sale Transactions Between 1997 and 2016

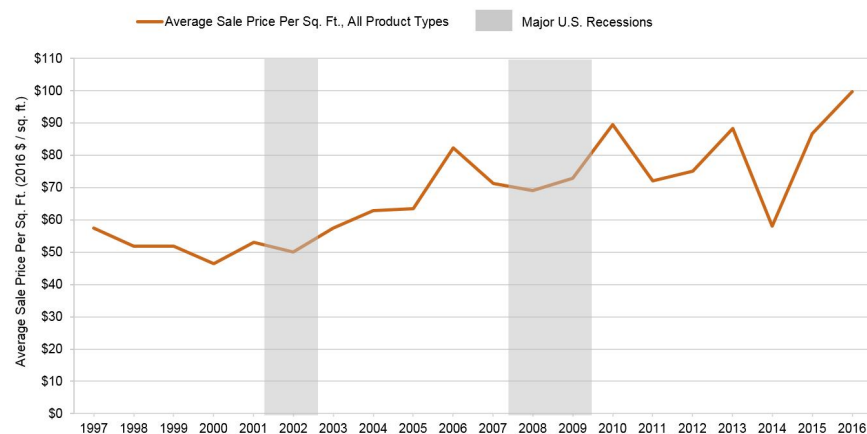


Source: Erie County, 2017; Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

Finally, the sale transaction analysis described above was supplemented by other data relating to market conditions in the corridor and the region, including: office and retail lease rates from 2007-2016 (from CoStar); residential multi-family rents from 2007-2016 (from CoStar); as well as residential median sale price from 1997-2016 (from Zillow).

The combination of sale price analysis and lease rate analysis paints a picture of the market from both an investor's perspective – looking at products as long-term assets – and from a local market perspective – understanding the current conditions and valuation of real estate products. Together, these measures characterize the relative performance and strength of various markets.

Figure 22. Average Sale Price for All Transactions in Sample, 1997-2016



All sale price amounts are expressed in 2016 dollars.
Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

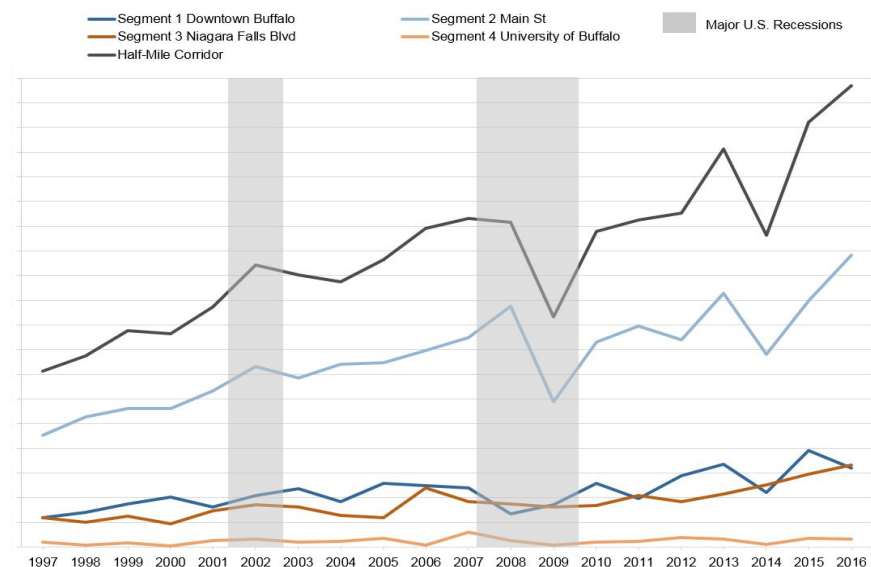
6.6.1. TOTAL CORRIDOR MARKET OVERVIEW

The corridor's basic market activity – as measured by the total number of sale transactions – grew significantly in the past two decades (Figure 23). Given the constant number of sample parcels tracked, the number of transactions jumped from 178 in 1997 to over 460 in 2016 – an increase of 160 percent.

Between 1997 and 2016, market activity in Segments 1, 2, and 3 multiplied at comparably high speeds. The number of transactions in Segments 1, 2, and 3 followed the corridor's overall trend, increasing by similar rates over the same period. However, Segment 4, which already displayed a smaller number of transactions compared to other segments in 1997, also had a notably slower increase in sale transaction activity (60 percent growth from 5 transactions in 1997 to 8 transactions in 2016). To some extent, this may reflect that nature of the underlying ownership pattern in Segment 4. This area has a significant number of office and industrial developments: these are often purchased and held by large investment groups, with the

Figure 23. Total Number of Sale Transactions in Sample, 1997-2016

3. Total Number of Sale Transactions in Sample, 1997-2016



Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

expectation that the return on investment is generated by the property's cash flow, rather than its speculative value at resale. Transaction activity in the corridor has been moderately responsive to broader economic trends, and has slowed down during major recession.

Figure 23 highlights how transaction activity was affected during the two major recessions of the last two decades, namely the 2001-2002 recession following the Dot-com bust and 9/11 attacks, and the 2007-2009 subprime mortgage crisis. Transaction activity stagnated only slightly following the recession in the early 2000s, but dropped more significantly – especially in Segments 1 and 2 – during the Great Recession. However, transaction numbers recovered and surpassed previous levels between 2010 and 2016, despite a short but deep dip in 2014. Perhaps more telling than the number of transactions is the average sale price of products being sold. Figure 22 shows the change in average sale price for all product types across the half-mile corridor.

Despite various fluctuations, between 1997 and 2016 the corridor showed a 75 percent increase in the sales value of all real estate product types. Average sale price per transaction increased from \$58 per square foot in 1997 to \$100 per square foot in 2016.⁷ Although stagnant between 1997

⁷ All dollar amounts are expressed in 2016 dollar values.

Table 28. Average Sale Price Per Square Foot by Product Type, across the Half-Mile Transit Corridor

	<i>Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 1997</i>	<i>Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 2016</i>	<i>Absolute Change 1997-2016</i>	<i>Percent Change 1997-2016</i>
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo	\$76	\$101	\$24	32%
Segment 2 Main St.	\$50	\$101	\$52	105%
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd/ Eggertsville	\$78	\$88	\$10	13%
Segment 4 University at Buffalo/ Audubon	\$71	\$120	\$50	70%
Half-Mile Corridor	\$58	\$100	\$42	73%

All sale price amounts are expressed in 2016 dollars.

*Data is insufficient to provide an average sale price in 2016.
Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.
See Appendix B for full data.

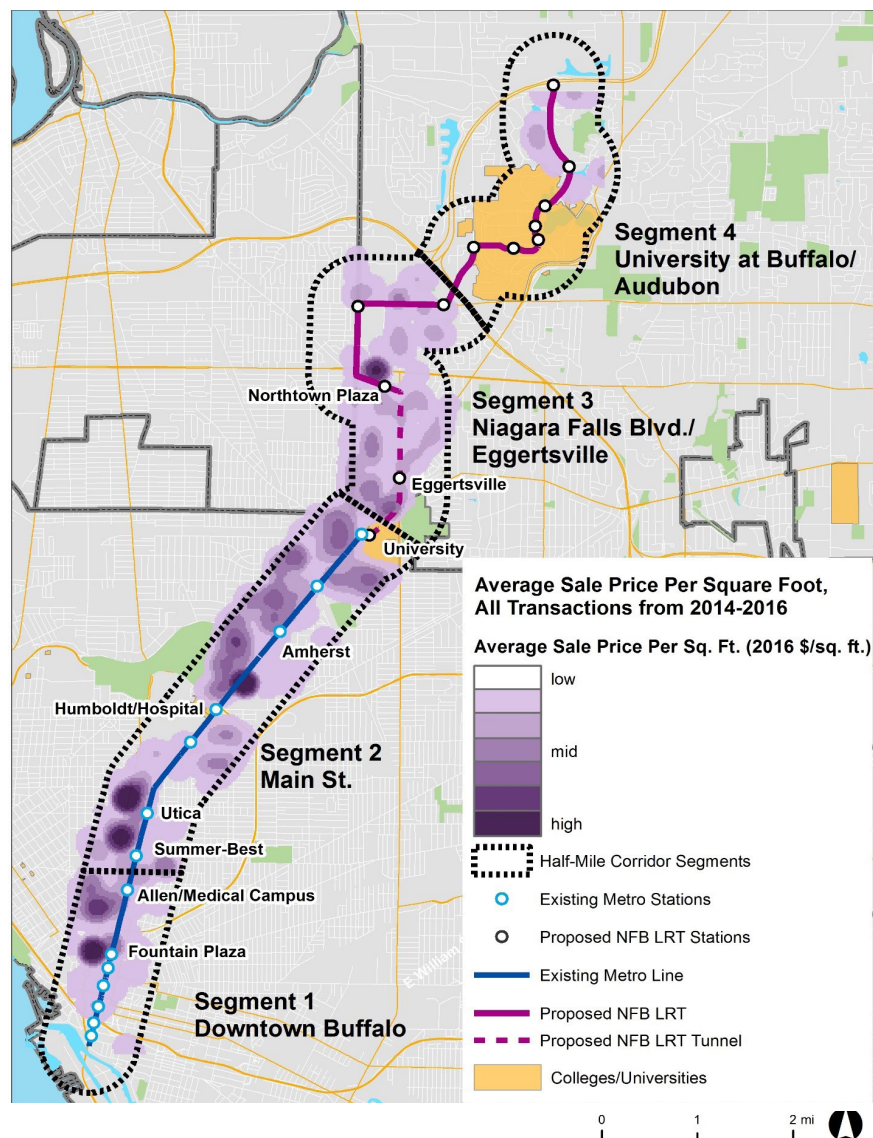
and 2002, sale prices experienced a period of strong growth after the Dot-com bust up until 2006. Since then, sale prices have fluctuated between \$60 and \$90 per square foot. However, in the last two years, they have started to recover and even surpass the mid-2000s peak, reaching a new peak of \$100 per square foot 2016.

PERFORMANCE BY SEGMENT

To understand market readiness for TOD, relative strengths must be identified at the segment-level. Table 28 summarizes change in average sale price between 1997 and 2016, by segment. Key findings are as follows:

- Segment 2 has had the strongest marginal increase in overall market performance. While this segment commanded low sale prices in 1997 (\$50 per square foot), these values doubled in the last 20 years (\$101 per square foot) and are now at competitive levels with Segment 1 and Segment 4, and even surpass Segment 3.
- Segment 1 has had a modest marginal increase in market performance. Between 1997 and 2016, average sale prices increased from \$76 to \$100 per square foot. Although its marginal market growth is smaller than Segment 2, Segment 1 finds itself today in a competitive position.
- Segment 3 has had a relatively weak market performance in the last 20 years, and has become relatively less competitive compared to more central segments. Between 1997 and 2016, Segment 3 saw the slowest increase in average sale price. While this segment appeared to command the highest sale prices in 1997 (\$78 per square foot), it commanded the lowest prices overall in 2016 (\$88 per square foot).
- Segment 4 has had a relatively marked growth in sale price and continues to remain a higher-priced area than other parts of the corridor. With an average sale price of \$120 per square foot in 2016, Segment 4 is considerably higher-priced than other segments.
- Segments more central and accessible to and from Downtown Buffalo (Segment 1 and 2) have experienced more growth in their market values; whereas Segment 3 has had a more lagging market.
- The new Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus is driving most of the value increases in Segments 1 and 2, while Segment 3 has not yet experienced the same level of transformative investment. The job

Figure 24. Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for All Transactions, 2014-2016



Source: Erie County, 2017; Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

growth in Segment 1 associated with build-out of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus has helped both the office market in Segment 1 and the housing market in the southern section of Segment 2. Segment 3, is also transitioning, although more slowly. The reinvestment in Northtown Plaza is an early indicator of this process. The eventual sale of Boulevard Mall could also eventually have a significant impact on Segment 3's overall real estate values.

Figure 24 illustrates the concentration and intensity of sale prices for recent transactions only. It highlights that each segment does not have a uniform distribution of market activity; rather, each segment has nodes that are stronger or weaker in today's market. Key findings are below:

- Downtown, Allentown, Bryant, and Elmwood Village – located in Segments 1 and 2 – display the strongest market nodes in the corridor. This corresponds to trends observed in Table 2.
- In Segment 2, strong market activity is found throughout the southern and western parts of the segment only, namely near Utica and Summer-Best stations, as well as westward of Main Street, near Humboldt/Hospital and Amherst stations. The eastern half of Segment 2 has limited activity.
- In Segments 1 and 3, market activity is concentrated in a small number of nodes. For instance, Segment 3 has two main nodes, near the Northtown Plaza station and between University and Eggertsville station; Segment 1 has a strong concentration of activity in the north-west corner – although these are somewhat more diffuse than Segment 3's nodes.

MARKET PERFORMANCE BY LAND USE TYPE

In this section, market performance is broken down by land use type. Corridor-wide trends are described below (and summarized in Table 29).

- Sale prices for office uses were the highest of all other uses in 1997, and remain so in 2016. Their value has increased at a similar rate (72 percent) as the average for all transactions.
- Commercial products experienced the highest increase in sale price value over time, in both absolute numbers and percentages. Although commercial products sold at a lower price than residential products in 1997, they have now caught up, and even slightly surpassed, residential uses.
- Residential products performed well in the last two decades, with a 45 percent increase in average sale price. Although residential uses did not increase as much as commercial and office uses, they remain not too far behind, with sale prices hovering around \$84 per square foot in 2016.
- Industrial products declined in value and lost their relative position compared to other uses. Although it has seen considerable fluctuation since 1997, the average sale price for industrial products was down to \$18 per square foot in 2016—noticeably lower than other product types. This demonstrates one important reason that adaptive reuse projects make financial sense: an industrial product can be purchased at a low price and, if transformed into an office, commercial or residential product instead, can be later resold at a much higher price.

In the following sections, residential, commercial and office, and industrial uses and their market strength by segment are examined in turn.

Table 29. Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Residential Sales, by Segment

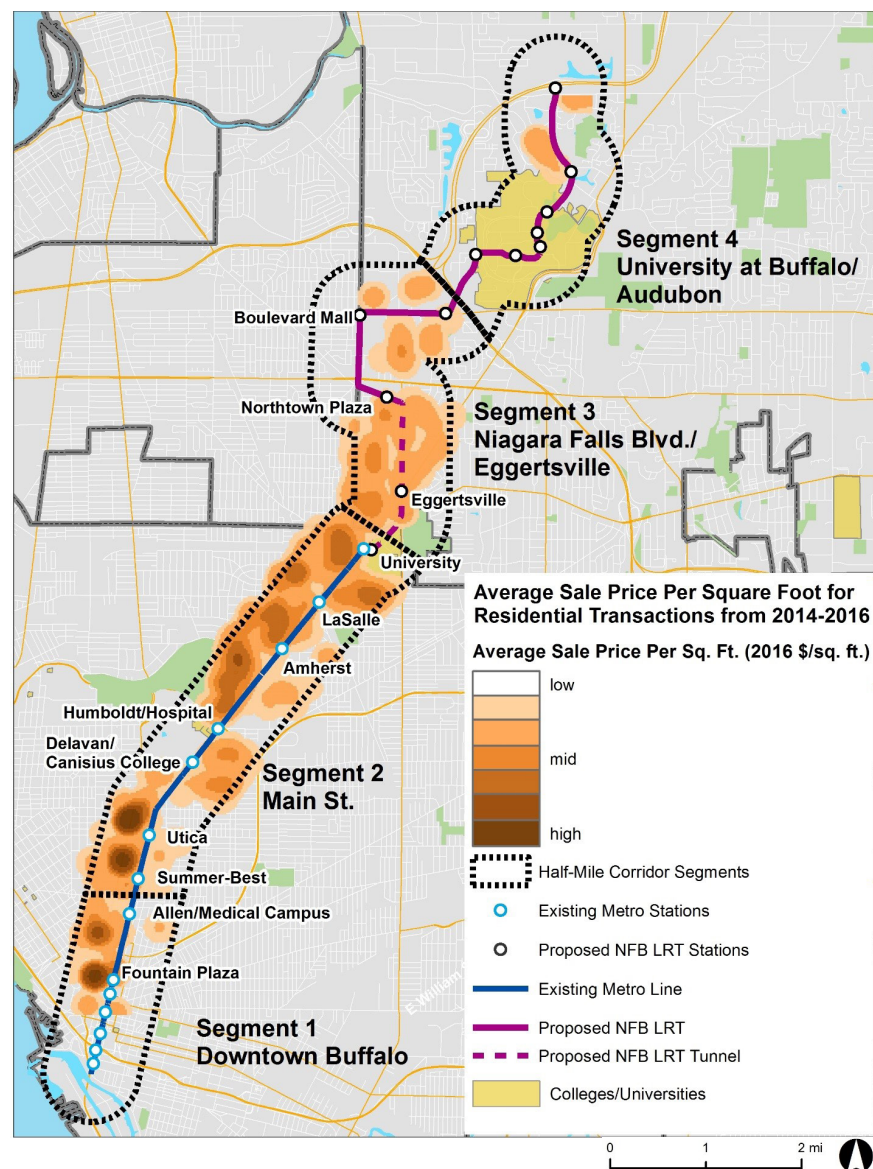
	<i>Total Parcels in Segment*</i>	<i>Parcels Sampled</i>	<i>Percent of All Segment Parcels</i>	<i>Percent of All Sample Parcels</i>
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo	\$82	\$116	\$34	42%
Segment 2 Main St.	\$52	\$82	\$29	56%
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd/ Eggertsville	\$75	\$70	-\$5	-7%
Segment 4 University at Buffalo/ Audubon*	n/a	\$92	n/a	n/a
Half-Mile Corridor	\$58	\$84	\$26	45%

All sale price amounts are expressed in 2016 dollars.

*Data is insufficient to provide an average sale price in 1997.

Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

Figure 25. Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Residential Sales, 2014-2016

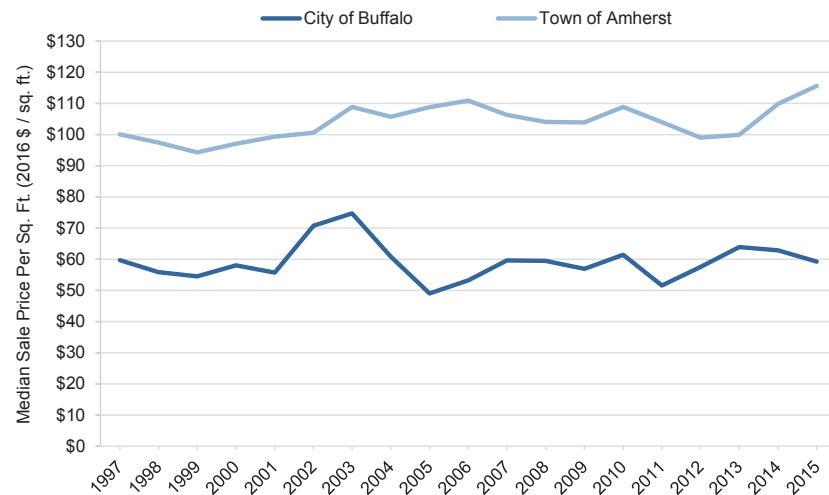


Source: Erie County, 2017; Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

RESIDENTIAL MARKET PERFORMANCE

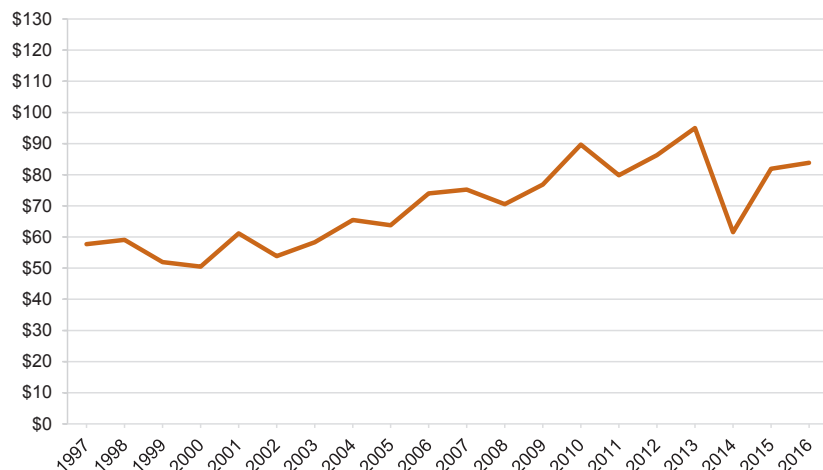
- Segment 1 and 2 have the strongest residential markets within the corridor, with steady increases in residential sale prices in the last 20 years (Table 30). Segment 1, which displayed some of the highest sale prices in 1997, has continued to grow and in 2016 still offers high prices. Segment 2, although offering very low prices in 1997, has caught up and now has relatively strong residential prices relative to the rest of the corridor. Also, Segment 2 has surpassed Segment 3 in terms of residential sales values.
- In contrast, the residential market in Segment 3 has witnessed a small but steady decline, as evidenced by a negative growth in residential sale prices (Table 30). While Segment 3 used to display sale prices much higher than the corridor-wide average, and higher than Segment 2, in 2016 its residential market value dropped to the lowest among the four segments. Although this might be due to the higher prevalence of single-family homes in this area, this still demonstrates that Segment 3 is not keeping up with the growth that occurred in Segments 1 and 2.
- Segment 4 also shows an overall downward trend for sale prices. Although values remain higher than the corridor-average, sale prices are not growing in value.
- Looking at nodes of high-priced residential sales from 2014 to 2016 (Figure 25) further confirms these trends:
- The most marked concentrations of high residential sales values are found in the north-western portion of Segment 1, and the southern and western portions of Segment 2. Several market rate residential projects are partly contributing to these high values. In turn, the eastern neighborhoods along Main Street (Masten Park, Fruit Belt, Cold Springs...) have suffered from disinvestment and vacancies, and only a few pockets emerge on the east side, such as near LaSalle and Delavan/Canisius College stations.
- Segments 3 and 4 show much more sparse concentrations of high prices for residential products. The southern portion of Segment 3 between Eggertsville and Northtown Plaza stations is the exception, with modest sale prices evenly distributed in the neighborhoods surrounding these potential future stations.

Figure 26. Median Sale Price Per Square Foot in the City of Buffalo and Town of Amherst, all Residential Types, 1997-2016



Data pulled for Q4 of each year. Values are expressed in 2016 dollars. Source: Zillow, 2017; Strategic Economics, 2017.

Figure 27. Average Sale Price Per Square Foot in the Half-Mile Corridor, All Residential Types, 1997-2016



Data pulled for Q4 of each year. Values are expressed in 2016 dollars. Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

Comparing median sales prices in the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst (Figure 26) to average sales prices in the half-mile corridor (Figure 27) provides useful context for the segments' overall performance. Because the data are not showing the same measure of value, they are shown in two separate charts (the city level data are stated as a median value, which is the only format in which the data are available, while the corridor level data have been stated as a mean, or average value⁸). Although a direct comparison of sales value between these geographies is not possible due to these differences, general trajectories over time and relative changes in value provide important insight:

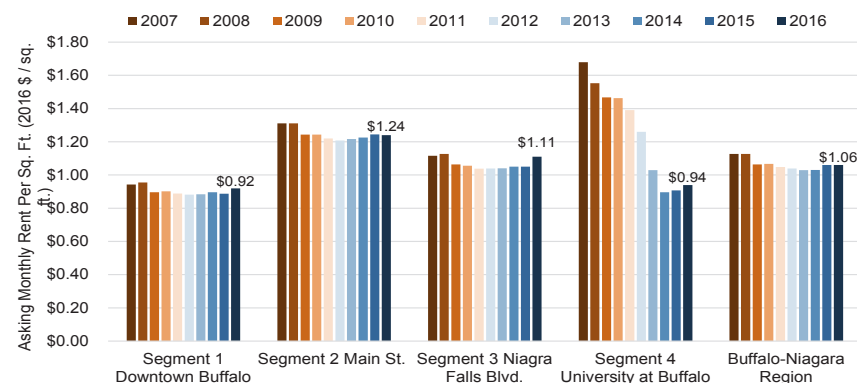
- The half-mile corridor today is more competitive than the City of Buffalo in terms of sales value. While the City of Buffalo experienced a slight decline in median sale price per square foot since 1997, the half-mile corridor increased in sales value. The corridor and the City had similar sales values in the late 1990s, but by the mid-2000s, the corridor surpassed the City of Buffalo, and has on average reached values closer to that of the Town of Amherst. Of note, the residential market in the more centrally-located Segments 1 and 2 has experienced a similar trajectory to the corridor overall and has become more robust than the City of Buffalo over time. In contrast, Segment 3 and 4 have had sales values higher than the City of Buffalo for most of the past two decades, but the gap between the City of Buffalo and Segment 3 has been closing in recent years. Finally, Segment 3 and 4 have not kept up with the Town of Amherst's increases in residential sale prices.

⁸ The data displayed in Figure 7.a. is Zillow's median sale price per square foot for all homes, while the data displayed in Figure 7.b. is the average sale price for the half-mile corridor, computed based on the parcel-level data provided by Landmax and CBRE. Because average measures tend to show higher values than median measures for variables such as prices, a direct comparison is not possible. However, general trends and relative changes in value can still be surmised from these different data sources.

Residential rents for multi-family product (Figure 28) complement the data on sale price, as they provide a more direct measure of current market conditions and the immediate value placed on multi-family properties, which are also the preferred residential TOD product type.

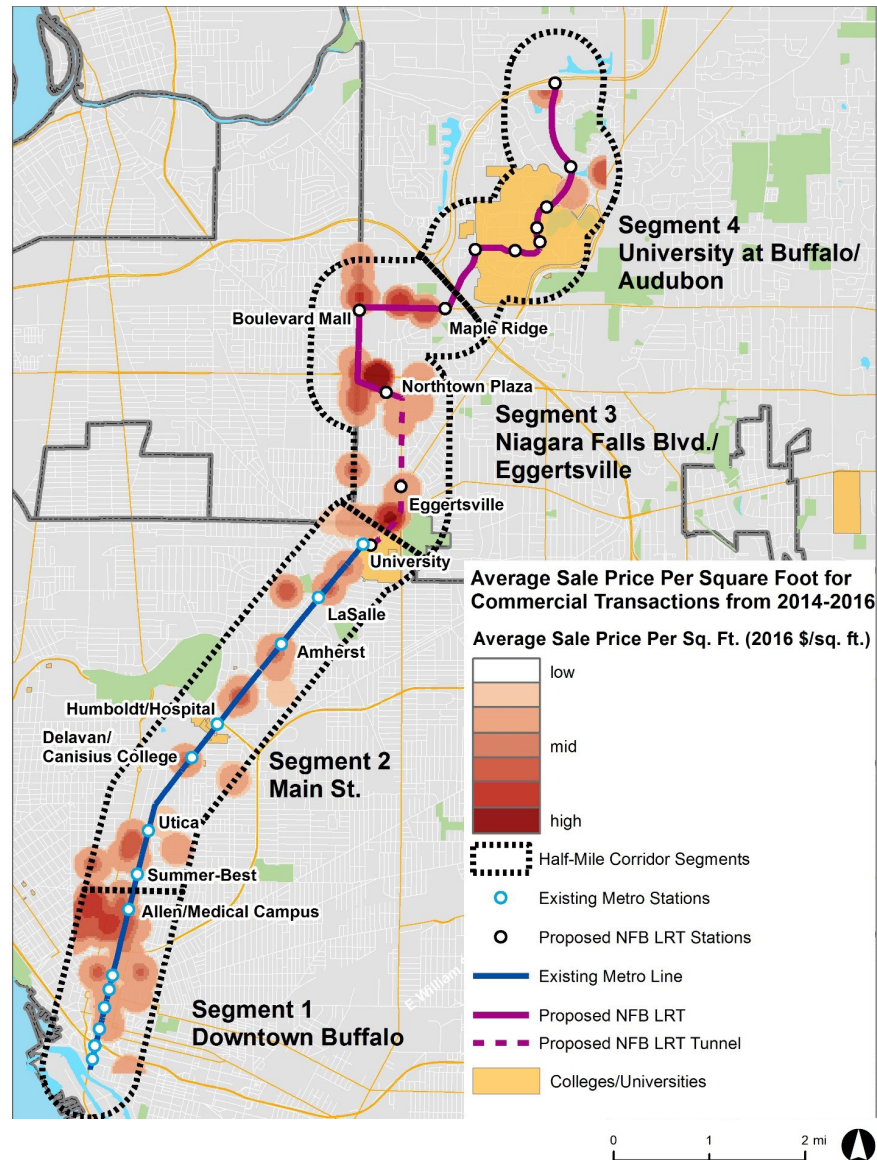
- Average multi-family rents in 2016 in the corridor point towards relative market strength for higher density, i.e. TOD housing products, in different segments of the corridor. Notably, rents in Segment 1 are lower than the regional average, whereas rents in Segment 2 are relatively strong – indicating a real potential for new multi-family products in Segment 2.
- While residential sale prices have increased over time, especially in Segment 1 and 2, multi-family rents have remained relatively stable over the last decade. While Segment 1 has had a steady upward pressure in sale prices, its residential rents remain lower than the regional average, and lower than other parts of the corridor. This trend in rents is similar across the region and across all segments other than Segment 4. This may represent a near-term barrier to new construction, as current rents are sufficient to provide an adequate return for property acquisition, but not for new construction. New construction requires a higher return because costs and risks are higher.
- In Segment 3, rents are higher than the regional average, but sale prices remain relatively low. This indicates another potential opportunity to leverage new investment.
- In Segment 4, multi-family rents have decreased significantly in the last ten years – and as described above, sale prices have also been in decline. In other words, the residential rental market in Segment 4 is not as strong as it was before the recession, nor is it currently competitive with Segments 2 or 3.

Figure 28. Multi-family Monthly Asking Rent Per Square Foot, by Segment, 2007-2016



Data pulled for Q4 of each year. Values are expressed in 2016 dollars.
Source: CoStar, 2017; Strategic Economics, 2017.

Figure 29. Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Commercial Sales, 2014-2016



Source: NFTA, 2017; Landmax, CBRE, WSP and Strategic Economics, 2017.

COMMERCIAL (NON-OFFICE) MARKET

Table 30 summarizes change in average sale price for commercial transactions over time, and Figure 29 shows the concentration of high sale prices for recent (2014-2016) transactions:

Segment 3 has considerably higher sales values for commercial products than any other segment.⁹ In both 1997 and 2016, sale prices in Segment 3 were over \$50 more per square foot than other segments. Although these values have fluctuated over the time period analyzed, they have remained higher than other areas overall. Segment 3 is well positioned to capitalize on this pre-existing asset.

- Segment 1 experienced a definite strengthening in its commercial market, with average sale prices having doubled between 1997 and 2016. This increase in value of commercial products now places Segment 1 as a relatively competitive segment for commercial properties.
- Segment 2, however, has not fared as well as other segments. While it had sales values comparable to Segment 1 in 1997, by 2016, Segment 2 trailed behind the other three segments, despite a modest increase in sales value.

Sale prices for commercial products must also be considered in conjunction with retail rents (Figure 32):

- Although most segments experienced increases in sales values, retail rents, on the other hand, have remained flat or declined in the past 10-20 years. Retail rents across the region and in most segments, have been in decline since 2007. These declines are most marked in Segments 1 and 2, which now have lower rents than the regional average, which was not the case in 2007.

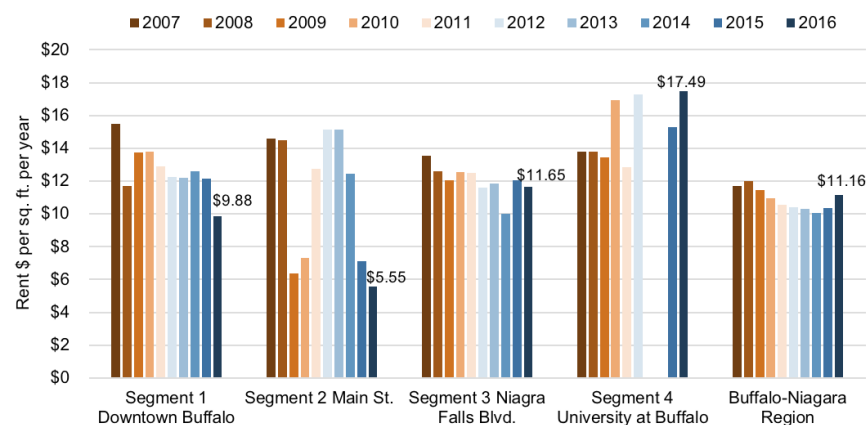
As Figure 29 shows, in the last two years analyzed, high-value commercial transactions were clustered in a few specific nodes along the corridor. While Segment 2 had very few locations where commercial transactions were generating mid- to high sales values, the highest-priced areas were located in Downtown Buffalo/Allentown, and in key commercial areas of Segment 3, such as around Boulevard Mall and along Maple and Eggert Roads.

OFFICE MARKET PERFORMANCE

Looking at the change in average sales values for office properties (Table 31) and office rents (Figure 32), the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Segments 1, 2 and 4 have seen a general upward trend in their office market values, measured in terms of sale transaction price. Segment 1 and 2, in particular, have had similar increases from \$50-60 per square foot to over \$100 per square foot. These segments now have higher values than Segment 4 – although this segment has also experienced some limited growth.
- The office lease rates confirm the overall competitiveness of Segment 1 for the office market relative to other parts of the corridor, and even relative to the region (Figure 32). This is a strength of the Downtown area: Segment 1 has the highest office rents in the corridor, and lease rates have increased in the last five years –the only segment in the corridor to have this kind of upward trend for rents. Figure 33 further illustrates this point, showing that the highest value node for office properties is in Downtown Buffalo, in the CBD area west of Fountain Plaza station. A strong cluster is also present around the Allen/Medical Campus station.

Figure 31. Retail Annual Direct Rent (Triple Net) by Segment, 2007-2016



Data pulled or Q4 of each year. Annual rents are adjusted to 2016 dollar values.
Source: CoStar, 2017; Strategic Economics, 2017.

Table 30. Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Commercial, by Segment

	Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 1997	Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 2016	Absolute Change 1997-2016	Percent Change 1997-2016
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo	\$33	\$69	\$36	108%
Segment 2 Main St	\$32	\$49	\$17	53%
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd/ Eggertsville	\$108	\$172	\$64	60%
Segment 4 University of Buffalo/ Audubon*	n/a	\$161	n/a	n/a
Half-Mile Corridor	\$45	\$97	\$52	115%

All sale price amounts are expressed in 2016 dollars.

*Data is insufficient to provide an average sale price in 1997.

Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

Table 31. Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Office Sales, by Segment

	Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 1997	Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 2016	Absolute Change 1997-2016	Percent Change 1997-2016
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo*	n/a	\$110	n/a	n/a
Segment 2 Main St.	\$57	\$137	\$80	139%
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd/Eggertsville*	n/a	\$79	n/a	n/a
Segment 4 University of Buffalo/Audubon	\$71	\$89	\$18	25%
Half-Mile Corridor	\$63	\$108	\$45	72%

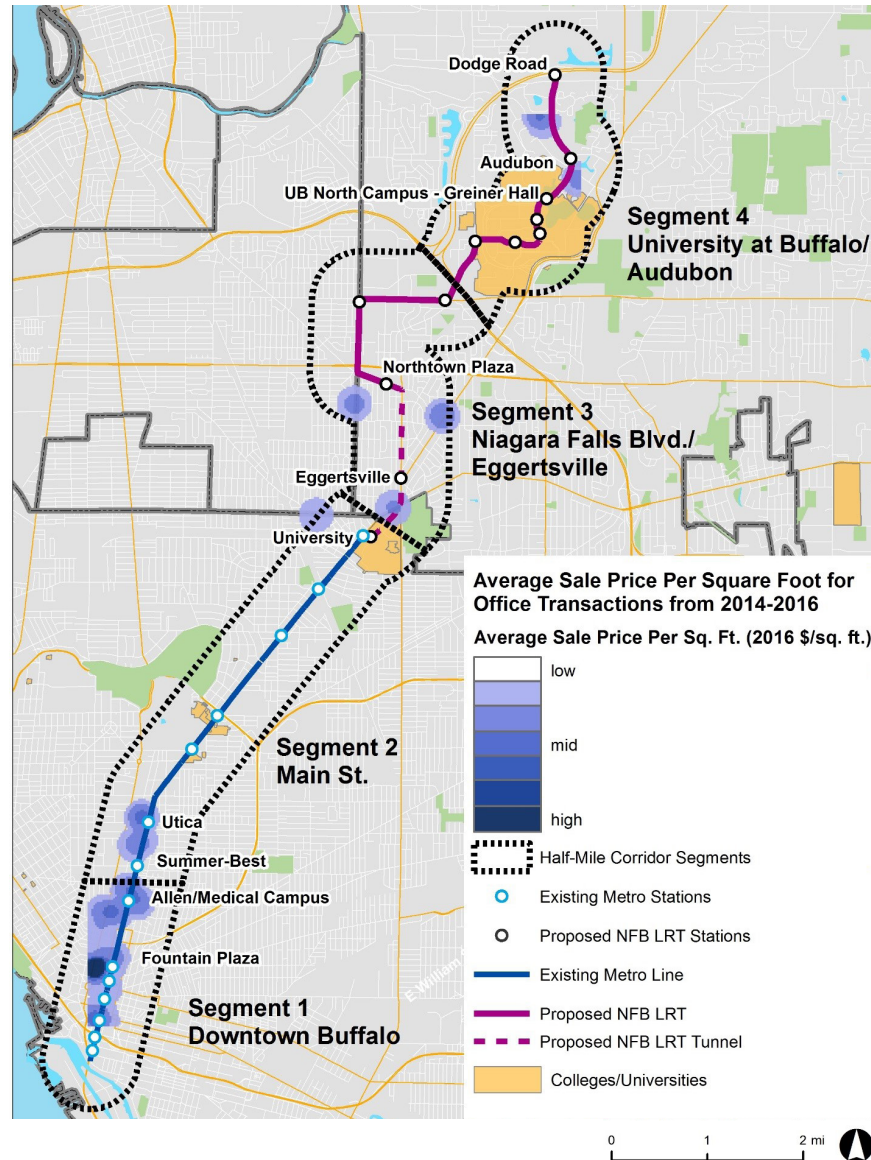
All sale price amounts are expressed in 2016 dollars.

*Data is insufficient to provide an average sale price in 1997.

Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.

See Appendix D for full data.

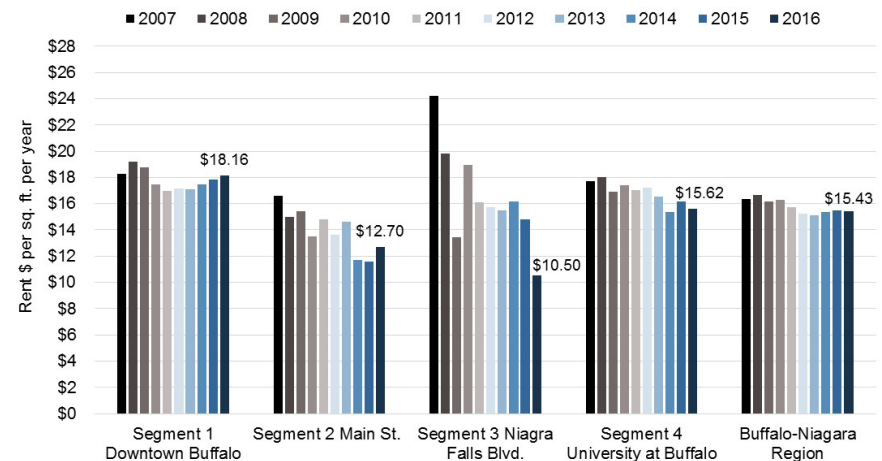
Figure 32. Density of Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Office Sales, 2014-



Source: NFTA, 2017; Landmax, CBRE, WSP and Strategic Economics, 2017.

- Segment 2 also appears to have one single major cluster of office activity, in the southern portion, surrounding Utica station along Main Street.
- Segment 4 office rents have declined slightly over time, but overall, this segment is still tracking with regional trends. This indicates that the office market in Segment 4 might hold potential for TOD. As shown in Figure 33, there are small nodes of sales activity in Segment 4 in the various office parks located north of the University at Buffalo North Campus.
- However, Segment 3 has seen a decline in average sales values, and a marked decline in office rents (Figure 11). As seen in Figure 12, the small pockets of office activity in Segment 3 are isolated from each other and do not appear strong, relative to other areas.

Figure 33. Office Annual Gross Rent by Segment, 2007-2016



Data pulled on Q4 of each year. Annual rents are adjusted to 2016 dollar values.
Source: CoStar, 2017; Strategic Economics, 2017.

INDUSTRIAL MARKET PERFORMANCE

The number of industrial sales transactions by segment is too small to draw reliable conclusions about the relative performance of industrial products in the half-mile corridor. Furthermore, data on industrial lease rates were not collected for the segments due to the limited number of industrial parcels in the sample. However, Table 7 shows that, between 1997 and 2016, industrial property values dropped considerably. Given the relative value difference between residential rents and industrial land values, it is easy to understand why there have been many adaptive reuse projects along the corridor in recent years, where old industrial buildings have been converted to residential, or even office, uses.

Table 32. Average Sale Price Per Square Foot for Industrial Sales, by Segment

	<i>Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 1997</i>	<i>Average Sale Price Per Sq. Ft. 2016</i>	<i>Absolute Change 1997-2016</i>	<i>Percent Change 1997- 2016</i>
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo*	n/a	\$19	n/a	n/a
Segment 2 Main St*	n/a	\$17	n/a	n/a
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd/Eggertsville*	\$60	n/a	n/a	n/a
Segment 4 University of Buffalo/Audubon*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Half-Mile Corridor	\$60	\$18	-\$42	-70%

All sale price amounts are expressed in 2016 dollars.

*Data is insufficient to provide an average sale price in 1997.

Source: Landmax, CBRE, WSP, and Strategic Economics, 2017.
See Appendix D for full data.

<i>Reinvestment</i>	<i>Reuse</i>	<i>Redevelopment</i>
- Reinvestment in existing buildings for the existing use - Filling vacancies or renovation to modern standards	- Reuse of existing buildings for a different use - Adaptive Reuse of commercial or industrial buildings for mixed-use	- Redevelopment of properties for new mixed-uses - Vacant land underutilized land



6.7. IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Based on the combination of parcel-level sale transaction data over a 20-year period and on supplemental lease data for the apartment, commercial, and office markets, the findings below summarize each segment's market readiness for new TOD investment. Potential implications for TOD, market sequencing, and investment strategies for different segments are also explored, based on each area's relative market strengths and weaknesses.

6.7.1. OVERVIEW

The half-mile transit corridor appears ripe for new investment in select areas. Measured in terms of average sale price, the corridor has witnessed a considerable increase in market value across most product types.

On the one hand, the more centrally-located and accessible segments – Segment 1 and Segment 2 – have experienced net growth in market strength over the last two decades. This likely reflects a general trend towards increased market interest in urban living which offers a much stronger live/work/play environment than traditional suburban locations. Transit access is also one of the urban amenities that is contributing to this trend.

On the other hand, the more suburban segments– Segment 3 and 4 – have not experienced as much growth or seen their markets strengthen as decidedly, even though these segments retain high rents and/or sale prices for certain product types. Based on the data analyzed in this report, there has been less of an upward market trend towards these areas. These findings reflect the fact that the real estate products in the suburbs are somewhat outmoded and needing reinvestment. However, Segments 3 and 4 still offer similar locational benefits to Segments 1 and 2, especially when compared to other parts of the region. The Metro Rail expansion is likely to enhance this benefit and distribute the increases in value to more locations along the corridor.

Further, while real estate sales prices along the corridor have shown growth over the last two decades, lease rates have remained fairly static. This indicates a desire by developers and investors to purchase property along the Metro Rail Corridor at what are relatively lower prices with the anticipation that adaptive reuse and infill projects with access to transit as well as major institutions will render the property more valuable in the

future. However, the static lease rates indicate that the ability to charge increased lease rates for projects is still lagging, making it difficult to generate a return on investment for projects that don't receive some sort of incentive.

For this reason, different strategies and timelines should be considered for segments along the corridor. For the segments that have experienced weaker growth, new transit accessibility has the potential to spur new investment by increasing the area's connectivity to major regional employment concentrations including major institutions like UB, and cultural and entertainment venues, like the Theatre District and HARBORCenter. The expansion of Metro Rail could help leverage interest and investment in these areas, and in some ways, they stand to benefit the most from the expansion. At the same time, even the segments that already have light-rail service and have experienced stronger growth, still stand to benefit from the Metro Rail expansion because more key destinations in Amherst will be accessible, including the UB north campus and the Boulevard Mall area.

The discussion below presents the findings regarding TOD market readiness more specifically by segment and product. These findings are also summarized in Figure 34. Here, TOD market readiness is defined based on two dimensions:

Investment Type: Three broad investment types are suggested: Reinvestment in existing buildings for the existing use (for example, filling vacancies or refurbishment and renovation). Reuse of existing buildings for different uses (for example, reusing industrial buildings for apartments). Redevelopment of properties with existing uses that would be demolished and replaced with new development and most likely, new uses or a mix of uses. These findings do not necessarily distinguish between redevelopment of existing buildings and new development on currently vacant land. Thus, the “redevelopment” category types includes possible new construction.

Development/Investment Timing: While specific phasing assumptions have not been identified, an effort was made to indicate which locations are likely to experience some type of new investment within a near-term, mid-term, or long-term timeframe. These timeframes are suggested as relative to each other, rather than as fixed time periods.¹⁰

¹⁰ The way these timelines play out will depend on (1) the phasing of the new transit line, and (2) how that phasing lines up with national economic cycles. Although the current economic cycle is still one of recovery (expansion), it is unclear how much longer this cycle will last before peaking and contracting again.

Figure 34. TOD Market Readiness by Segment and by Land Use Type

		RESIDENTIAL *			COMMERCIAL (NON-OFFICE)			OFFICE		
		Market Trends		TOD Market readiness	Market Trends		TOD Market readiness	Market Trends		TOD Market readiness
		Sale price per square foot	Rent		Sale price per square foot	Rent		Sale price per square foot	Rent	
Segment 1 Downtown Buffalo	Change over time	Increase + +	Flat	Near-term: reinvestment and adaptive reuse; Mid-term: redevelopment	Increase + +	Decline - -	Mid-term: reinvestment or reuse	Increase + +	Increase	Near-term: reinvestment
	Absolute value 2016	High compared to corridor	Low compared to region		Low compared to corridor	Low compared to region		Comparable to corridor	High compared to region	
Segment 2 Main St	Change over time	Increase + + +	Flat	Near-term: adaptive reuse and redevelopment	Increase +	Decline - -	Mid-term: redevelopment	Increase + +	Decline - -	Mid-term: reinvestment
	Absolute value 2016	Comparable to corridor	High compared to region		Very low compared to corridor	Very low compared to region		High compared to corridor	Very low compared to region	
Segment 3 Niagara Falls Blvd	Change over time	Decline - -	Flat	Mid-term: redevelopment	Increase +	Decline -	Near-term: reinvestment and redevelopment	Decline - -	Decline - -	Long-term: redevelopment
	Absolute value 2016	Lower than corridor (Used to be high, now lowest)	High compared to region		Very high compared to corridor	Comparable to region		Lowest compared to corridor	Low compared to region (Used to be higher than region, now lower)	
Segment 4 University of Buffalo	Change over time	Decline - -	Decline - - -	Long-term: redevelopment	n/a	Increase +	n/a, to monitor	Increase +	Flat	Mid-term: reinvestment; Long-term: redevelopment
	Absolute value 2016	Comparable to corridor	Comparable to region		n/a	High compared to region		Low compared to corridor	Comparable to region	

Source: NFTA, 2017; Landmax, CBRE, WSP, 2017; CoStar, 2017; Zillow, 2017; Strategic Economics, 2017.

*Does not account for student impact.

6.7.2. SEGMENT 1 DOWNTOWN BUFFALO

In the last two decades, Segment 1 has seen growth in its residential, office, and commercial market values. This is likely due to its competitive advantages as the region's Central Business District (CBD).

Segment 1's office market has near-term potential for the absorption and reinvestment of existing vacant spaces. The office market in Segment 1 has experienced both increasing sale prices and continues to have relatively high office lease rates. Unlike the other three segments, Segment 1's office lease rates are higher than the regional average, and did not decline in the last decade.

The residential market in Segment 1 offers near-term opportunity for continued adaptive reuse, and some mid-term opportunity for redevelopment and new construction. While residential property has had a considerable increase in sale prices, making Segment 1 the area with the highest sales values across the corridor, rents for multi-family housing products have remained flat over the last decade, and are slightly lower than the regional average. In other words, although there is relative market strength for higher density (i.e. TOD) housing product in Downtown, current barriers to near-term development include modest rent levels. This could change with new investment in transit.

The commercial market in Segment 1 is also relatively strong, and could hold mid-term potential for reinvestment or reuse projects: commercial property more than doubled in sales values over the last 20 years, and Segment 1 now offers competitive prices for these products comparatively to the corridor. Retail rents in Segment 1, however, have followed regional trends and have declined in the last decade.

6.7.3. SEGMENT 2 MAIN STREET

The greatest potential for Segment 2 is likely its residential market, which offers near-term opportunity for continued adaptive reuse as well as for redevelopment/new construction. This segment witnessed the largest percent increase in residential sale price – transitioning from very low prices in 1997 to levels competitive with other segments in 2016. At the same time, Segment 2 displays today some of the highest multi-family housing rents in the corridor – higher than the regional average – although they have remained relatively flat in the past decade. Of all the segments, Segment 2 displays some of the highest opportunity for new, higher density, TOD-type development.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that Segment 2's strong residential market is mainly concentrated in neighborhoods west of Main Street. However, in the areas closest to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, this dynamic could easily reverse itself very quickly.

The office market in Segment 2 also faces opportunities for growth, with opportunity in the mid-term for filling existing vacancies, although challenges remain too. This segment has seen a considerable increase in office sales values– even reaching values comparable to Segment 1 – but at the same time, office lease rates in Segment 2 have steadily declined over time, at levels lower than the regional average and at a faster pace than the region.

The commercial market in Segment 2 has not seen much interest or growth – with probably only mid or long-term opportunity for redevelopment. There may be some increase in demand for retail space, as new residential units are added in the segment; however, given overall trends in retailing, it is likely that Segment 2 is sufficiently supplied with retail space. Therefore, over time, commercial properties may have good potential for redevelopment. However, this may be a slow process due to the patterns of property ownership, rather than the underlying project economics.

6.7.4. SEGMENT 3 NIAGARA FALLS BOULEVARD

The greatest potential for Segment 3 is likely its commercial market, offering near-term opportunity for both reinvestment in existing spaces and/or properties as well as some limited redevelopment into more intensive uses. Although Segment 3 saw only a modest increase in commercial sale prices, the absolute sale prices for commercial products is much higher than any other segment in the region. The same can be said for retail lease rates: although they have declined slightly in the last decade, they remain higher in Segment 3 than in other segments, and slightly higher than the region. TOD could help capitalize on this existing strength of the segment. This strength in the commercial market could also suggest the potential for mixed-use buildings in Segment 3 that could accommodate ground floor retail uses with office, or more likely, housing above.

Although the residential market in Segment 3 has weakened in the last two decades, this could be due to the quality and location of the existing residential building stock. Although Segment 3 displayed the highest sale prices in 1997, by 2016 these prices declined, and reached values lower than any other segment along the corridor. This could be linked to the shifting popularity of more central, accessible, walkable neighborhoods, such as those in Downtown and Segment 2. Furthermore, Segment 3 has seen a slight decline in multi-family housing rents, at levels comparable to the region.

Although this seems to indicate a weakness of Segment 3 for future residential development, this trend, in fact, points towards a real opportunity: new transit could create new interest in this area for new residential development by building stronger connections to downtown, the Medical Campus, and to the University of Buffalo North Campus, and thus create opportunities in the mid-term to long-term for new higher density residential construction associated with TOD.

Finally, the office market in Segment 3 also weakened over the past 20 years, offering potentially only long-term opportunities for redevelopment. Sale prices for office products in Segment 3 decreased steadily over time, and office lease rates dropped to levels much lower than the region and other segments.

6.7.5. SEGMENT 4 UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO NORTH CAMPUS

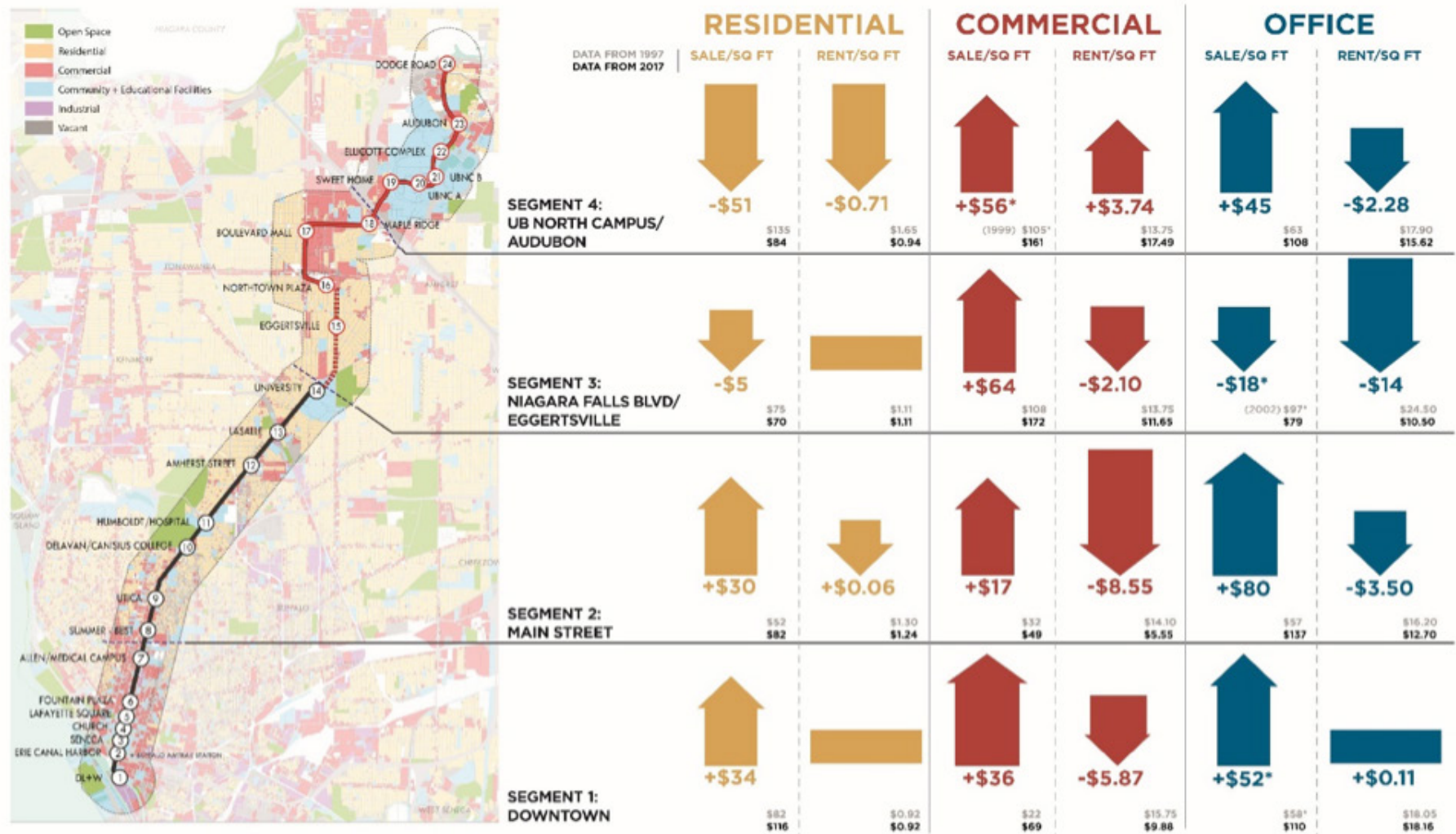
Although a complete analysis of market trends in Segment 4 was limited by a small sample size and only a limited number of transactions for the parcels that were sampled, Segment 4 does present some TOD opportunities, as discussed below.

The office market in Segment 4 might be one area of opportunity in the mid- and long-term, for both reinvestment in existing buildings and new construction. Sale prices have seen a modest increase over time, and have reached levels that are relatively competitive for the corridor – but remain lower than Segment 1 and 2. Furthermore, office lease rates have only declined slightly – in contrast to Segments 2 and 3 which saw much sharper drops in rents. Therefore, this market could be strengthened with the introduction of new transit.

As with Segment 3, the residential market in Segment 4 has lost traction in the last 20 years – probably translating only into potential long-term redevelopment opportunity for residential TOD. Sales values are relatively high, compared to the corridor, but they have been in steady decline, despite fluctuations. Furthermore, multi-family housing rents have also had a sharp decline, now at levels lower than the regional average. Again, one reason for this decline might be the transferring of market strength towards more central, accessible, walkable neighborhoods. If this is the case, then the Metro Rail expansion would provide new opportunities to shift some of this interest back to these segments. In Segment 3 there is a major opportunity to add more housing around Boulevard Mall: the rail extension would also create a much stronger connection between the University of Buffalo North Campus and the entire Audubon area.

The commercial market in Segment 4 had very few transactions in the last 20 years, making it difficult to draw conclusions about how sales values have evolved over time. However, it is worth noting that Segment 4 is the only segment in the corridor that had increasing retail rents over the last decade. The potential for renewed commercial activity in Segment 4 should be monitored.

Figure 35. TOD Market Readiness Summary



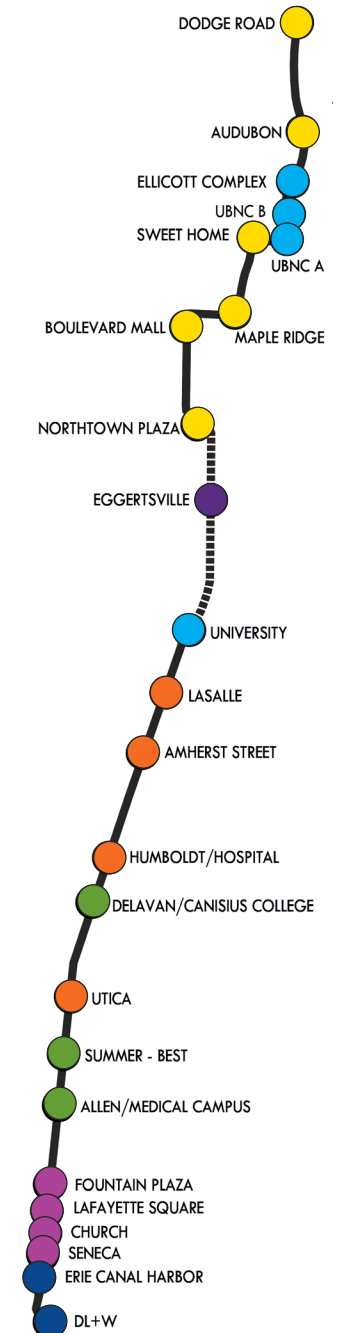
7. STATION AREA TOD TYPOLOGIES

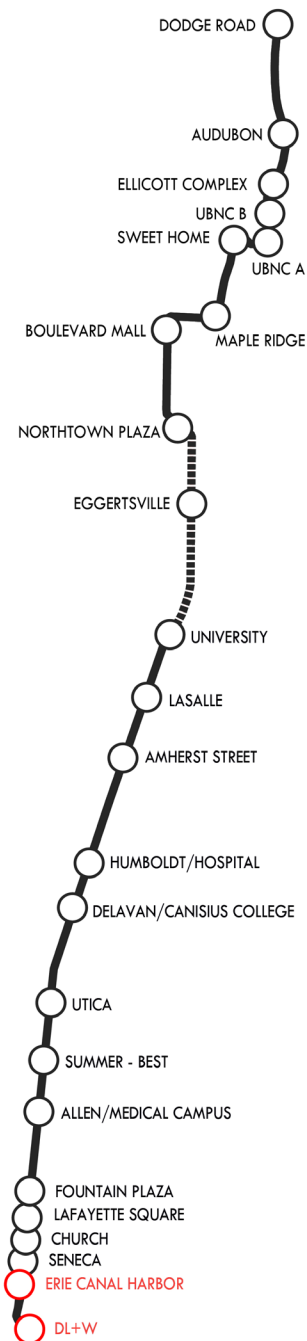
TOD should not be viewed as a one-size-fits-all approach. Because station areas vary significantly in function, character, physical form, and market potential, and are driven by a number of factors that vary throughout a corridor, planning goals and future development objectives for station areas should be flexible to accommodate the differences in situations at various station areas.

Station typologies are a way to think about the function, character, physical form, and market potential of station areas in the larger context of the Metro Rail study corridor, and provides a way to group station areas that share similar attributes. Station typologies are developed based on the current character of the neighborhood, a reasonable expectation of what character the station area will take on and how the station area will function, how the physical form will be shaped, and what the market potential is for TOD. Seven station typologies are identified in the Metro Rail study corridor, shown below with the stations that fit within each typology. The corridor map to the right portrays the station typologies along the Metro Rail Corridor and an explanation of each of the station typologies is provided on the following pages.

- Sports & Entertainment District
 - DL&W Terminal
 - Erie Canal Harbor
- Urban Core
 - Seneca
 - Church
 - Lafayette Square
 - Fountain Plaza

- Urban Campus
 - Allen/ Medical Campus
 - Summer – Best
 - Delavan/Canisius College
- Urban Neighborhood
 - Utica
 - Humboldt/Hospital
 - Amherst Street
 - LaSalle
- Suburban Neighborhood
 - Eggertsville
- Mixed-use Center
 - Northtown Plaza
 - Boulevard Mall
 - Maple Ridge
 - Sweet Home
 - Audubon
 - Dodge Road
- University Campus
 - University
 - UB North Campus A
 - UB North Campus B
 - UB North Campus C
 - Ellicott Complex





7.1. SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Metro Rail stations:** The DL&W Terminal and Erie Canal Harbor stations are included in the Sports & Entertainment District station typology.
- **Character:** The attractions throughout the Sports & Entertainment District draw large crowds as events take place. KeyBank Center holds events nearly 80 days per year, Canalside attracts upwards of a million visitors a year, and events at HARBORCenter and Riverworks attract visitors, many from out of town. The Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino brings a steady crowd of residents to the area at all times of the day.
- **Density:** As a whole, the Sports & Entertainment District contains vast amounts vacant or underutilized land. Much of this vacant and underutilized land is reserved for parking for the foreseeable future, some of the land is reserved as future development parcels. As the Canalside and Cobblestone areas build-out, density will increase and more importantly begin to create continuous building frontages.
- **Mix of Uses:** While the Sports & Entertainment District used to be solely focused on large scale sports and entertainment type venues, recent projects have introduced mixed-uses and have begun to reactivate street frontages and generate activity even when events are not occurring. Proposals for the continued

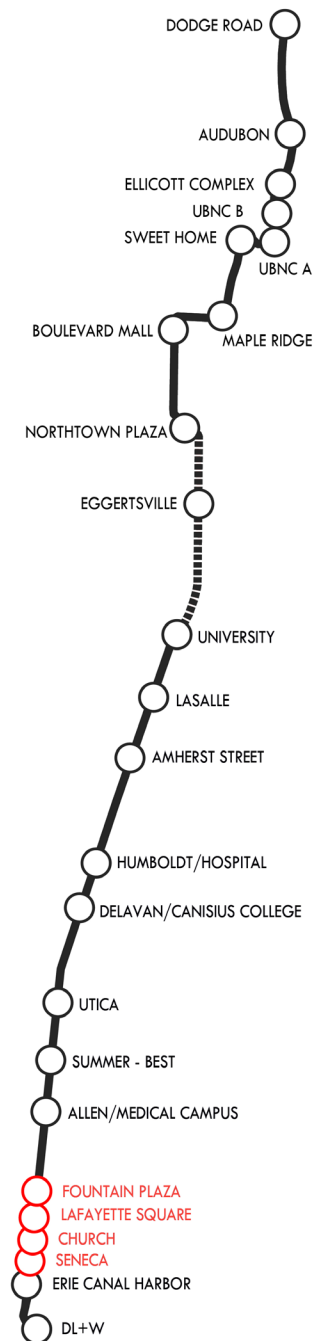
build-out of Canalside and redevelopment of Cobblestone will add to this mix of uses.

- **Pedestrian Environment:** Where improvements associated with Canalside or around development projects (i.e., HARBORCenter, One Canalside, Ohio Street, and Buffalo Seneca Creek Casino) have been undertaken, pedestrian and bicycle accommodations have been upgraded. However, large sections of the area contain poor pedestrian and bicycle conditions due to lack of building frontage activity and overall outdated facilities. The redevelopment of Canalside has brought about new and revived public spaces that continue to attract visitors and connect people to the waterfront.
- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Metro Rail is highly visible as it operates on the surface along Main Street through the Sports & Entertainment District. Metro Rail currently has exclusive use of portions of Main Street but, an upcoming Cars on Main Street project will open up Main Street to shared Metro Rail and vehicle space. NFTA is pursuing a project to locate a new Metro Rail stations within the ground floor of DL&W Terminal, with possible connections to the south side of KeyBank Center, opening up portions of DL&W Terminal for redevelopment.
- **Parking:** Off-street parking is plentiful in the Sports & Entertainment District to accommodate large events. Numerous surface parking lots and parking structures frequently interrupt the urban landscape and result in large areas of inactivity during non-event times. On-street parking is available on some streets.



THE SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT HOUSES SOME OF THE REGION'S MAJOR SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND TOURISM BASED ATTRACTIONS FOCUSED IN AND AROUND THE CANALSIDE AND COBBLESTONE DISTRICTS. THE INCREASED INFLUX OF VISITORS TO THE AREA IS BEGINNING TO DRIVE DEVELOPMENT INTEREST FOR REDEVELOPMENT AND INFILL DEVELOPMENT.





7.2. URBAN CORE

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Metro Rail stations: The Seneca, Church, Lafayette Square, and Fountain Plaza stations are included in the Urban Core station typology.
- Character: The Urban Core is the region's center for employment and government and contains the tallest buildings in Buffalo, including the tallest-Seneca One Tower that spans Main Street, and has traditionally been the center of commerce for the region. Much of the original radial street pattern is still in place and provides good connectivity and manageable block sizes that support transit use.
- Density: Distinctively higher density along the Metro Rail line (Main Street), with progressively less density east of Main Street towards Michigan Avenue, but still high density west of Main Street towards the government center.
- Mix of Uses: While the Urban Core is traditionally the commercial and government center of the region, there have been an increasing number of redevelopment and infill projects that have reestablished a vibrant mix of uses, with several projects redeveloping older building stock with upper floor residential and office with active ground floor uses.
- High Quality Pedestrian Environment: Wide sidewalks are prevalent along most urban core streets. Recent

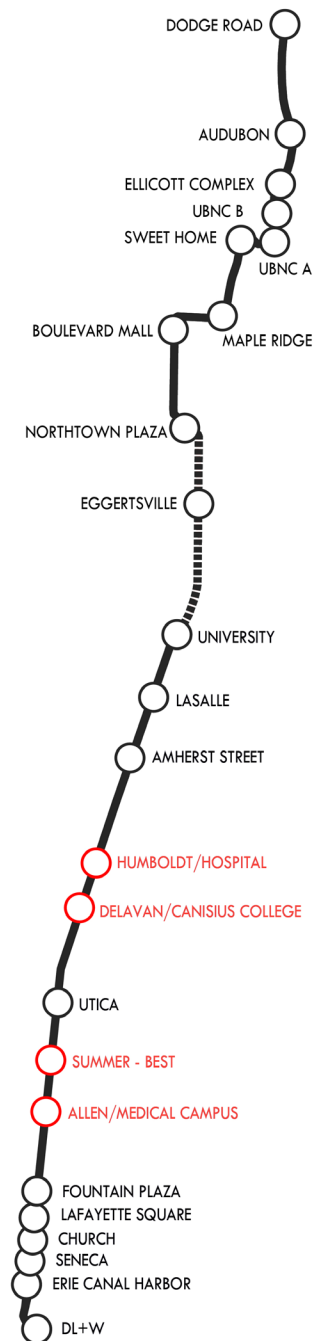
Cars on Main Street projects have introduced updated pedestrian amenities to the section of Main Street between Mohawk Street and Goodell Street. There are a mix of blocks that contain larger projects from an urban renewal era that have broken up the street connectivity and/or have long spans of inactive building frontages. Buffalo's historical street pattern allows for numerous public plazas and parks that open up viewsheds across the Urban Core and offer opportunity for public gathering. The Metro Rail transit plaza which remains along portions of Mail Street provides a vehicle-less transit and pedestrian linear plaza.

- Multi-Modal Connectivity: Metro Rail is highly visible, as it operates on the surface along Main Street through the Urban Core. Metro Rail has exclusive use of portions of Main Street; other portions that have been improved under the Cars on Main Street projects contain shared Metro Rail and vehicle space. NFTA's busiest Metro Bus transfer area is located adjacent to Church stations, and numerous Metro Bus routes in the Urban Core provide access to the greater transit network. Bicycle facilities continue to be added as transportation and other improvement projects are undertaken.
- Parking: Off-street parking is available in both surface lots and structures in the Urban Core, with surface parking lots frequently interrupting the urban landscape. On-street parking is available on most streets, including along portions of Main Street.



THE URBAN CORE IS THE REGION'S CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNMENT AND HAS THE HIGHEST DENSITY AND GREATEST MIX OF USES. THERE IS INCREASINGLY MORE MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING ASSOCIATED WITH ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECTS, WHICH COMBINED WITH ACTIVE GROUND FLOOR USES, ARE HELPING TO REVITALIZE URBAN CORE STREETS.





7.3. URBAN CAMPUS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Metro Rail stations:** The Allen/ Medical Campus, Summer – Best, and Delavan/Canisius College stations are included in the Urban Campus station typology.
- **Character:** The Urban Campus consists of medical/ hospital uses as well as college institutional uses clustered in a campus type setting within an urban setting. The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) houses the region's most dense cluster of hospitals and medical related uses. Canisius College is an expanding college campus at Main Street and Jefferson Avenue. While much of the development that has occurred is non-taxable, the development has spurred associated commercial and residential development that offers a greater mix of uses.
- **Density:** The BNMC is home to the highest concentration of hospitals and medical uses in the region, and has been developed in a dense urban campus setting that takes advantage of the existing city street grid. The new University at Buffalo Medical School was built in the air space above the Allen/ Medical Campus station, offering the region's first TOD joint development project. The Canisius College campus is constrained by its existing neighborhood and is currently expanding into existing buildings along Main Street near the Delavan/Canisius College station and Humboldt/Hospital station.
- **Mix of Uses:** While many of the hospitals, medical offices, and college institutional buildings are single

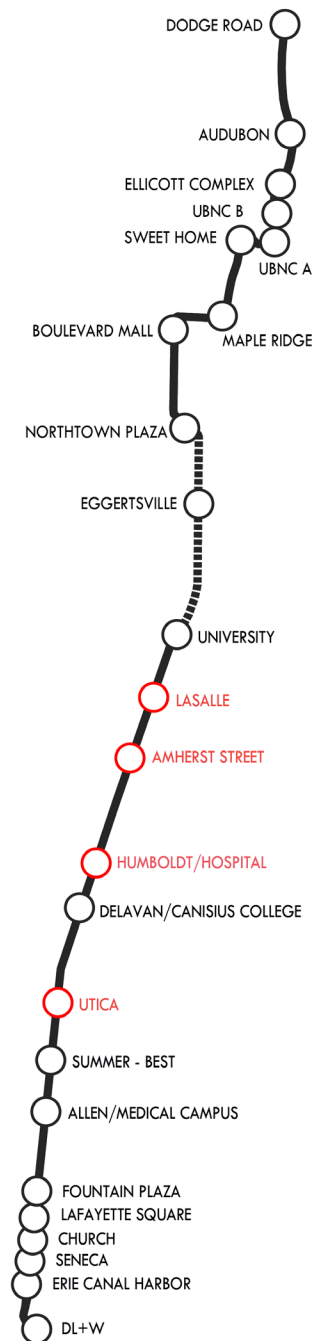
use buildings, associated commercial and residential development has increased the mix and diversity of uses and has added street activity. Adaptive reuse of buildings along Main Street has helped to revitalize that corridor and has helped to reconnect the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and Allentown.

- **Pedestrian Environment:** Numerous streetscape projects throughout BNMC have brought enhanced pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities. Along with the UB Medical School project will come additional public space and a new connection between Allentown and Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. The BNMC and grass roots organizations are actively involved in promoting alternative transportation options as a way to reduce single-occupant vehicle travel and the amount of parking. The pedestrian environment on the Canisius College campus is high quality, but Main Street in this area is a wide 6-lane automobile dominated roadway that impacts the comfortability of walking and biking.
- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** The BNMC is looking into developing a mobility hub near the Allen/ Medical Campus station in order to promote alternative transportation options. Metro Bus routes provide major east-west bus connectivity to Metro Rail stations.
- **Parking:** Off-street parking in the Urban Campus mostly exists in parking structures. On-street parking is available on most streets. Parking is at a premium in the Urban Campus, thus making it easier to promote transit options.



THE URBAN CAMPUS CONSISTS OF MEDICAL/ HOSPITAL AND COLLEGE INSTITUTIONAL USES CLUSTERED IN A CAMPUS TYPE SETTING WITHIN AN URBAN SETTING. THE BUFFALO NIAGARA MEDICAL CAMPUS HOUSES THE REGION'S MOST DENSE CLUSTER OF HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL RELATED USES. CANISIUS COLLEGE IS AN EXPANDING URBAN COLLEGE CAMPUS.





7.4. URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Metro Rail Stations:** The Utica, Humboldt/Hospital, Amherst Street, and LaSalle stations are included in the Urban Neighborhood station typology.
- **Character:** The Urban Neighborhood is dominated by smaller parcels, medium density (2-5 stories), and predominately shallow commercial properties fronting major roadways.
- **Density:** The area scales down in density and it transitions from the Urban Campus areas. The area is dominated by smaller parcels, medium density (generally 2-5 story buildings), and a mix of uses. Major roadways are fronted by shallow lot commercial and residential buildings, Main Street being the most predominant. Adjacent neighborhoods are characterized by medium density single and two family residential, with occasional multi-family development.
- **Mix of Uses:** The area offers a general mix of uses, ranging from commercial, office, retail, and residential fronting Main Street and many east-west cross streets. Adjacent neighborhoods are primarily single and

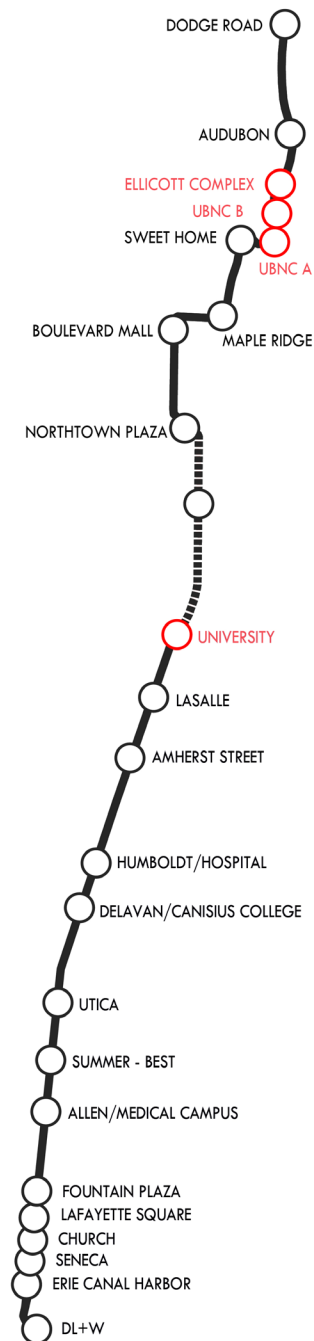
two-family residential with occasional multi-family or commercial uses mixed in. The neighborhoods east of Main Street experience much higher vacancy.

- **Pedestrian Environment:** The traditional street grid layout in this area offers smaller lot sizes, smaller block sizes, and numerous street connections. This provides for a very manageable walking environment that provides numerous opportunities for connectivity to stations. In many cases, the actual walking environment is poor and is in need of upgrades. There are limited public spaces and plazas in the Urban Neighborhood.
- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** The numerous street connections provide opportunity for abundant east-west connectivity via Metro Bus routes. All streets have sidewalks, although many are in poor condition. While bicycle facilities are lacking on many major roadways, a contra-flow bicycle lane exists on Linwood Avenue, offering an alternative to Main Street between Delaware Park and Downtown.
- **Parking:** Off-street parking in the Urban Neighborhood is accommodated on a site-by-site basis, with several properties providing some off-street parking. On-street parking is available along Main Street and side streets.



THE URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD IS DOMINATED BY SMALLER PARCELS, MEDIUM DENSITY (2-5 STORY BUILDINGS), AND PREDOMINATELY SHALLOW COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES FRONTING MAJOR ROADWAYS SURROUNDED BY MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS. THE TRADITIONAL STREET GRID CREATES SMALL BLOCKS AND MULTIPLE CONNECTIONS, WHICH ARE SUPPORTIVE OF TOD.





7.5. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Metro Rail stations:** The University Campus typology includes University, UB North Campus A, UB North Campus B, UB North Campus C, and Ellicott Complex stations.
- **Character:** Numerous educational buildings spread out in a campus atmosphere, with abundant green space. The University Campus is a stand-alone area and is generally not well tied into adjacent neighborhoods, but greatly impact the economy and drive the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.
- **Density:** While the University Campus area can have pockets of higher density and higher intensity, it is generally low density, with several educational buildings of varying heights spread out across a campus type setting.
- **Mix of Uses:** There isn't a great deal of mixed-uses in the University Campus. Most buildings are educational buildings or buildings to support the University. There are some residential dormitories and small retail and restaurant establishments within educational and residential dormitories. Most commercial, retail, and other services are found off campus in the surrounding areas.
- **Pedestrian Environment:** The University Campus

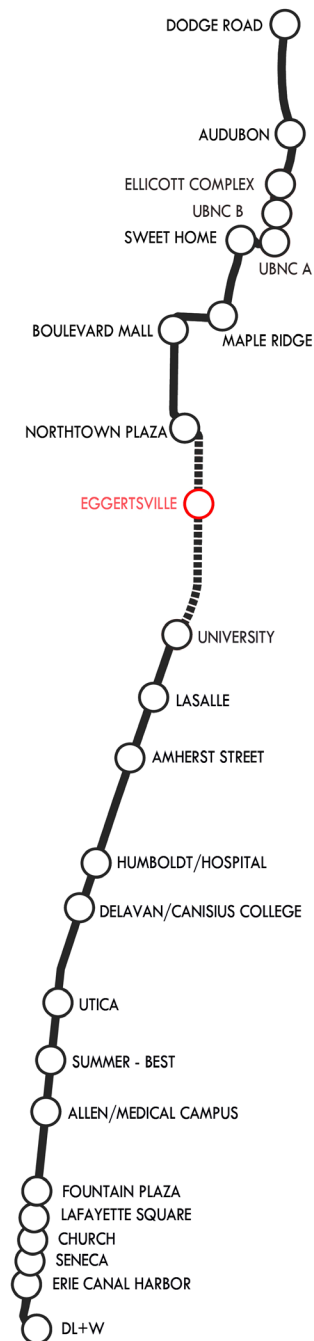
environment offers a highly comfortable walking and biking environment, with good connections between campus destinations. Walking and biking corridors are generally well lit and active. Connections to adjacent neighborhoods outside of the campus are somewhat limited and less comfortable. The layout of the University Campus lends itself to numerous public plazas and open space that create connections between educational facilities and allow for social and gathering places on the campuses. The vast open space at South Campus actually works to somewhat separate the University and University station from the University Heights neighborhood.

- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Metro Rail and Metro Bus serve the University South Campus well, with a major multi-modal node located at University station. The University at Buffalo operates the Stampede bus service to supplement NFTA service and connect the University's three campuses. Future Metro Rail expansion will supplant the Stampede and offer Metro Rail service between all three University at Buffalo campuses.
- **Parking:** Both the North and South Campuses offer abundant faculty, staff, and student parking areas. At South Campus, the parking areas along Main Street are also used for Metro Rail commuter park-and-ride lots, which are heavily used.



THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS IS INCLUSIVE OF THE UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO NORTH AND SOUTH CAMPUSES. THESE AREAS ARE ENCOMPASSING OF LARGE EDUCATIONAL BUILDINGS SET IN A CAMPUS SETTING, WITH LARGE EXPANSES OF GREEN SPACE WITH LITTLE OR NO OTHER RESIDENTIAL OR COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY. THESE AREAS HAVE ABUNDANT PARKING FOR UNIVERSITY STAFF, FACULTY, AND/OR STUDENTS THAT CAN ALSO BE USED FOR PARK-AND-RIDE, AS IS THE CASE AT SOUTH CAMPUS.





7.6. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Metro Rail stations:** The Eggertsville station is included in the Suburban Neighborhood station typology.
- **Character:** The Suburban Neighborhood is characterized by medium-density residential neighborhoods with intermixed, small-lot commercial and retail uses fronting major roadways or at major intersections. The residential neighborhoods are predominantly single-family, however, some multi-family residential is intermixed.
- **Density:** Medium-density residential, mainly single-family detached residential. Commercial and retail uses are small and typically no taller than 2 stories.
- **Mix of Uses:** While the neighborhoods themselves contain mixed-uses, individual properties are mainly dedicated to a single use. Along major roadways and

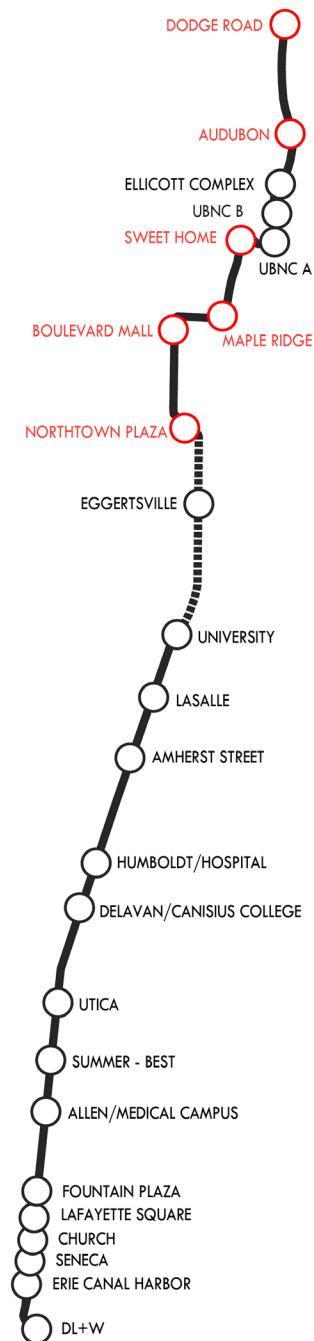
at major intersections, commercial and retail uses are prevalent and are often adjacent to residential with little buffer.

- **Pedestrian Environment:** The walking environment is very good, with all streets containing sidewalks and block sizes very manageable. Multiple connections are available between neighborhood commercial areas and residences.
- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Metro Bus operates on major streets. The layout of the street pattern and medium-density makeup of the neighborhood make transit very accessible by a large population. The Inter-Campus bikeway connects the University at Buffalo South and North Campuses.
- **Parking:** Most commercial and residential properties contain their own off-street parking. On-street parking is available on most streets and supplements off-street parking, especially where commercial properties do not have sufficient off-street parking.



THE SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD IS CHARACTERIZED BY MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS WITH INTERMIXED, SMALL-LOT COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL USES FRONTING MAJOR ROADWAYS OR AT MAJOR INTERSECTIONS. THE LAYOUT OF THE STREET GRID PROMOTE MANAGEABLE BLOCK SIZES THAT PROMOTES WALKABILITY AND TRANSIT USE.





7.7. MIXED-USE CENTER

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Metro Rail Stations:** The Northtown Plaza, Boulevard Mall, Maple Ridge, Sweet Home, Audubon, and Dodge Road stations are included in the Mixed-Use Center station typology.
- **Character:** The Mixed-Use Center is currently representative of auto-oriented, suburban type development consisting of large lot, single-use properties in a low-density setting. There are several big box retailers along Sheridan Drive, Niagara Falls Boulevard, Maple Road, and Sweet Home Road; office parks along Maple Road, Sweet Home Road, and Audubon Parkway; and intermixed smaller businesses. The commercial areas are surrounded by both single-family and multi-family residential. The area is a major retail destination for UB students. This area represents an opportunity to recreate auto-oriented, suburban type development into live, work, play mixed-use centers built around transit.
- **Density:** The Mixed-Use Center contains mainly low-density commercial, with pockets of medium-density

commercial clustered within commercial parks, and low to medium-density residential development.

- **Mix of Uses:** Properties are mainly dedicated to a single use, either commercial or residential. The distances and character between uses is generally such that walking between uses is not comfortable and driving is encouraged.
- **Pedestrian Environment:** The walking environment is fairly uncomfortable in the area due to auto-dominated uses, wide streets and high traffic volumes, and limited pedestrian amenities. Public areas are generally limited to the public realm along streets and at parks. There are limited gathering areas along roadways.
- **Multi-Modal Connectivity:** Metro Bus operates on major streets and handles a high volume of riders, especially along Niagara Falls Boulevard. Transit amenities and accessibility between transit stops and destinations are not great.
- **Parking:** All commercial properties have their own off-street parking, typically located at the front of the site. There is limited on-street parking on major streets, on-street parking is available on side streets.



THE MIXED-USE CENTER IS CURRENTLY REPRESENTATIVE OF AUTO-ORIENTED, SUBURBAN TYPE DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF LARGE LOT, SINGLE-USE PROPERTIES IN A LOW-DENSITY SETTING. THIS AREA REPRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECREATE AUTO-ORIENTED, SUBURBAN TYPE DEVELOPMENT INTO LIVE, WORK, PLAY MIXED-USE CENTERS BUILT AROUND TRANSIT.



8. TOD DESIRABILITY AND READINESS ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

To take a closer look at the existing and proposed Metro Rail stations and their surrounding areas, the following station area assessment was undertaken. The station area assessment considers findings from existing plans and studies, review of existing conditions, input from stakeholders and the community, as well as professional input from the consulting team. The station area assessment is laid out from south to north—beginning with DL&W Terminal station and ending at the proposed Dodge Road station—and includes photos of the station area, station area descriptions, strengths and opportunities and weaknesses and challenges, maps of the station areas' existing conditions and generalized strengths and weaknesses, and a TOD Desirability & Readiness Assessment for each station area, as described below.

The TOD Desirability & Readiness Assessment is a qualitative exercise used to gauge the level of preparedness for TOD and, if development is desirable, to identify what might be needed to stimulate investment. This process is generally accepted by the Center for Transit-Oriented Development and has been used in other regional TOD plans.

8.1. DEFINING DESIRABILITY AND READINESS FOR TOD AT A STATION AREA

At each station area, the local government leadership, real estate and development interests, businesses, and community need to express their level desire for TOD in order to set the context for each station area strategy. Building upon a community's desire for TOD is the market strength for development to occur at a station area. A community may be very interested in having TOD occur, but if the market doesn't support TOD at a station area, successful TOD will be slow to follow. High desire (which, in turn, suggests a community's degree of readiness) is illustrated by a community that strongly supports TOD in the station area and sees the station as a centerpiece to development. This is supported by a strong market for TOD at the station area due to existing or perceived market conditions.

Not every station is suitable for TOD. Communities define their desire based upon surrounding land uses, surrounding densities, and neighborhood character. However, a lower desire reflects only current opinion and does not necessarily mean that there are no opportunities for future TOD and other improvements. In station areas where desire is lower, there may still be a need to consider what public realm improvements can optimize the relationship between the station and the surrounding community that would result in greater accessibility to and use of the station, accompanied by reduced automobile usage.

Building upon the desire for TOD, each station area is also evaluated for its level of readiness to implement TOD. Readiness translates a community's desire into an understanding of the level of preparedness that the community has to achieve the TOD within the context that they envision.

The readiness evaluation focuses on physical conditions and the capacity of the local leadership to implement TOD.

The following four criteria are essential ingredients to the successful implementation of TOD. The Desirability & Readiness Assessment summarizes the overall TOD potential by assessing the degree of desirability and readiness for TOD in a community surrounding a station.



8.2. TOD DESIRABILITY AND READINESS FACTORS FOR ASSESSMENT

The following elements are scored based on a qualitative assessment of either poor, fair, good, or excellent:

- **Local Leadership** – Leadership and stewardship of planning initiatives at the local and regional levels are essential to successful implementation of TOD. This leadership includes the willingness of a community to accept and promote TOD as well as willingness of government to adopt new plans and adapt regulations geared toward allowing and promoting TOD.
- **Market Strength** – Most TOD is initiated by the private sector and through public-private partnerships. Market strength reflects the real estate market and developer interest in an area and to the extent that transit influences that market.
- **Physical Suitability** – A station area’s physical context—including availability of large parcels, block sizes, simple ownership patterns, developable sites, pedestrian accessibility, land use composition, zoning, and multi-modal accessibility—can either support or provide obstacles for TOD.
- **Plans in Place** – Having the appropriate regulatory and policy framework, provision of incentives, and local plans in place within the station area is important for both the feasibility and timeframe for implementing TOD and making a site “development-ready.”

8.3. TOD DESIRABILITY & READINESS FINDINGS

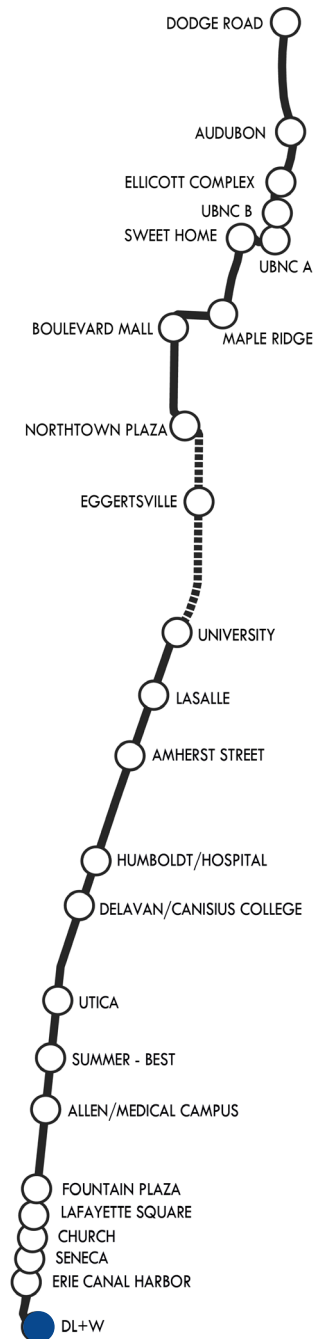
Following a full synthesis of existing conditions analysis; stakeholder, government, and community input; market analysis and developer interest; and review of existing policies, plans, and regulations, evaluation scales (presented in the station area assessments) were developed to summarize and illustrate how each station area performed according to the four TOD desirability and readiness factors and their scores (see previous section). A resulting overall station area desirability and readiness rating is provided, as follows:

- **Very High:** Station areas contain excellent physical suitability, strong market demand, have plans in place, and have government and community leadership to support TOD. These should be considered catalytic station areas where TOD can work in the near term.
- **High:** Station areas where there are generally good conditions for TOD to occur, and one or two elements may even be excellent, but one or two particular elements may be weaker than others. These station areas need to strategize ways to improve overall conditions to fully support TOD.
- **Medium:** Station areas where there are generally fair conditions for TOD to occur. Nothing stands out as being excellent but nothing stands out as being particularly poor. These station areas need to energize the community and development stakeholders to generate TOD opportunities.
- **Low:** Station areas where local leadership of TOD is lacking, market strength for TOD is static, the physical suitability is poor, and plans and policies are weak. These station areas need to synthesize elements to increase desirability and improve readiness for future TOD potential.

An explanation of each station's Desirability & Readiness Assessment is provided in the respective station area discussion. A summary of all station Desirability & Readiness Assessments is provided at the end of the station area assessment.

8.4. METRO RAIL CORRIDOR OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The following indicates the general strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses and challenges associated with stations throughout the Metro Rail Corridor.



STATION 1: DL&W TERMINAL

STATION TYPOLOGY: SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The DL&W Terminal station is located along South Park Avenue at the foot of Main Street. It is adjacent to the KeyBank Center and is near Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino and Canalside. The DL&W Terminal sits on the Buffalo River, with the Shoreline Trail running alongside the building and river. A new connection to the Central Wharf now connects this section along the Shoreline Trail with Canalside.

The Cobblestone District consists of the area to the north of the DL&W Terminal, generally between KeyBank Center and Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino. There are some restaurant, residential, and office uses, but the majority of the area is surface parking lot. The area has seen increased development interest, and areas just to the east of Michigan Street and southeast along Ohio Street have seen new mixed-use projects within the last few years. The Shoreline Trail continues along Ohio Street to the Outer Harbor. Across the Michigan Street Bridge is

Riverworks, a large entertainment facility that often hosts events that exceed its parking supply.

The station serves as the maintenance and storage facility for the NFTA Metro Rail. There are multiple bays for which trains can enter the station and are serviced for repairs and maintenance. The station also features an indoor maintenance facility for enhanced repairs. On the eastern end of the station is a loop track for train turnaround.

NFTA is pursuing plans to redevelop the DL&W Terminal as a Metro Rail station and to reuse portions of the second level for future development. The concept would connect the DL&W Terminal Station directly with KeyBank Center, thus eliminating the Special Events station. There is an open roof area that can be accessed from the second level that provides for additional open-air development potential.



Key Places

- A. Canalside and Erie County Naval & Serviceman's Park
- B. Buffalo Riverfest Park
- C. Offers enhanced connectivity to Canalside, KeyBank Center, KeyBank Center Parking Ramp, Cobblestone, Buffalo Seneca, Creek Casino, Ohio Street and First Ward, and Riverworks
- D. KeyBank Center
- E. HARBORCenter
- F. One Canalside
- G. Marine Drive Apartments
- H. Amtrak Buffalo Exchange Street Station (BFX)
- I. Fairmont Creamery and Elk Terminal Lofts
- J. Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino
- K. Riverworks
- L. DL&W Terminal (Reuse as Metro Rail Station and second floor redevelopment)
- M. Cobblestone surface parking lots
- N. Ohio Street & First Ward underutilized land
- O. Aud Block Redevelopment (Children's Explore & More Museum and other development)
- P. Canalside development parcels
- Q. East Canal development parcel
- R. Parking garage
- S. Buffalo River reduces station catchment area but is also an attraction; water taxis and Michigan Street Bridge help to bridge the river.

Legend

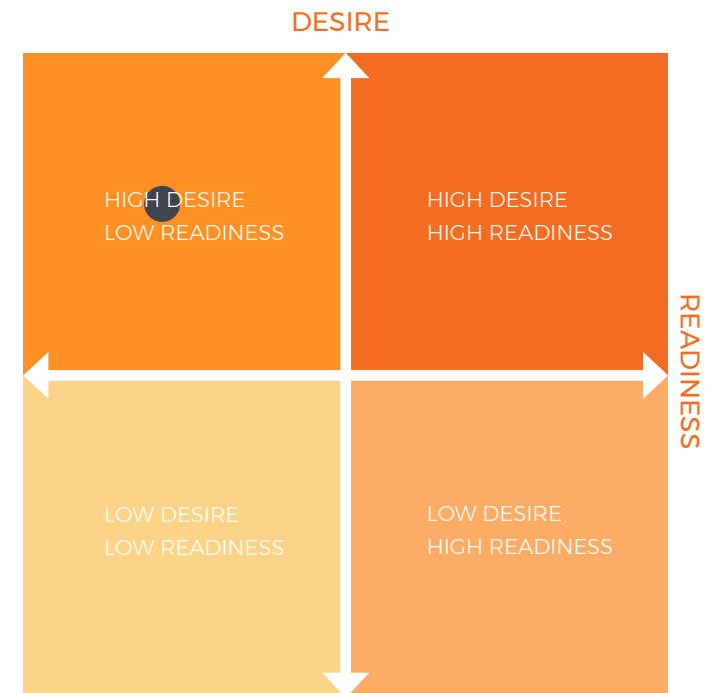
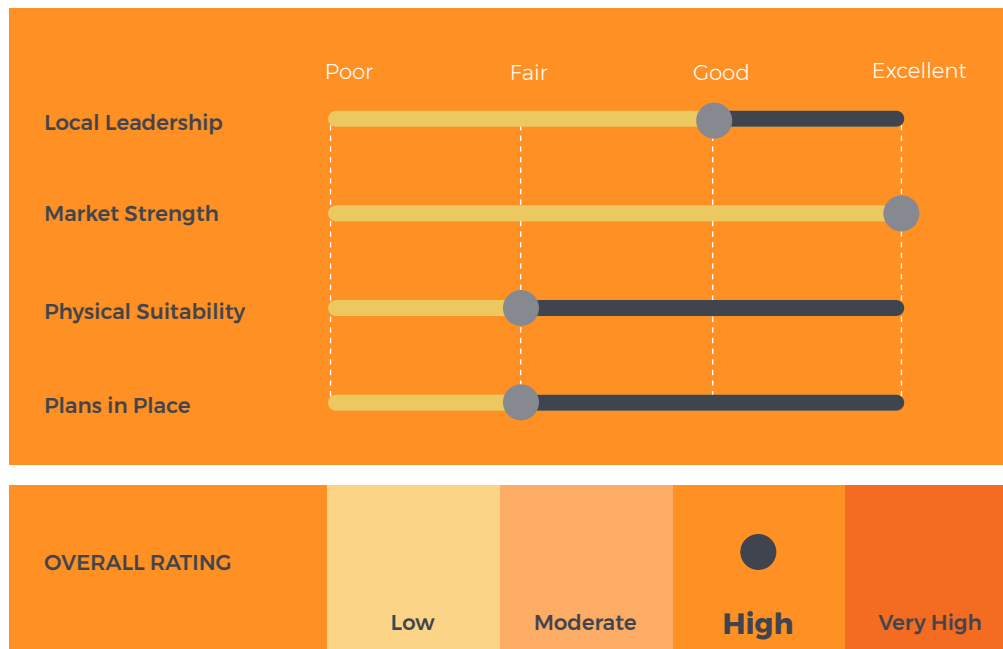
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

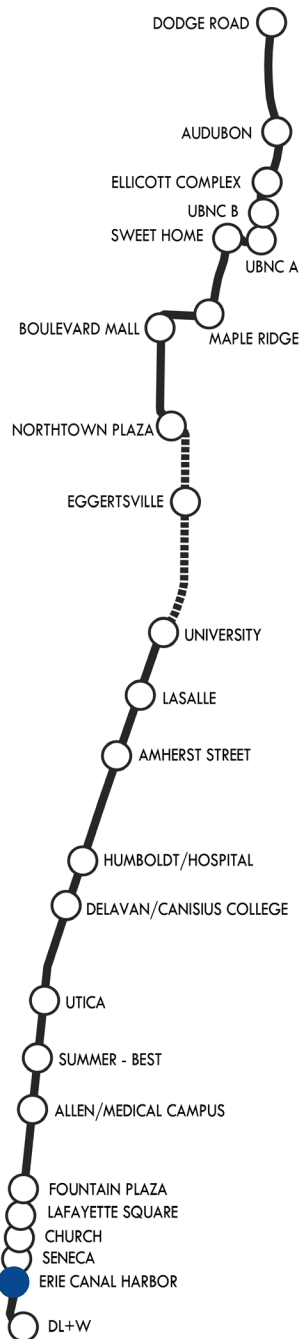
DL&W TERMINAL STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Governor has shown interest in redevelopment of DL&W and Canalside. • NFTA is leading an effort to redevelop DL&W Terminal into a station and development site. • Major stakeholders in the area are supportive of Metro Rail extension to DL&W Terminal, with new permanent station.	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Proximity to sports, entertainment, and tourist destinations that bring millions of visitors annually. • Market is strong for continued investment in entertainment and tourist destinations and supporting commercial and residential. • Opportunity to incorporate development on second level. • Infrastructure investment along Ohio Street is spurring development. • Empire State Development/Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation is gearing up to issue RFPs for Canalside parcels.	• Availability to redevelop surface parking lots is constrained due to long-term leases to Buffalo Sabres and HSBC Bank. • Reduction in the availability of building stock for adaptive reuse has forced investment to “skip over” the surface parking lots to building stock east of Michigan Avenue, farther from Metro Rail.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• Offers connectivity to KeyBank Center parking ramp and area parking lots for park-and-ride opportunities to Downtown and Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. • Trails offer good connectivity to/from First Ward, Ohio Street development, and Canalside. • Surface parking lots in Cobblestone offer redevelopment opportunity. • DL&W Terminal offers high visibility as a station.	• Poor walkability conditions lead to perception that areas are not walkable to/from Metro Rail even though they fall within the walkshed. • Lack of wayfinding to/from Metro Rail, especially areas east of KeyBank Center within walkshed. • Availability of parking Downtown makes it easy to drive. • There is no public access to the DL&W Terminal • Large blocks in Cobblestone need to be broken up.
PLANS IN PLACE	• NFTA plans emphasize reactivating DL&W Terminal with a Metro Rail station on lower level, redeveloping second level, activating South Park Avenue, and opening building to the Buffalo River. • Some of the most TOD-supportive zoning under Green Code exists in Canalside and Cobblestone areas. • The Canalside General Project Plan (GPP) promotes TOD for Canalside.	• DL&W Terminal is a few years away from being ready as a permanent station and development opportunity. NFTA is using Special Events station as a temporary station until DL&W Terminal is completed.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

DL&W Terminal Station





STATION 2: ERIE CANAL HARBOR

STATION TYPOLOGY: SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT



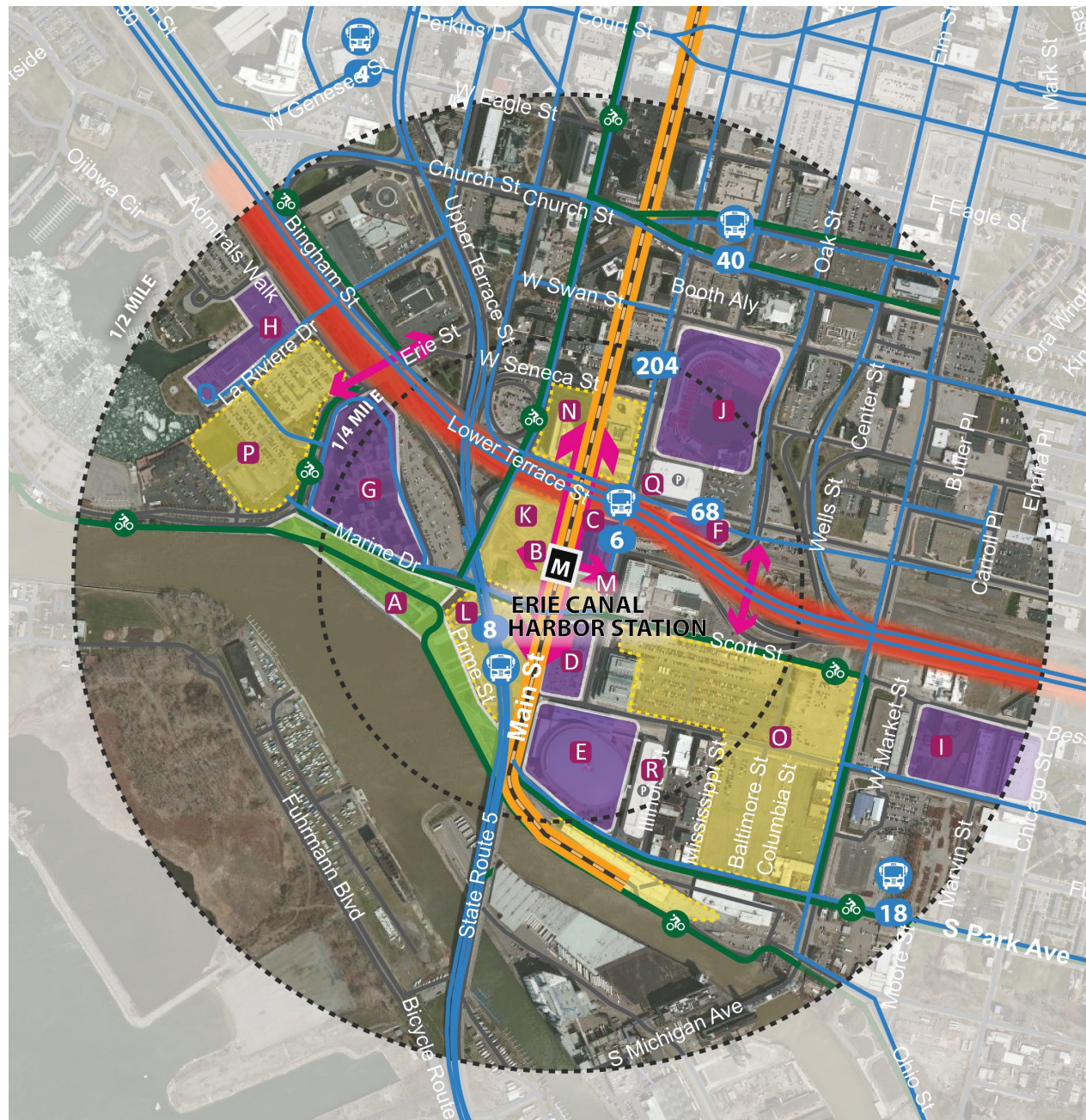
STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Erie Canal Harbor station is located adjacent to the One Canalside building and Aud Block at Canalside, situated on Main Street between Scott Street and I-190. The station serves as the first stop for trains coming from the maintenance facility and is the primary station for passengers seeking access to Canalside and the surrounding Sports & Entertainment District. The station also offers expanded access to the Marine Drive Apartments, Erie County Naval & Serviceman's Park, and Erie Basin Marina.

Due to its close proximity to the existing Amtrak Exchange Street Station and the reconstruction of the Amtrak station in the downtown area, the Erie Canal Harbor station is well situated for multi-modal transportation and improved connectivity between Amtrak and Metro

Rail. Nearby parking options also provide opportunities for park and ride passengers to utilize the station as part of their commute. The Explore & More Children's Museum chose its Canalside location because of its proximity to Metro Rail, hoping families will use Metro Rail rides as part of their museum experience.

The station is in generally good condition and passengers can easily access the station. Canopies and wide sidewalks along with walkway ramps are features for both sides of the station. An upcoming Cars Sharing Main Street project will return vehicular traffic to Main Street and will potentially realign portions of the station canopy.



Key Places

- A. Canalside and Erie County Naval & Serviceman's Park
- B. Offers connectivity to Canalside and Erie County Naval & Serviceman's Park, HARBORCenter, KeyBank Center, Marine Drive Apartments, One Canalside, Historic Canals and Aud Block (including Explore & More Museum), and Amtrak Buffalo Exchange Street Station (BFX).
- C. One Canalside
- D. HARBORCenter
- E. KeyBank Center
- F. Amtrak Buffalo Exchange Street Station (BFX)
- G. Marine Drive Apartments
- H. Waterfront Village
- I. Fairmont Creamery and Elk Terminal Lofts
- J. Coca-Cola Field
- K. Aud Block redevelopment
- L. Canalside development parcels
- M. East Canal development parcel
- N. Seneca One redevelopment
- O. Redevelopment of Cobblestone surface parking lots
- P. Waterfront Village parking lot redevelopment
- Q. Parking garage
- R. Parking garage
- S. I-190 reduces the station catchment area and creates visual and physical barriers to destinations north of I-190.

Legend

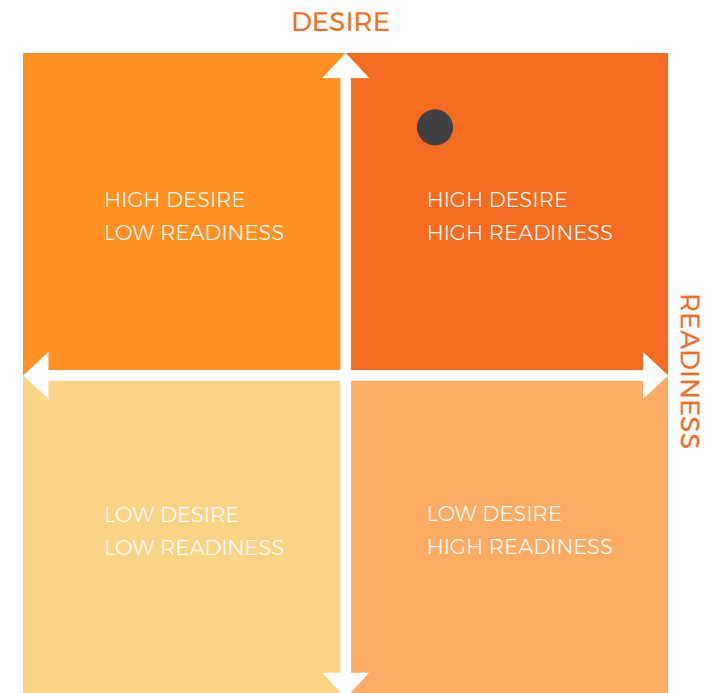
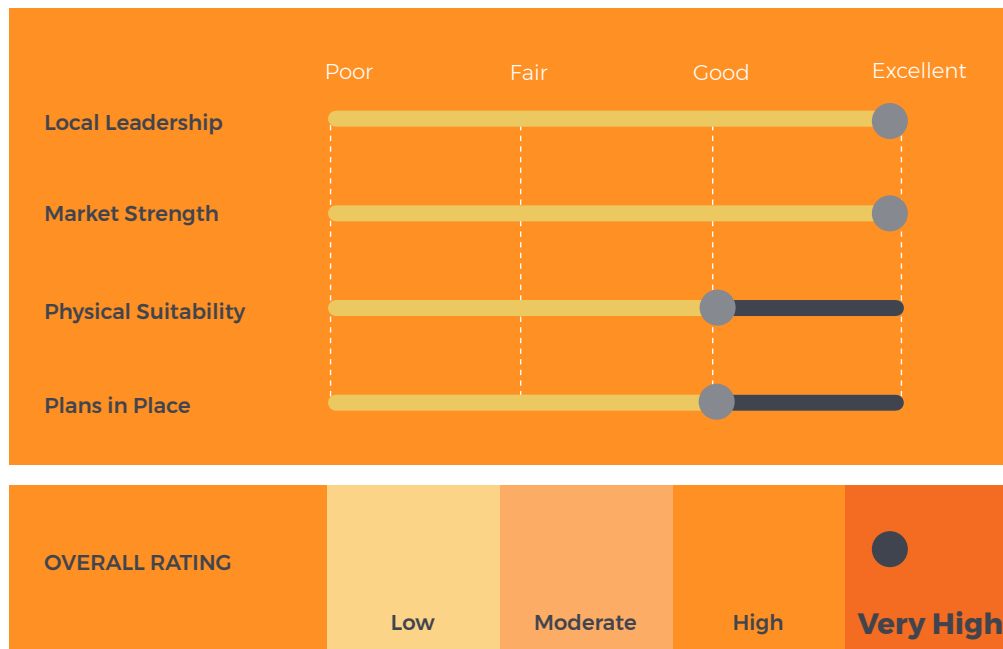
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

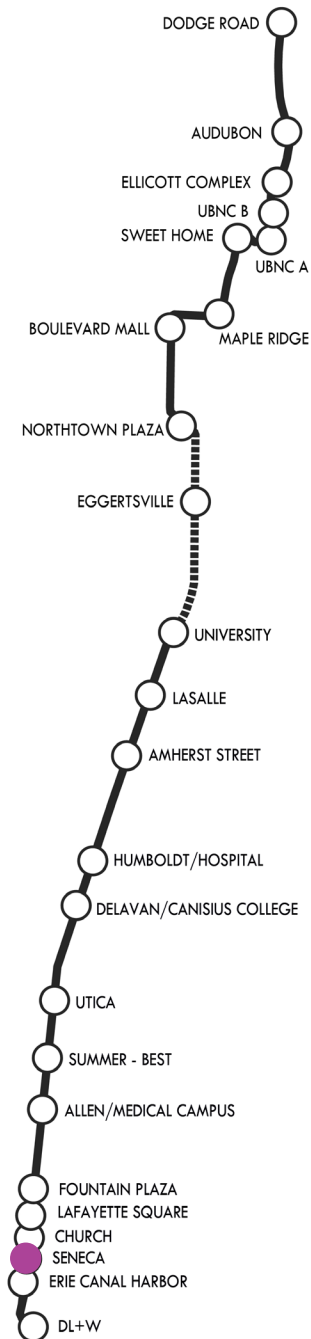
ERIE CANAL HARBOR STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Strong desire by state and local officials and stakeholders in the area to attract TOD-supportive uses at Canalside and Cobblestone.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Proximity to a number of sports, entertainment, and tourist destinations (KeyBank Center, HARBORCenter, Canalside, Erie County Naval & Serviceman's Park, and Erie Basin Marina); these destinations draw out-of-town visitors who use the Metro Rail Fare Free Zone - Entertainment and tourist destinations help drive the area's market for development. - A number of development sites at Canalside to come on board in near future (i.e., Explore & More Children's Museum). - Empire State Development/Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation is gearing up to issue RFPs to develop Canalside parcels.	- While market remains strong, new development sites have been slow to materialize. - Reduction in the availability of building stock for adaptive reuse has forced investment to "skip over" the surface parking lots to building stock east of Michigan Avenue, farther from Metro Rail.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Station is well sited at center of Canalside activity and is highly visible. - Offers connectivity to HARBORCenter parking ramp for park-and-ride opportunities to Downtown and Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. - Opportunities for improved multi-modal connectivity to Amtrak Buffalo Exchange Street Station. - There is a good sidewalk and trail network, as well as public spaces in and around Canalside.	- Cars Sharing Main Street project will temporarily constrain Metro Rail operations in near future. - Availability of downtown parking makes it easy to drive. - I-190 acts to reduce the station catchment area and creates visual and physical barrier to destinations north of I-190
PLANS IN PLACE	- Cars Sharing Main Street project will bring street and pedestrian enhancements to area. - Some of the most TOD-supportive zoning under Green Code exists in Canalside and Cobblestone areas. - The Canalside General Project Plan promotes TOD for Canalside.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

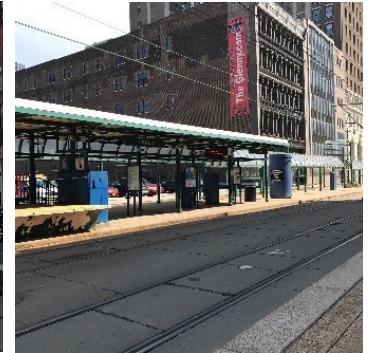
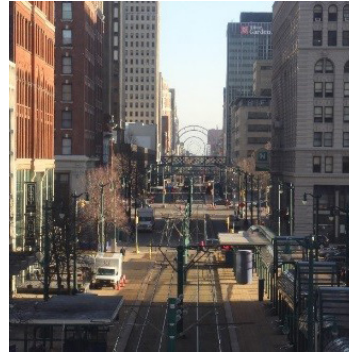
Erie Canal Harbor Station





STATION 3: SENECA

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CORE

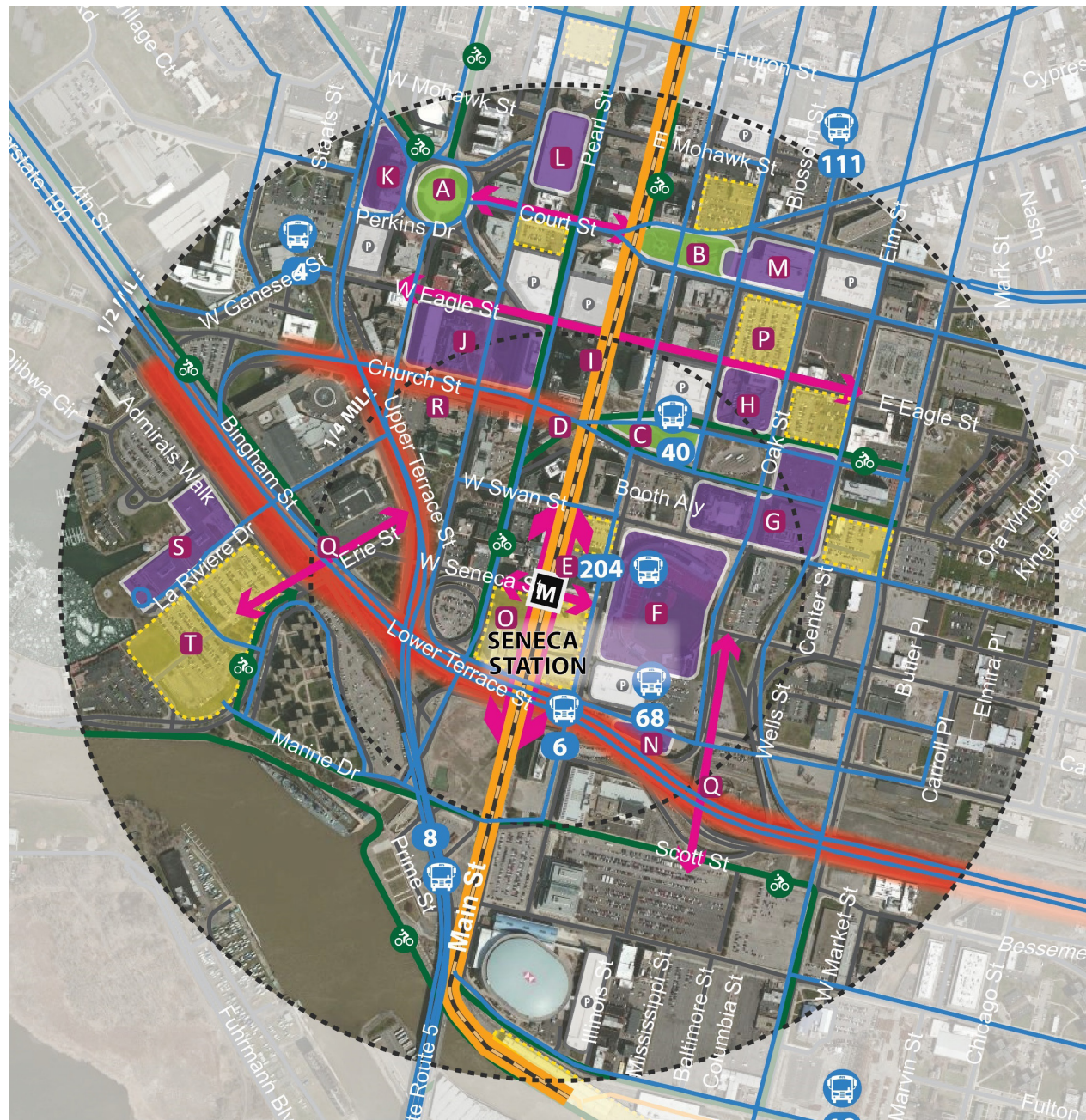


STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Seneca station is located on Main Street between West Swan Street and West Seneca Street. It is located north of the Seneca One Tower and one block west of Coca-Cola Field.

The proximity of the station to several sporting and entertainment attractions as well as key office and mixed-use sites at the southern end of downtown are one of its strengths. The proposed redevelopment of Seneca One Tower will reactivate nearly a million square feet of space spanning Main Street. Erie Community College and several government offices are also within a short walk from the station. There are several public parking lots within its proximity and on-street parking is available on some of the surrounding streets. The I-190 acts as a barrier to the station's connectivity to the south and west.

Metro Rail service exclusively operates at grade and automobile access is restricted to NFTA personnel on this section of Main Street. The station canopy extends the entire length of the block between West Swan Street and West Seneca Street.



Key Places

- A. Niagara Square
- B. Lafayette Square
- C. Five Flag's Park and Fireman's Park
- D. Cathedral Park
- E. Connectivity to Coca-Cola Field, Erie Community College, Seneca One Tower, and areas west towards Waterfront Village
- F. Coca-Cola Field
- G. Erie Community College
- H. NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center
- I. Main Street and Downtown business district
- J. Erie County government buildings
- K. Buffalo City Hall
- L. Buffalo Niagara Convention Center
- M. Buffalo & Erie County Central Library
- N. Amtrak Buffalo Exchange Street Station (BFX)
- O. Seneca One redevelopment
- P. Proposed 201 Ellicott development project
- Q. I-190 reduces the station catchment area and creates visual and physical barrier to destinations south of I-190.
- R. Church Street is not a comfortable pedestrian environment.
- S. Waterfront Village
- T. Waterfront Village parking lot redevelopment

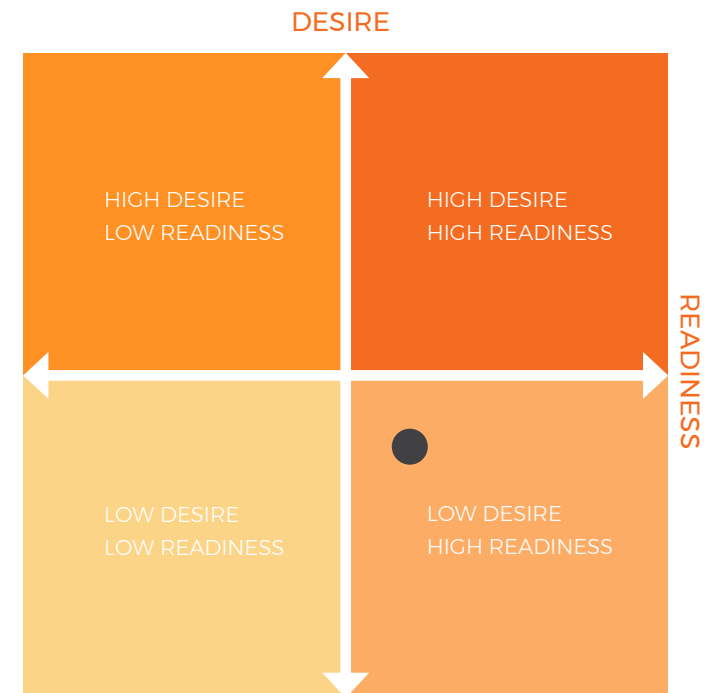
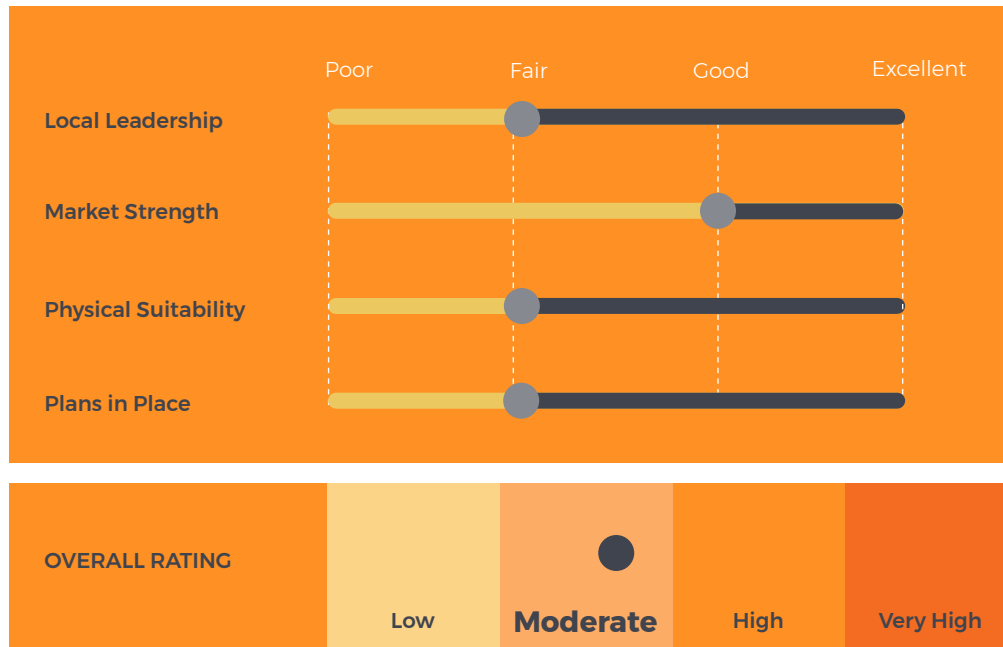
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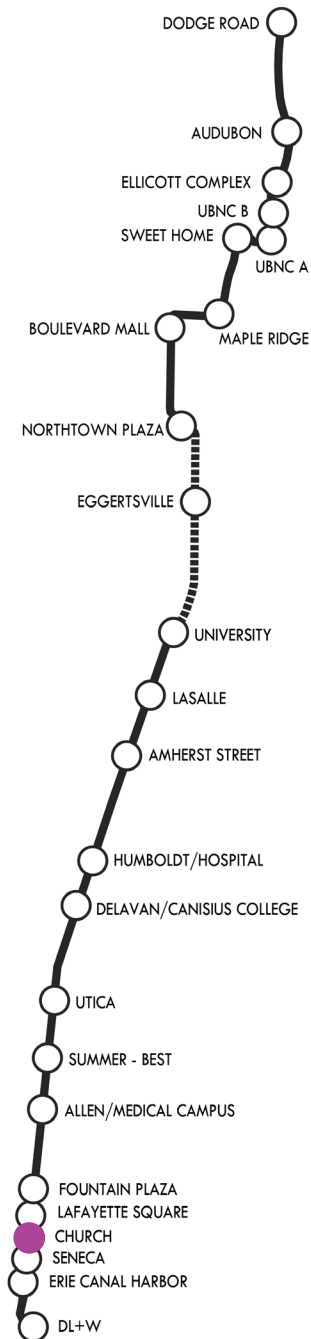
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

SENECA STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Support from area stakeholders for TOD. • Support from Seneca One developer for transit-supportive development. • Buffalo Place, Inc.	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Proximity to Seneca One Tower redevelopment – opportunity to reconnect 1+ million square feet of mixed-use development with Metro Rail. • Existing building stock experiencing adaptive reuse.	
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• Proximity to Coca-Cola Field, which holds events on 80 or so dates, and Erie Community College. • Bike lanes have recently been added to Pearl Street.	• Station infrastructure and public realm is dated. • This is one of the windiest locations in Downtown Buffalo. • The Skyway and I-190 act as walkshed barriers to the west and south. • Walls around Seneca One Tower create dead public realm space. • Church Street is not a comfortable walking environment.
PLANS IN PLACE	• In addition to generally TOD-supportive zoning in Green Code throughout Downtown, several Green Code requirements are TOD supportive such as density bonus along Metro Rail, elimination of minimum parking requirements, and development of Transportation Management Plan.	• Availability of parking Downtown makes it easy to drive. • Cars Sharing Main Street project for this area is a few years off, so infrastructure upgrades will not happen in the near future.

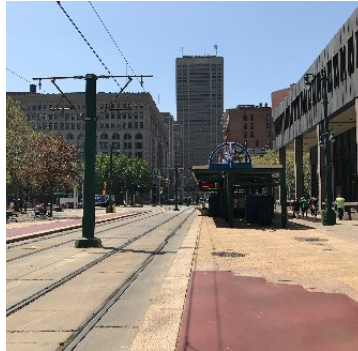
TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING Seneca Station





STATION 4: CHURCH

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CORE



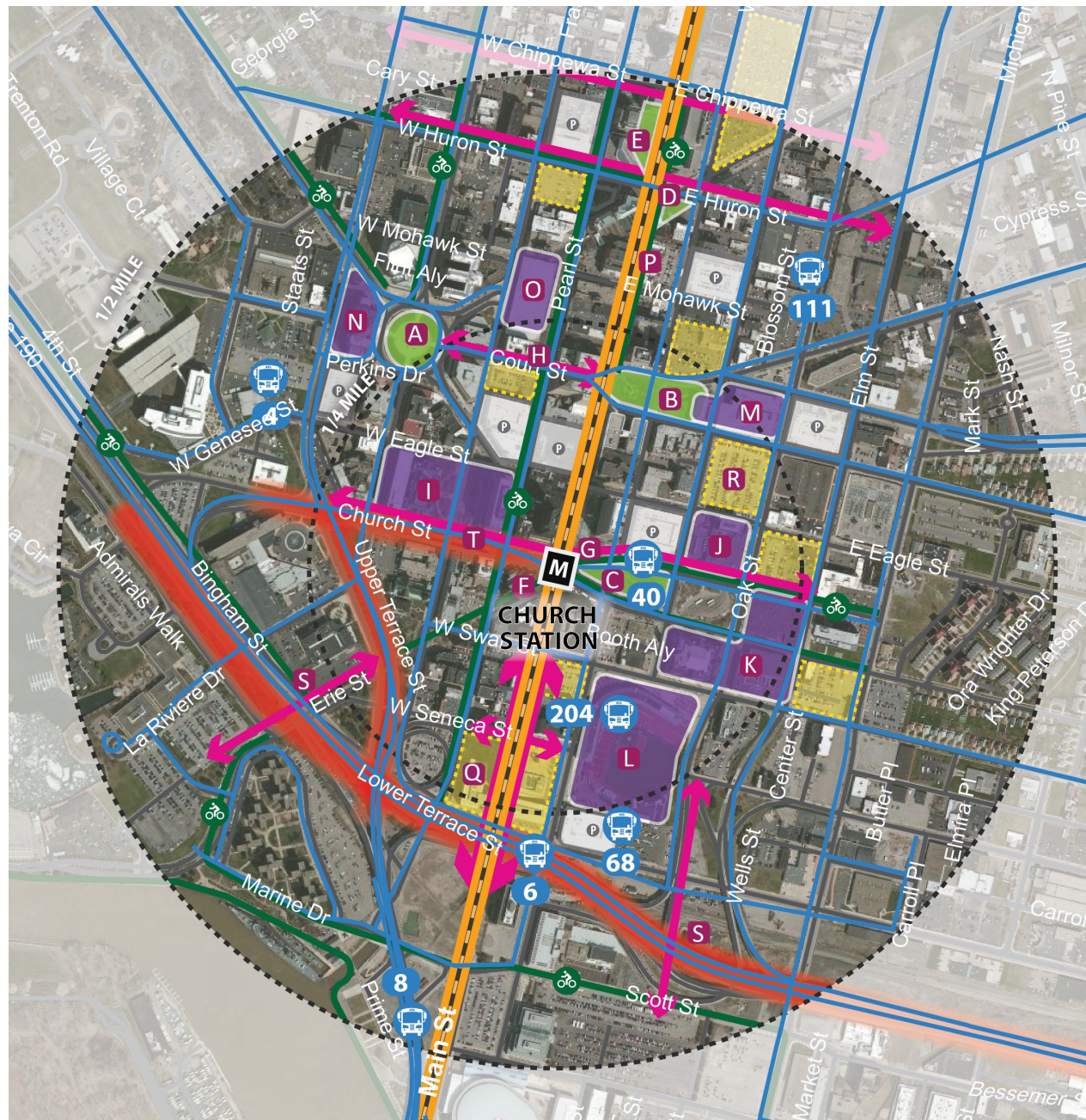
STATION AREA DISCUSSION

Church station is located north of Church Street adjacent to the Main Place Mall and the M&T Bank building. This station is located within the Fare Free Zone. Metro Rail service exclusively operates at grade, and automobile access is restricted to NFTA personnel. There are covered boarding ramps for each direction of travel. The station also offers good connectivity to Downtown destinations and key government centers. The NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center is two blocks east of Church Station, offering intercity passenger bus service, and the busiest NFTA Metro Bus transfer station is located along N. Division Street near Main Street, offering good multi-modal connectivity in this area. A plan to provide an enhanced transit plaza to improve connectivity between the Metropolitan Transportation Center and Church station, as well as offer an improved Metro Bus stop, is proposed

by NFTA. Church Street and N. Division/S. Division Streets do not offer comfortable walking environments; however, a project recently constructed by the New York State Department of Transportation calms traffic and added bike lanes to this area.

During peak business hours, the station area is typically bustling with pedestrians passing through or using the station. Along Main Street, there are opportunities for food trucks, food carts, farmers' markets, and other sidewalk attractions that help bring activity to the area.

Public parking is available below ground at the Main Place Mall. The station is also near a public parking ramp at Washington and East Eagle Streets (Adam Ramp).



Key Places

- A. Niagara Square
- B. Lafayette Square
- C. Five Flag's Park and Fireman's Park
- D. Roosevelt Plaza
- E. Fountain Plaza
- F. Cathedral Park
- G. Connectivity to NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center, Erie County government buildings, along Main Street and west down Cathedral Park
- H. Good cross-street connectivity to destinations throughout Downtown
- I. Erie County government buildings
- J. NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center
- K. Erie Community College
- L. Coca-Cola Field
- M. Buffalo Erie County Central Library
- N. Buffalo City Hall
- O. Buffalo Niagara Convention Center
- P. Main Street and Downtown business district
- Q. Seneca One redevelopment
- R. Proposed 201 Ellicott development project
- S. I-190 reduces the station catchment area and creates visual and physical barrier to destinations south of I-190.
- T. Church Street is not a comfortable pedestrian environment.

Legend

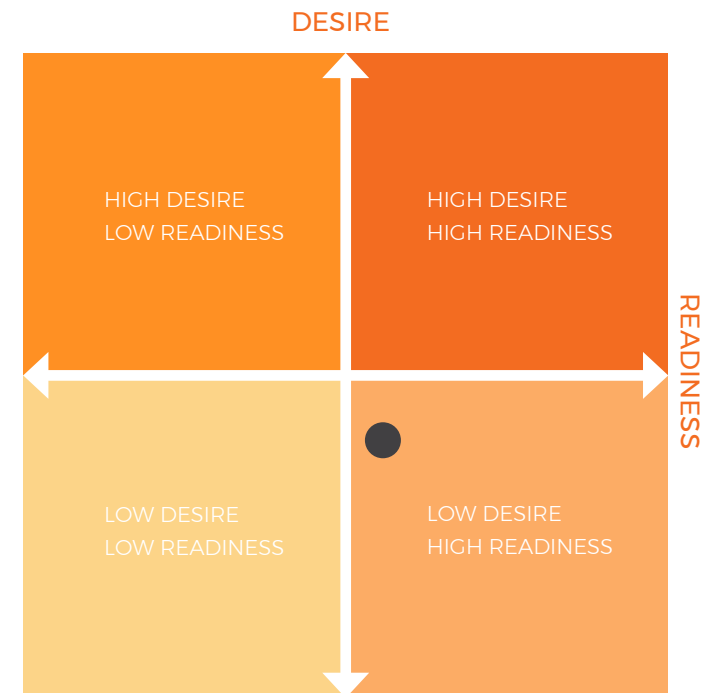
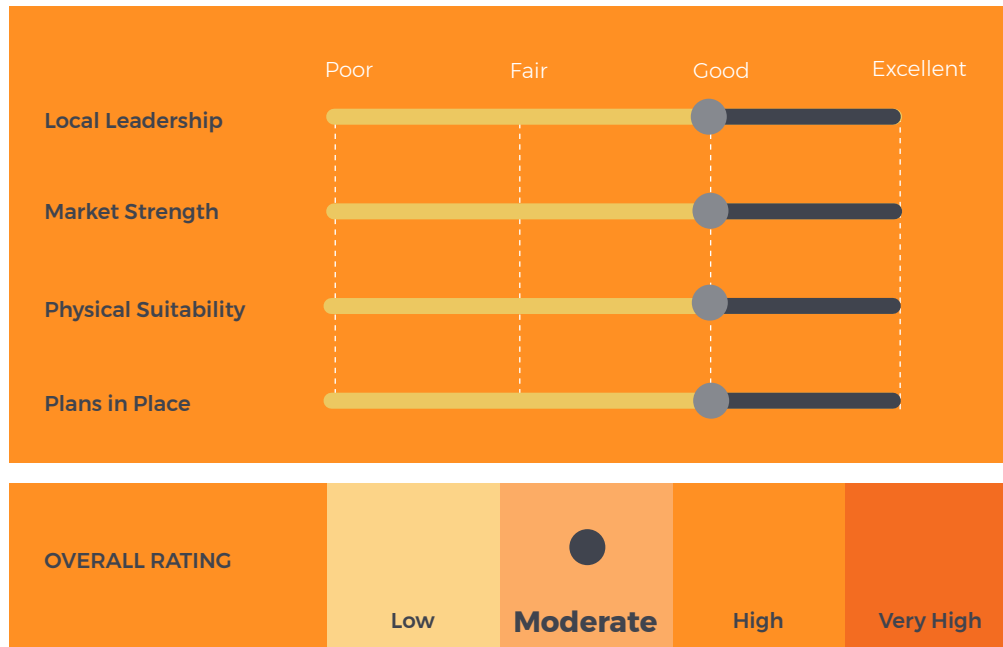
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

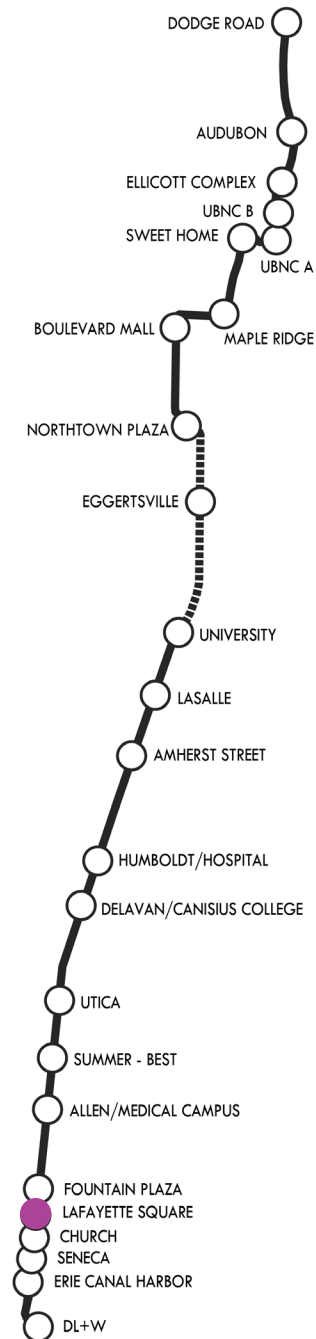
CHURCH STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Support from area stakeholders for TOD. • NFTA has desire to make this area a transit hub for Downtown multi-modal activity. • Buffalo Place, Inc	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Several adaptive reuse projects have been completed, are under construction, or are proposed for existing building stock. • Proximity to 211 Ellicott development and proposed new supermarket, which should help spur interest in the area. • Overall Downtown market remains fairly strong for mixed-use development.	• Main Place Mall has struggled to retain retail tenants.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• Station area offers good east-west connectivity to other Downtown locations. • Adjacent to the busiest NFTA Metro Bus transfer stop in the system; provides access to most Metro Bus routes. • Allows for connectivity to NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center and inter-city bus service. • Bike lanes have recently been added to Pearl Street and to N. and S. Division Streets. • Proximity to Erie County Government buildings and other nearby commercial space..	• Station infrastructure and public realm is dated. • Church Street and North and South Division Streets offer challenges to walkability. • Main Place Mall creates inactive street frontage and several projects in area have resulted in superblocks that break up the street pattern. • I-190 reduces the station catchment area and creates a visual and physical barrier to destinations south of I-190.
PLANS IN PLACE	• NFTA has a plan to develop a future NFTA Transit Hub, linking Metro Rail, Metro Bus, and intercity bus transportation along N. Division Street. • In addition to generally TOD-supportive zoning in Green Code throughout Downtown, several Green Code requirements are TOD supportive such as density bonus along Metro Rail, elimination of minimum parking requirements, and development of Transportation Management Plan. • NFTA has plans for a multi-modal transit hub to connect the Metropolitan Transportation Center, new transit hub between Washington and Ellicott Streets, and Church Street Metro Rail Station	• Availability of parking Downtown makes it easy to drive. • Cars Sharing Main Street project for this area is a few years off, so infrastructure upgrades will not happen in the near future.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

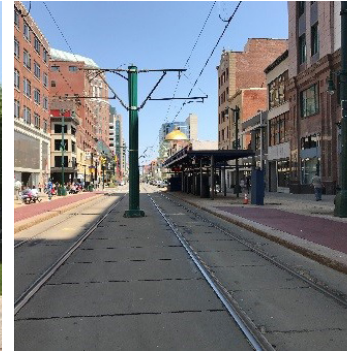
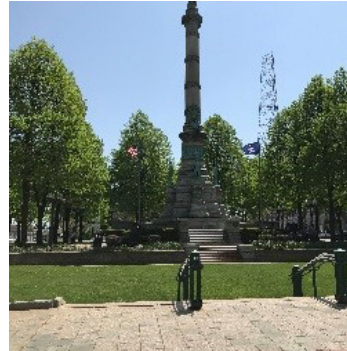
Church Station





STATION 5: LAFAYETTE SQUARE

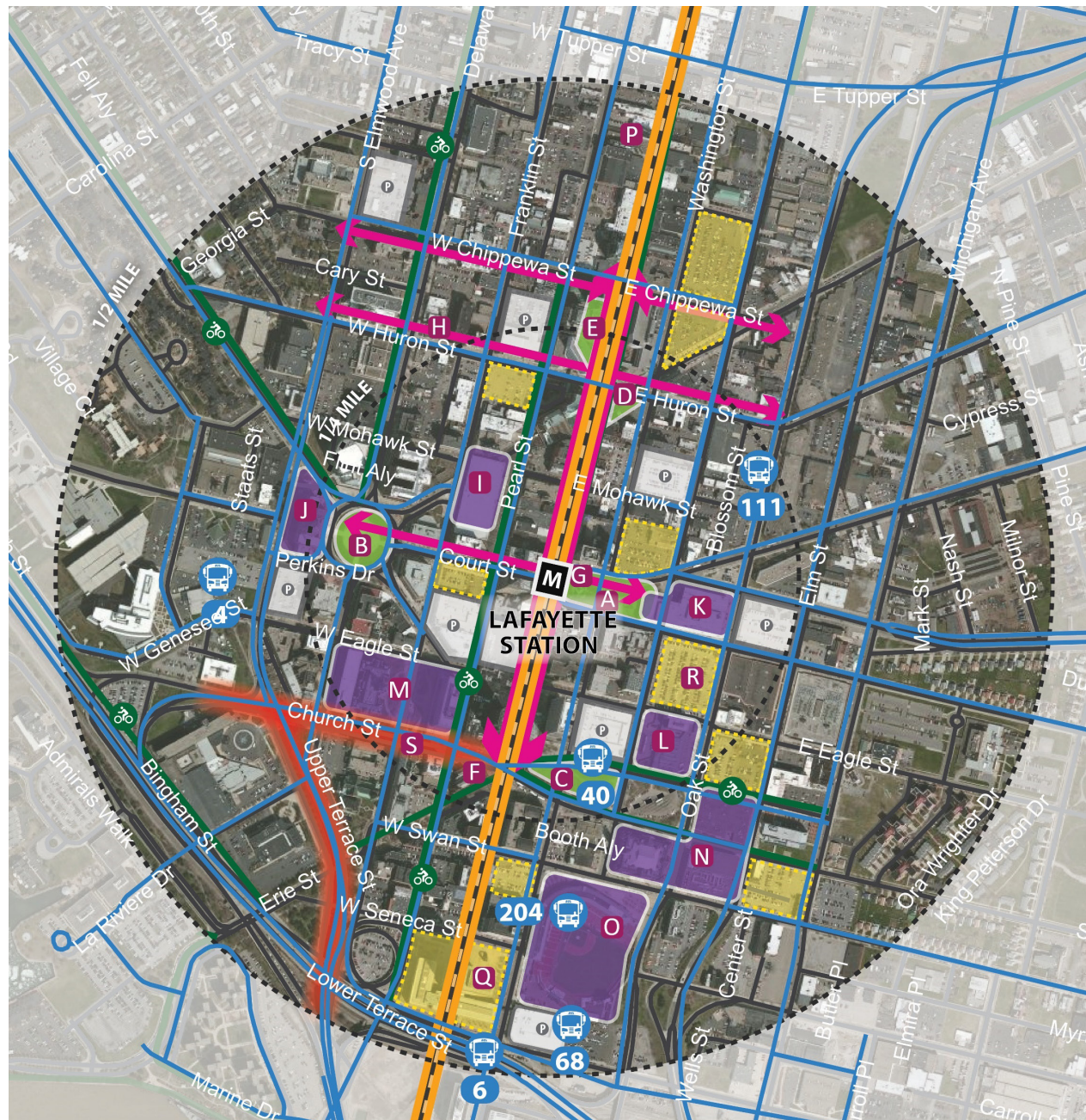
STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CORE



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Lafayette Square station is located north of Lafayette Square and south of Mohawk Street. This station is located within the Fare Free Zone. Train service operates exclusively at grade, and automobile access is restricted to NFTA personnel. The Cars Sharing Main Street project has returned vehicular traffic to Main Street north of Mohawk Street, and along with it improved infrastructure and pedestrian amenities. Bike lanes have recently been provided on Pearl Street.

Lafayette Square station sits at a major east-west crossroads in Downtown, offering good connectivity to City Hall and government centers around Niagara Square, offices in the area, Buffalo Niagara Convention Center, and Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, and many restaurants, offices, hotels and shops. Both surface and ramp parking are located near the station.



Key Places

- A. Lafayette Square
- B. Niagara Square
- C. Five Flag's Park and Fireman's Park
- D. Roosevelt Plaza
- E. Fountain Plaza
- F. Cathedral Park
- G. Connectivity to Niagara Square and City Hall, Buffalo Erie County Central Library, Buffalo Niagara Convention Center, and attractions around Lafayette Square
- H. Good cross-street connectivity to destinations throughout Downtown
- I. Buffalo Niagara Convention Center
- J. Buffalo City Hall
- K. Buffalo Erie County Central Library
- L. NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center
- M. Erie County government buildings
- N. Erie Community College
- O. Coca-Cola Field
- P. Main Street and Downtown business district
- Q. Seneca One redevelopment
- R. Proposed 201 Ellicott development project
- S. Church Street is not a comfortable pedestrian environment

Legend

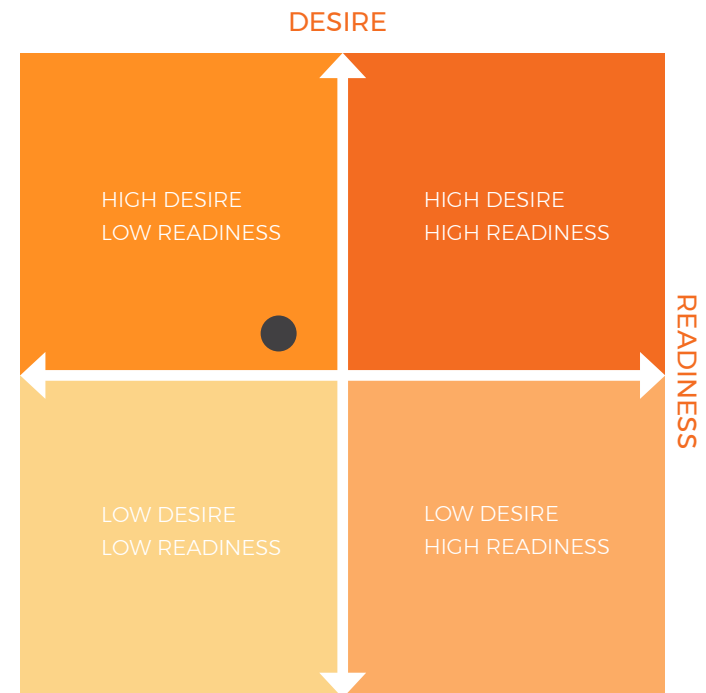
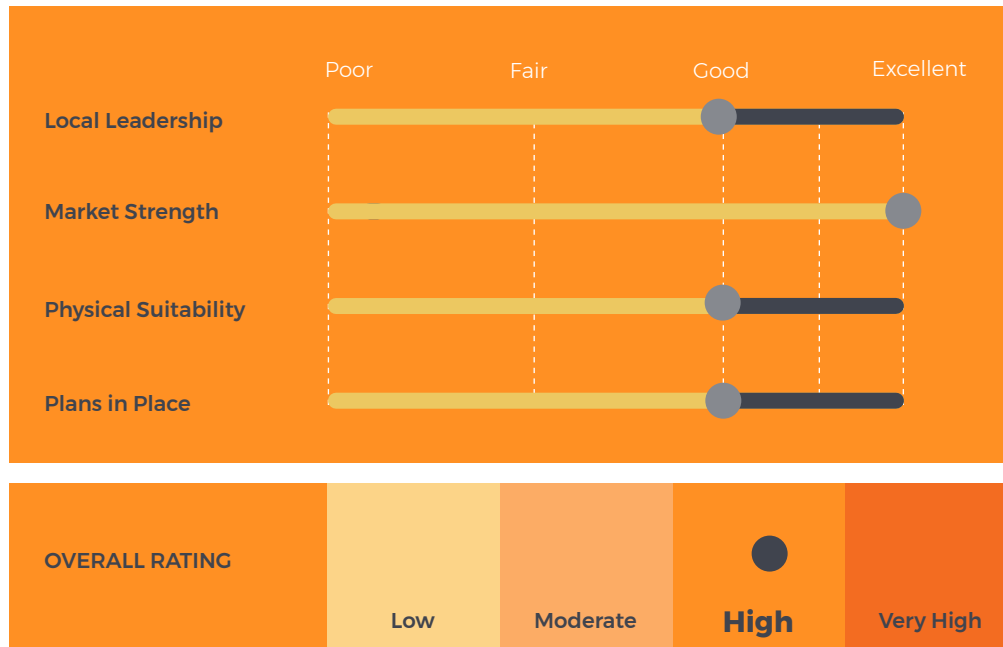
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- P Parking
- BUS Metro Bus Routes
- B Bike Facilities (Existing)
- B Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

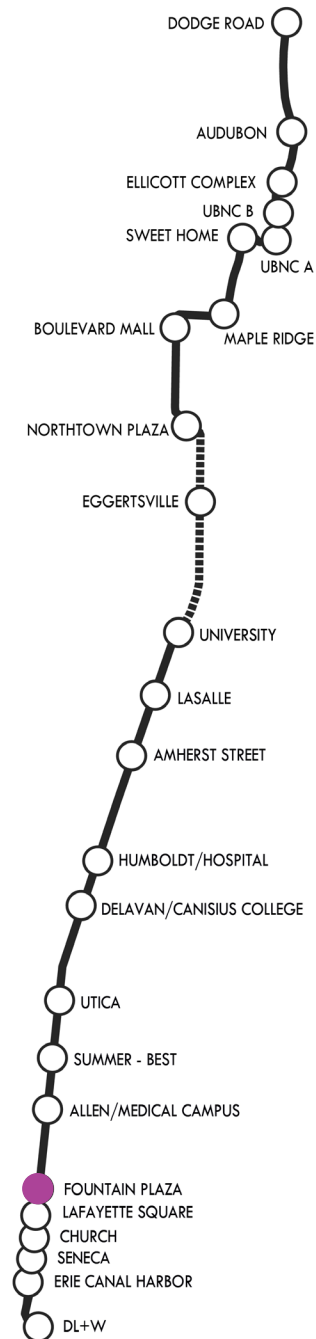
LAFAYETTE SQUARE STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Support from area stakeholders for TOD. • Buffalo Place, Inc	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Several adaptive reuse projects have been completed, are under construction, or are proposed for existing building stock. • Proximity to 211 Ellicott development and proposed new supermarket, which should help spur interest in the area. • Overall Downtown market remains fairly strong for mixed-use development. • Nearby surface parking lots available for potential redevelopment.	
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• Proximity to City of Buffalo government and county and federal buildings and other nearby commercial and hotel space. • Proximity to Convention Center and Erie County Central Library. • Station area offers good east-west connectivity to other Downtown locations. • Cars Sharing Main Street project north of Mohawk Street has brought enhancements to public realm and streetscape, including reconnection of W. Mohawk Street between Main Street and Pearl Street. • Bike lanes have recently been added to Pearl Street.	• Station infrastructure and public realm south of Mohawk Street is dated. • Buildings on the west side of Main Street, north of Court Street, offer poor street interaction.
PLANS IN PLACE	• In addition to generally TOD-supportive zoning in Green Code throughout Downtown, several Green Code requirements are TOD supportive such as density bonus along Metro Rail, elimination of minimum parking requirements, and development of Transportation Management Plan.	• Availability of parking Downtown makes it easy to drive. • Cars Sharing Main Street project for this area is a few years off, so infrastructure upgrades will not happen in the near future.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

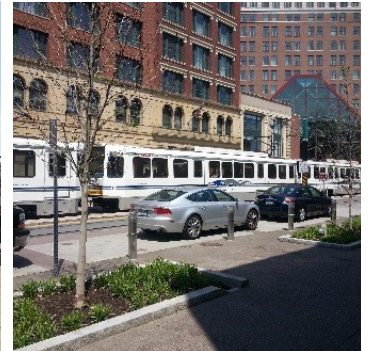
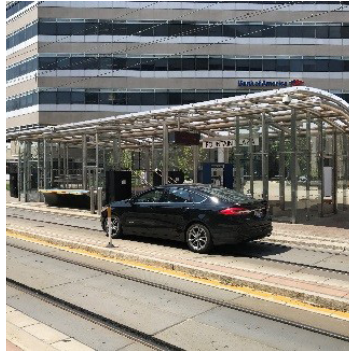
Lafayette Square Station





STATION 6: FOUNTAIN PLAZA

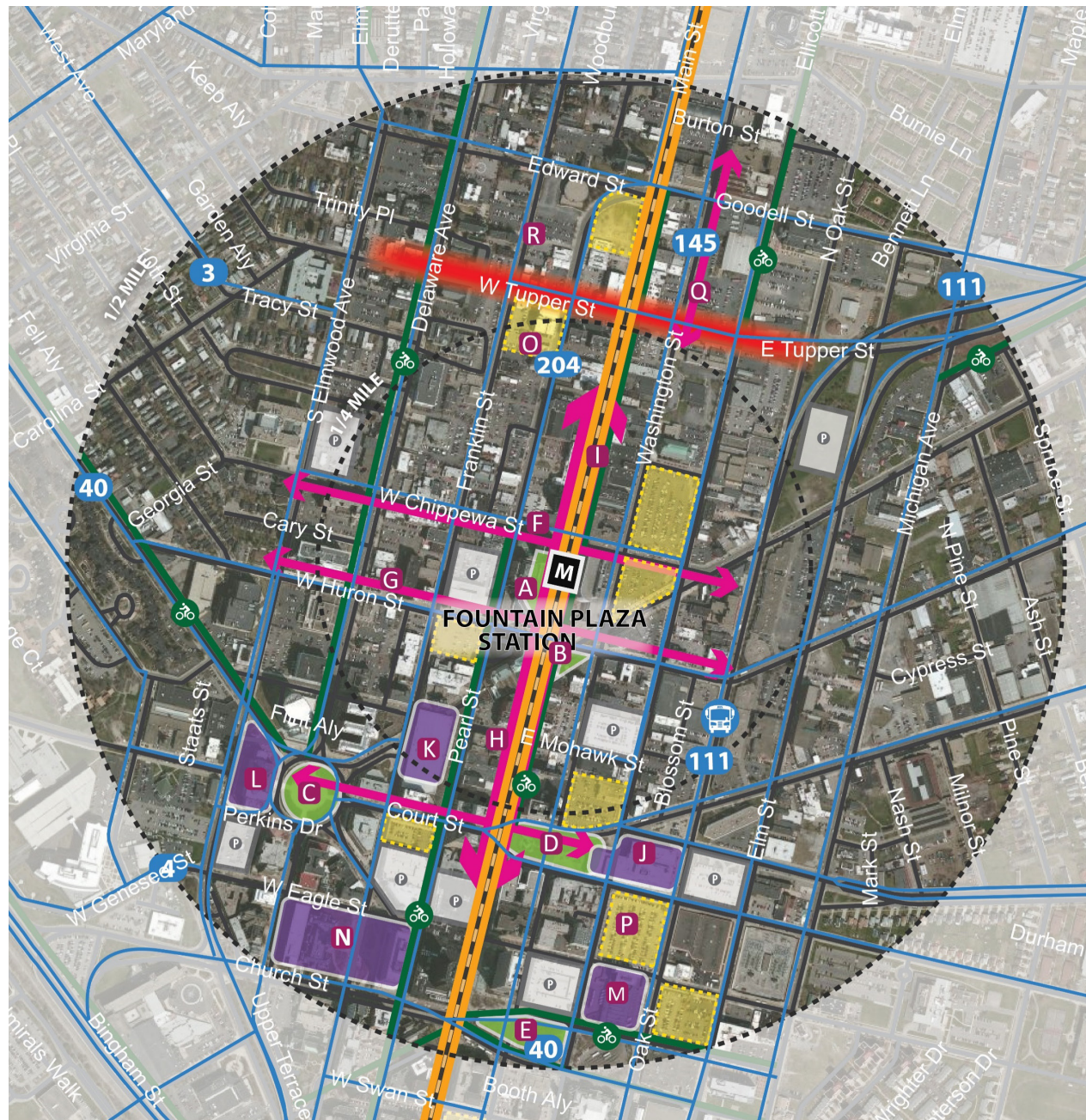
STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CORE



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Fountain Plaza station is located between Genesee and Chippewa Streets. This station is at the northern terminus of the Fare Free Zone. Metro Rail service operates exclusively at grade, and vehicular access is permitted with the recent Cars Sharing Main Street projects. The Cars Sharing Main Street projects allows on-street parking on Main Street and has brought about improvements to the public realm as well as a new Fountain Plaza station. With the Cars Sharing Main Street project, the Theater station was eliminated, this making Fountain Plaza to the station providing access to the Theater District and 700 Block of Main Street. The Cars Sharing Main Street project investments have spurred investment in existing building stock along Main Street, bringing about revitalized street activity and upper floor uses.

It is located near several of Buffalo's most iconic buildings and places, including Fountain Plaza, the Electric Tower, Roosevelt Plaza, Chippewa Street, and the Theater District. Numerous office buildings surround the station along with several hotels and restaurants. Both surface and ramp parking options are available within one or two blocks. Adjacent streets offer good connectivity across Downtown, and nearby public spaces provide good visibility to the station.



Key Places

- A. Fountain Plaza
- B. Roosevelt Plaza
- C. Niagara Square
- D. Lafayette Square
- E. Five Flag's Park and Fireman's Park
- F. Connectivity to Fountain Plaza, Main Street and Downtown businesses, Theater District, and Chippewa District
- G. Good cross-street connectivity to destinations throughout Downtown
- H. Main Street and Downtown business district
- I. Theater District
- J. Buffalo Erie County Central Library
- K. Buffalo Niagara Convention Center
- L. Buffalo City Hall
- M. NFTA Metropolitan Transportation Center
- N. Erie County government buildings
- O. Proposed 500 Pearl development project
- P. Proposed 201 Ellicott development project
- Q. Gap in station area walkshed between Fountain Plaza and Allen Medical Campus
- R. Tupper and Goodell are uncomfortable pedestrian environments

Legend

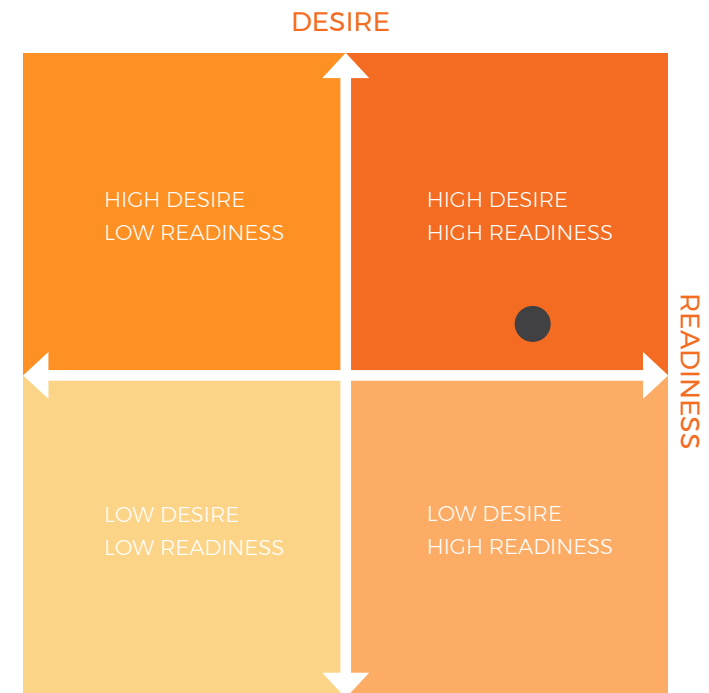
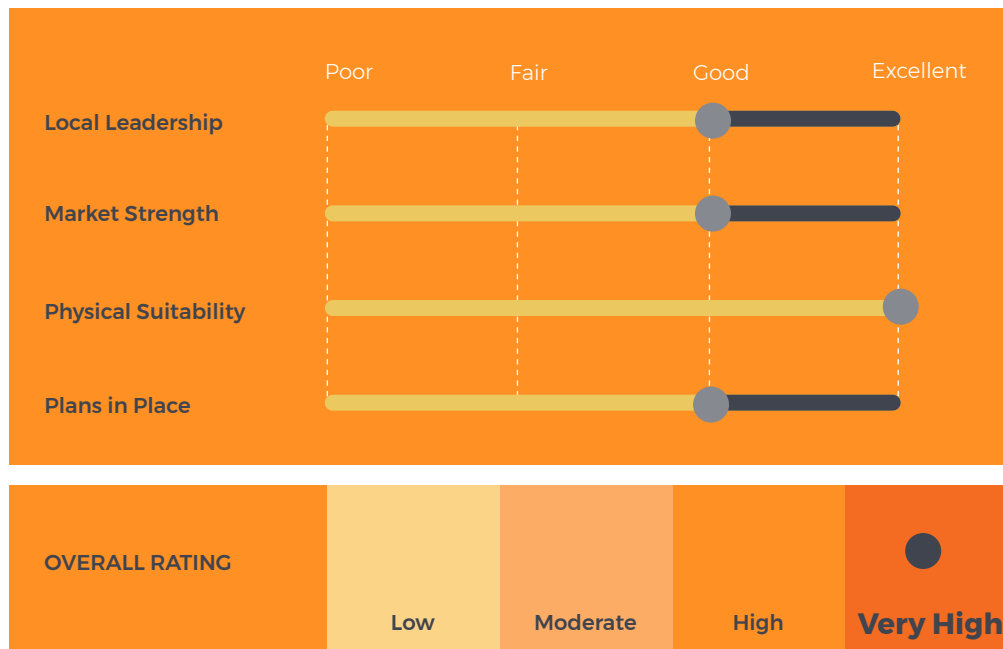
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- P Parking
- 111 Metro Bus Routes
- 🚲 Bike Facilities (Existing)
- 🚲 Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- ↔ Key Connectivity
- Challenges

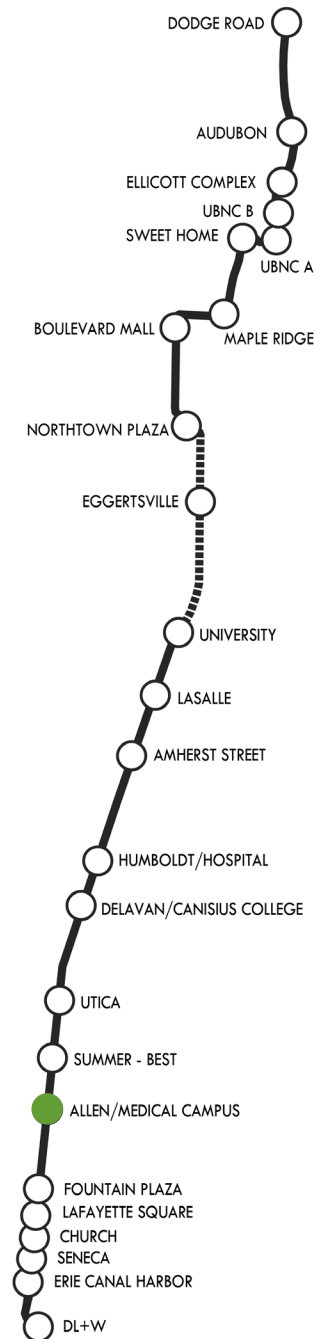
FOUNTAIN PLAZA STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Support from area stakeholders for TOD Development..	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Proximity to 500, 600, and 700 blocks of Main Street, which have seen substantial adaptive reuse with increased ground-floor activity and upper-floor reuse. • Nearby surface parking lots available for potential redevelopment. • Overall Downtown market remains fairly strong for mixed-use development..	
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• Recently updated station infrastructure and public realm infrastructure as part of Cars Sharing Main Street project. • Proximity to Fountain Plaza, Chippewa Street, Electric Building, and Theater District as well as major commercial tenants. • Station area offers good east-west connectivity to other Downtown locations; ability to reach Delaware North/Westin building and Catholic Health building. • Station area offers comfortable walking environment; Cars Sharing Main Street project has brought enhancements to public realm and streetscape. • Bike lanes have recently been added to Pearl Street.	• Gap in station area walkshed between Fountain Plaza and Allen/Medical Campus • Tupper Street and Goodall Street are not comfortable walking environments.
PLANS IN PLACE	• In addition to general TOD-supportive zoning in Green Code throughout Downtown, several Green Code requirements are TOD supportive such as density bonus along Metro Rail, elimination of minimum parking requirements, and development of Transportation Management Plan.	• Availability of parking Downtown makes it easy to drive. • Cars Sharing Main Street project for this area is a few years off, so infrastructure upgrades will not happen in the near future.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

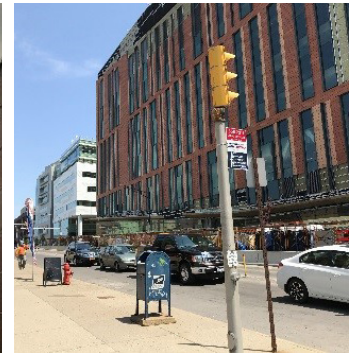
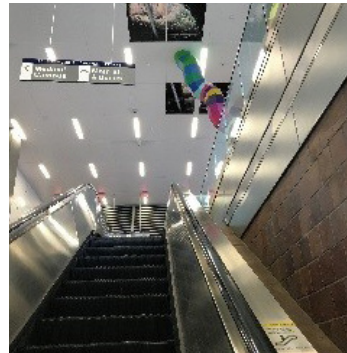
Fountain Plaza Station





STATION 7: ALLEN/MEDICAL CAMPUS

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CAMPUS

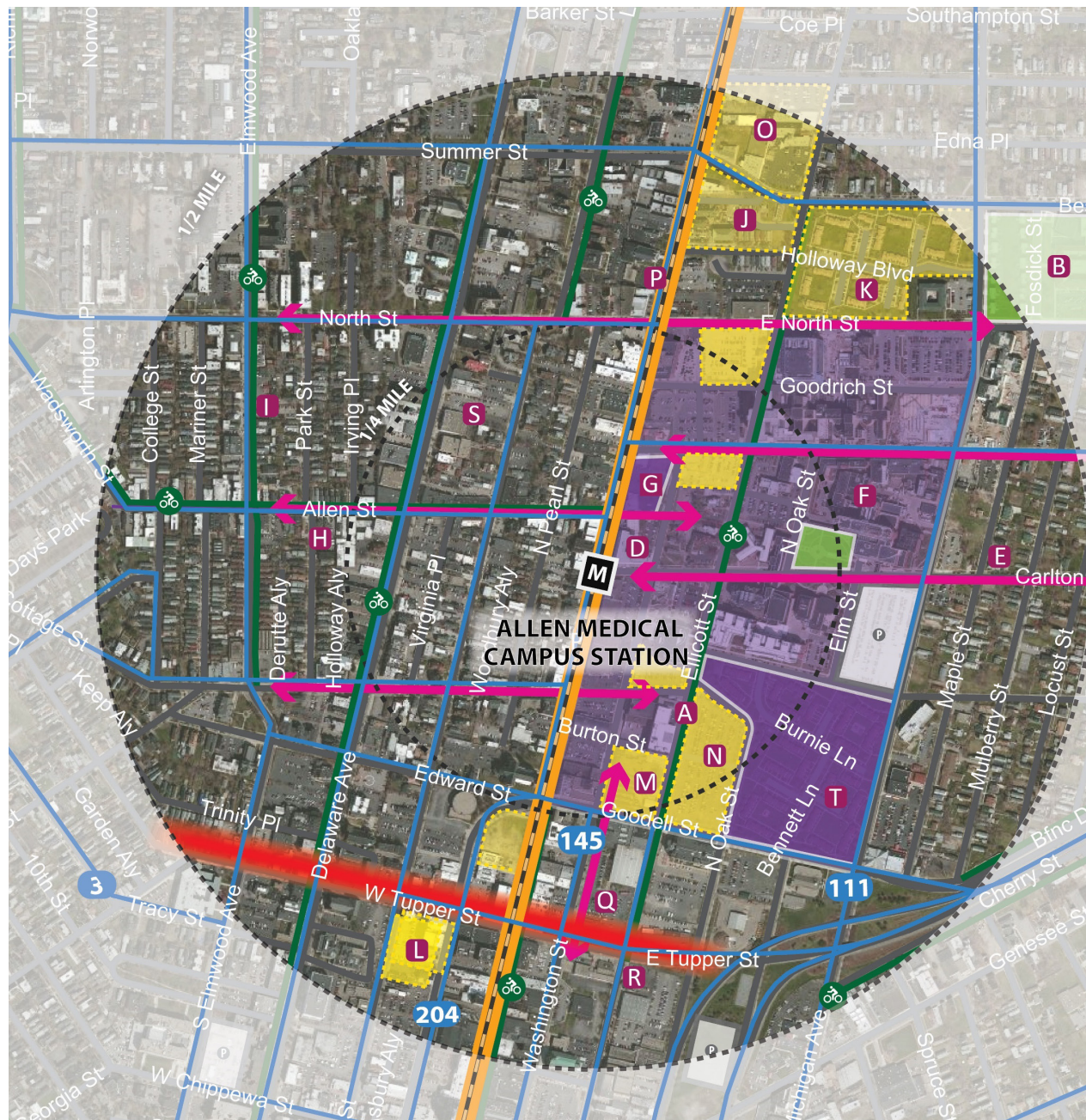


STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Allen/Medical Campus station is located at the corner of Main and Allen Streets and serves as the primary station for the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. This station along with its passenger boarding area is underground, and the purchase of a fare is required to use the train. The station lobby is indoors and leads to a stairwell down to the platforms. One escalator is in place for passengers exiting the platform area. The new UB Medical School has been constructed above the station and has provided a new station lobby. Continued hospital, medical use, and associated commercial and office use continues to

be constructed throughout the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, and existing building stock along Main Street has seen adaptive reuse. The station is located near the Allentown District, which features a mix of residential, commercial, restaurant, and entertainment uses.

Parking in the surrounding area is restricted primarily to on-street parking and those surface and ramp parking located at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Bike lanes are provided along Delaware Avenue and Linwood Avenue, and shared lane markings are provided on Ellicott Street.



Key Places

- A. BNMC Bicycle Locker
- B. City Honor's
- C. Masten Park
- D. UB Medical School project will bring enhanced connectivity between Allen/Medical Campus Station and BNMC and Allentown.
- E. Cross streets provide connectivity between station and Fruit Belt, Allentown, and Elmwood Village
- F. Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
- G. UB Medical School — Built in air space over Allen/Medical Campus Station
- H. Allentown
- I. Elmwood Village
- J. Proposed 1091 Main development project
- K. Proposed Campus Square development project
- L. Proposed 500 Pearl development project
- M. Proposed Trico redevelopment project
- N. Surface parking lot available for redevelopment
- O. Redevelopment opportunity around Summer Best Station and adjacent vacant properties
- P. Main Street consists of a 6-lane roadway with no bicycle facilities/uncomfortable walking environment
- Q. Gap in station area walkshed between Fountain Plaza and Allen/Medical Campus
- R. Tupper and Goodell are uncomfortable pedestrian environments.
- S. Delaware Avenue
- T. McCarley Gardens Housing

Legend

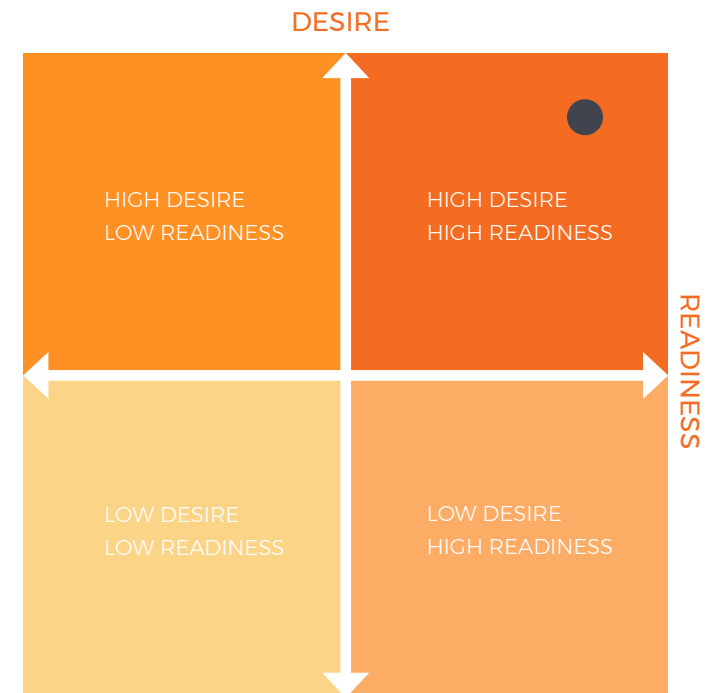
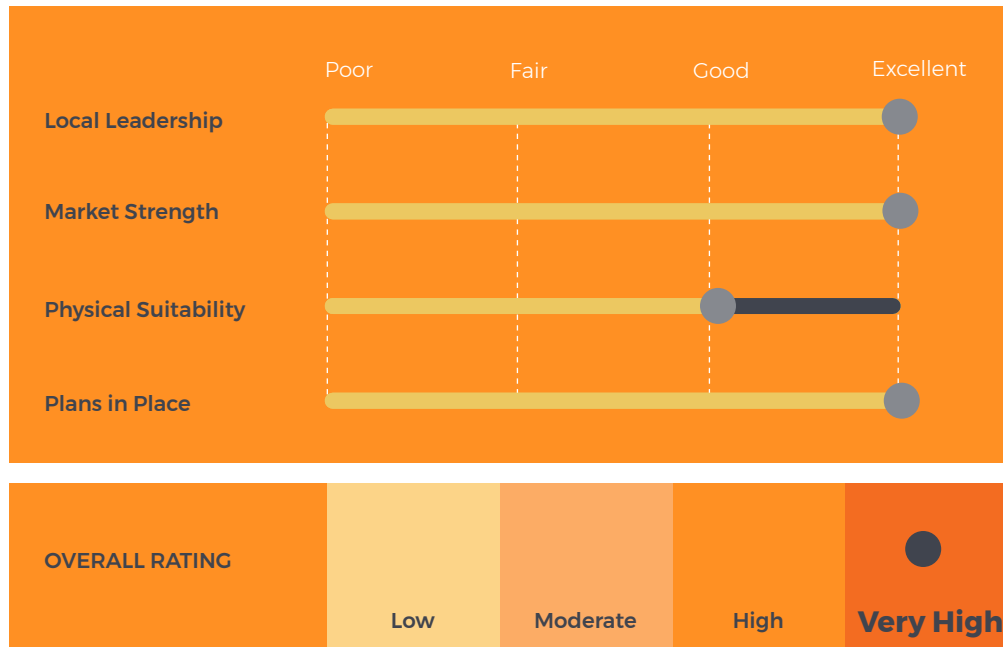
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

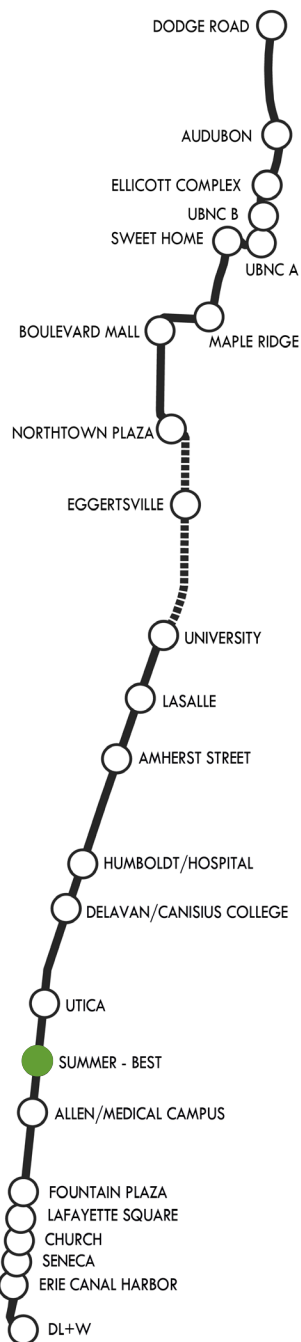
ALLEN/MEDICAL CAMPUS STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus is strong proponent of TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Hospital and medical uses have generated a strong demand for associated commercial, retail, and residential uses. - The UB Medical School is the region's first real joint development TOD, built atop the Allen/Medical Campus station.	The demand for development in the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus has put development and parking pressure on adjacent residential neighborhoods.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Proximity to Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, one of the highest concentrations of employment and fastest growing areas in the region, and Allentown, one of the oldest and most desirable retail and residential neighborhoods. - While parking is available, it is in short supply and comes at a premium opening up opportunity for alternative transportation modes such as transit. - Station area offers comfortable walking environment; with the opening of the UB Medical School comes a new connection that will improve connectivity between Allentown, Allen/Medical Campus station, and BNMC.	- With the elimination of Theatre station, Metro Rail station walkshed no longer overlaps that of the Allen/Medical Campus station, leaving an area between about Goodell Street and Tupper Street outside of a Metro Rail station walkshed. - Tupper Street and Goodell Street present challenges to walkability; present perceptible walkability barrier between Downtown and Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. - This station sits outside of the Metro Rail Fare Free Zone, bringing about challenges to using parking supply in Canalside and Cobblestone as a park-and-ride opportunity.
PLANS IN PLACE	- The Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and several organizations are actively promoting alternative transportation opportunities. - In addition to general TOD-supportive zoning in Green Code throughout the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, several Green Code requirements are TOD supportive, such as density bonus along Metro Rail, elimination of minimum parking requirements, and development of Transportation Management Plan.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

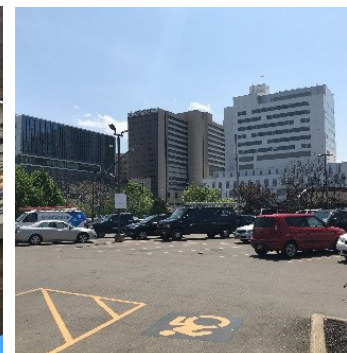
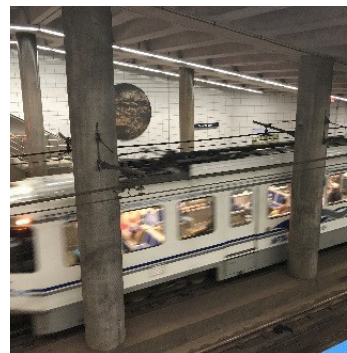
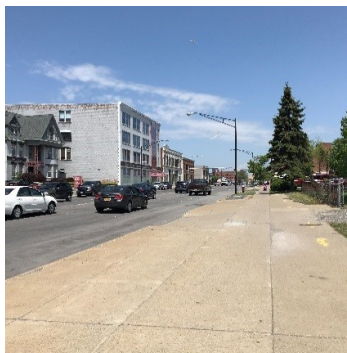
Allen/Medical Campus Station





STATION 8: SUMMER - BEST

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CAMPUS



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Summer - Best station is situated at the northeast corner of Main and Best Streets. This station, along with its passenger boarding area, is underground and the purchase of a fare is required to use the train. The station lobby is indoors and leads to a stairwell down to the platforms. There are escalators and elevators available to passengers for access to the platform area.

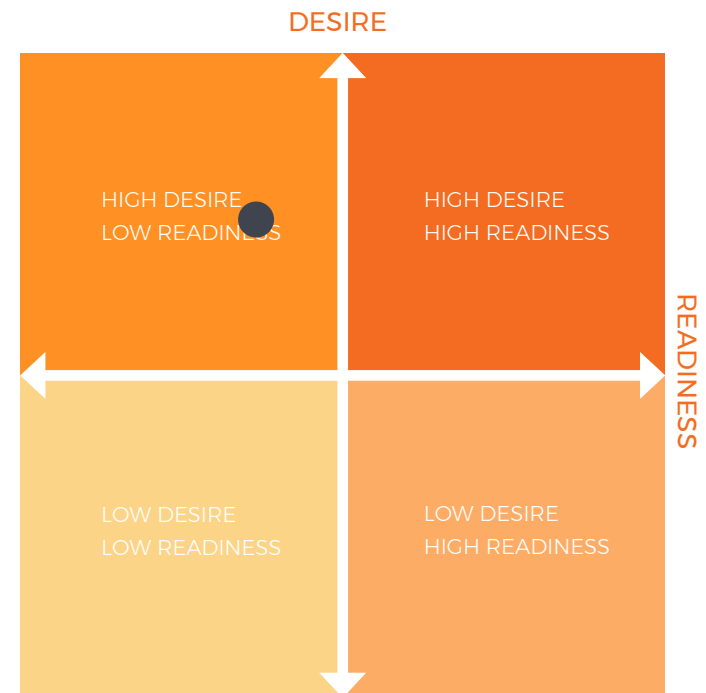
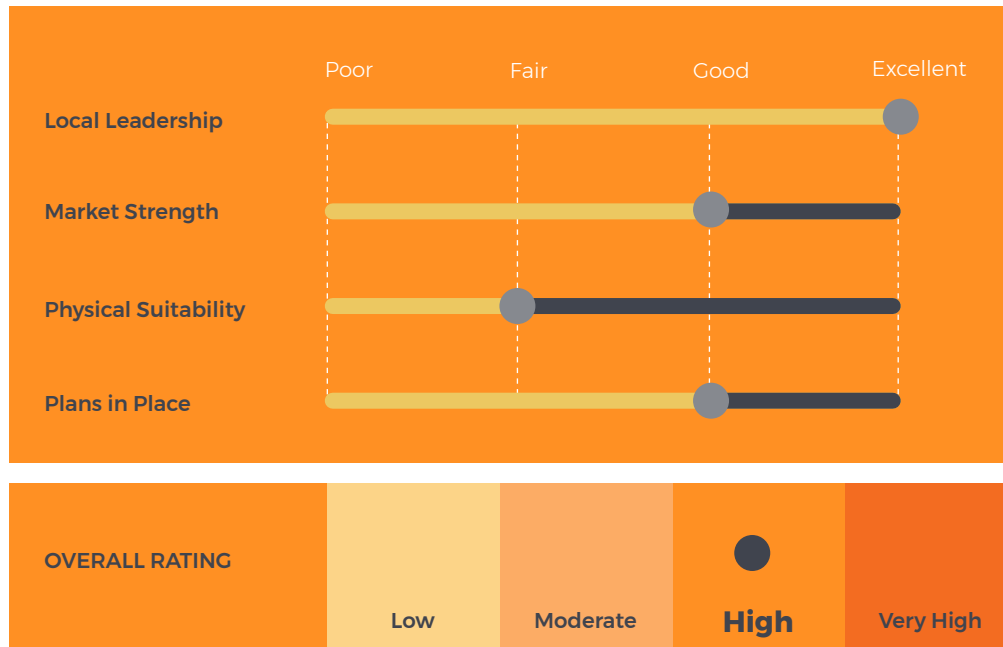
The station is located near the north end of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, and development continues to push north and influence this area. Surrounding the station are a mix of medium-density residential, commercial, and restaurant uses along with several places of worship. There is an abundance of developable parcels and buildings available for adaptive reuse within the immediate area, including the site immediately north of the station. Metro Bus Route #22 operates east-west along Summer and Best Streets, providing connectivity to the station. Bike lanes are provided along Linwood Avenue and shared-lane markings are provided on Ellicott Street. Parking around the station is a mix of both on-street and surface lots.

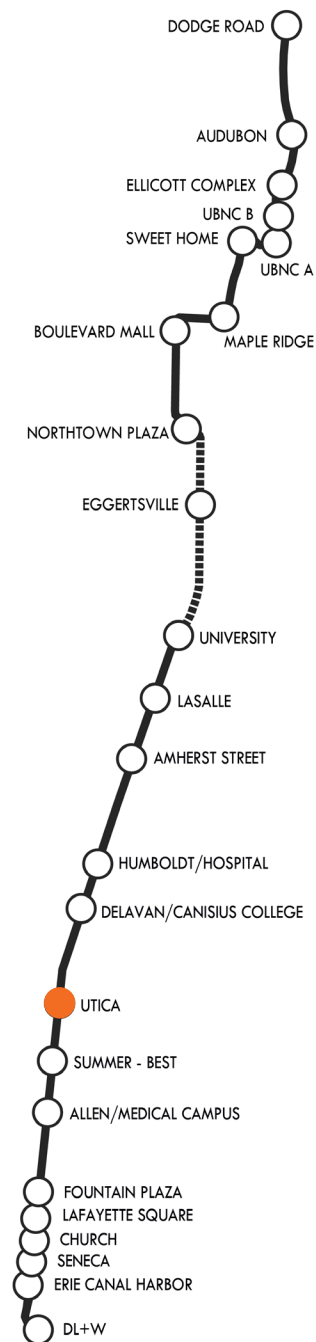
SUMMER – BEST STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	– WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus is strong proponent of TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Market driven by Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus pushing toward Summer – Best station, demand for associated commercial, retail, and residential uses. - Available building stock for reuse and vacant and underutilized land for redevelopment. - NFTA-owned parcel that Summer – Best station sits on presents good opportunity for joint development.	- The demand for development in the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus has put development and parking pressure on adjacent residential neighborhoods. - Small parcels under multiple ownership along Main Street and in surrounding area require parcel assembly to create redevelopment sites..
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Proximity to Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (one of the highest concentrations of employment and fastest growing areas in the region) and Allentown (one of the oldest and most desirable retail and residential neighborhoods). - While parking is available, it is in short supply and comes at a premium, opening opportunities for alternative transportation modes such as transit. - Station area offers comfortable walking environment; with the opening of the UB Medical School comes a new connection that will improve connectivity between Allentown, Allen/Medical Campus station, and BNMC.	- Station and surrounding infrastructure is dated. - Main Street is a wide 6-lane roadway and pedestrian environment is generally not comfortable along Main Street and along east-west streets. - Station doesn't connect well with Elmwood Village, which lies just outside the station walkshed.
PLANS IN PLACE	In addition to general TOD supportive zoning in Green Code throughout the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, several Green Code requirements are TOD supportive such as density bonus along Metro Rail, elimination of minimum parking requirements, and development of Transportation Management Plan.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Summer – Best Station





STATION 9: UTICA

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

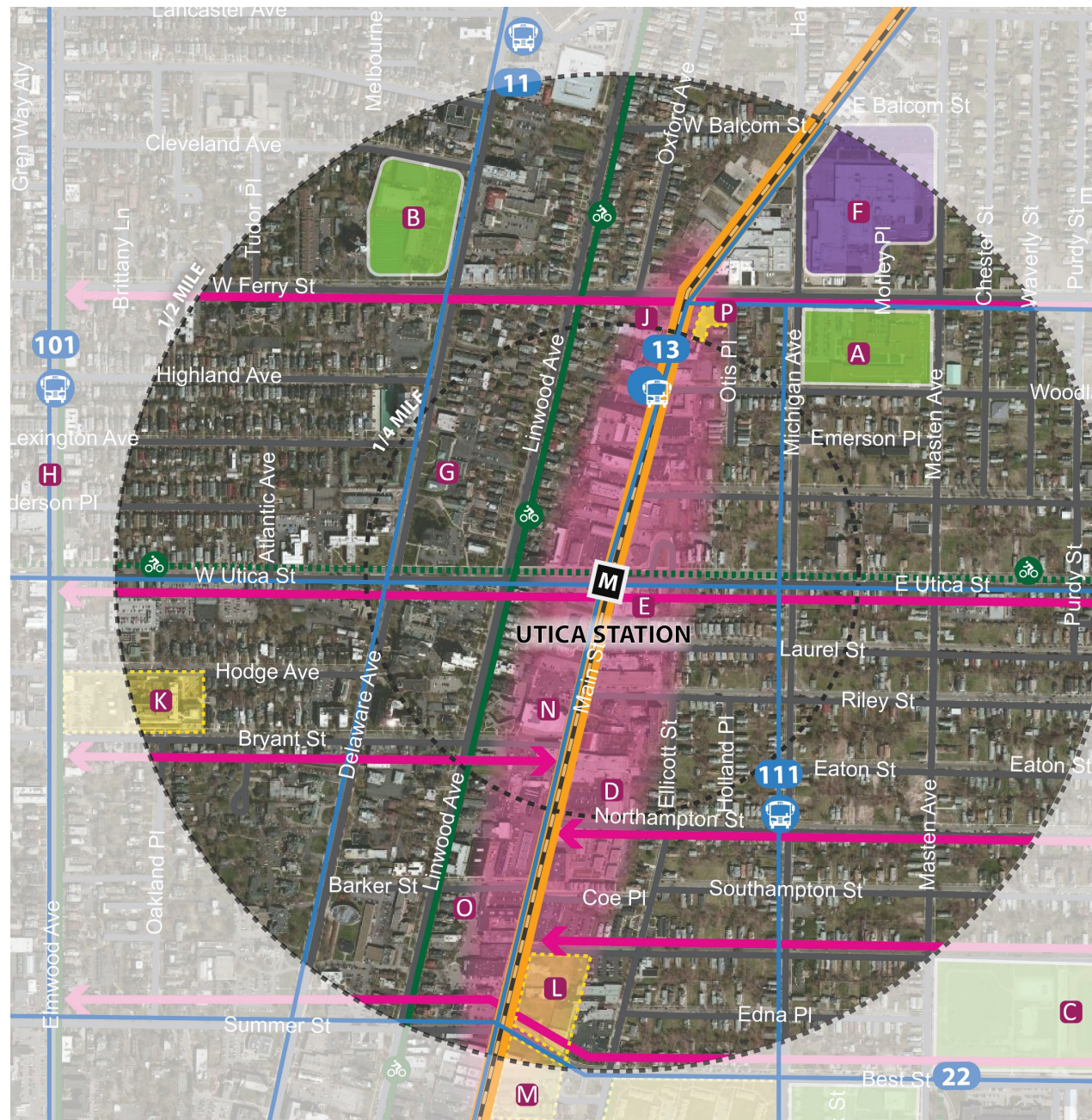


STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Utica station is located at the northeast corner of Main and East Utica Streets. This station has an enclosed lobby at ground level with a passenger waiting area along with information and fare kiosks. The boarding area is underground, and the purchase of a fare is required to use Metro Rail.

The area surrounding the station is a mix of medium-density residential, commercial, and restaurant uses, with generally 2- to 4-story buildings fronting Main Street. There is an abundance of developable parcels and buildings with adaptive reuse potential within the immediate area. The residential neighborhoods east of the station are experiencing higher vacancy rates than

those west of the station. The area around the intersection of Main and Ferry Streets has seen redevelopment. Metro Bus Route #12 operates east-west along Utica Street, providing connectivity to the station. The Elmwood Village and proposed Children's Hospital redevelopment are within the catchment area of Utica station but lack comfortable walking conditions. Bike lanes are provided along Linwood Avenue, and shared-lane markings are provided on Ellicott Street. Parking around the station is a mix of both on-street and surface lots for private or commercial use.



Key Places

- A. Buffalo Academy of Visual and Performing Arts
- B. Canisius High School
- C. Masten Park
- D. Cross streets provide good connectivity between station and nearby neighborhoods
- E. Busy Metro Bus/Metro Rail transfer location — good east-west connectivity
- F. NFTA Cold Springs Garage
- G. Delaware Avenue
- H. Elmwood Village
- I. Jefferson Avenue
- J. Main/Ferry
- K. Proposed Children's Hospital redevelopment project
- L. Redevelopment opportunity around Summer-Best Station and adjacent vacant properties
- M. Proposed 1091 Main development project
- N. Main Street consists of a 6-lane roadway with no bicycle facilities/uncomfortable walking environment
- O. Adaptive Reuse opportunities with existing building stock along Main Street
- P. Proposed Willoughby Insurance redevelopment project

Legend

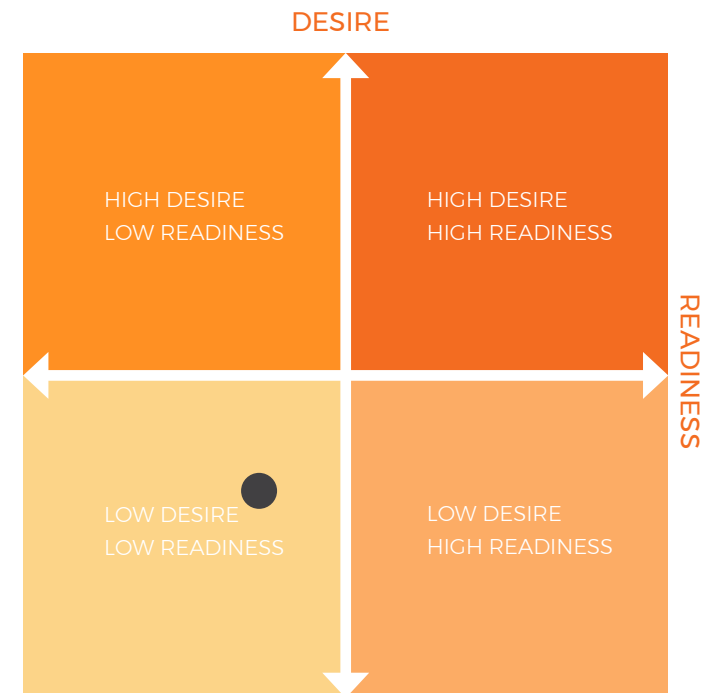
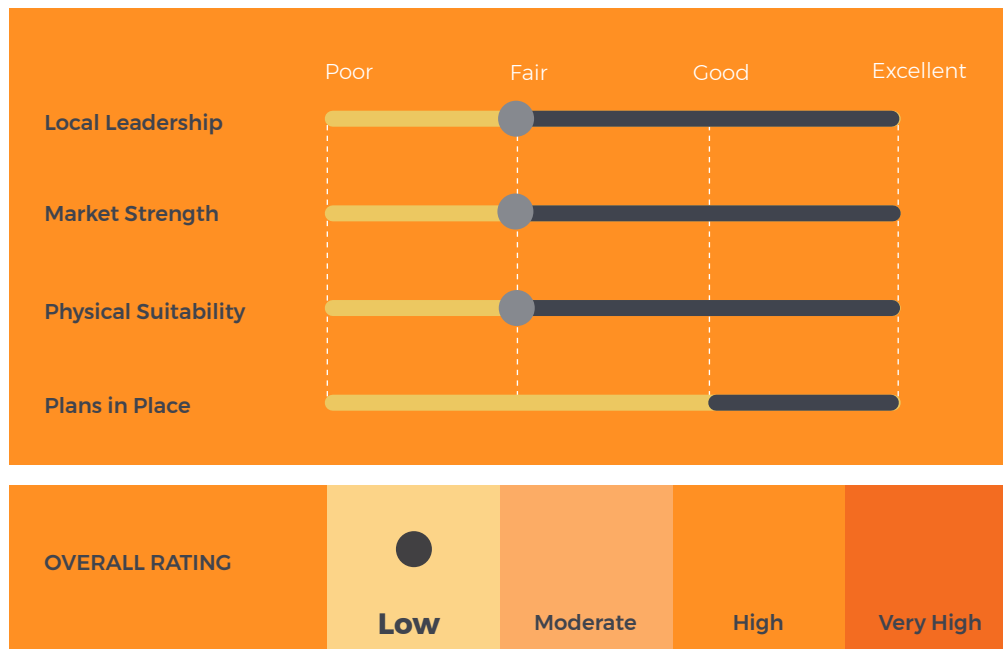
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- P Parking
- B Metro Bus Routes
- B Bike Facilities (Existing)
- B Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- A Key Connectivity
- Challenges

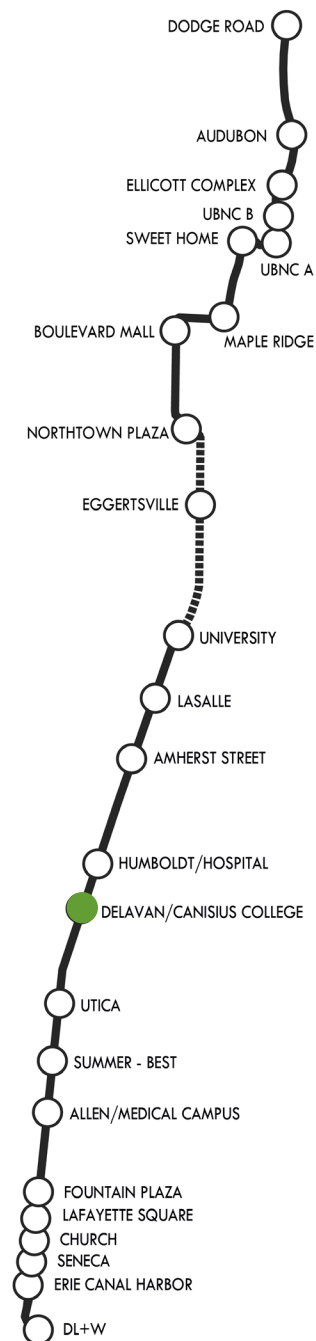
UTICA STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Strong desire from community for making Utica Station a community and transportation hub.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Areas to the south (Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus) and north (Main/Ferry) are seeing redevelopment, with opportunities pushing toward Utica station. - Available building stock for reuse and vacant and underutilized land for redevelopment. - Available land owned by NFTA and City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency around Utica station that could be used as a joint development opportunity.	Small parcels under multiple ownership along Main Street and in surrounding area require parcel assembly to create redevelopment sites.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Station offers good east-west connectivity through Metro Bus. - Proposed Utica Neighborhood Bikeway will enhance connectivity to/from Utica station. - Small parcels offer opportunity for infill.	- Station and surrounding infrastructure is dated. - Main Street is a wide 6-lane roadway, and pedestrian environment is generally not comfortable along Main Street and along east-west streets. - Station doesn't connect well with Elmwood Village, which lies just outside the station walkshed. - Riders indicated that east-west connectivity can be improved; improve coordination and interaction between Metro Rail and Metro Bus.
PLANS IN PLACE	TOD-supportive zoning under Green Code exists; Utica Station is the northern extent of the highest TOD-supportive zoning. Areas along Main Street north of Utica to Delavan Avenue are generally permitted a height of 4-5 stories.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Utica Station





STATION 10: DELAVAN/CANISIUS COLLEGE

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CAMPUS



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Delavan/Canisius College station is located on the northeast corner of Main Street and West Delavan Avenue. This station has an enclosed lobby at ground level with information and fare kiosks. Purchase of a fare is required at this station. Passengers must take two sets of escalators to reach the station platforms. There is also an elevator available for access to the passenger boarding area.

This station is near Canisius College and its facilities and sits adjacent to a parking ramp used by the college. The area surrounding the station is primarily associated with the college and also consists of a mix of commercial uses to the south. Abundant residential uses in the area range from single-family homes to multi-family buildings catering to students within a few blocks from the station in any direction. The Hamlin Park community is to the

east. The Gates Circle redevelopment project is within the catchment area of the station, to the west. Forest Lawn Cemetery to the northwest constrains the catchment area of the station.

There is a parking garage to the east of the station and on-street parking is available in the immediate area. The surface lots are dedicated to the college facilities and commercial areas. Metro Bus Route #26 operates east-west along Delavan Avenue, providing connectivity to the station. Bike lanes exist along Linwood Avenue but are absent in the nearby area.



Key Places

- A. Forest Lawn Cemetery
- B. Koessler Athletic Center — Canisius College
- C. Buffalo Academy of Visual and Performing Arts
- D. Cross streets provide good connectivity between station and nearby neighborhoods
- E. Busy Metro Bus/Metro Rail transfer location — good east-west connectivity
- F. Canisius College
- G. Medaille College
- H. NFTA Cold Springs Garage
- I. Sisters Hospital
- J. Gates Circle redevelopment project
- K. Canisius College Parking Garage
- L. Main Street consists of a 6-lane roadway with no bicycle facilities/uncomfortable walking environment
- M. Forest Lawn Cemetery acts to reduce catchment area of station

Legend

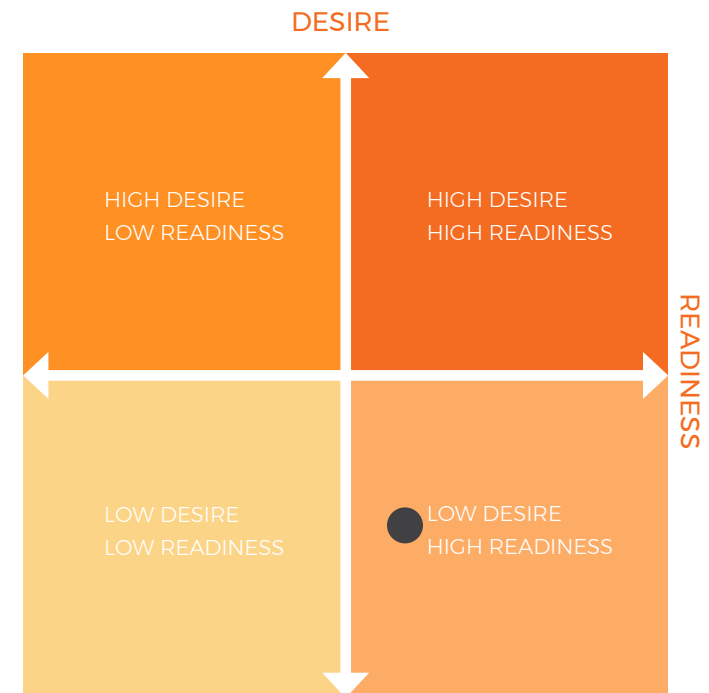
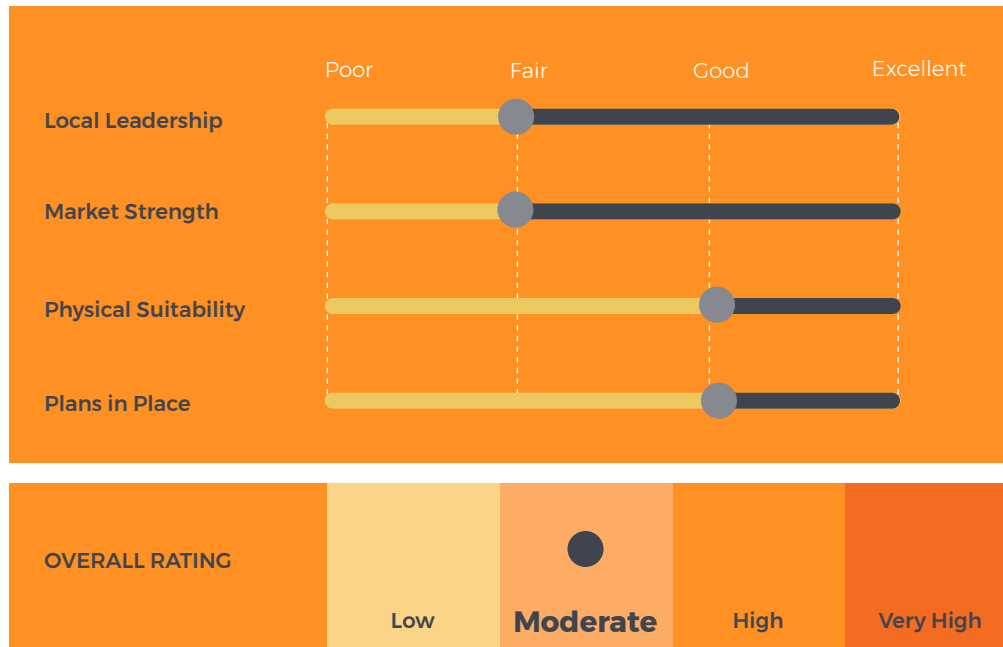
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

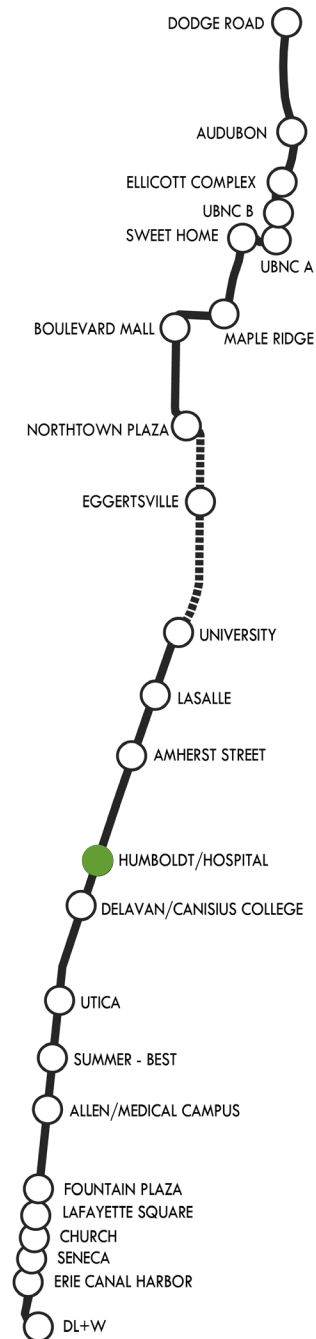
DELAVAN/CANISUS COLLEGE AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Opportunity for Canisius College to take a leadership role in TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Development market is associated primarily with proximity to Canisius College. There is an opportunity to leverage connectivity to Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and Downtown.	• Land and available building stock in the area for redevelopment is limited; the Forest Lawn Cemetery to the northwest constrains catchment area of the station. Most TOD opportunity lies in partnership with Canisius College. • Available building stock for reuse is limited on Main Street, and mostly exists in adjacent neighborhoods.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• Station offers good east-west connectivity through Metro Bus. • Proposed Delavan Avenue bicycle improvements will enhance connectivity between Gates Circle redevelopment and Delavan/Canisius College station. • Parking garage offers opportunity for structured TOD parking or park-and-ride or for use in a parking management district.	• The heart of the Canisius College campus lies outside of the Delavan/Canisius College station walkshed, and actually falls mostly within the Humboldt/Hospital station walkshed. • Station and surrounding infrastructure is dated. • Main Street is a wide 6-lane roadway, and pedestrian environment is generally not comfortable along Main Street and along east-west streets. • Forest Lawn Cemetery reduces catchment area of station
PLANS IN PLACE	• The Green Code zoning in this area, while still supportive of TOD, generally reduces the maximum building height north of Delavan Avenue to 3 stories.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Delavan/Canisus Station





STATION 11: HUMBOLDT/HOSPITAL

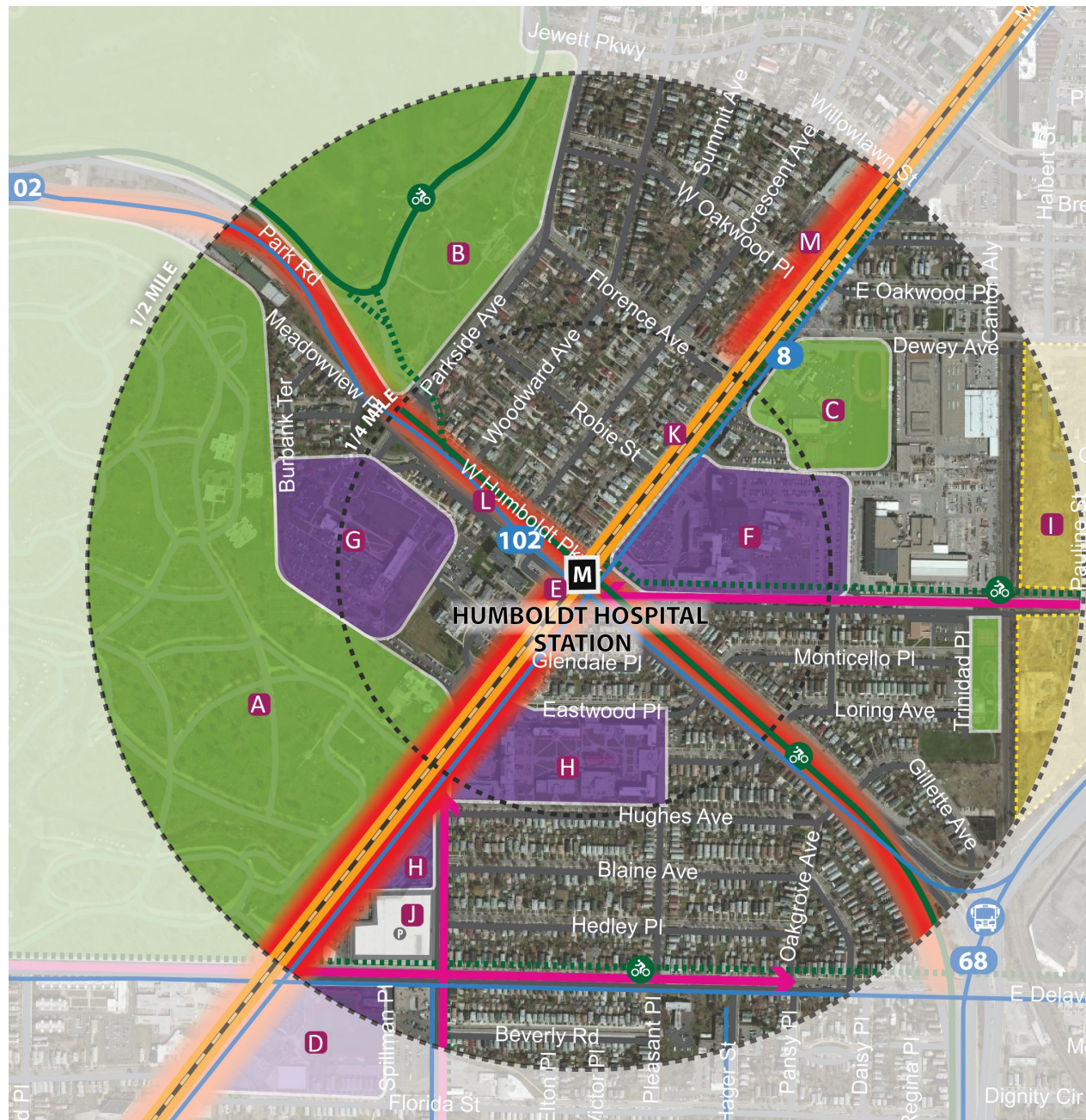
STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN CAMPUS



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Humboldt/Hospital station is located at the western terminus of Kensington Avenue and Main Street, near the State Route 198 overpass. There are two ground-level buildings on both sides of Main Street that provide access to the underground platforms—one sits on the east side of Main Street, the other on the west side on land leased from the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority. The underground levels feature information and fare kiosks. Purchase of a fare is required at this station. Elevators are available for passenger use.

The station is near Sisters of Charity Hospital, Canisius College, Medaille College, and St. Mary's School for the Deaf. Delaware Park and Parkside also lie within the station catchment area, but State Route 198 creates a barrier for access between the Humboldt/Hospital station and areas to the north. Beyond the college and hospital campuses, there are mostly single-family residential uses and sporadic commercial buildings. Residential structures converted to commercial use front Main Street. Bicycle infrastructure is limited; there are bike lanes on Humboldt Parkway. Parking is primarily on-street since most of the existing surface lots are reserved for the respective commercial uses, campuses, and hospital.



Key Places

- A. Forest Lawn Cemetery
- B. Delaware Park
- C. St. Mary's School for the Deaf
- D. Koessler Athletic Center — Canisius College
- E. Station provides good connectivity to Canisius College
- F. Sisters of Charity Hospital
- G. Medaille College
- H. Canisius College
- I. Kensington Avenue redevelopment areas
- J. Canisius College Parking Garage
- K. Main Street consists of a 6-lane roadway with no bicycle facilities/uncomfortable walking environment
- L. Station catchment area is minimized by Forest Lawn Cemetery and State Route 198. Lack of comfortable walking environment to Medaille College, Delaware Park, and Sisters of Charity Hospital.
- M. Gap in station walkshed between Humboldt Hospital and Amherst Street Station

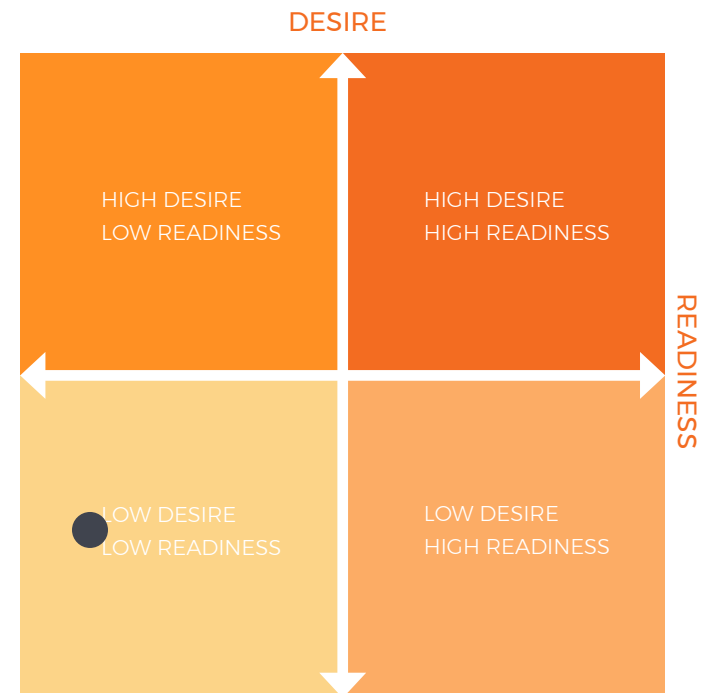
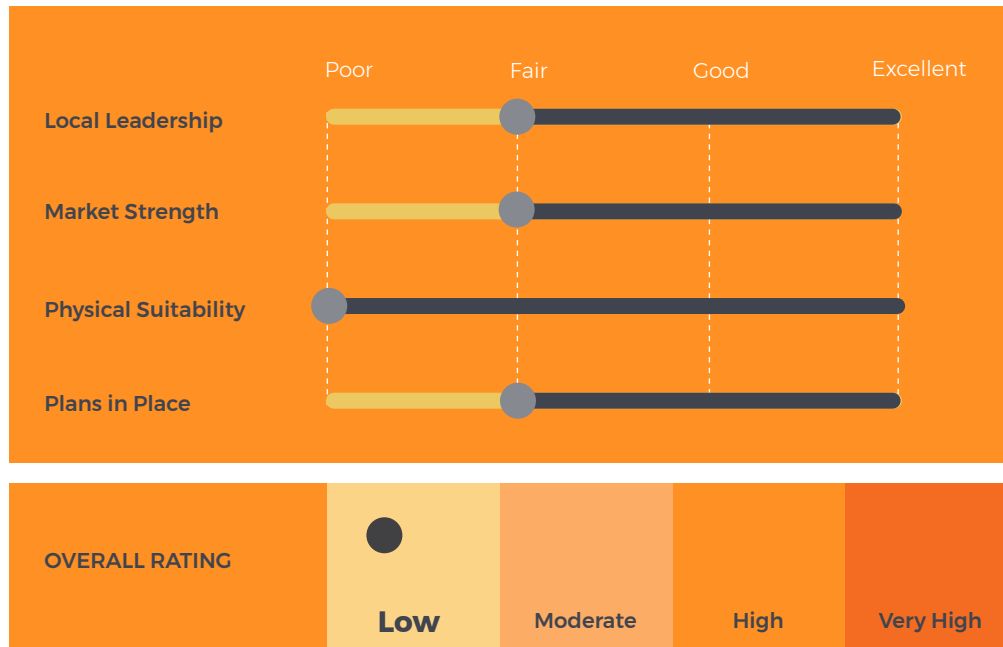
- Legend
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential
- Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

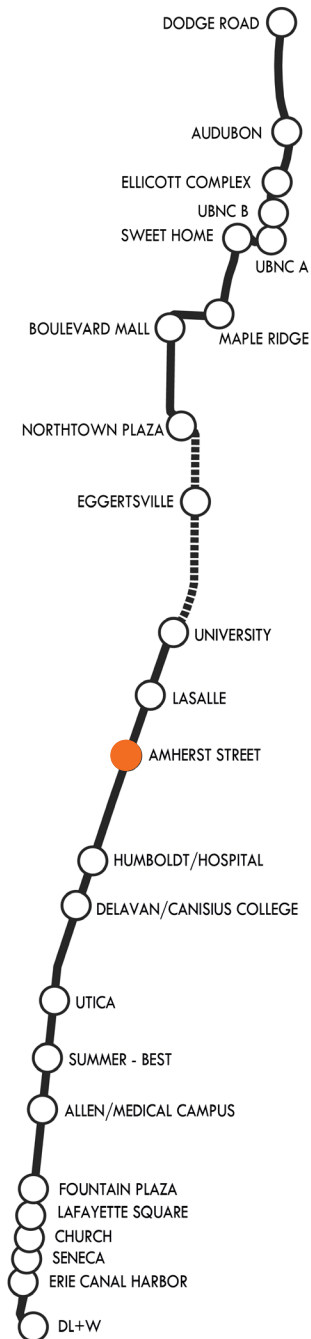
HUMBOLDT/HOSPITAL STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Opportunity for Canisius College, Medaille College, Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority, and Catholic Health System (through Sisters of Charity Hospital) to take a leadership role in TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	• While redevelopment opportunities are limited in this area, there is an opportunity for TOD to occur on west side of Main Street around station area.	• Redevelopment opportunities are constrained by existing land uses, parcel size, and barriers (i.e., Forest Lawn Cemetery and State Route 198). • Available building stock for reuse is limited on Main Street.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• The central Canisius College campus actually falls within the Humboldt/Hospital station walkshed. • Station consists of an entrance/exit on both the east and west sides of Main Street, allowing for multiple access options. • Proximity to Medaille College, Canisius College, Sisters of Charity Hospital, and St. Mary's School for the Deaf.	• Station and surrounding infrastructure is dated. • Main Street is a wide 6-lane roadway, and pedestrian environment is generally not comfortable along Main Street and along east-west streets. • State Route 198 creates walkshed barrier between station and areas north, such as Sisters of Charity Hospital, Parkside Community, and Delaware Park. • Poor connectivity between Medaille College and station.
PLANS IN PLACE	• The Green Code zoning in this area, while still supportive of TOD, generally reduces the maximum building height north of Delavan Avenue to 3 stories.	• Gap in station walkshed between Humboldt-Hospital and Amherst Street stations

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

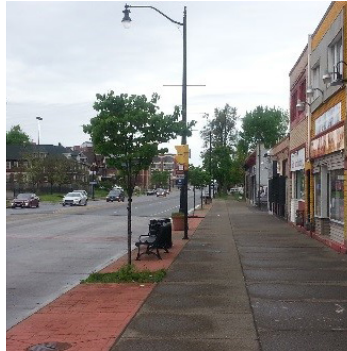
Humboldt/Hospital Station





STATION 12: AMHERST STREET

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

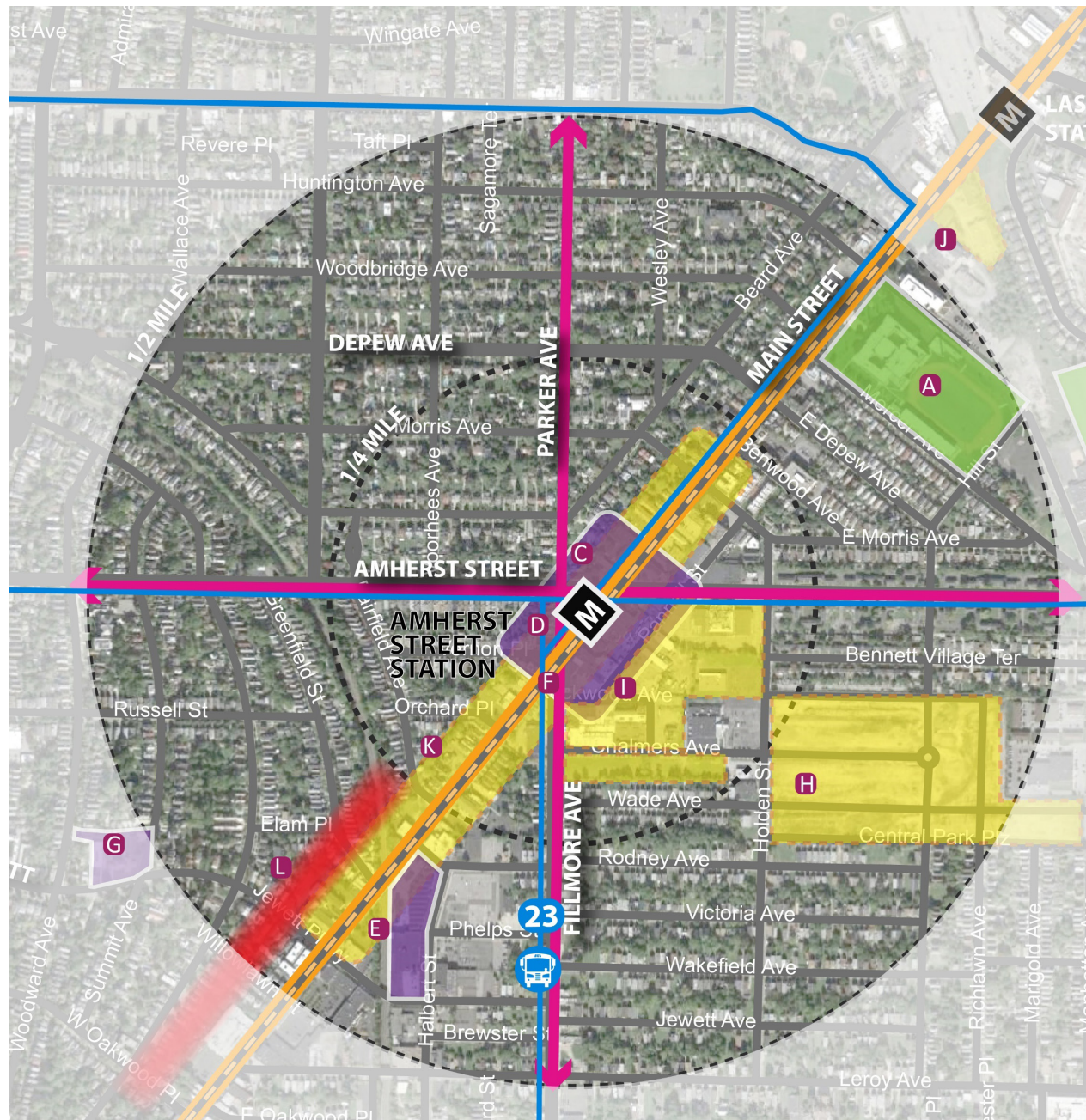


STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Amherst Street station is located at the southeast corner of Main and Amherst Streets on a triangular parcel. There is a lobby at ground level with escalator and elevator access to the train platforms underground. The purchase of a fare is required to utilize this station.

The immediate area surrounding the station comprises a mix of residential and commercial uses. The Parkside neighborhood and Central Park neighborhood to the west and north, respectively, are single- and two-family residential neighborhoods. The areas immediately to the east are current or former industrial areas, with single- and multi-family residential uses beyond. The Central Park Plaza redevelopment/Highland Park Neighborhood will bring a new residential neighborhood to the area, with improved connectivity to the station. In addition, the station is near the Tri-Main Center and other office spaces along Main Street. Middle Early College High School and All High Stadium are to the northeast of the station. There

is available building stock along Main Street for adaptive reuse opportunities as well as nearby redevelopment opportunities of former commercial and industrial areas. Parking in the immediate area is primarily on-street since surface lots are restricted to commercial uses. Main Street between State Route 198 and Kenmore Avenue was recently reconstructed to include four travel lanes with median and on-street parking. With this project, public realm amenities have been updated and improved to enhance walkability of the street. Metro Bus Route #32 operates east-west along Amherst Street and Route #23 operates north-south along Fillmore Avenue, providing connectivity to the station. Bike infrastructure is mainly absent in the area.



Key Places

- A. Bennett High School and All High Stadium
- B. McCarthy Park
- C. Station provides good multi-directional connectivity to nearby neighborhoods.
- D. Busy Metro Bus/Metro Rail transfer location — good east-west and north-south connectivity
- E. Tri-Main Center
- F. Redeveloped Neighborhood Center at Main, Amherst, and Fillmore/Parker
- G. Darwin Martin House
- H. Highland Park redevelopment project
- I. Brownfield redevelopment potential
- J. Proposed student housing development project
- K. Adaptive Reuse opportunities with existing building stock along Main Street
- L. Gap in station walkshed between Humboldt/Hospital and Amherst Street Station

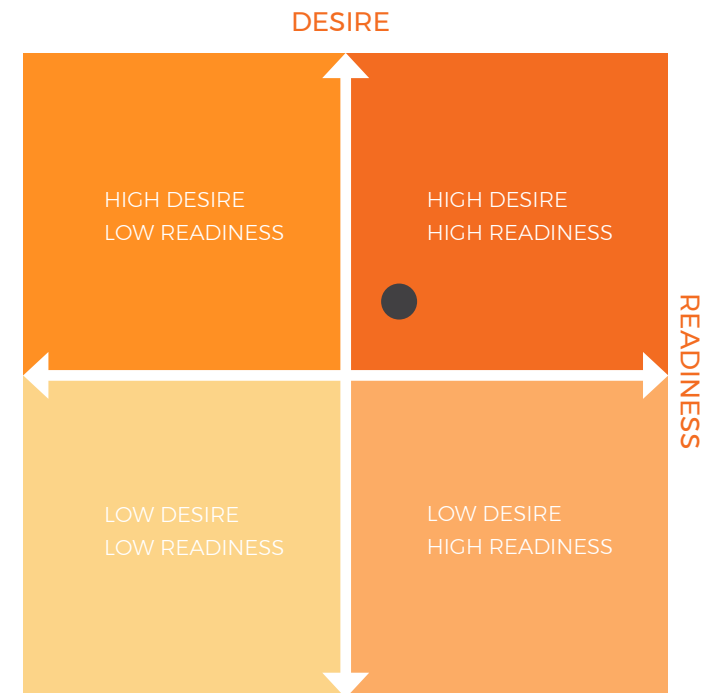
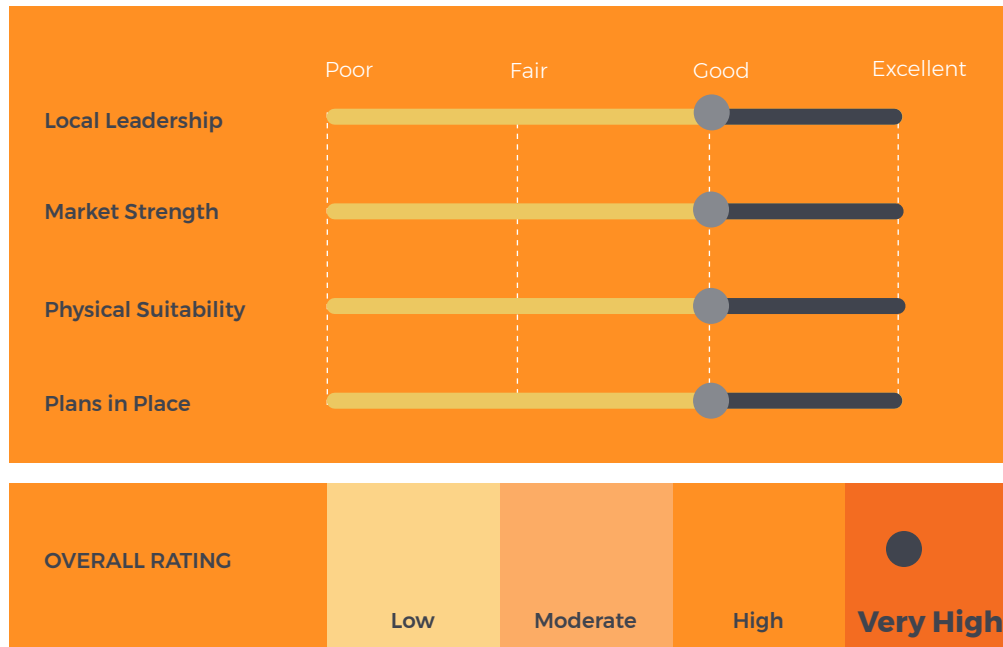
Legend

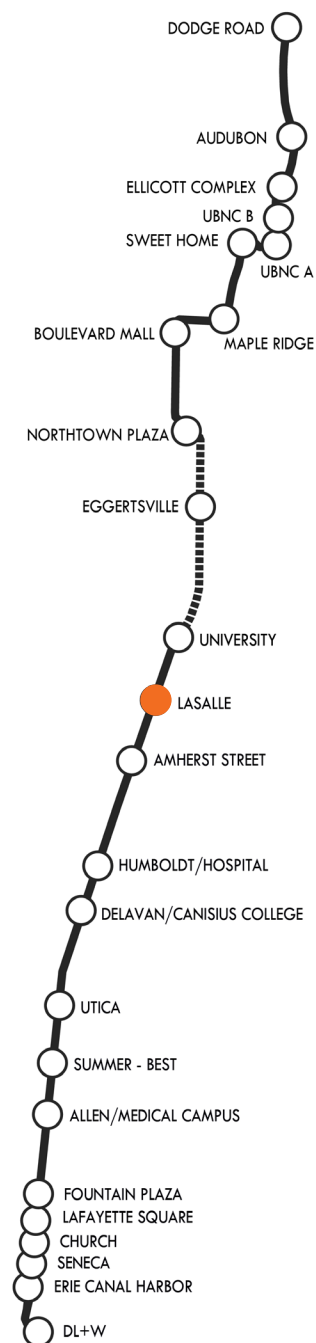
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

AMHERST STREET STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	- The community has been engaged in the Highland Park redevelopment efforts; support from community and area stakeholders for TOD. - Interested developer who is undertaking Highland Park redevelopment is creating a new mixed-use/mixed-income neighborhood within walking distance of station.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Former industrial/commercial area generally bound by E. Amherst Street, Holder Street, Chalmers Avenue, and Pannell Street (just east of Main Street) offers large redevelopment potential and opportunity to better connect Highland Park. - Station surrounded by stable neighborhoods and street fronting commercial uses that offer neighborhood amenities.	- Tri-Main Center is large employment center but is just outside of station walkshed area. - Former industrial/commercial sites offer difficult redevelopment due to cost and extent of cleanup/reuse.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Highly visible station at crossroads of Main Street, Amherst Street, and Fillmore Avenue also offers connections to multiple Metro Bus routes. - Existing street grid offers good connectivity between station and neighborhoods. - Recent streetscape improvements to Main Street have improved walkability and streetscape environment.	- Station infrastructure is dated. - Several recent developments in the area are auto-oriented and don't offer comfortable walking environment. - While recent streetscape improvements have been made to Main Street, they don't include bike infrastructure. - Gap in station walkshed between Amherst Street and Humboldt-Hospital stations - Railroad presents barrier to accessibility and connectivity.
PLANS IN PLACE	- The Green Code zoning in this area, while still supportive of TOD, generally reduces the maximum building height to 3 stories. - Highland Park Redevelopment	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING Amherst Street Station





STATION 13: LASALLE

STATION TYPOLOGY: URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

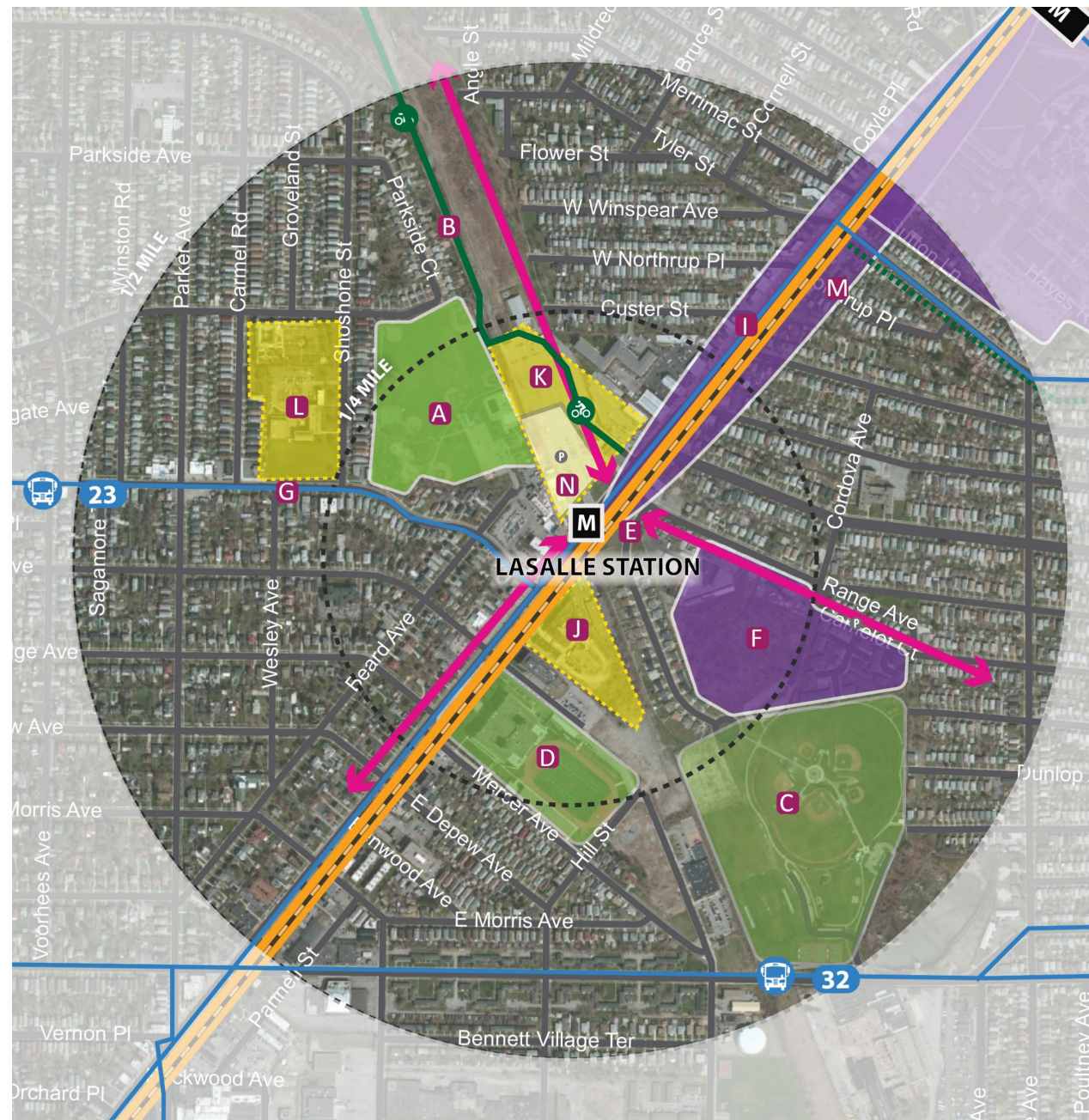


STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The LaSalle station is located on the west side of Main Street between Minnesota and LaSalle Avenues. The station sits within a large park-and-ride lot. There is a ground-level lobby with information and fare kiosks. Escalators and elevators provide access to the underground platform. The purchase of a fare is required at this station.

While the area immediately surrounding this station is a park-and-ride lot, residential, commercial, educational, and recreational uses comprise the surrounding areas. The station anchors the southern end of the University Heights Main Street district that features many restaurants and retail shops. Just to the west, Hertel Avenue has seen a steadily emerging market for mixed-use development. The University Heights neighborhood consists of single- and two-family residential uses, many of which house

students and a neighborhood commercial district along Main Street and a neighborhood commercial district along Main Street. Areas to the east and south have seen recent or proposed student housing development interest, with new student housing development built along LaSalle Avenue. Building stock along Main Street is available for adaptive reuse opportunities. Parking in the immediate area is primarily on-street since surface lots are restricted to commercial uses. Main Street between State Route 198 and Kenmore Avenue was recently reconstructed to include four travel lanes with median and on-street parking. With this project, public realm amenities have been updated and improved to enhance walkability of the street.



Key Places

- A. Shoshone Park
- B. North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails
- C. McCarthy Park
- D. Bennett High School
- E. Station provides good connectivity to nearby neighborhoods
- F. Student housing
- G. Hertel Avenue
- H. University at Buffalo South Campus
- I. University Heights business district
- J. Proposed student housing development project
- K. LaSalle Station redevelopment opportunity
- L. Holy Angels reuse project
- M. Adaptive Reuse opportunities with existing building stock along Main Street
- N. Park-and-ride lot

Legend

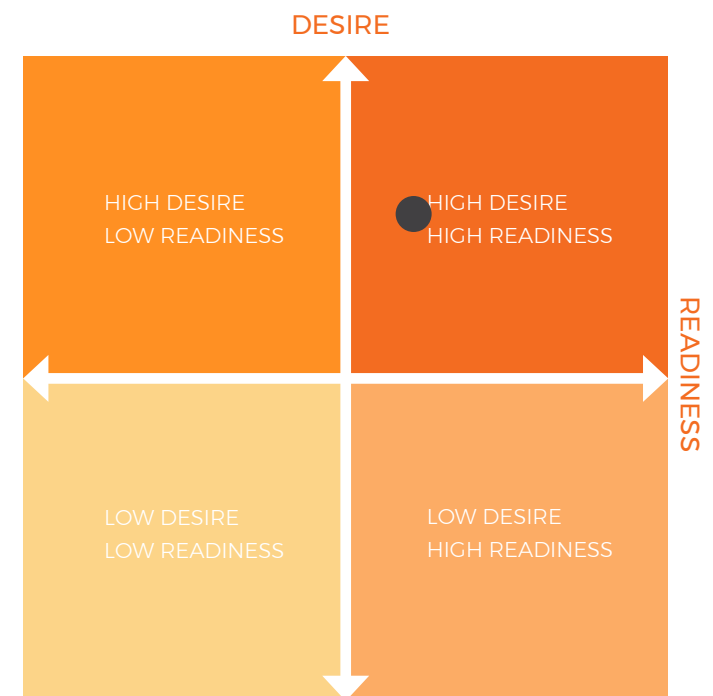
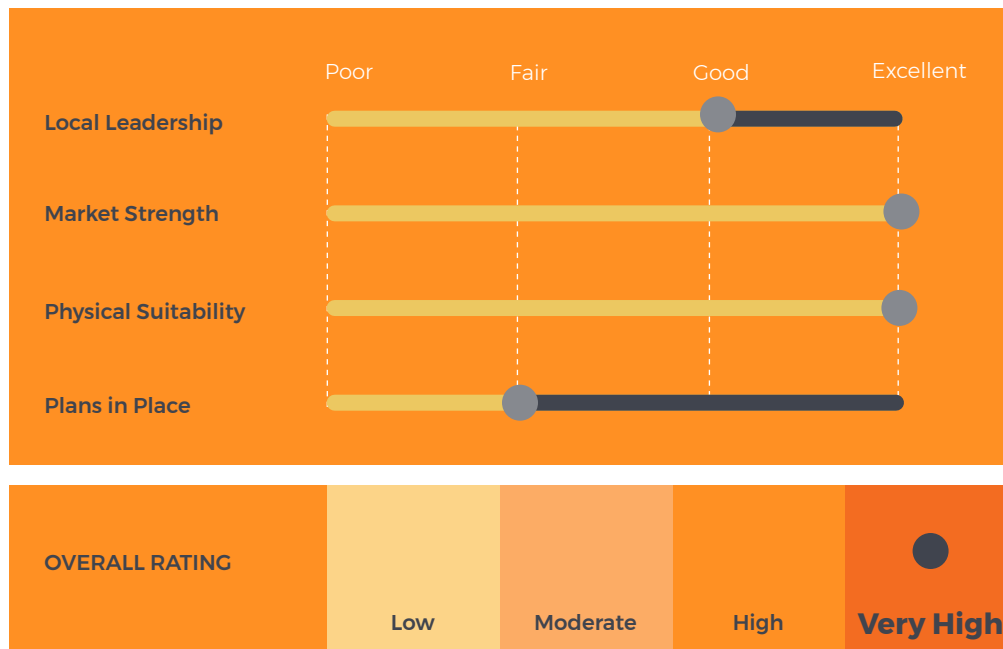
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

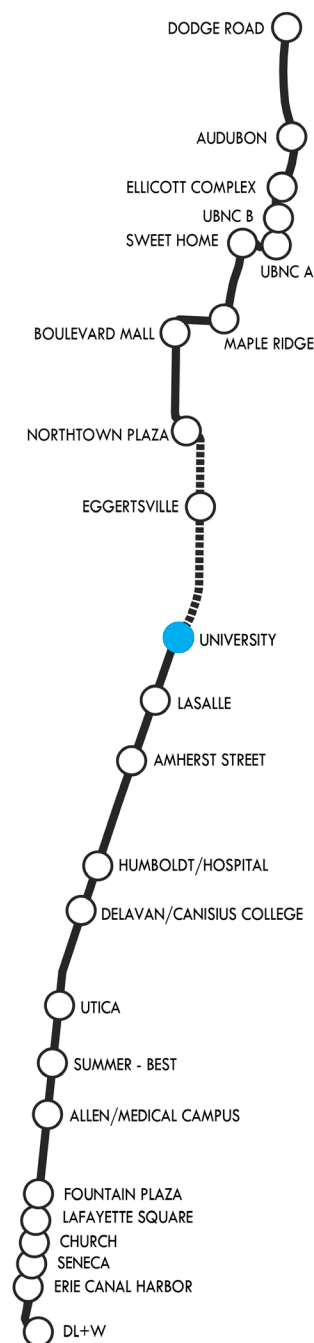
LASALLE STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	NFTA supports TOD opportunity at this site.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Large parking area under government ownership (NFTA and City of Buffalo) offers great opportunity to assemble development parcels for TOD potential. - Continued interest to construct student housing in station area. - Available building stock for reuse and vacant and underutilized land for redevelopment.	Existing casements in place on LaSalle \station parking lots
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Newly constructed rails-to-trails project connects LaSalle station to neighborhoods and parks to the north, into North Buffalo and Tonawanda. - Station anchors southern end of University Heights neighborhood, which offers a walkable commercial area, mix of neighborhood amenities, and opportunities for adaptive reuse and infill. - Proximity to Hertel Avenue and Middle Early College High School. - Recent streetscape improvements to Main Street have improved walkability and streetscape environment. - Station area offers a number of park and recreation amenities.	- Station infrastructure is dated. - Adjacent grocery store to the north is auto-oriented with large parking area. - While recent streetscape improvements have been made to Main Street, they don't include bike infrastructure. - Connectivity to/from station is generally poor.
PLANS IN PLACE		While the market strength of the area is strong, the Green Code zoning in this area, generally reduces the maximum building height to 3-4 stories.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

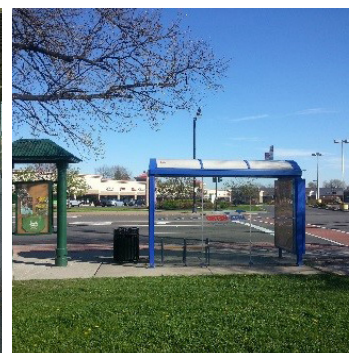
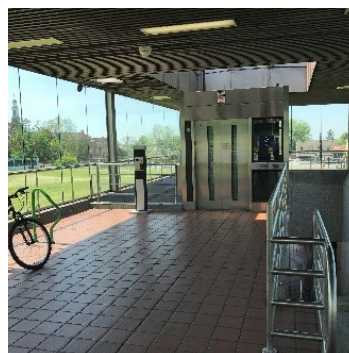
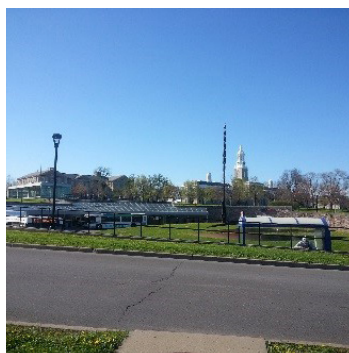
LaSalle Station





STATION 14: UNIVERSITY

STATION TYPOLOGY: UNIVERSITY CAMPUS



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The University station is located on Main Street on the University at Buffalo South Campus. The station is the northern terminus of the Metro Rail line. The station features a large bus loop for Metro Bus connections. There are two ground-level station entrances, one for the bus loop and the other for the campus access. Both entrances lead to a lobby with information and fare kiosks along with seating areas. The platforms are located underground and are accessible via escalator or elevator.

The area immediately surrounding the station contains a lawn area, a park-and-ride lot, and institutional buildings. The University Heights Main Street district features many restaurants and retail shops with walkable streetfronts. University Plaza and several larger commercial buildings are north of the station, but are generally auto-oriented. The surrounding neighborhoods are primarily single- and two-family residential. Building stock along Main Street is available for adaptive reuse opportunities. Parking in

the immediate area is primarily on-street since surface lots are restricted to commercial uses or university. Main Street between State Route 198 and Kenmore Avenue was recently reconstructed to include four travel lanes with median and on-street parking. With this project, public realm amenities have been updated and improved to enhance walkability of the street. Numerous Metro Bus routes converge on the station, providing connectivity to the station. Bike infrastructure is limited to new bike lanes along Kenmore Avenue and the Inter-Campus Bikeway that runs between University at Buffalo South and North Campuses.

Parking is prohibited on the portions of Main Street in front of the station, and surface lots are reserved for the respective commercial uses. There is a large park-and-ride lot north of the station that NFTA leases that fills to or near capacity during weekdays.



Key Places

- A. Grover Cleveland Golf Course
- B. University at Buffalo South Campus
- C. Veteran's Administration Hospital
- D. University Heights business district
- E. Parking lot redevelopment potential
- F. Shopping center redevelopment potential
- G. Park-and-ride lot

Legend

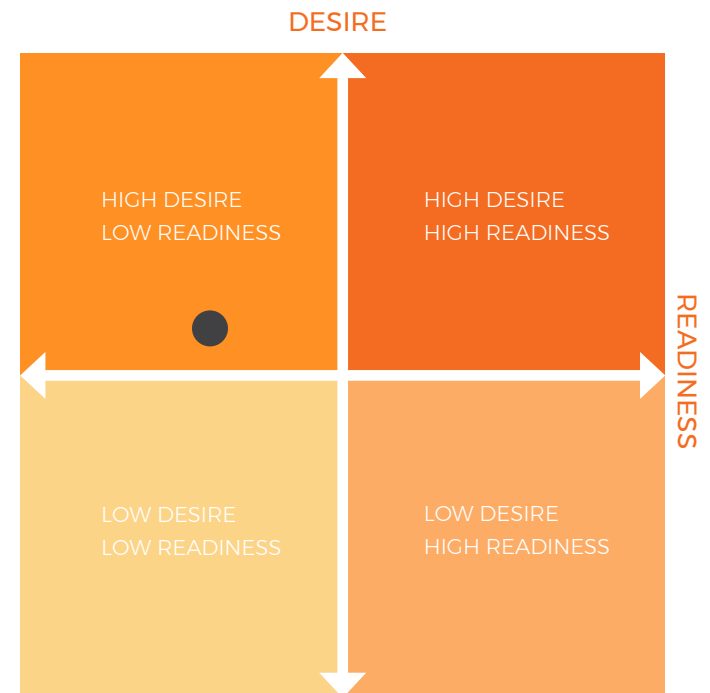
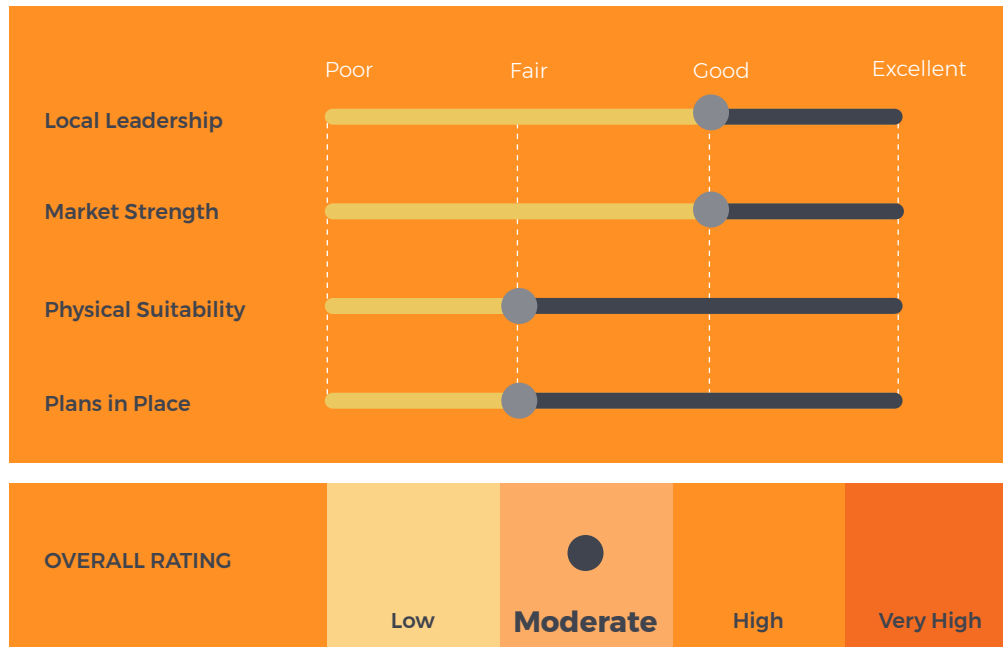
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- P Parking
- 5 Metro Bus Routes
- B Bike Facilities (Existing)
- B Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- ↔ Key Connectivity
- Challenges

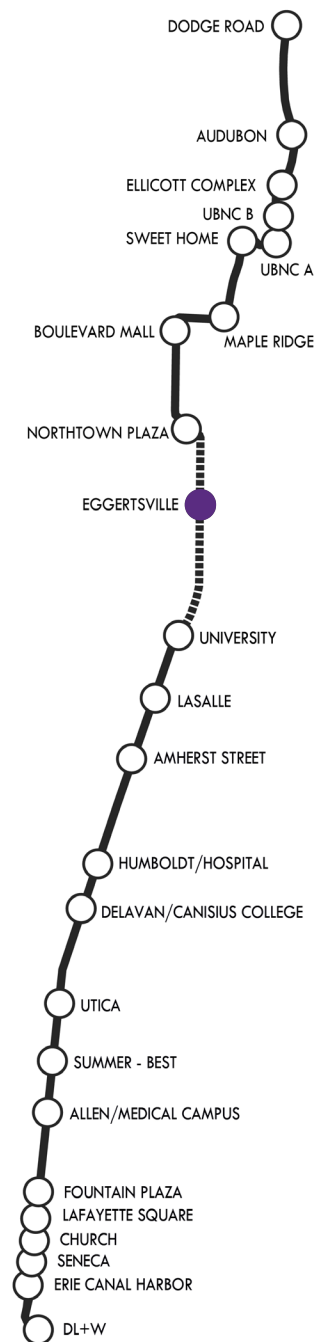
UNIVERSITY STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• Opportunity for University at Buffalo to take leadership role in promoting TOD around this station.	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Large parking lots along Main Street offer TOD opportunity and opportunity to better connect University at Buffalo (UB) South Campus with the University Heights neighborhood and Main Street. • Area near UB South Campus provides market for various mixed-uses.	• Area immediately surrounding the station is under UB ownership; opportunities for TOD are limited unless jointly developed with UB.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• The station is a major node of multi-modal activity. • Recent streetscape improvements to Main Street have improved walkability and streetscape environment.	• Station is set back from Main Street and University Heights neighborhood. • While recent streetscape improvements have been made to Main Street, they don't include bike infrastructure. • Large park-and-ride lots further disconnect station and campus from Main Street. • University Plaza includes a number of amenities for students and the neighborhood but is very auto-oriented.
PLANS IN PLACE		• While the market strength of the area is strong, the Green Code zoning in this area generally reduces the maximum building height to 3 stories.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

University Station





STATION 15: EGGERTSVILLE

STATION TYPOLOGY: SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD



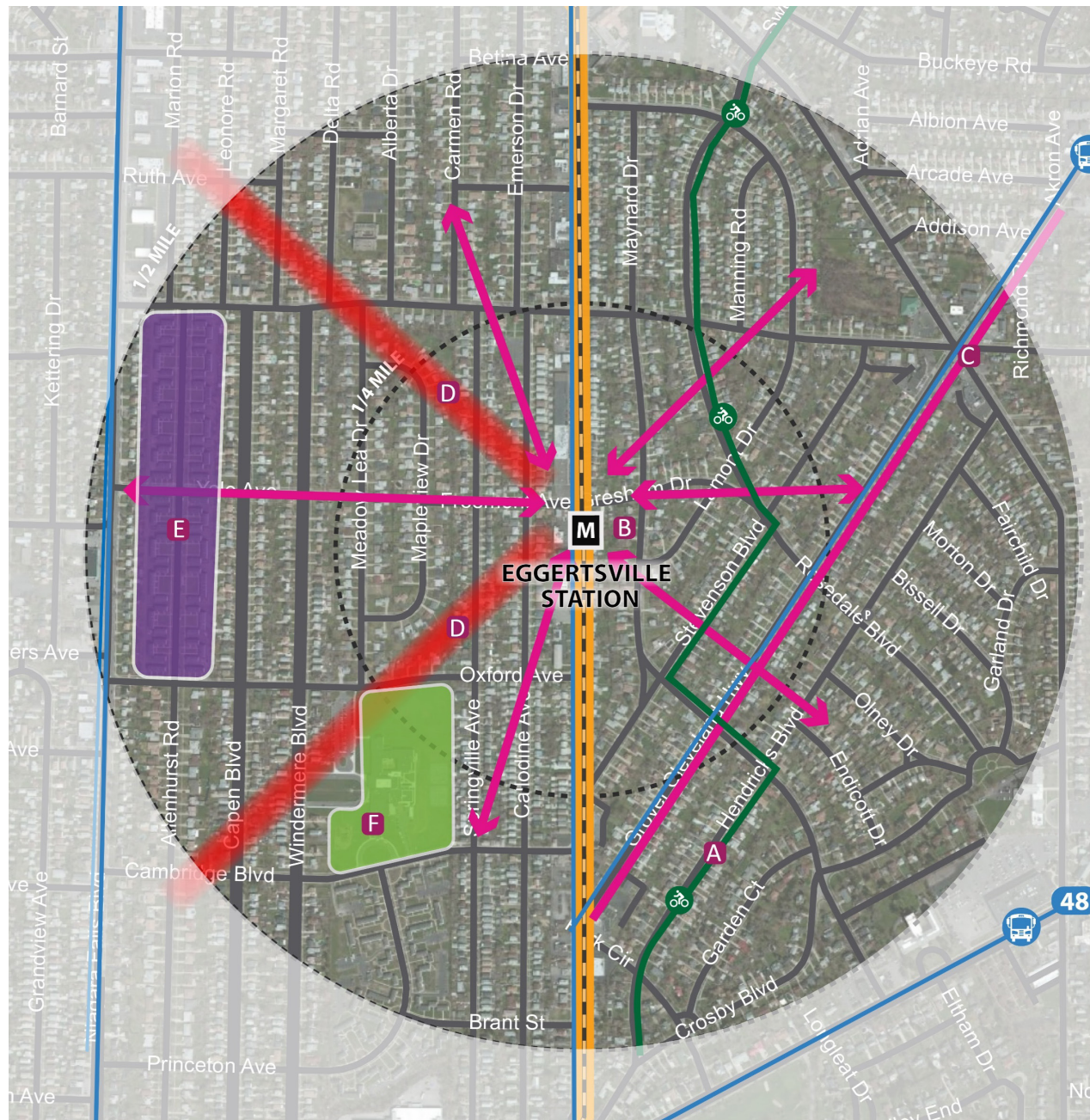
STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Eggertsville station would be located along Bailey Avenue near Freemont Avenue/Gresham Drive. Metro Rail would operate underground in this area, extending from University station.

The west side of Bailey Avenue contains 1- to 2-story commercial uses and the east side contains residential homes. Single-family residential neighborhoods surround the areas in all directions emanating from the proposed station, with some multi-family residential uses closer to Niagara Falls Boulevard.

Bailey Avenue is serviced by NFTA Metro Bus Route #49 and there are sidewalks on each side for pedestrian use. The density of the area is medium density, which, combined with the favorable street pattern, would provide a transit-supportive neighborhood. Zoning of the area is intended to keep the character of the neighborhood.

Bailey Avenue and adjacent side streets contain on-street parking. The existing surface parking lots are dedicated to the respective commercial spaces. Bike infrastructure is limited to the Inter-Campus Bikeway that runs between UB South and North Campuses.



Key Places

- A. Inter-Campus Bikeway
- B. Good connectivity with surrounding neighborhoods
- C. Able to capture Grover Cleveland Highway/Millersport Highway and commercial node at Grover Cleveland/Millersport, Longmeadow, and Eggert
- D. Station catchment area doesn't reach to most of Niagara Falls Boulevard
- E. Multi-family housing
- F. Windermere Boulevard Elem School

Legend

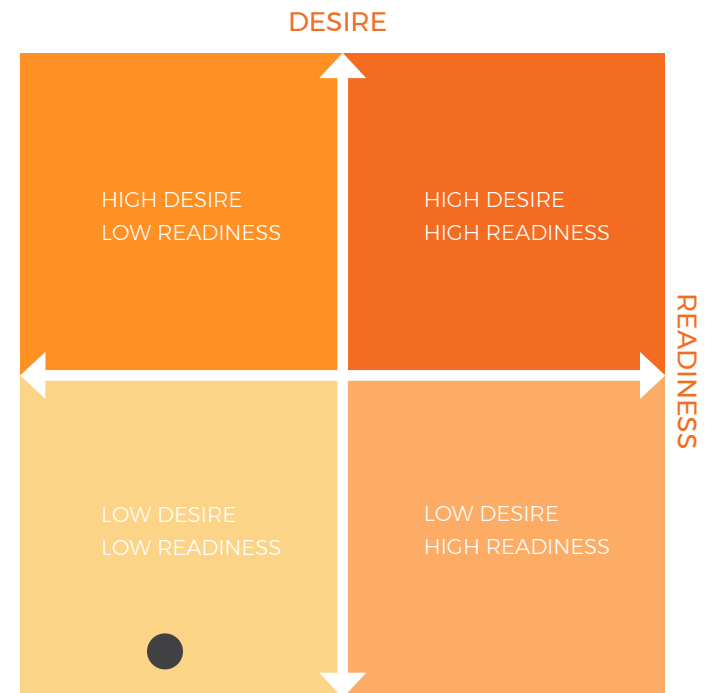
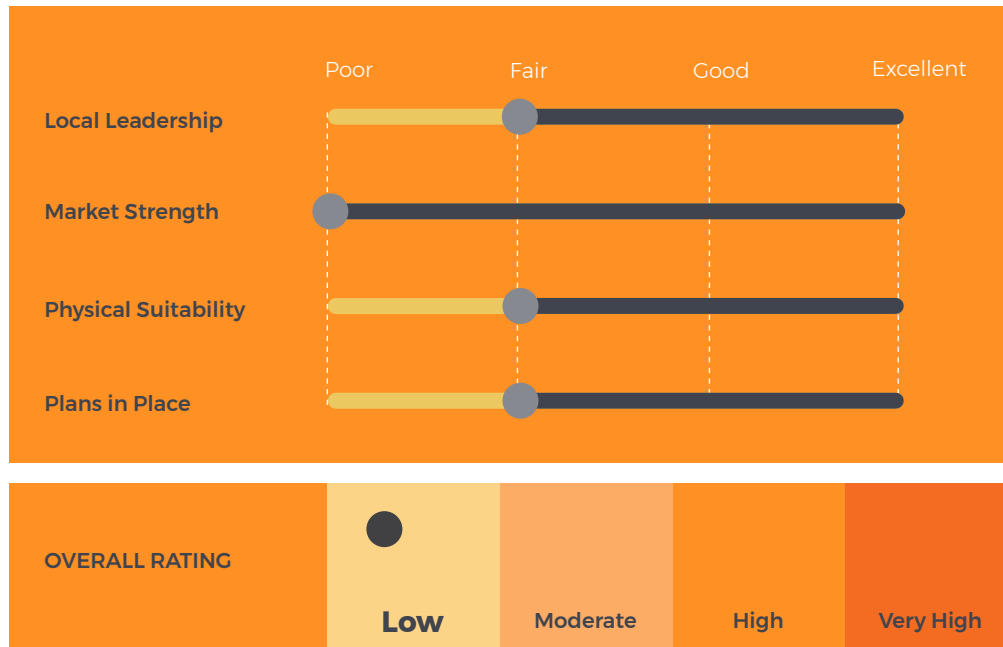
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

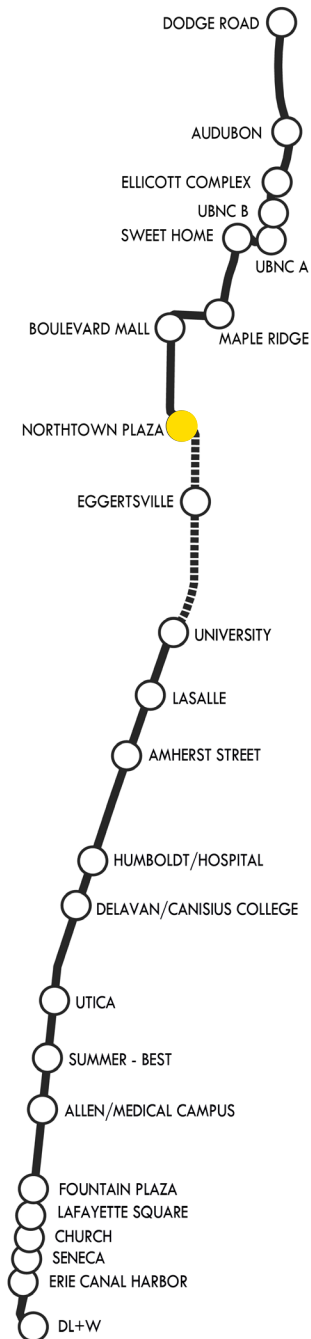
EGGERTSVILLE STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Eggertsville Community Organization is a strong community group that is looking to preserve the character of the community.	- Community does not desire TOD - Existing plans do not support TOD
MARKET STRENGTH	Greatest benefit is likely in enhanced transit access for the community that could help increase property values.	Identified as having minimal TOD opportunity due to small/shallow parcels, overall lack of redevelopment sites, and lack of interest from community to support TOD redevelopment.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	The medium density of the neighborhood and layout of street grid lend itself to supporting transit.	
PLANS IN PLACE	Eggertsville community plans indicate support for enhanced transit, but are skeptical about Light Rail on Bailey Avenue.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Eggertsville Station





STATION 16: NORTHTOWN PLAZA

STATION TYPOLOGY: MIXED-USE CENTER



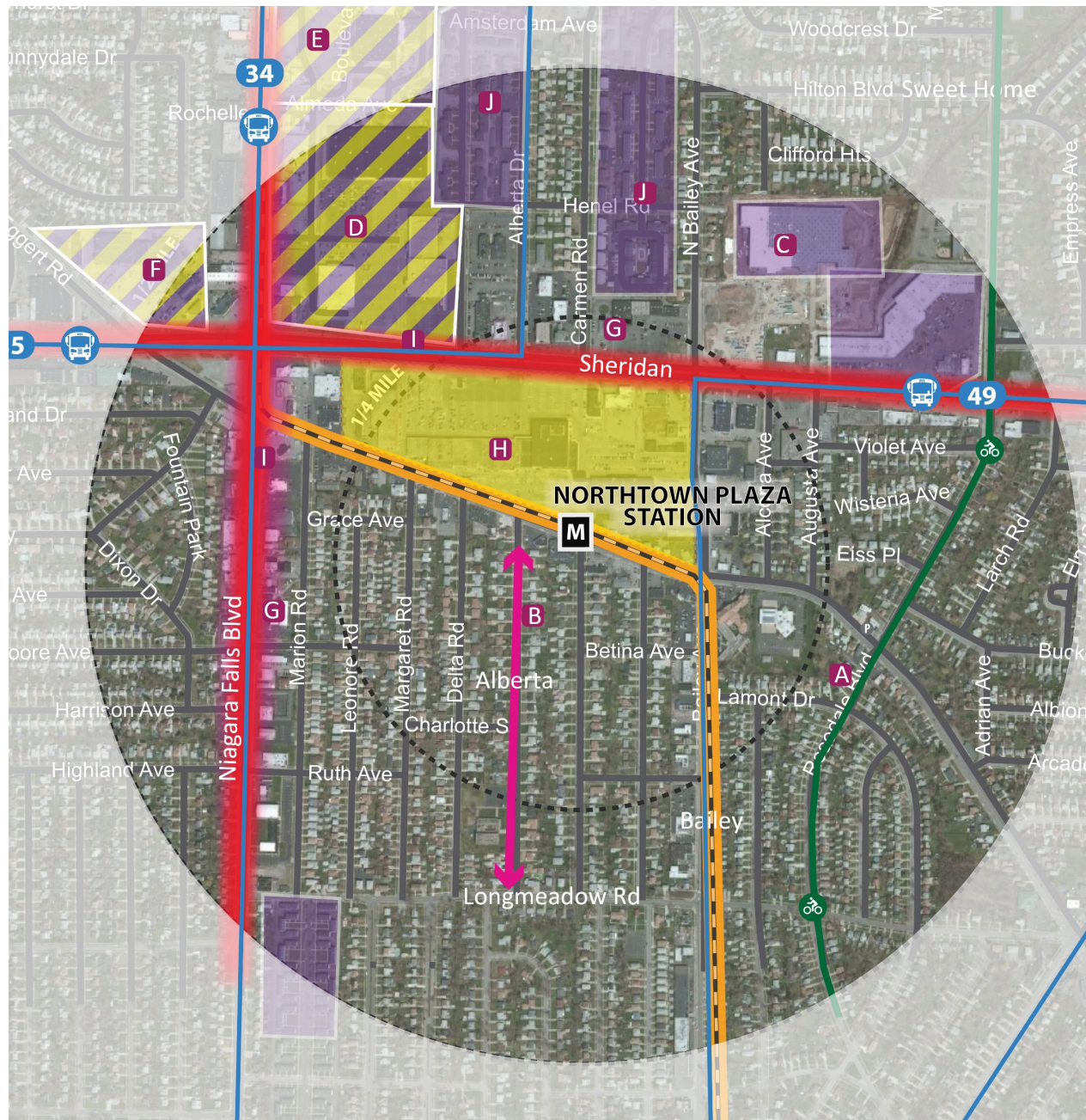
STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Northtown Plaza station would be located along Eggert Road near Alberta Drive. The proposed Metro Rail extension would emerge at-grade through a portal along Eggert Road, and continue to run at-grade for the remainder of the route. The surrounding area consists of single-family residential uses to the south, as part of the Eggertsville Community, with mainly auto-oriented commercial uses to the north along Sheridan and Niagara Falls Boulevard. There are some smaller scale commercial buildings along the south side of Eggert Road as well.

Northtown Plaza is located north of the proposed station location, on the south side of Sheridan Drive. The plaza is currently undergoing redevelopment, with a Whole Foods recently opened. Other major commercial areas

include a WalMart Supercenter at Sheridan and Bailey and major plazas on the north side of Sheridan Drive.

There is no on-street parking along Eggert Road; however, it is permitted along the residential side streets south of Eggert. The existing surface lots in the area are dedicated for patrons of the respective commercial uses. Metro Bus Route #35 runs along Sheridan, providing access to UB North Campus in addition to several commercial areas, and Metro Bus Route #34 operates along Niagara Falls Boulevard to UB South Campus in addition to several commercial areas. The overall pedestrian and bicycle experience is fairly uncomfortable since the area is predominately auto-oriented.



Key Places

- A. Inter-Campus Bikeway
- B. Good connectivity with adjacent neighborhood to south
- C. WalMart Supercenter
- D. Plaza at Sheridan and Niagara Falls Boulevard is an existing retail destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment
- E. Boulevard Mall— existing retail destination but is currently for sale and offers opportunity for redevelopment
- F. Sheridan Plaza — existing retail destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment
- G. Commercial areas along Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard are destinations for future Metro Rail riders
- H. Northtown Plaza redevelopment
- I. Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard do not currently offer comfortable walking, biking, and transit environments
- J. Multi-family housing

Legend

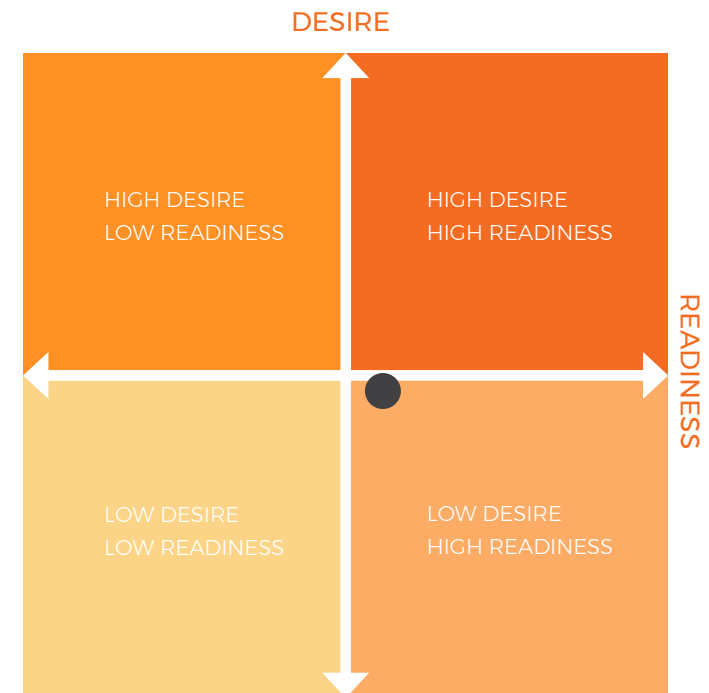
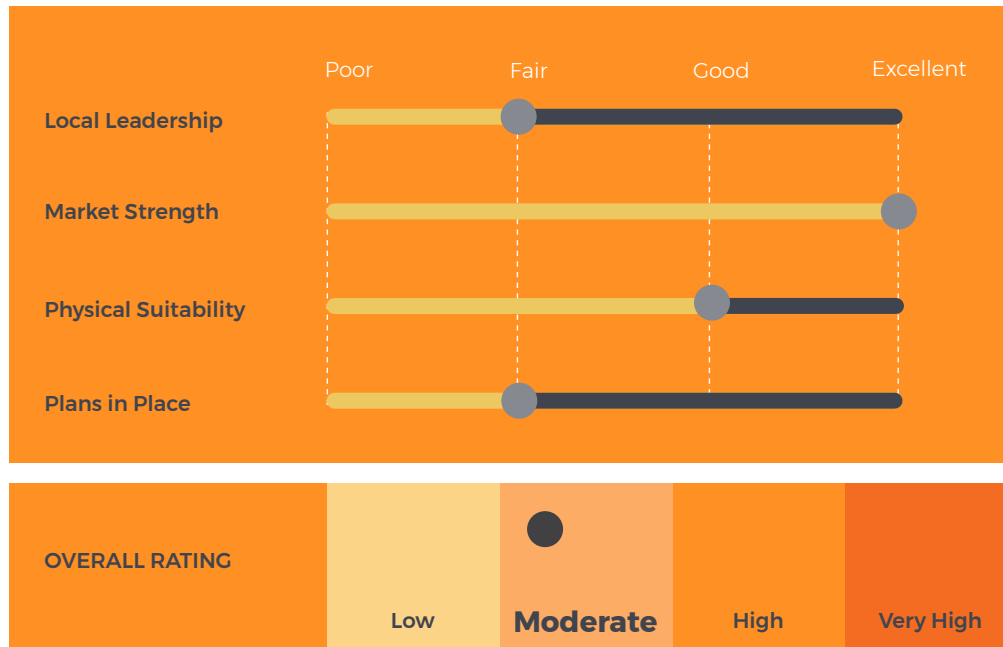
- Key Anchors
- Existing Anchor & Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

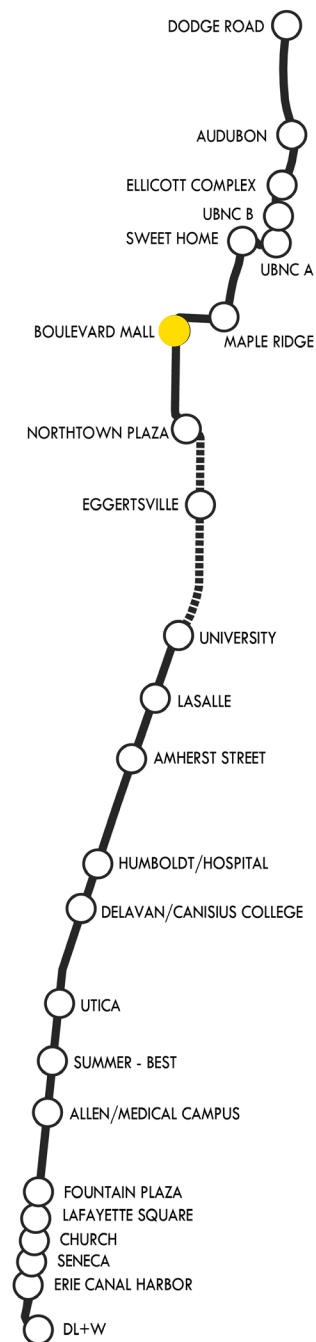
NORTHTOWN PLAZA STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Northtown plaza developer has indicated a desire to work with TOD should the project move forward	Northtown Plaza developer has not committed to TOD, citing uncertainty of Metro Rail opening as to why the plans are moving ahead without transit consideration..
MARKET STRENGTH	- Northtown Plaza is experiencing large-scale redevelopment helping to spur additional redevelopment opportunities in the area. - The area is surrounded by stable neighborhoods and is a regionally significant commercial center.	- Increasing number of retail/commercial vacancies in this area. - Timing difference between developer's redevelopment plans and Metro Rail extension.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Several regional, large-scale retailers are located in the area. - Metro Rail is proposed to surface near Northtown Plaza and become much more visible. - Good connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods, especially to the south.	- First phase of redevelopment of Northtown Plaza—Whole Foods—is not oriented toward the planned Northtown Plaza station on Eggert. - Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Boulevard are both 6-lane highways dominated by automobile uses, making for uncomfortable walking and biking environment and are not transit supportive.
PLANS IN PLACE	Proposed Imagine Amherst rezoning would bring transit-supportive zoning to area.	- Current redevelopment plans for Northtown Plaza are not conducive to TOD. - Existing zoning isn't supportive of large-scale TOD.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

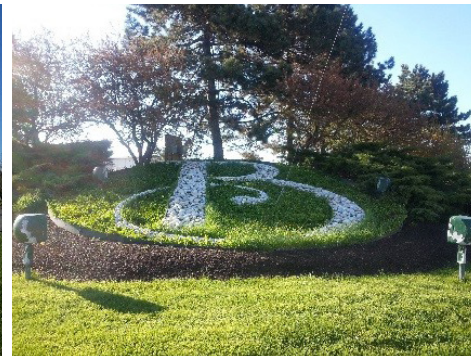
Northtown Plaza Station





STATION 17: BOULEVARD MALL

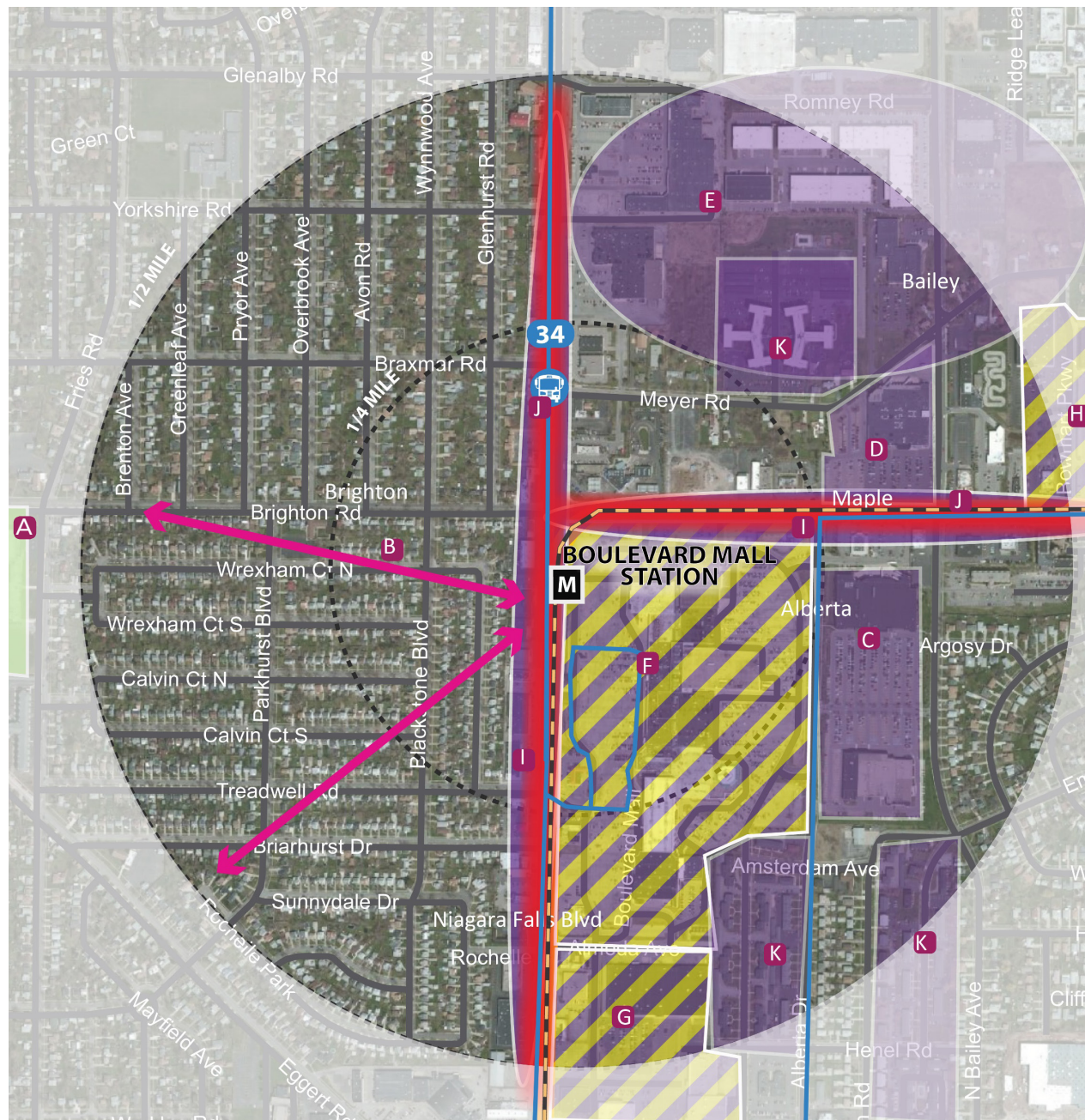
STATION TYPOLOGY: MIXED-USE CENTER



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Boulevard Mall station would be located near the intersection of Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road. This busy intersection features commercial retail and office spaces along Niagara Falls Boulevard in addition to many restaurants and grocery stores. The Boulevard Mall dominates the area, with other major retail entities that include Tops and Wegmans grocery stores, which attract the regional population in addition to UB students, and the Boulevard Consumer Square, just north of the station catchment area. Beyond the “Boulevard,” there are mainly single-family homes west of Niagara Falls Boulevard in Tonawanda, and a mix of single-family and multi-family residential uses in Amherst. There are high-density apartment buildings north of Maple Road.

On-street parking is prohibited on both Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road, but is available on most residential side streets. Surface parking lots are dedicated to the respective retail or commercial buildings for which they support. Metro Bus Route #34 operates along Niagara Falls Boulevard to UB South Campus in addition to several commercial areas. This is a heavily used Metro Bus route, especially on Saturdays. The overall pedestrian and bicycle experience is fairly uncomfortable since the area is predominately auto-oriented. The University at Buffalo operates a Stampede bus service which provides access to many of the destinations in this area.



Key Places

- A. Kenmore East High School
- B. Good connectivity with adjacent neighborhoods to west; Brighton offers comfortable walking environment
- C. Wegmans
- D. Tops
- E. Additional office and regional retail north of Maple Road
- F. Boulevard Mall — existing retail destination but is currently for sale and offers opportunity for redevelopment.
- G. Plaza at Sheridan and Niagara Falls Boulevard is an existing retail destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment.
- H. Existing retail plaza destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment.
- I. Commercial areas along Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road are destinations for future Metro Rail riders.
- J. Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road do not offer comfortable walking, biking, and transit environments.
- K. Multi-family housing

Legend

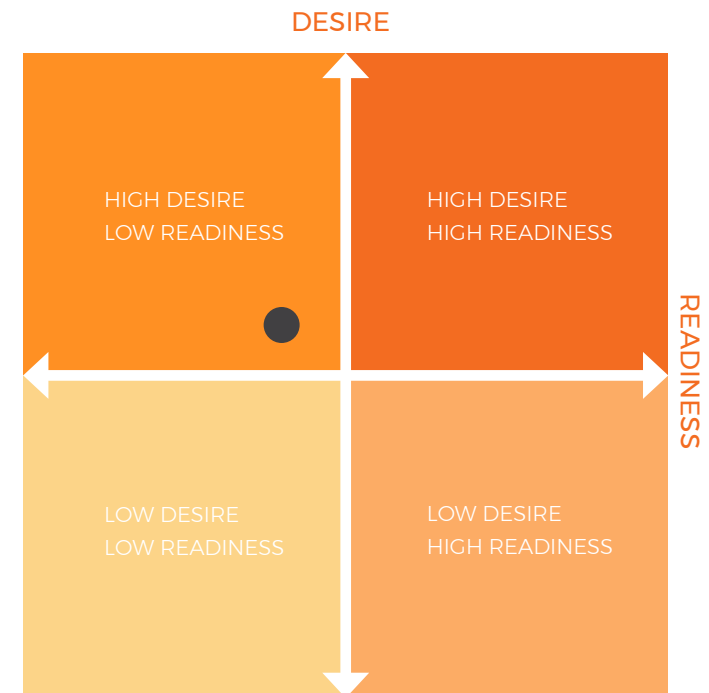
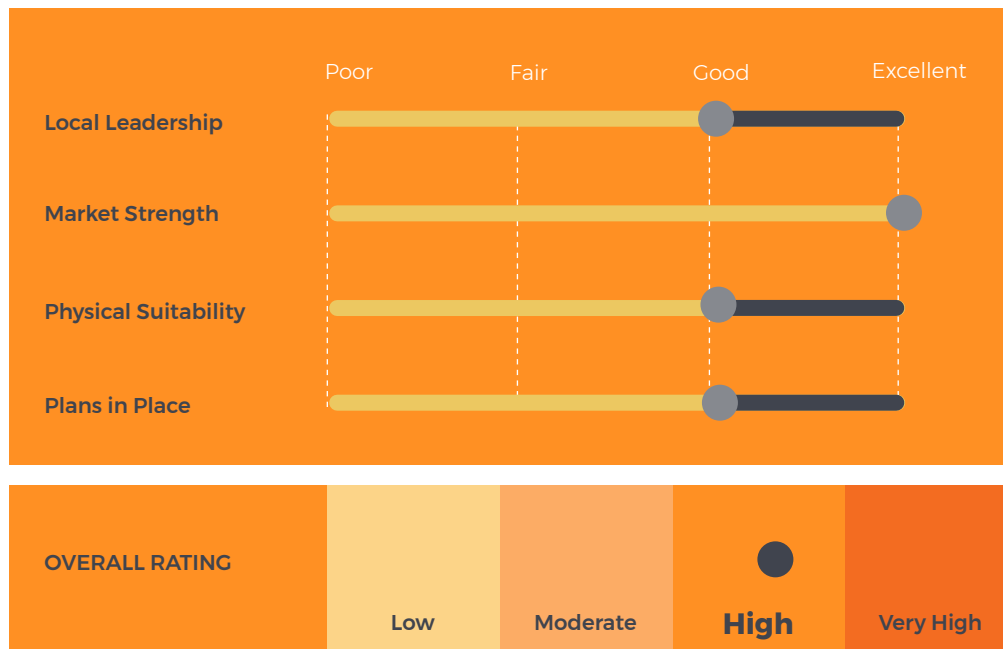
- Key Anchors
- Existing Anchor & Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

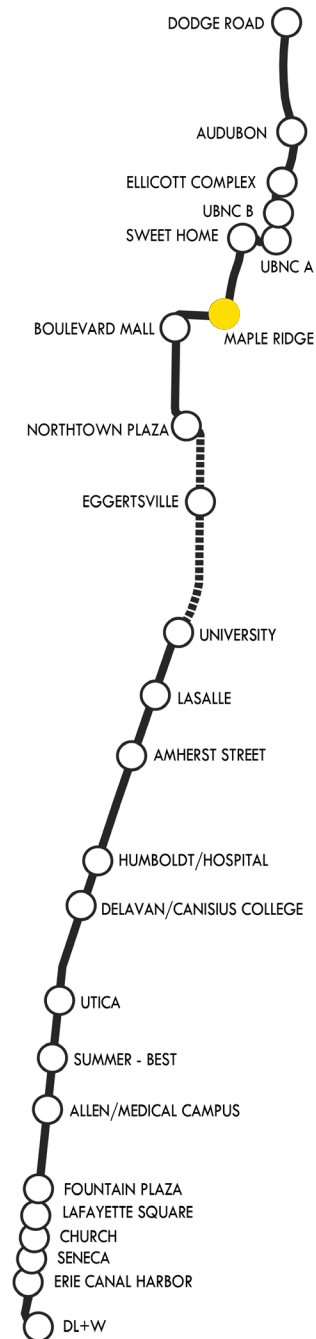
BOULEVARD MALL STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Area is supported for TOD by local government and stakeholders who view this as the area in Amherst where it makes most sense to increase density and mixed-use.	Uncertain future of Boulevard Mall leaves area without a strong proponent for TOD.
MARKET STRENGTH	- Boulevard Mall and several outparcels are listed for sale or lease, presenting an opportunity to completely rethink the mall site. - This area represents an opportunity to redevelop a regional destination around transit because it is felt TOD will be generally accepted here versus other areas. - Opportunity to capture nearby residential population and possibly tie in park-and-ride. - The area is surrounded by stable neighborhoods and is a regionally significant commercial center.	- Increasing number of retail/commercial vacancies are in this area. - Timing of mall redevelopment and Metro Rail extension and opportunity for TOD may not align.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Proposed station would be near regional retail destinations. - Adjacent residential neighborhoods have good transit-supportive design and density. - Boulevard Mall site is a large parcel that can be assembled for a large-scale redevelopment. - Parcels on the west side of Niagara Falls Boulevard are smaller, shallower, and bordered by single-family residential neighborhoods, constricting the redevelopment opportunities there.	Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road are both 5- to 6-lane highways dominated by automobile uses—making for uncomfortable walking and biking environment—and are not transit supportive.
PLANS IN PLACE	- Niagara Falls Boulevard Corridor Study recognizes the need to improve pedestrian amenities and improve overall walkability. - Proposed Imagine Amherst rezoning would support transit-supportive zoning to area	Existing zoning does not support large-scale TOD.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Boulevard Mall Station





STATION 18: MAPLE RIDGE

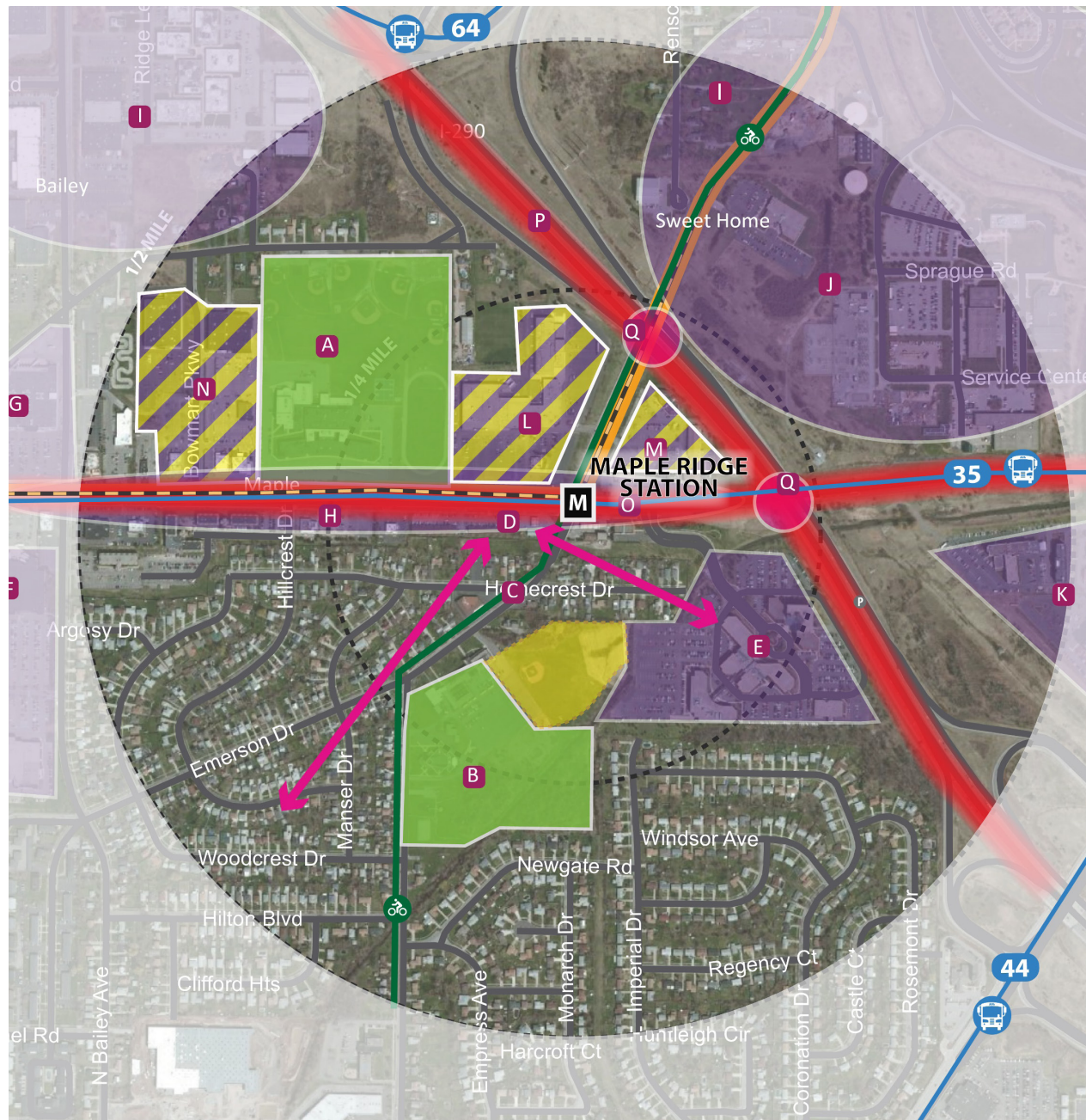
STATION TYPOLOGY: MIXED-USE CENTER



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Maple Ridge station would be located near the intersection of Maple Road and Sweet Home Road, near the Maple Ridge Plaza. The area is predominately commercial, with Maple Ridge Plaza, a retail plaza on the northeast corner of Maple Road and Sweet Home Road, smaller commercial uses along Maple Road, Maple Village Office Park, and University Corporate Centre near Maple Road and I-290. Sweet Home Middle School is to the west. Single-family neighborhoods exist south of Maple Road.

Metro Bus Route #35 runs along Maple Road, providing access to UB North Campus in addition to several commercial areas. The surface parking lots are dedicated to the respective office parks and shopping centers. On-street parking is prohibited on Maple Road and Sweet Home Road. Bike infrastructure is limited to the Inter-Campus Bikeway that runs between UB South and North Campuses along Sweet Home Road.



Key Places

- A. Sweet Home Middle School
- B. St. Leo Church
- C. Inter-Campus Bikeway
- D. Good connectivity with adjacent neighborhoods to south and to office and commercial areas along Maple Road
- E. University Corporate Centre
- F. Wegmans
- G. Tops
- H. Commercial and retail along Maple Road are destinations for Metro Rail riders.
- I. Additional office and regional retail north of Maple Road
- J. University at Buffalo North Campus
- K. Hotels
- L. Maple Ridge Plaza - existing retail destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment.
- M. Existing retail plaza destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment.
- N. Existing retail plaza destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment.
- O. Maple Road does not offer comfortable walking, biking, and transit environments.
- P. I-290 acts as a barrier and reduces size of station catchment area.
- Q. Sweet Home Road underpass at I-290 and Maple Road overpass at I-290 are vast areas of uncomfortable walking and biking environments .

Legend

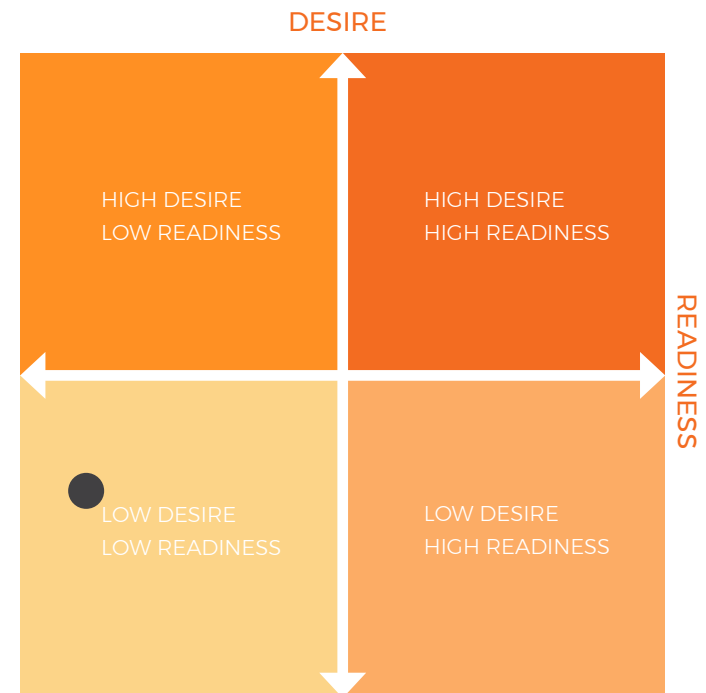
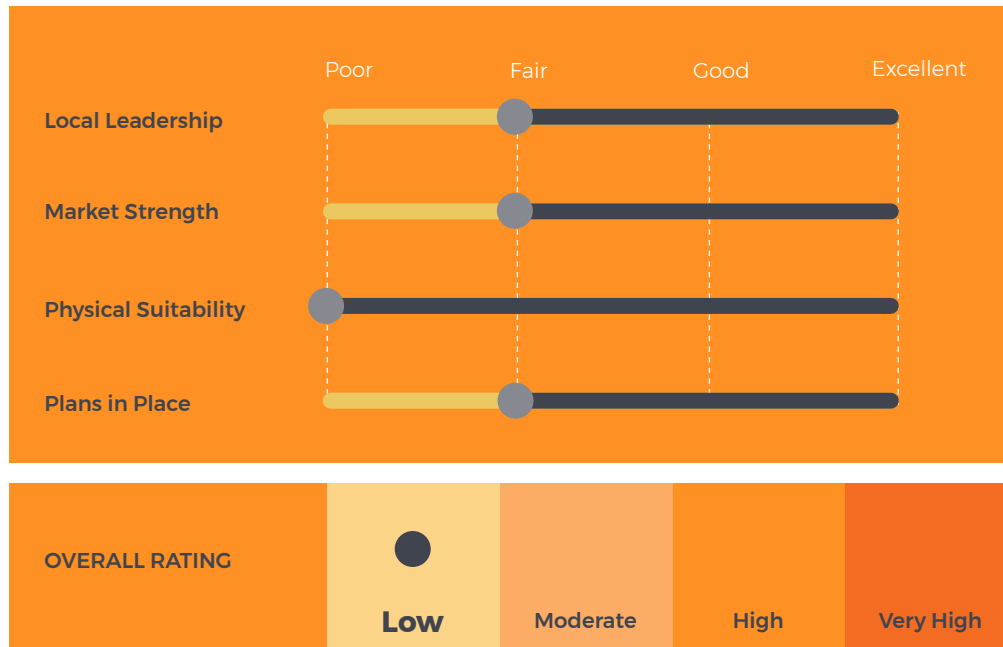
- Key Anchors
- Existing Anchor & Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

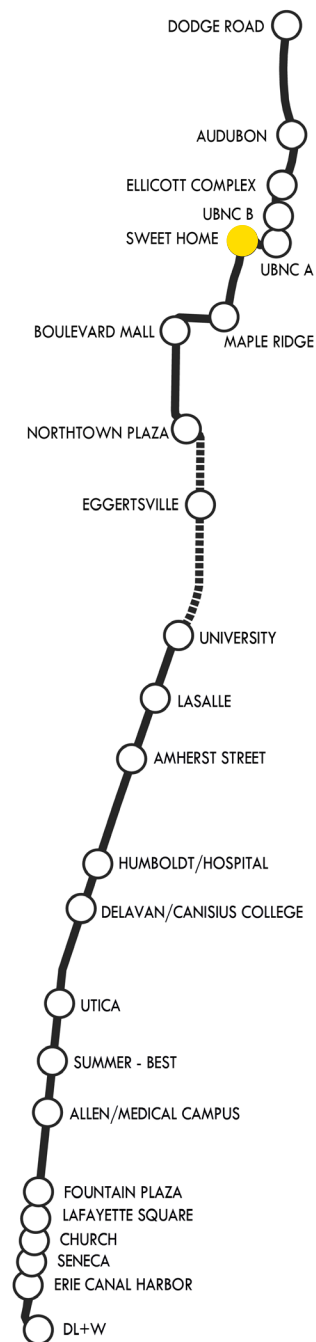
MAPLE RIDGE STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP		
MARKET STRENGTH	Proposed station would be near UB North Campus and regional commercial and retail destinations.	- There are an increasing number of retail/commercial vacancies in this area. - Opportunities for redevelopment primarily focus on the two plaza sites at the intersection of Maple Road and Sweet Home Road due to I-290, Sweet Home Middle School, and residential neighborhoods to the south of Maple Road.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Maple Ridge Plaza site is a large parcel that can be assembled for a large-scale redevelopment. - Proposed station would be near University Corporate Centre and Maple Village Office Park as well as numerous retail sites. - Inter-Campus Bikeway runs along Sweet Home Road, providing bicycle connectivity..	- Maple Road and Sweet Home Road are 4- to 5-lane roadways dominated by automobile uses—making for uncomfortable walking and biking environment—and are not transit supportive. - I-290 acts as a barrier to the station catchment area and results in topography that isn't transit supportive in the immediate vicinity along Sweet Home Road. - It would be a challenge to connect to/from University Corporate Centre.
PLANS IN PLACE	Proposed Imagine Amherst rezoning would bring transit-supportive zoning to area	Existing zoning does not support large-scale TOD.

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

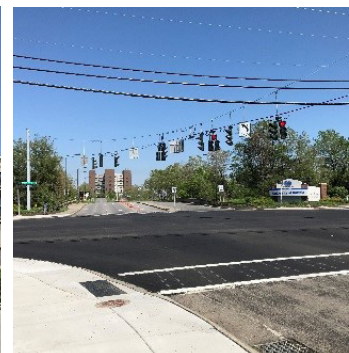
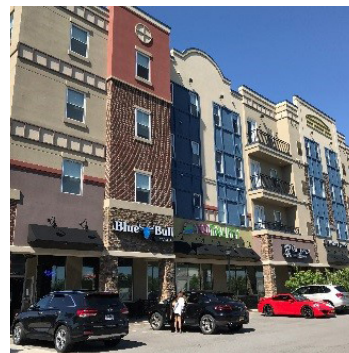
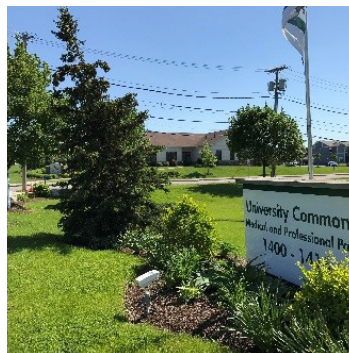
Maple Ridge Station





STATION 19: SWEET HOME

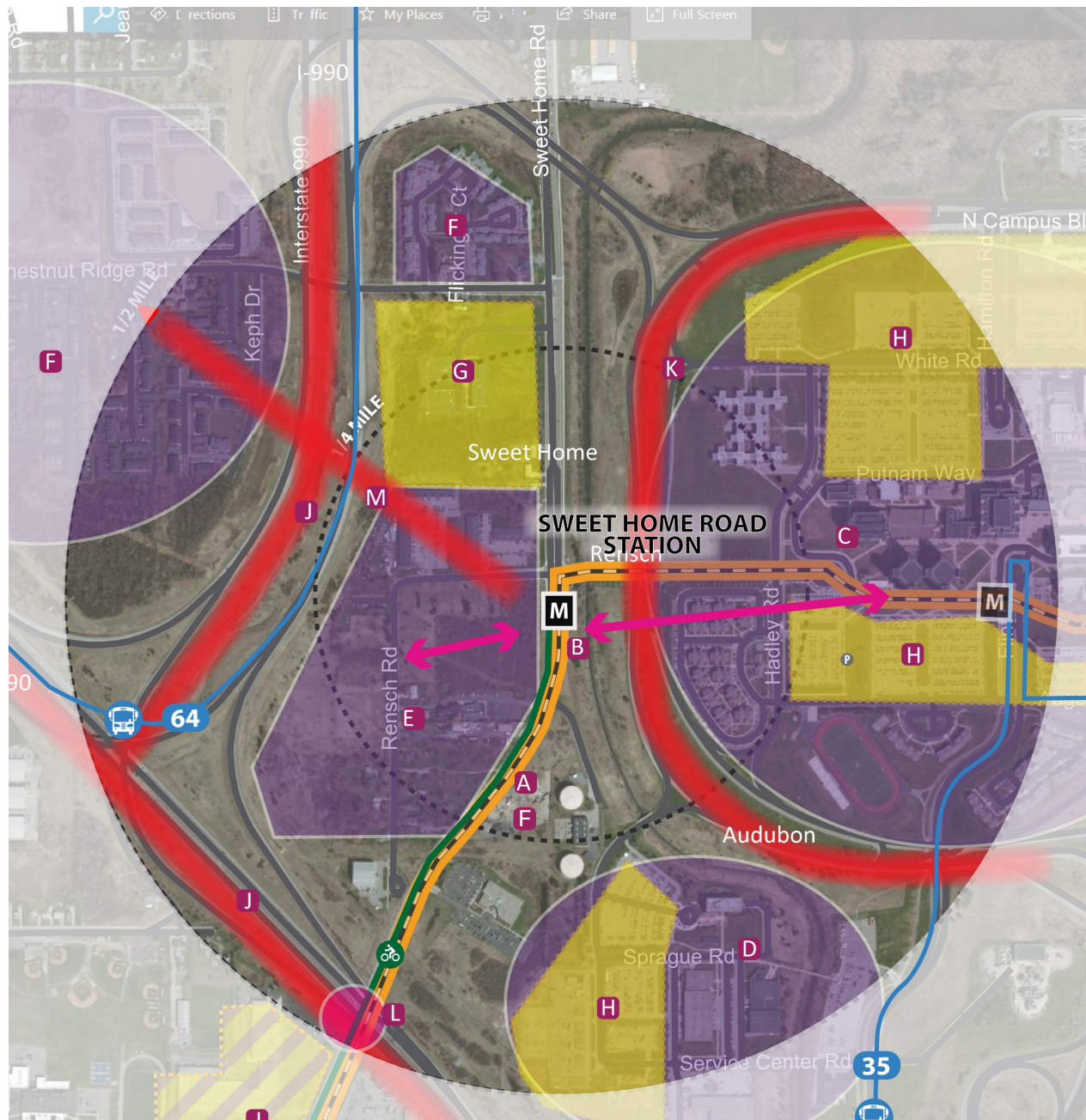
STATION TYPOLOGY: MIXED-USE CENTER



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Sweet Home station would be located near the intersection of Sweet Home and Rensch Roads, which is the western entrance road of the UB North Campus. While the UB is the predominant land use in the area, there are a mix of student housing complexes, commercial office parks, and retail along Sweet Home Road. Several student housing complexes are sprawled out north and west of the station, making walking to/from the station difficult. One recent development, The Exchange, while still auto-oriented, contains the mix and density of uses to be transit supportive.

The proximity to the UB and the surrounding student housing neighborhoods make this an attractive location if walkability and density can be improved. On-street parking is prohibited along Sweet Home, and the surface lots are dedicated to patrons and employees of the existing buildings. Bike infrastructure is limited to the Inter-Campus Bikeway that runs between the UB South and North Campuses along Sweet Home Road.



Key Places

- A. Inter-Campus Bikeway
- B. Connectivity with adjacent student housing complexes and UB North Campus
- C. UB North Campus
- D. UB service area
- E. Student housing and retail destinations
- F. Student housing
- G. Baird Research Park infill development opportunity
- H. Surface parking infill development opportunity
- I. Maple Ridge Plaza - existing retail destination but also offers opportunity for redevelopment
- J. I-290 and I-990 act as barriers and reduce size of station catchment area.
- K. Audubon Parkway does not offer a comfortable walking, biking, and transit environment.
- L. Sweet Home Road underpass at I-290 is a vast area of uncomfortable walking and biking environment.
- M. I-990 creates disconnect between station and large student housing population.

Legend

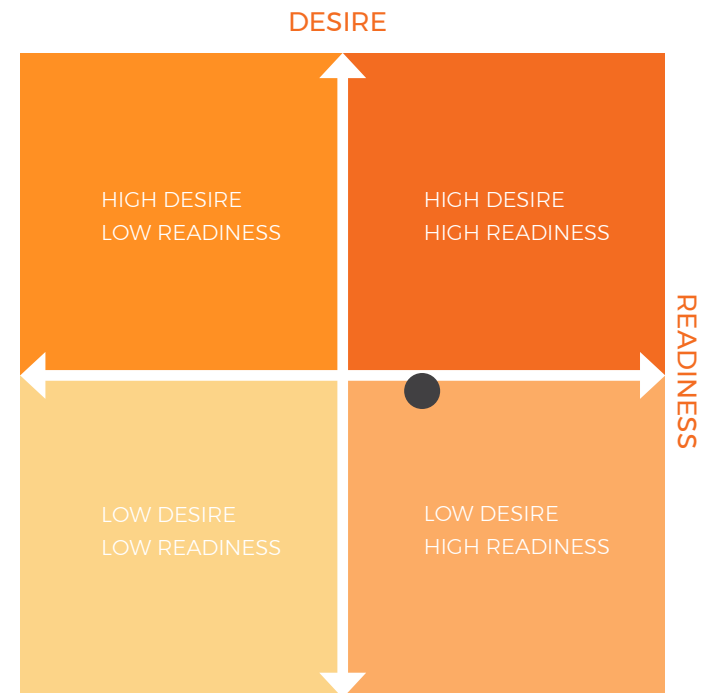
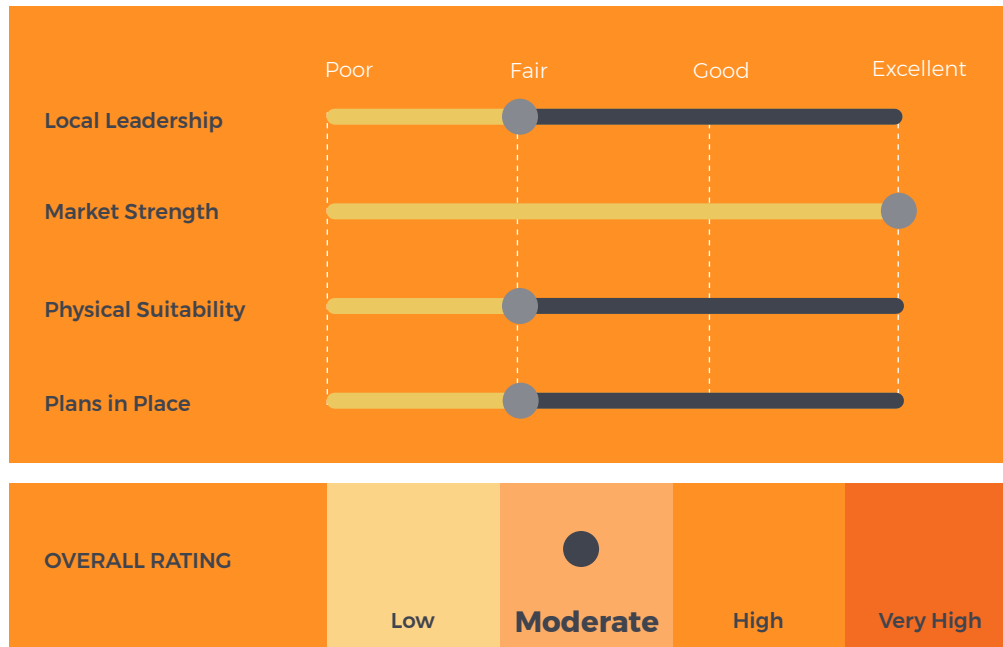
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

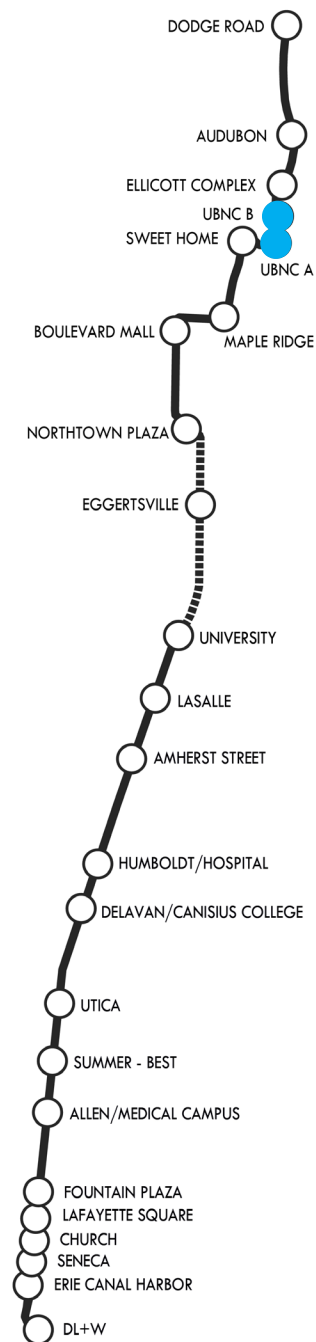
SWEET HOME STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	• There is an opportunity for University at Buffalo (UB) to participate in a supporting role for TOD. • There are development interests supportive of TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	• Proximity to UB North provides good market for development of related commercial and residential uses. • There is redevelopment opportunity around Baird Research Park and east side of Sweet Home Road.	• While the market in this area is strong, development is being undertaken in a very sprawled manner.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	• One recent development, while still auto-oriented, was built with the density and mix of uses necessary to support transit. • Inter-Campus Bikeway runs along Sweet Home Road, providing bicycle connectivity.	• Sweet Home Road is a 4-lane roadway dominated by automobile uses—making for an uncomfortable walking and biking environment—and is not transit supportive. • Student housing in the area is sprawled out, making it difficult to reach from the station by walking. • I-290 acts as a barrier to the station catchment area and results in topography that isn't transit supportive in the immediate vicinity along Sweet Home Road.
PLANS IN PLACE	• Proposed Imagine Amherst rezoning would bring transit-supportive zoning to the area. • Continuation of student housing development on east side of Sweet Home Road.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

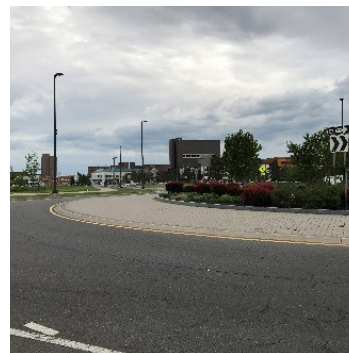
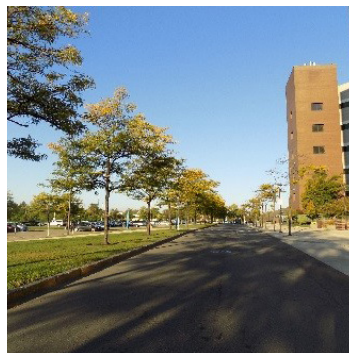
Sweet Home Station





STATION 20+21: UB NORTH CAMPUS A&B

STATION TYPOLOGY: UNIVERSITY CAMPUS



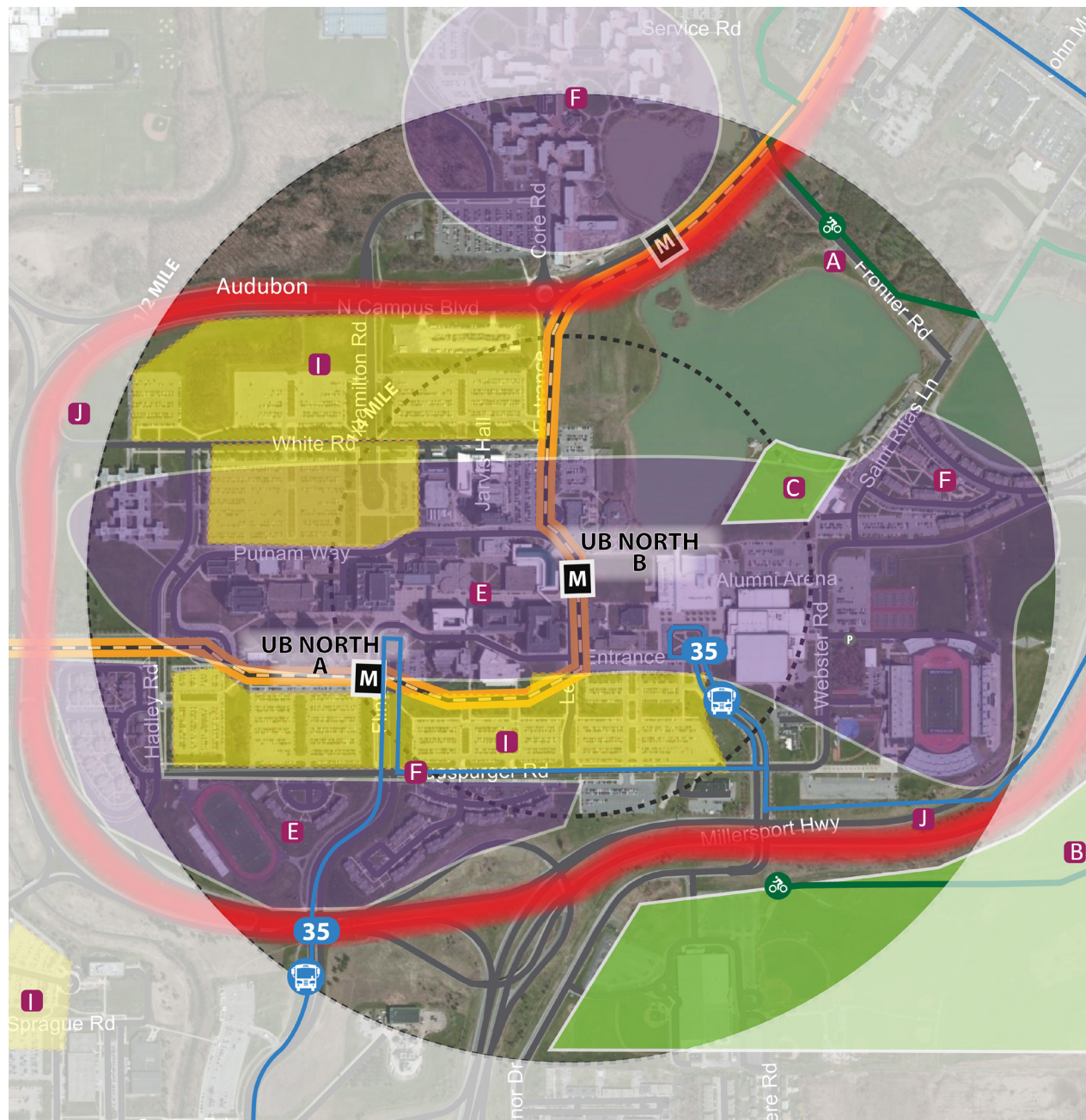
STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed UB North Campus station(s) would be located near the academic spine of the UB North Campus for convenient access. Since all UB stations would be located near each other and conditions would be similar between the stations, a combined station area assessment was undertaken for all stations.

Metro Rail would wind through the UB North Campus, at grade, providing several stops. The UB North Campus is a suburban university campus, with institutional buildings and student housing spread across the campus. Support retail uses are located at the center of campus. Surface parking lots are plentiful and generally located on the periphery of the campus. John James Audubon Parkway

is a 4- to 6-lane roadway that encircles the campus, making pedestrian and bicycle access to/from areas beyond uncomfortable.

The campus is served by the UB bus system, Stampede, that connects riders to various locations on campus and to the UB South Campus, as well as destinations in between. Shuttles are also available for parking lots outside the spine area as well as to off-campus student housing. All parking lots are surface lots with restrictions on access and times. Walking and biking on campus can be challenging due to the auto-orientation of the campus.



Key Places

- A. Ellicott Creek Trailway
- B. Audubon Recreation Complex and Northtown Center
- C. Baird Point
- D. Inter-Campus Bikeway
- E. UB North Campus
- F. Student housing
- H. Baird Research Park infill development opportunity
- I. Surface parking infill development opportunity
- J. Audubon Parkway and Millersport Highway do not offer a comfortable walking, biking, and transit environment.

Legend

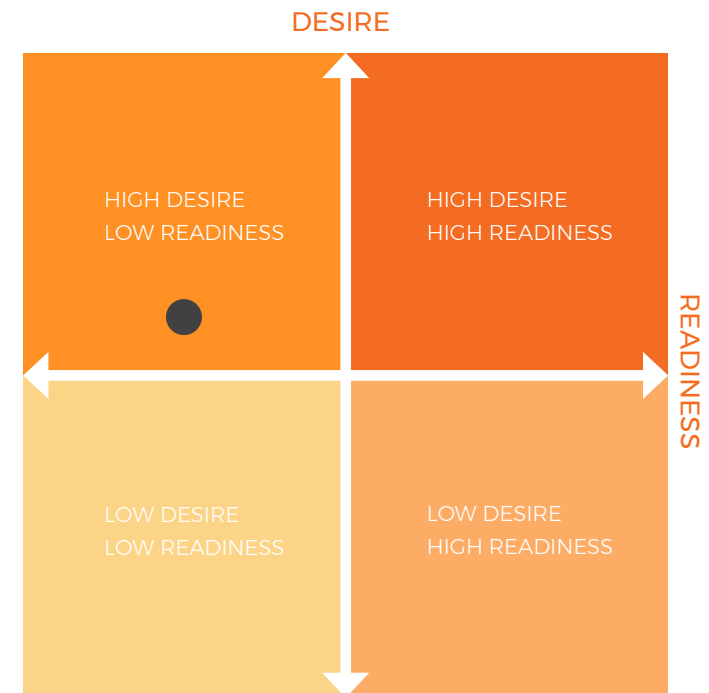
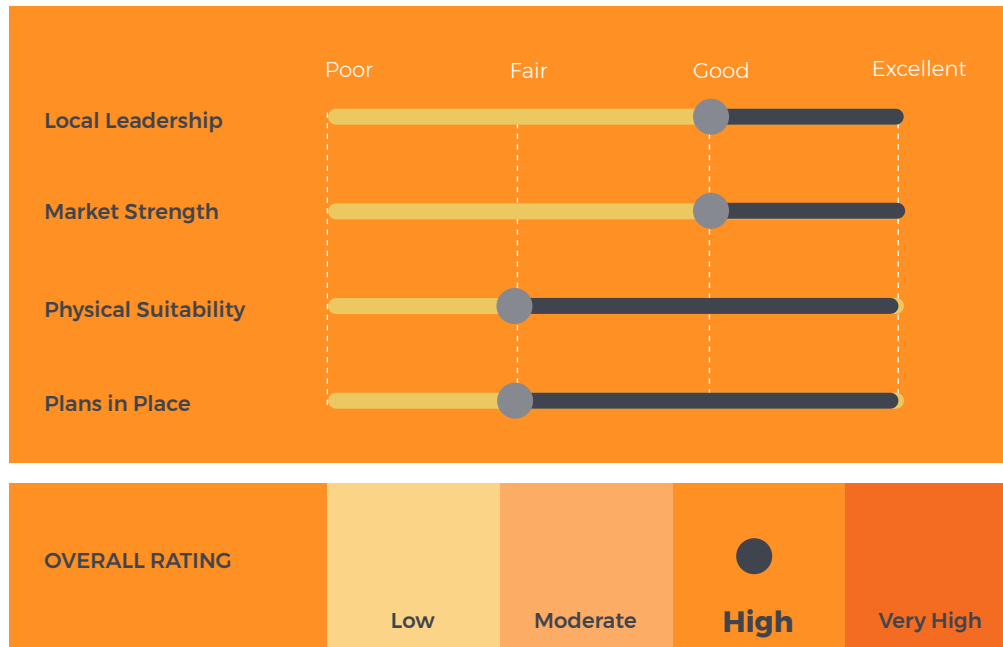
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

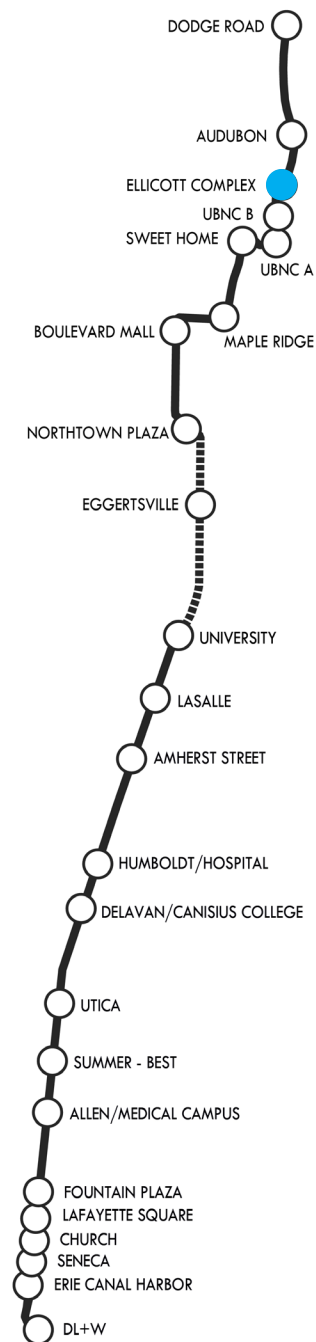
UB NORTH CAMPUS A&B STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Land is under UB control, which allows it to promote TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	Location within UB North Campus provides good market for development of related commercial and residential uses.	The ability to spur TOD on UB North Campus relies on coordination with the UB and its eliminating its Stampede service so that students rely on Metro Rail.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- The proposed stations provide opportunity to be a major node of multi-modal activity. - There is generally good walkability on campus.	Audubon Parkway is a 4- to 6-lane roadway that encircles the UB North Campus, which makes walking and biking to/ from areas beyond the campus a challenge.
PLANS IN PLACE	The UB 2020 Master Plan looks to enhance connectivity between the three campus (UB North, UB South, and Medical Campus) through improved transit.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

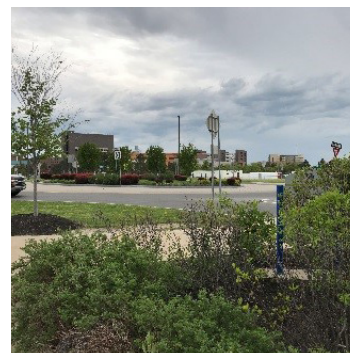
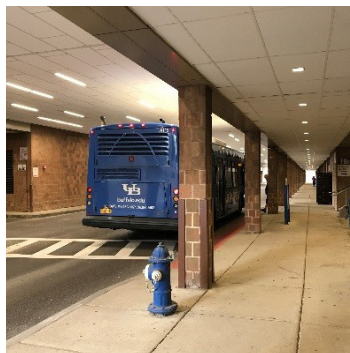
UB North Campus A&B Station





STATION 22: ELLICOTT

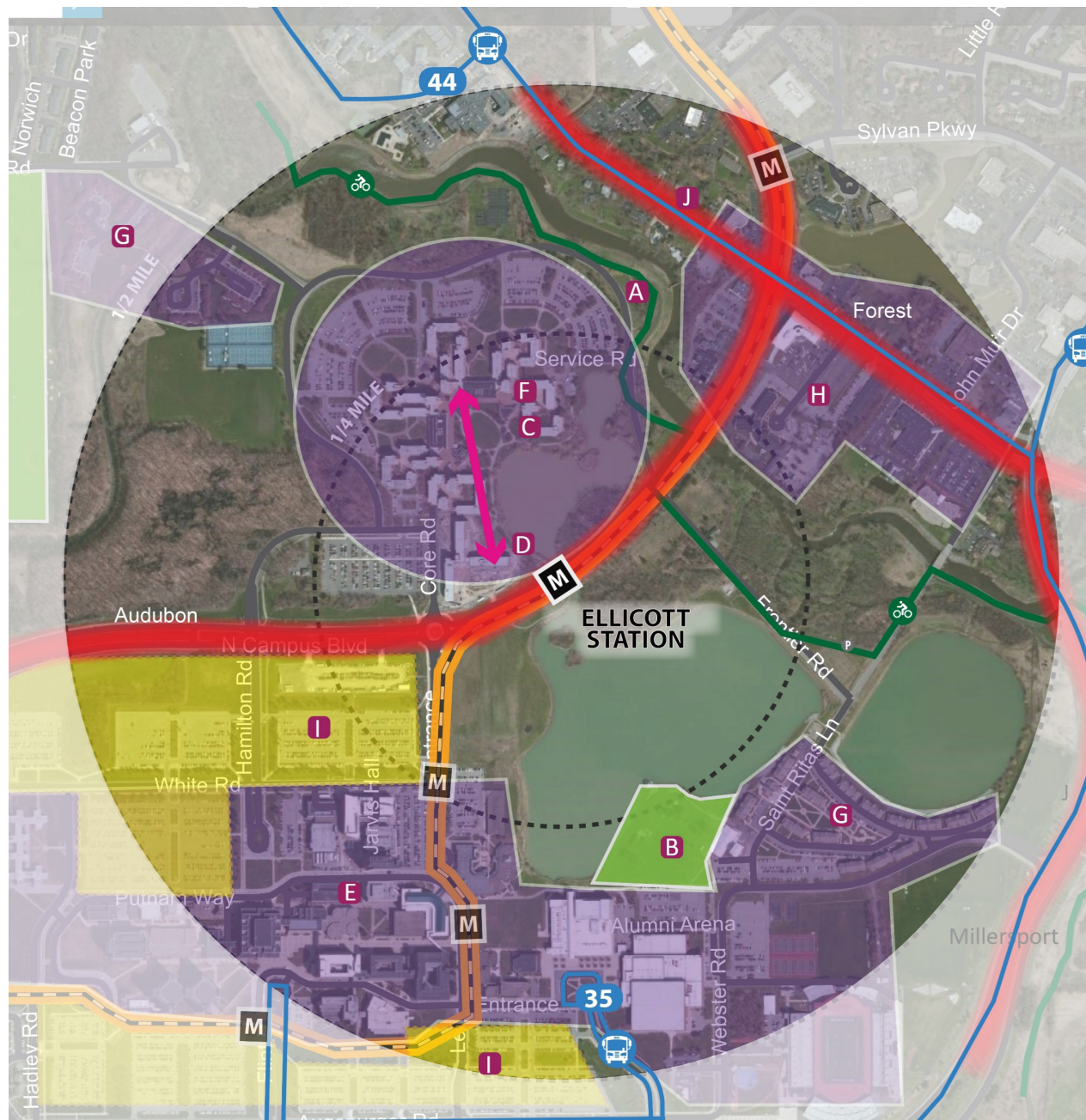
STATION TYPOLOGY: UNIVERSITY CAMPUS



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The Ellicott station would be located near John James Audubon Parkway and Core Road on the UB North Campus. It would connect students living on campus, university staff members, and others to access the many facilities located in the area. Dormitory amenities such as living quarters, cafeterias, convenient stores, and laundry facilities are located in the Ellicott Complex. The location also features parkland, recreational facilities, and exercise/fitness areas. In addition, there are several university offices, classrooms, and lecture halls located there.

Within the complex, there are dedicated routes for the UB bus system. Access to these routes are restricted to buses and UB vehicles only. There are several surface parking lots surrounding the complex; however, these are restricted to UB students and staff with permits. Bike paths with racks are scattered throughout, along with sidewalks, which connect the complex to the main academic spine via the Student Union.



Key Places

- A. Ellicott Creek Trailway
- B. Baird Point
- C. Sweet Home High School
- D. Connectivity to Ellicott Complex (student housing)
- E. UB North Campus
- F. Ellicott Complex (student housing)
- G. Student housing
- H. Office
- I. Surface parking infill development opportunity
- J. Audubon Parkway, North Forest Road, and Millersport Highway do not offer a comfortable walking, biking, and transit environment.

Legend

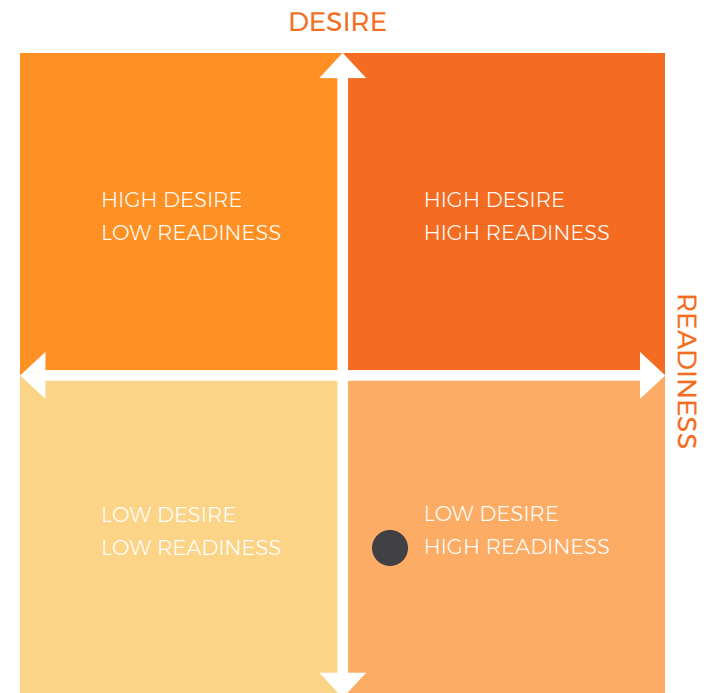
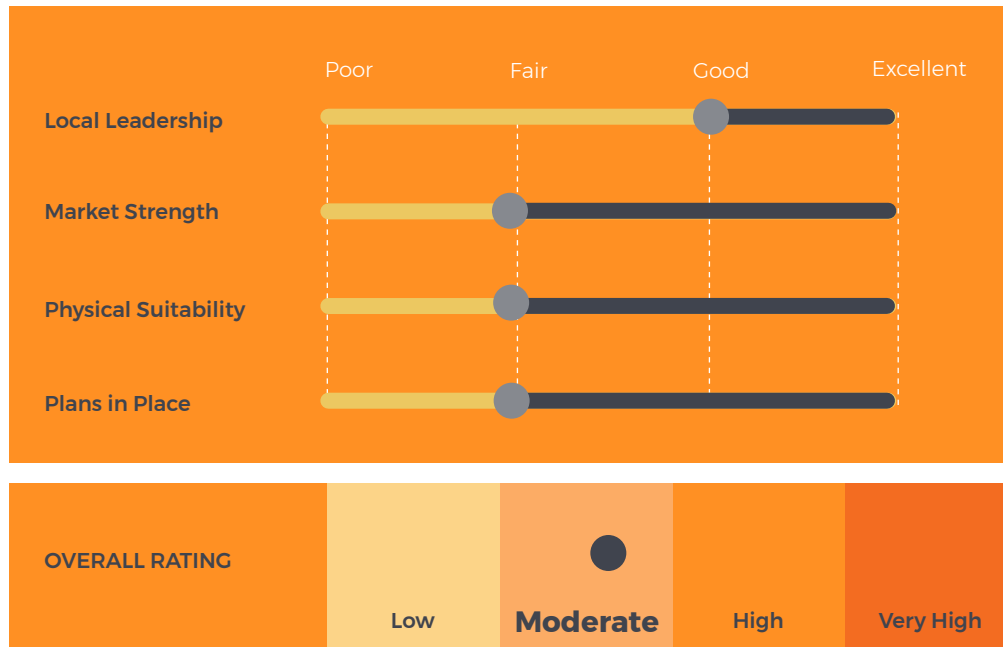
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

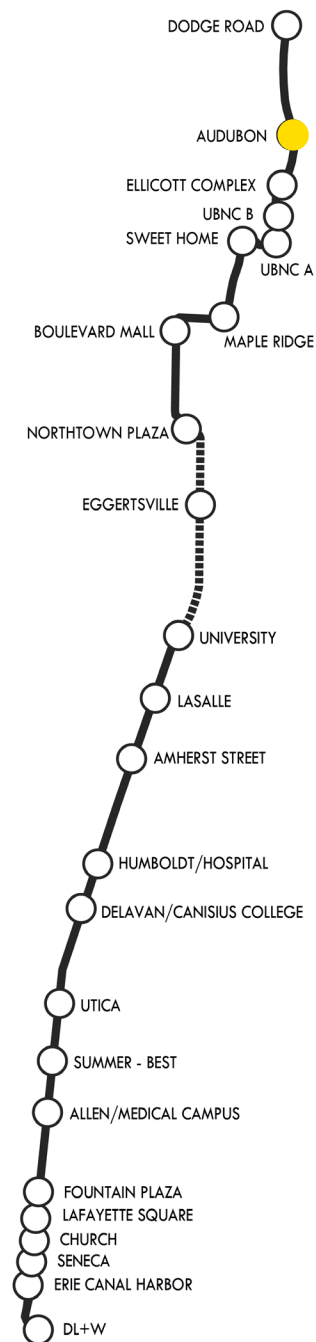
ELLICOTT STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	The UB controls this land, which allows it to promote TOD.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Proximity to UB North provides good market to develop related commercial and residential uses. - Already a high density of student housing.	The ability to spur TOD on UB North Campus relies on coordination with the UB and its eliminating its Stampede service so that students rely on Metro Rail.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- The proposed station would be near a large student housing complex at Ellicott Complex. - Audubon Parkway has been calmed at the intersection of Audubon Parkway and Core Road to provide better walkability between Ellicott Complex and core of UB North Campus.	- Outside of the roundabout at Audubon Parkway and Core Road, Audubon Parkway is a 4- to 6-lane roadway that encircles the UB North Campus and makes walking and biking to/from areas beyond the campus a challenge. - Large surface parking exists around the periphery of the Ellicott Complex, impeding walkability and continuity to/from the station.
PLANS IN PLACE		Connectivity to/from Ellicott Complex is generally poor

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

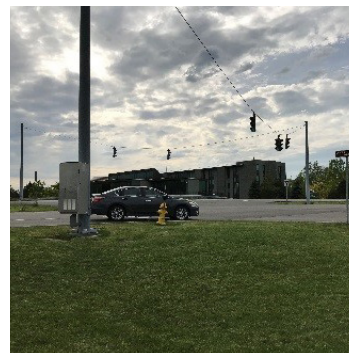
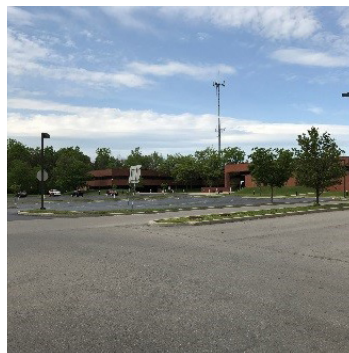
Ellicott Station





STATION 23: AUDUBON

STATION TYPOLOGY: MIXED-USE CENTER

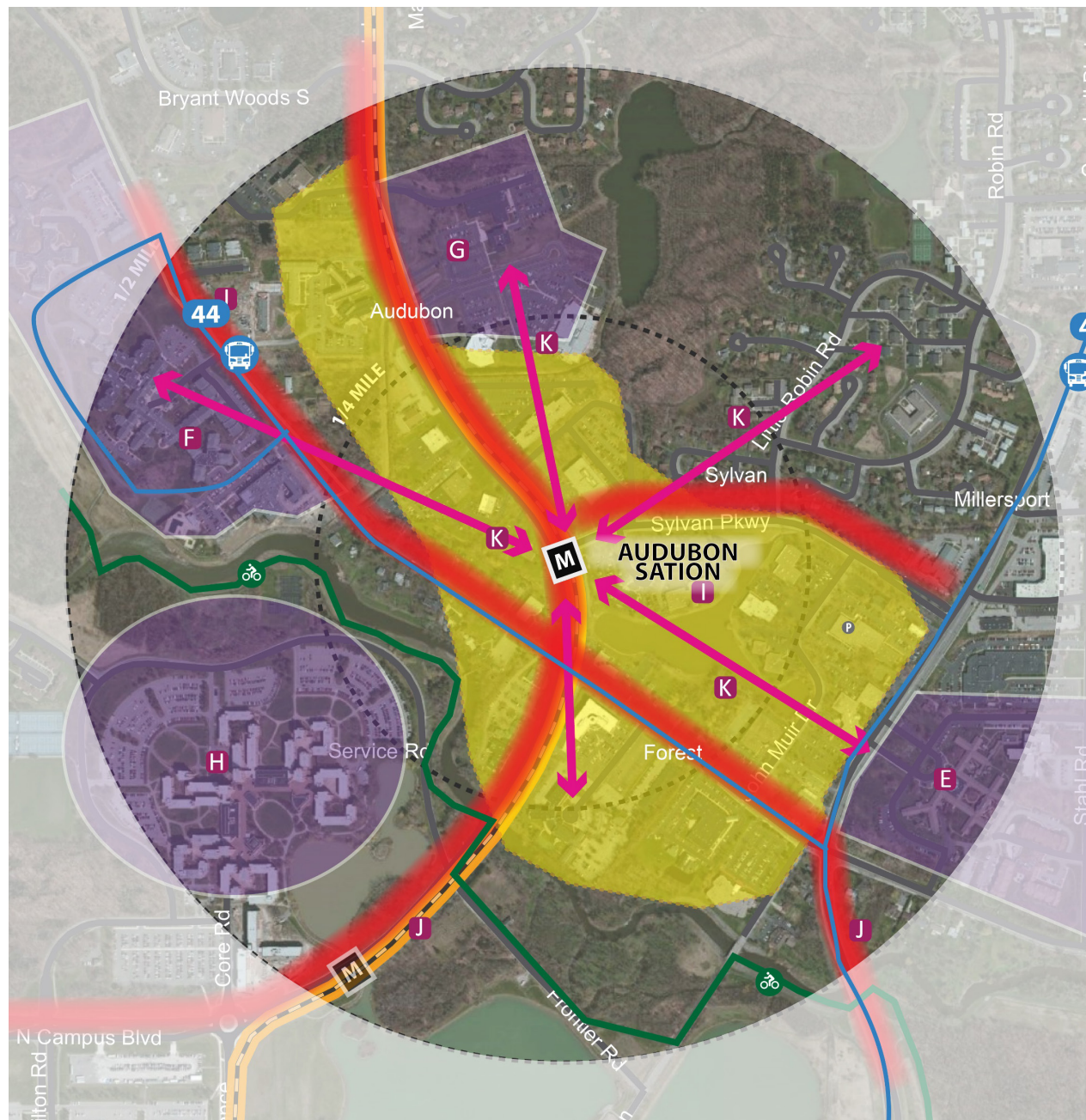


STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Audubon station would be located along John James Audubon Parkway near Sylvan Parkway, although consideration should be given to locating the station near Amherst's government complex. The Audubon Community is a planned community from the 1970s that was built out in a fashion that separates uses, placing commercial uses and office complexes along Audubon Parkway with residential neighborhoods off the road. Several Amherst government and recreational facilities are located in a complex, including the town's police and court, senior center, Audubon Library, and Walton Woods Park. The Weinberg Campus and Beechwood Complexes are large assisted and senior living residences, but would not be well connected to the

proposed station location. John James Audubon Parkway is a 4-lane divided highway with a speed limit of 45 miles per hour. There are no sidewalks or bicycle facilities located along Audubon Parkway; trails are off-road and wind through preserve areas.

There is no on-street parking on John James Audubon Parkway, and surface parking is reserved for the respective office park tenants and visitors. Public parking is available in the town court/library lots. While office uses are concentrated in the area, Audubon Parkway is not a walkable street and was not built to be transit supportive. Metro Bus Route #44 runs along portions of Audubon Parkway, accessing the Weinburg Campus and office parks near Sylvan Parkway.



Key Places

- A. Ellicott Creek Trailway
- B. Baird Point
- C. Connectivity to Ellicott Complex (student housing)
- D. UB North Campus
- E. Beechwood Continuing Care and Asbury Pointe Retirement Community
- F. Weinburg Campus and Jewish Community Center
- G. Amherst Police Department, Audubon Library, and Amherst Senior Center
- H. Ellicott Complex (student housing)
- I. Office development; opportunity for adaptive reuse and infill development
- J. Audubon Parkway, North Forest Road, Sylvan Parkway, and Millersport Highway do not currently offer a comfortable walking, biking, and transit environment
- K. Due to lack of pedestrian facilities, poor connectivity to surrounding destinations and neighborhoods

Legend

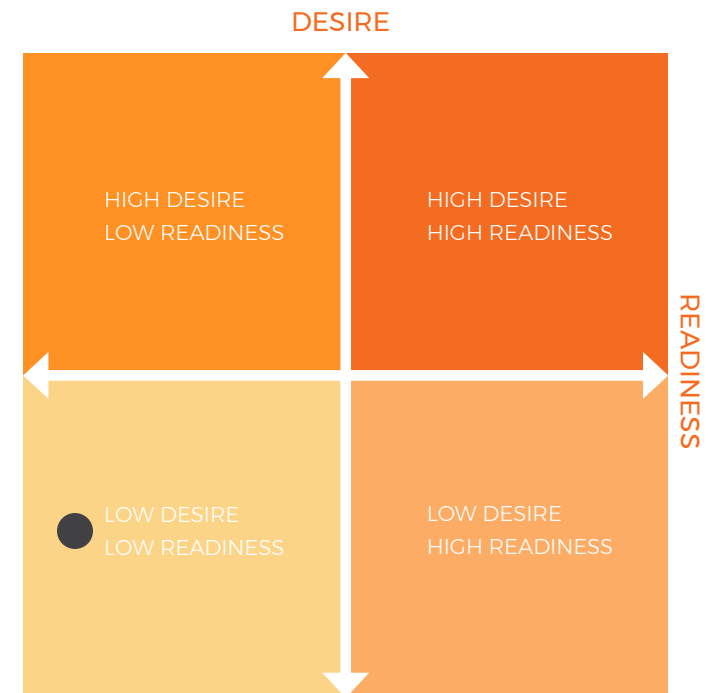
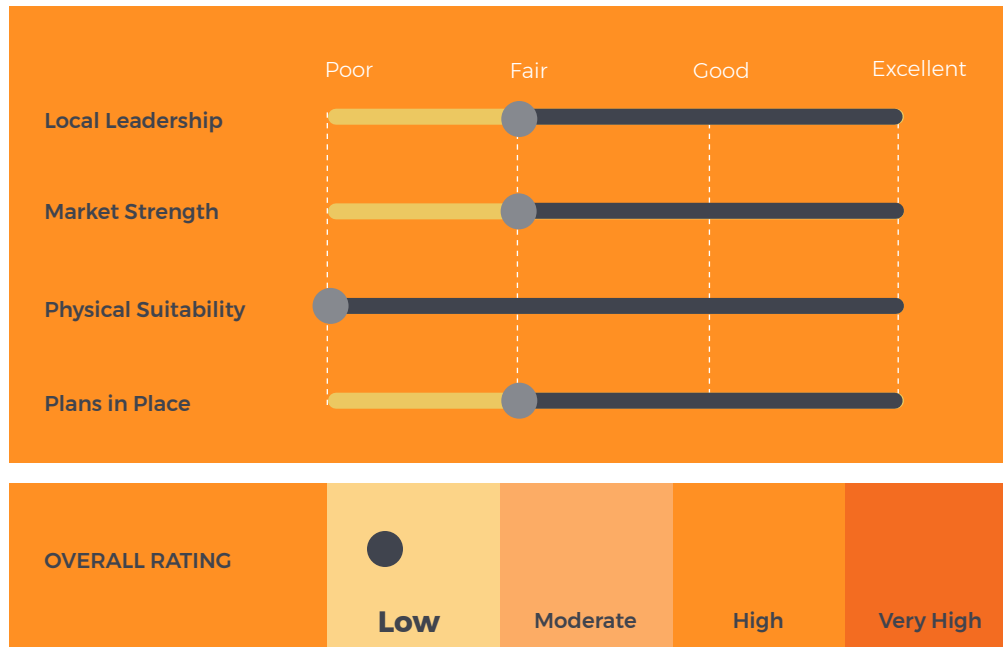
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

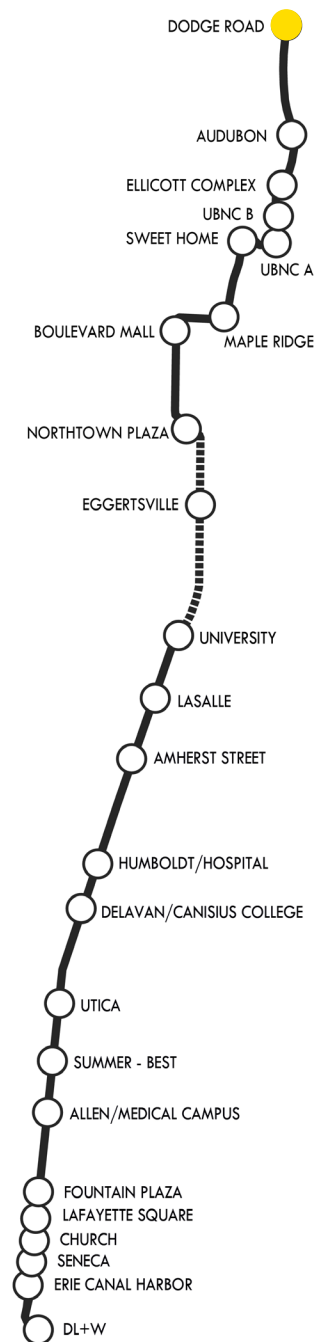
AUDUBON STATION REA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	Local government understands need to rethink Audubon Community transportation and land use.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Proximity to UB North, nearby office complexes, and large assisted living and senior residences provides good market for development of supportive uses. - There is good amount of vacant and underutilized land.	The area consists of varying uses in an auto-oriented setup that makes it difficult to build the type of development that is transit supportive.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- Station could be near town of Amherst center—police, court, Audubon Library, senior center—and Walton Woods Park located off Audubon Parkway. - Station would be near a number of office parks, assisted living and senior residences, and large employment base.	- Audubon Parkway is a 4-lane divided highway with high speeds and no pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure, making for an uncomfortable walking environment that is not transit supportive. - Very segregated uses and low density make for a difficult transit environment.
PLANS IN PLACE	The area is mostly zoned New Community District, offering some flexibility to achieve TOD.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Audubon Station





STATION 24: DODGE ROAD

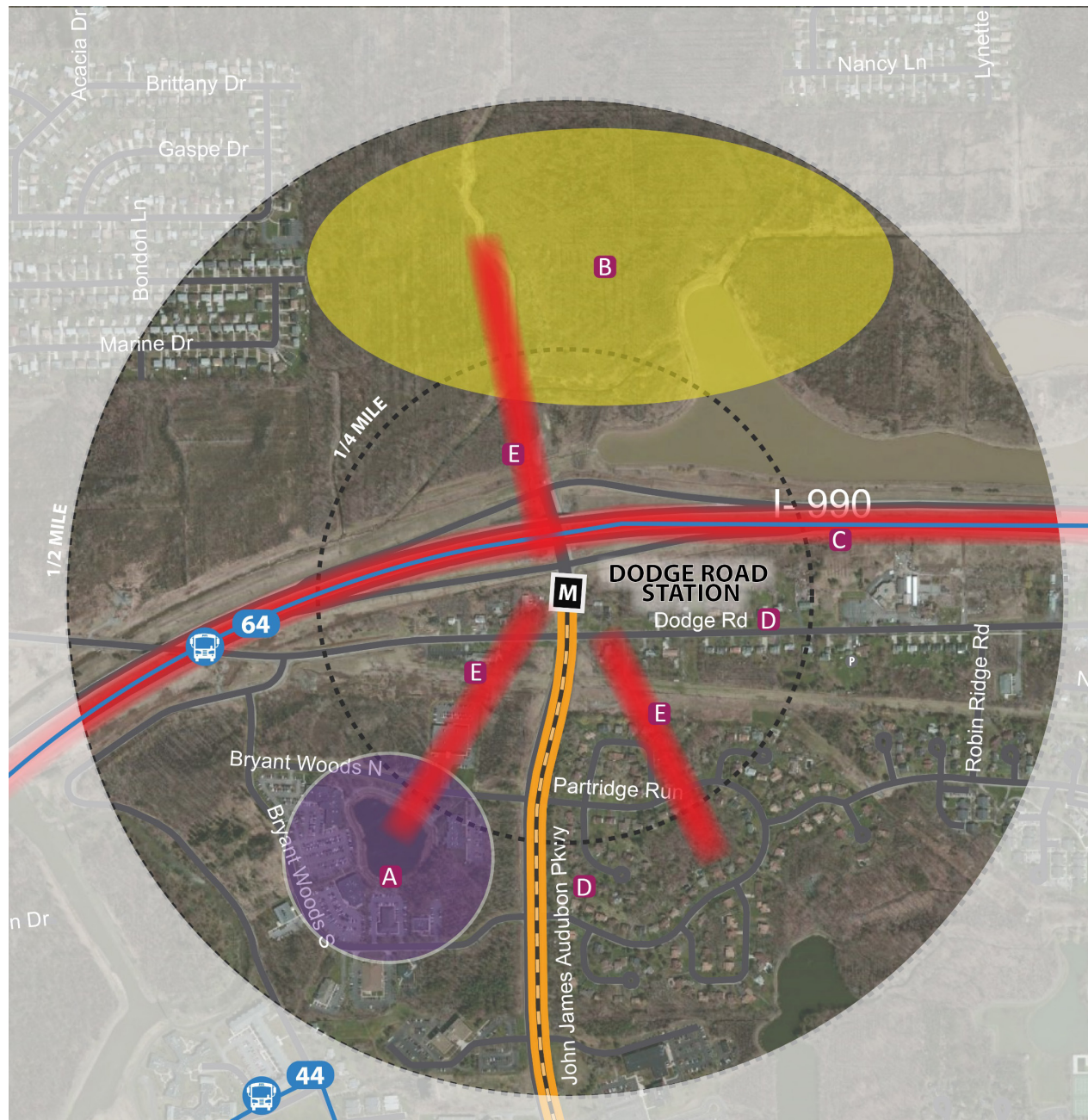
STATION TYPOLOGY: MIXED-USE CENTER



STATION AREA DISCUSSION

The proposed Dodge Road station would be located near the intersection of John James Audubon Parkway and Dodge Road near I-990. This would be the northern terminus of the proposed Metro Rail extension. The area is surrounded by low-density residences, office parks, and vacant land. Bryant Woods Office Park is west of Audubon Parkway near Dodge Road. There is a large proposed development to the north (Muir Woods) that could incorporate the proposed Metro Rail station into a TOD. John James Audubon Parkway is a 4-lane divided highway with a speed limit of 45 miles per hour. There are no sidewalks or bicycle facilities along Audubon Parkway or Dodge Road.

There is no on-street parking on Audubon Parkway or Dodge Road, and surface parking is reserved for the respective office park tenants and visitors. John James Audubon Parkway is not a walkable street and was not built to be transit supportive. Metro Bus Route #64E operates along I-990 between Buffalo and Lockport.



Key Places

- A. Office and student housing development
- B. Proposed Muir Woods development project
- C. I-990 acts as a barrier to the station catchment area.
- D. Audubon Parkway and Dodge Road do not offer a comfortable walking, biking, and transit environment.
- E. Due to lack of pedestrian facilities and road connectivity, there is poor connectivity to surrounding destinations and neighborhoods.

Legend

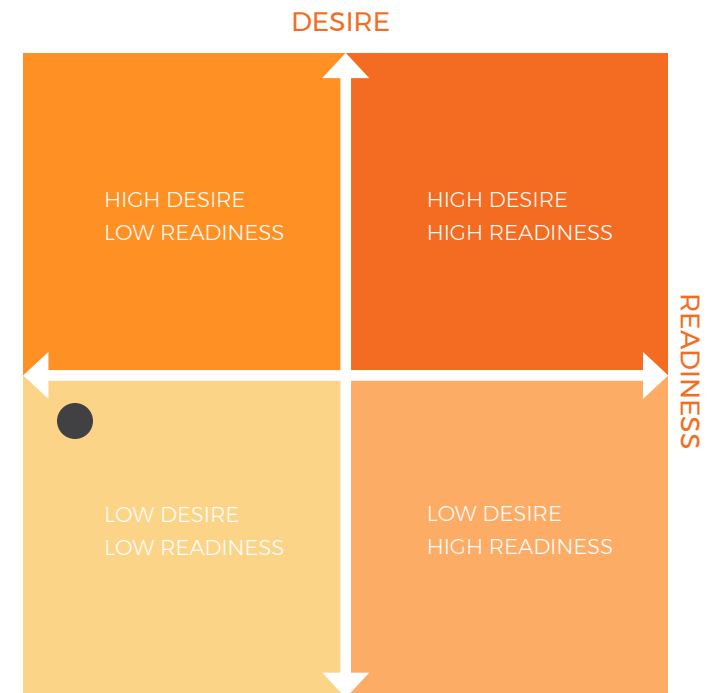
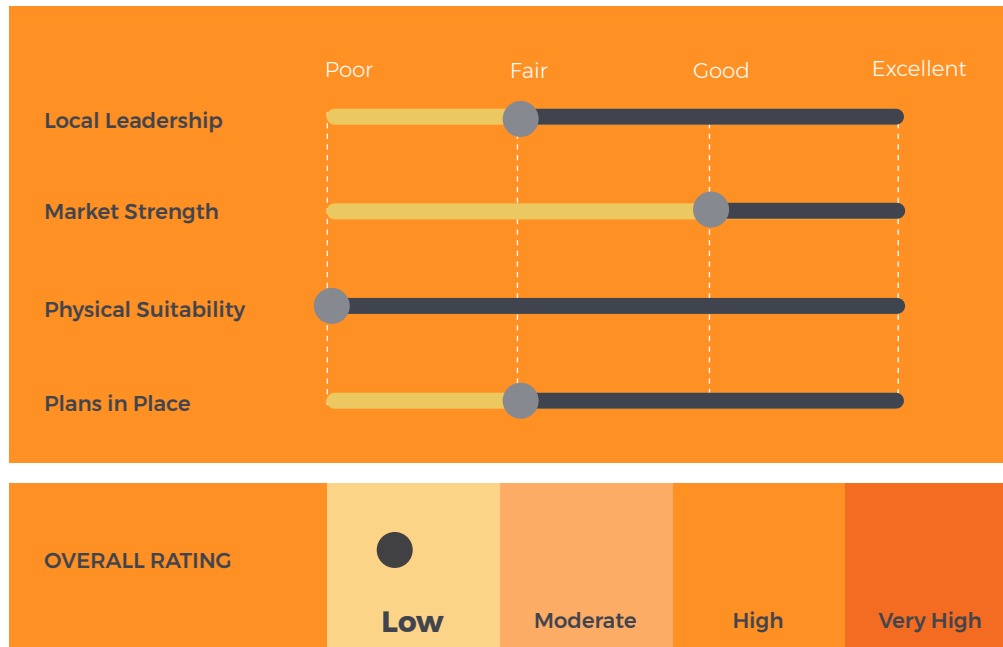
- Key Anchors
- Under Construction/Proposed/Potential Redevelopment Sites
- Parks and Public Spaces
- Parking
- Metro Bus Routes
- Bike Facilities (Existing)
- Bike Facilities (Proposed)
- Key Connectivity
- Challenges

DODGE ROAD STATION AREA OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

	+ STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES	- WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES
LOCAL LEADERSHIP	There is developer interest in TOD near the station site – Muir Woods.	
MARKET STRENGTH	- Proximity to UB North Campus and nearby office complexes provides good market for development of supportive uses. - There is good amount of large vacant and underutilized land..	The area is a single-use, auto-oriented neighborhood that makes it difficult to build development that is transit supportive.
PHYSICAL SUITABILITY	- The station would be near a number of office parks and large employment base. - Proximity to I-990 would provide opportunity for park-and-ride lots and last-mile connection to Crosspoint Business Park.	- Audubon Parkway is a 4-lane divided highway with high speeds and no pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure, making for an uncomfortable walking environment that is not transit supportive. - Very segregated uses and low density make for a difficult transit environment.
PLANS IN PLACE	The area is mostly zoned New Community District, offering some flexibility to offer TOD.	

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING

Dodge Station



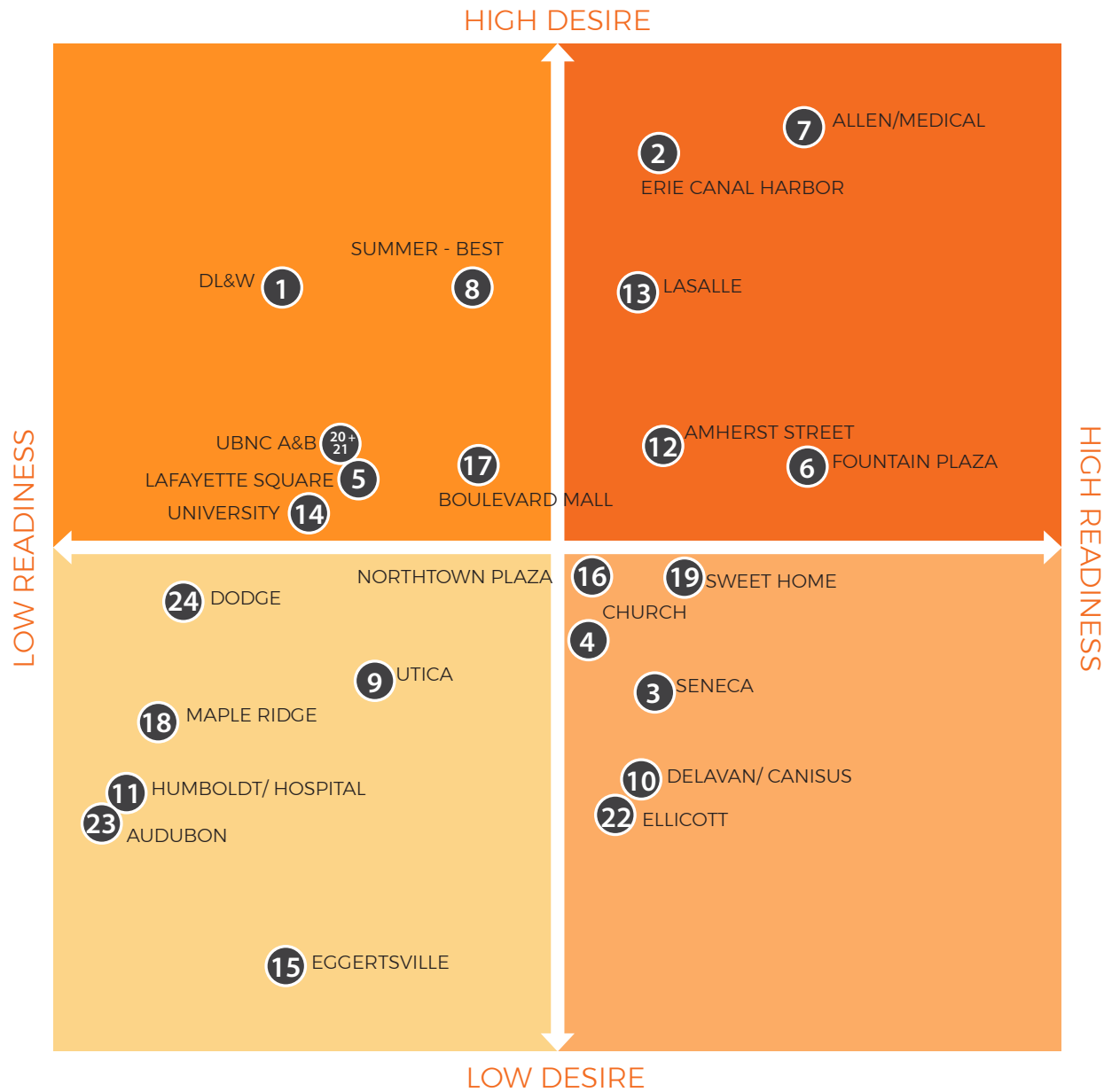
8.5. CONCLUSION

The Erie Canal Harbor, Fountain Plaza, Allen/ Medical Campus, Amherst Street, and LaSalle station areas exhibit the highest desirability and readiness for TOD. These station areas are already seeing development activity in their neighborhoods, and the market continues to be strong. The newly adopted Green Code promotes good TOD-supportive development at most of these station areas.

The DL&W, Lafayette Square, Summer-Best, University, UB North Campus, and Boulevard Mall station areas exhibit high desirability but low readiness for TOD. These station areas have good leadership and support for TOD and are strong from a market standpoint, but don't have good physical suitability and/or are absent of plans and policies to support TOD. The Seneca, Church, Delavan/ Canisius College, Northtown Plaza, Ellicott Complex, and Sweet Home station areas exhibit low desirability but high readiness for TOD. These station areas have good physical suitability and/ or plans and policies are in place; however, the area lacks community or developer support or developer interest in promoting TOD.

The Utica, Humboldt/ Hospital, Eggertsville, Maple Ridge, Audubon, and Dodge Road station areas exhibit low desirability and low readiness for TOD. These station areas don't have good physical suitability, plans and policies, market strength, and/or community support for TOD

TOD DESIRE & READINESS RATING SUMMARY



9. PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY AND STRATEGIES

9.1. PRIORITY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

This Priority Infrastructure Investment section focuses on those key infrastructure investments and strategies that need to be coordinated and implemented by both public and private entities to facilitate and accelerate TOD. In many instances, initial investments in infrastructure by public entities is a key mechanism for accelerating TOD, and can often serve as the tool that unifies a TOD and maximizes its potential.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT FOCUS STRATEGIES

The opportunity for TOD may vary in different areas of the region, and for different station typologies. But certain universal strategies can be considered and evaluated for each station area in order to implement and accelerate TODs. The following six strategies are defined based on fundamentals of successful TOD:

- Complete Streets/ Multi-Modal Connectivity
- Engaging Civic Spaces/ Placemaking
- Progressive Parking Design and Policy
- Mixed-Use Development
- Transit-Oriented Density Distribution
- Repurposing and Infill Development

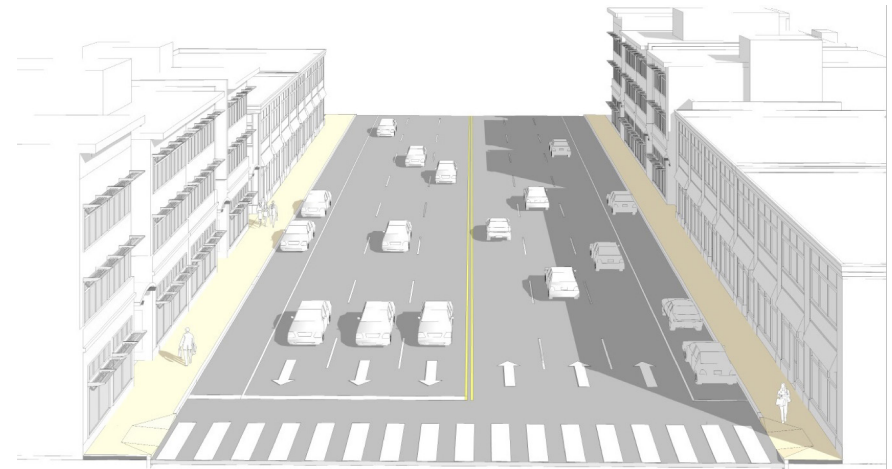
9.1.1. COMPLETE STREETS/ MULTI-MODAL CONNECTIVITY

When streets are geared towards automobile use or are uninviting to pedestrians, the result will be a neighborhood that sees low transit usage and a visible lack of people walking around. At the most fundamental level, TOD expands transit access, increases mobility options, and serves surrounding land uses through an integrated multi-modal transportation network. Successful TOD necessitates creating Complete Streets that accommodate multiple modes of transportation and provide comfortable, attractive walking environments. Multi-modal connections allow people to use transit and transfer to/from other modes near the transit station. Comfortable and attractive walking environments occur when there are amenities to make walking, biking, and transit use more comfortable, vehicles do not dominate the street, and there are active and engaging streetscapes and building frontages.

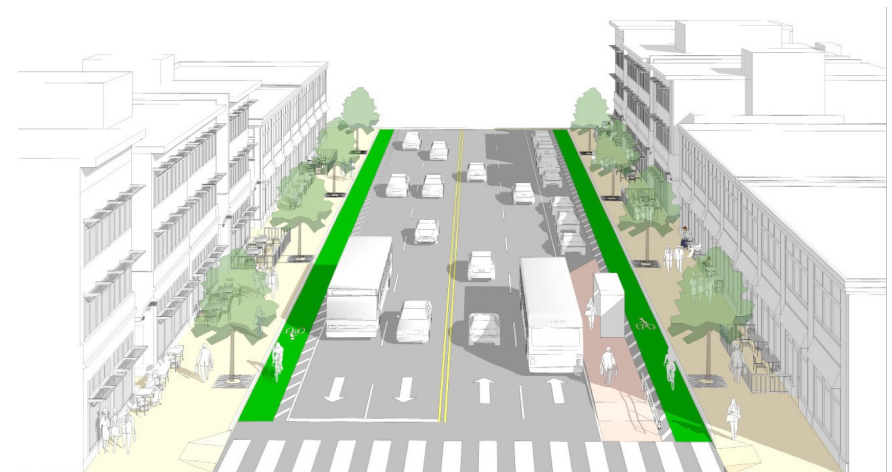
The City of Buffalo is making significant strides toward implementing and expanding Complete Streets. Continued expansion of Complete Streets will help strengthen the multi-modal transportation network and continue to enhance both north-south and east-west connectivity to Metro Rail stations, and further unite neighborhoods along Main Street. The Town of Tonawanda recently adopted a Complete Streets Policy and the Town of Amherst has begun to consider how a Complete Streets initiative should advance Complete Streets and multi-modal transportation Engaging Civic Spaces/Placemaking

A large part of what makes a neighborhood more attractive is the social aspect of an engaging and active space and streetscape that draw attention and interest. Public spaces- such as parks, natural features, public realm, and public plazas- should be utilized as an organizing feature for TOD and as a focal point for the station area neighborhood. Within a TOD, high quality pedestrian-oriented public spaces enhance the desirability of transit and supports its use by providing a comfortable, accessible, and inviting environment for all users as they travel to and from transit

Figure 36. Poor Complete Streets Design and Preferred Transit-supportive Complete Streets Design



Example of a street that is not transit-supportive and is not a Complete Street



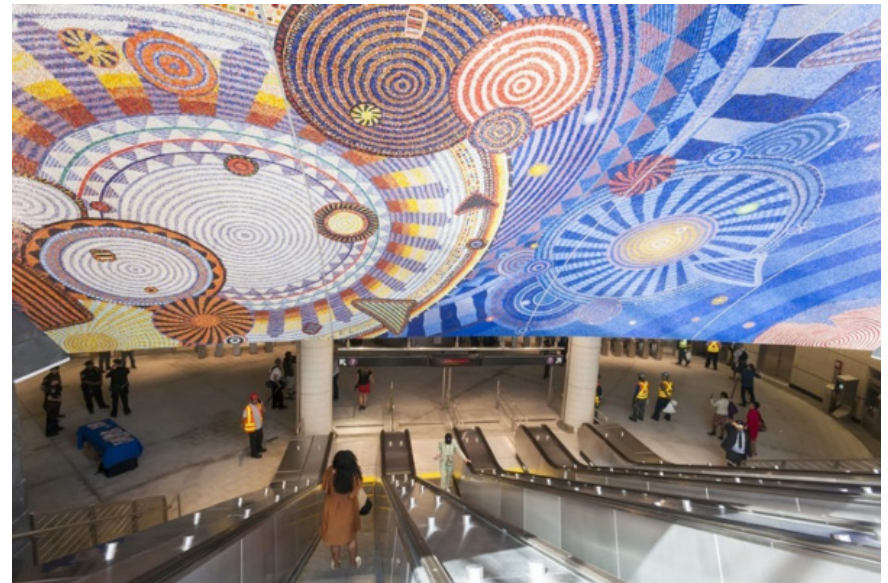
Example of a transit-supportive Complete Street

9.1.2. ENGAGING CIVIC SPACES/ PLACEMAKING

STATION IMPROVEMENT

- High quality amenities
- Signage and wayfinding
- Public art
- Bike storage
- Safe and comfortable waiting/ seating areas for enhanced customer experience
- Elevators/ escalators
- ADA accessibility
- Real time information and enhanced technology
- Mobile applications
- Customer feedback
- Wi-Fi and cellular reception

Figure 37. New 34th Street Station in New York City



PLAZA AND OPEN SPACE

Well designed public spaces serve as a safe environment for people and enhance the multi-modal transportation network, while also serving as community gathering areas that help strengthen the character and identity of the neighborhood. Be it through a community center, public parks, athletic fields, performing stage, or just a public seating area, giving neighborhoods a place to gather socially goes a long way in building and activating a TOD. Active, vibrant TODs facilitate social interaction and make TODs desirable destinations, which in turn increase transit usage..

The immediate area around a station should address pedestrian-oriented amenities and focus on walkability and a sense of place. The following are some key strategies for the area immediately adjacent to a station:

- Incorporate civic plazas with ample lighting, trees, seating, signage, public activities, and public art to show an active pedestrian area or pedestrian zone
- Install pocket parks and open space areas for gatherings spots and local events for transit users and visitors
- Encourage convenient land uses such as coffee shops, restaurants, markets, libraries and other community uses should be located in this area to highlight a destination and pedestrian zone
- Accommodate all transportation modes adjacent to train station areas by creating or enhancing facilities such bus stops, parking and ride hauling facilities (Uber and Lyft) to improve the overall user experience

The recent renovation of the Allen/ Medical Campus station successfully demonstrates the transformative impact of an accessible and attractive station that incorporates engaging civic spaces into its design. The renovation featured a rotating public art piece that greets customers and is visible to passerbys on Main Street. Additionally, a new pedestrian and bike connection with new seating amenities, permeable pavers, and lighting will connect both Allen Street and the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus to the station.

Figure 38. Engaging TOD Civic Space



Example of an engaging and active Transit-Oriented Development civic plaza



Target Field Station, Minneapolis, MN

9.1.3. PROGRESSIVE PARKING DESIGN AND POLICY

When plentiful, inexpensive (or free), and highly visible parking is available, automobile usage can easily dominate a neighborhood. Conversely, TOD is maximized when parking is limited or managed into shared parking (preferably structured parking) which creates publicly available spaces rather than reserving parking for individual uses or specific property owners. Limiting or managing parking makes it less enticing to drive to a neighborhood and more comfortable to walk or use transit. Parking should be located on the periphery of the station area, while facilities such as kiss and rides, bus transfers, and shared mobility stations should be located nearest the station. Innovative parking design can reduce the amount of space dedicated to parking, while still meeting the needs of the community, local businesses, and residents. With less land used for surface parking, more land can be dedicated to civic spaces and mixed-use development. Progressive parking strategies also promote better station access and visibility, and encourage transit use.

Potential parking strategies include:

- Encourage on-street parking
- Place surface parking lots at the rear of buildings, allowing building frontages along streets
- Wrap parking structures with active street frontage uses
- Encourage (or require) shared parking
- Create parking districts where parking revenue can contribute to public realm improvements
- Create park-and-ride hubs
- Implement real-time parking information
- Utilize demand based parking fee structure

Figure 39. Poor TOD Parking Design and Preferred TOD Parking Design



Poor TOD Parking Design



Preferred TOD Parking Design

9.1.4. MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Mixed-use neighborhoods that contain a mix of residential, retail, office, commercial, and community facilities helps to create the “Live, Work, Play” active environment surrounding the station and reinforces the use of transit, both of which are needed for successful TOD. By creating vibrant centers where retail, restaurant, entertainment, commercial, and residential uses are lively at all times of the day, mixed-use TOD decreases auto dependency since users can easily reach a host of destinations. Active ground floor uses, such as retail, restaurant, or other social gathering places, should be focused near the station to help to generate activity and interest. Mixed-use development also enhances economic opportunity, creating areas that serve as a destination and providing transit opportunities to bring people there. Further, mixed-uses also encourage opportunities for mixed income and equitable development..

Mixed-use development as a tool for TOD should be applied in a context-sensitive manner. Many Main Street facing blocks lack continuous, active ground floor uses that can motivate walking and transit use. Finding appropriate areas for mixed-use development, including existing underutilized buildings, can begin to create lively and active TOD areas that motivate less automobile use and encourage walking and transit use.

Figure 40. Preferred Mixed-Use Development at the Center of TOD



Example of preferred Mixed-Use, Transit-Oriented Development, with active ground floor storefronts and upper floor residential, office, or flex uses.

Figure 41. Montgomery Row near Bethesda, MD Metro Station



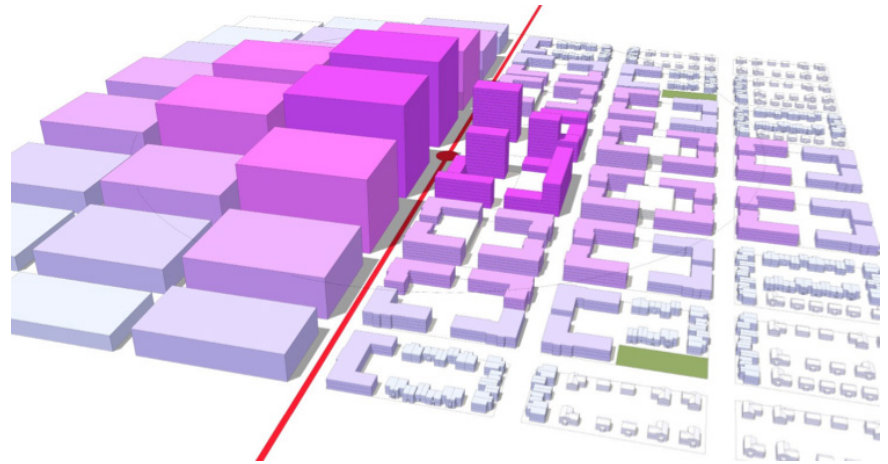
Montgomery Row near Bethesda, MD Metro Station

9.1.5. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DENSITY DISTRIBUTION

By concentrating relatively high-density, mixed-use development within walking distance from transit station, TOD promotes a more compact development pattern compared to its surroundings. By doing so, TOD maximizes transit accessibility and places the highest concentration of activity near the transit station, thus providing the greatest potential for increased ridership.

TOD density and compactness is not uniformly high, but varies based on its community context, transit capacity, and distance from the transit station. The greatest density is encouraged in areas immediately surrounding the station, allowing for transition downward from the center to surrounding neighborhoods.

Figure 42. Example of TOD Density Distribution



Example of Transit-Oriented density distribution, with highest density near a light rail station, gradually transitioning to lower density development around the periphery.



Example of Transit-Oriented density distribution in Arlington County, VA

Figure 43. Repurposing Vacant and Underutilized Properties



Example of how existing building stock can be repurposed to include active ground floor uses and mixed upper floor uses that generate transit ridership.



Example of building repurposing at Main Street and Ferry Street that will create active ground floor uses and mixed upper floor uses

9.1.6. REPURPOSING AND INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Fill in the empty spaces. It's a simple concept that goes a long way. By giving vacant or underutilized buildings, as well as vacant land, new life and strategically introducing new developments in established communities, smart infill can reduce traffic congestion, save open space, and strengthen the overall fabric of our communities. Creating an active experience at the street level helps to fill upper floors, creating a focus on social gathering places and active neighborhoods.

There is vacant and underutilized land along the Metro Rail Corridor that is available for redevelopment, infill development, and adaptive reuse based on market conditions. The One Region Forward framework focuses on infill development and building urban fabric, thus the focus of TOD should be on redeveloping and infilling this vacant and underutilized land.

9.2. GENERAL INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS BY TYPOLOGY

Utilizing the six TOD focus strategy areas outlined previously, there are a number of general infrastructure investments that should be implemented to facilitate and accommodate TOD. These may vary by typology, and thus the discussion below is geared around general infrastructure investments by typology. This may include instances where TOD should comply with the existing neighborhood and provide equitable development, as well discuss areas where change is being emphasized by TOD.

Sports & Entertainment District

Much of the problem currently is the Sports & Entertainment District is the “donut hole” that are the surface parking lots throughout Cobblestone. Development and activity has been growing in Canalside west of Washington Street, areas along Ohio Street, areas east of Michigan Avenue, and areas along Ganson Street. Redevelopment plans for DL&W Terminal are also moving forward to add a signature Metro Rail station to Cobblestone. The issue at the forefront continues to be the lack of activity at the center of Cobblestone which results in an undesirable pedestrian environment and general lack of “place”. Thus, the focus of infrastructure investments in the Sports & Entertainment District are in connecting the various destinations across Canalside, Cobblestone, Old 1st Ward, and along Ganson Street and filling in the surface parking lots to create a unified “District”. From an infrastructure standpoint, this includes walkability/ Complete Streets improvements to many roadways, bridging the activity centers and connecting to the new DL&W Terminal Metro Rail Station with a comfortable walking environment and providing multi-modal transportation options. The soon to be underway Cars sharing Main Street project for the area around Erie Canal Harbor station will bring upgraded amenities and streetscape to this section of Main Street.

Urban Core

The Urban Core Metro Rail stations are all highly visible and situated in high activity centers throughout Downtown. Accessibility to/from the stations and other activity centers in Downtown is generally very good. The main improvements needed for the Urban Core stations will continue to be general upgrades to bring more modern stations with comfortable waiting areas, technology, and improved amenities. The Fountain Plaza station is a good example of an improved and upgraded station that



should be implemented at Lafayette, Church, and Seneca stations. The Fountain Plaza station also has an improved civic area surrounding the station that creates an active environment that attracts transit usage. The NFTA Downtown Transit Hub project should move forward to provide enhanced connectivity between the Metropolitan Transportation Center, Metro Bus transfer area, and Church Street Metro Rail station. Upgrades to the Seneca Street station should accompany redevelopment of the Seneca One Tower in order to enhance connectivity between the station and Seneca One Tower.

Urban Campus

The focus for the Urban Campus typology should be on increased coordination with Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, University at Buffalo, and Canisius College, bringing campus and institutional uses to the station site in the form of mixed-use joint development. Working with these institutions, transportation demand management policies (like expanded Go Buffalo Niagara Plan) should be implemented to encourage transit use by students, faculty, and staff, and upgrades to public realm infrastructure will improve the station area and accessibility to/from the station, essentially incorporating the station into the campus. Walkability and bikeability enhancements along with smart technology should be provided to promote multi-modal transportation options.

Urban Neighborhood

The Urban Neighborhood Metro Rail stations are incorporated within neighborhoods along Main Street. The stations themselves are single-story, single-purpose buildings that sit at prominent corners along Main Street, with very little TOD occurring at or around the stations. There are four main focus areas for improving Urban Neighborhood stations:

Increasing Transit-Oriented Development activity at NFTA owned Metro Rail station properties and directly adjacent to the station.

This would take the form of joint development to replace the single-story Metro Rail station buildings with mixed-use development that includes an enhanced station lobby and access to the station platform. Where station sites are small or isolated, ideally this would become a joint development with nearby properties to make way for a larger TOD.

- Improving walkability and multi-modal options along Main Street. A Increasing Transit-Oriented Development activity at NFTA owned Metro Rail station properties and directly adjacent to the station.
- This would take the form of joint development to replace the single-story Metro Rail station buildings with mixed-use development that includes an enhanced station lobby and access to the station platform. Where station sites are small or isolated, ideally this would become a joint development with nearby properties to make way for a larger TOD.
- Improving walkability and multi-modal options along Main Street. A Complete Street treatment needs to be applied to Main Street to calm traffic and make the street less dominated by vehicular travel, open up opportunities for alternative modes (i.e., bicycle and transit), and create a more comfortable and enjoyable walking experience.
- Improving connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods to expand the station catchment area. Density (taken in terms of residents per square mile) is fairly high in the neighborhoods surrounding Urban Neighborhood stations, but a general perception that walkability and bikeability to these stations is lacking results in a less than optimal catchment area. Walkability, bikeability, and transit improvements should be focused on major north-south and east-west roadways. This can be undertaken in the form of streetscape enhancements, traffic

calming/ Complete Streets, and filling in underutilized properties with active ground floor uses.

- Placemaking improvements at the station to bring community/ social activity to stations. Improved civic spaces at the actual station will help create a social gathering place and a sense of community pride. This will help the community identify with a transit station and generate the interest in transit that will help increase ridership.

● Suburban Neighborhood

The focus of the Suburban Neighborhood typology is to create a low impact station that fits the context, and serves the existing neighborhood through enhanced connectivity. Sidewalks are prevalent in these neighborhoods, thus walkability improvements would take the focus of improved crossings at major intersections and additional biking opportunities on adjacent streets. These stations should also include bicycle amenities and infrastructure

● Mixed-Use Center

The Mixed-Use Center typology is generally in need of numerous walkability improvements and increased alternative transportation opportunities that help to reduce the dominance of the automobile. If stations are to be placed within the median, accessibility and connectivity to the platform is a priority to attract transit riders. Parking should be shared and located at the rear of building fronts to avoid large surface parking lots near stations. As redevelopment occurs in these areas, mixed-use buildings with active storefronts and upper floor uses should front the station areas, or stations should be incorporated within redevelopment plans, helping to create active, inviting, and comfortable station areas that promote transit use. There may be opportunities for park-and-ride as Metro Rail is expanded into suburban areas. Walkability and bikeability enhancements along with smart technology should be provided to promote multi-modal transportation options.

● University Campus

The most important element of locating stations within University Campus typologies is good placement of the station within the campus to maximize visibility and accessibility to attract ridership. The central core of the University Campus typology is generally walkable; if stations are placed at the periphery of the central campus, walkability and bikeability improvements will be necessary. Beyond the campus, walkability and bikeability improvements and infilling vacant and uninviting properties are necessary to attract ridership from nearby student housing.

9.3. RECOMMENDED NEW OR AMENDED POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

9.3.1. INTRODUCTION

This section outlines the new or amended policy and implementation strategies that should be strategically implemented across the Metro Rail Corridor to facilitate Transit-Oriented Development, or TOD. Transit-Oriented Development conforms to the One Region Forward vision of building upon our existing urban environment and promoting transit-supportive and walkable neighborhoods.

Policy recommendations focus on the land use regulations, development policies, parking management tools, transportation policies, and other policy driven recommendations that can help facilitate implementation of TOD. These policies are broken out by both regional policies with multiple jurisdictional coordination and those policies that require local municipal implementation. Regional policies are important to the regional success of Transit-Oriented Development and in conforming to the One Region Forward vision; local municipal policies are important to the success of specific station area TOD.

9.3.2. KEY RECOMMENDED POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The below table outlines the key recommended policy and implementation strategies of this plan that will guide both regional and local Transit-Oriented Development. Since most recommended policy and implementation strategies require some sort of municipal coordination and/or implementation, policy strategies are identified by the jurisdiction/ agency that should take the lead.

REGIONAL TOD COMMITTEE

One of the key recommendations is the creation of a regional governance structure, such as a Regional TOD Committee, that would help implement TOD-supportive policy and infrastructure strategies. The following is a more detailed description and outline of a Regional TOD Committee..

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF TOD REGIONAL COMMITTEE

The TOD Regional Committee would:

- Bring together regional and local stakeholders to advocate for and implement Transit-Oriented Development and TOD-supportive infrastructure and policies along the Metro Rail Corridor (both the existing line and proposed extension), particularly at or in the immediate vicinity of existing and proposed stations. This would include creating a vision and establishing a framework for both regional and municipal participation, coordination, and proactive implementation of strategies. A Regional TOD Committee would be made up of stakeholders from Industrial Development Agencies, municipalities and municipal departments, taxing jurisdictions, economic development agencies, Chambers of Commerce, and other TOD stakeholders to implement value capture mechanisms that would fund and/ or finance infrastructure needs at station areas to enhance the neighborhood and promote Transit-Oriented Development.
- Assist with new or revised policy and infrastructure strategies and possibly review development applications to support implementation of Transit-Oriented Development.

STRUCTURE OF TOD REGIONAL COMMITTEE

The ultimate structure and governance of a Regional TOD Committee will need to be determined, and early meetings would need to outline the following:

- Establish the purpose of the Regional TOD Committee:
 - Bring together stakeholders to advocate for and implement TOD and TOD-supportive infrastructure along Metro Rail Corridor.
 - Implement value capture mechanisms for TOD and TOD-supportive infrastructure.
 - Influence land use and other regulatory policy to support TOD.
 - Establish the long-term structure of the Regional TOD Committee.
- Identify initial members of Regional TOD Committee.
- Develop and promote governance framework to advocate for and implement TOD and TOD-supportive infrastructure.
- Explore and implement value capture mechanisms.
 - Commit to explore each value capture mechanism to identify best viable funding/ financing options to support TOD and TOD-supportive infrastructure.
 - Commit to coordinating value capture mechanisms with the appropriate departments and agencies.
- How to work with stakeholders to implement TOD.
- Establish governance framework until/ unless Regional TOD Committee is replaced with a new entity. Issues to address include but are not limited to:
 - How often does the Regional TOD Committee meet?
 - Who can call a Regional TOD Committee meeting?
 - What type of notice is required to members in advance of meetings?
 - Who runs Regional TOD Committee meetings?
 - How are issues decided among members?
 - How are members added/ removed?

POTENTIAL MEMBERS OF A REGIONAL TOD COMMITTEE

An initial list of potential Regional TOD Committee members includes:

- Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC)
- Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA)
- City of Buffalo
- Town of Amherst
- Town of Tonawanda
- Erie County
- New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)
- Empire State Development (ESD)
- Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA)
- Amherst Industrial Development Agency (AIDA)
- Amherst Chamber of Commerce
- Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC)
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership
- University at Buffalo
- Buffalo LISC along with various foundations (Ralph C. Wilson, Jr Foundation, Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, John R. Oishei Foundation, etc.) to discuss potential TOD funds

Other potential members that could be invited to participate on the Regional TOD Committee include:

- School districts to participate in value capture discussion (Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD, Amherst School District, Sweet Home Central School District, Williamsville Central School District). We could also invite Erie County Association of School Boards to help coordinate.
- Ken-Ton Chamber of Commerce
- Invest Buffalo Niagara
- Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
- Buffalo Place

Phases of a Regional TOD Committee

- Initially – Regularly scheduled meetings of the Regional TOD Committee to explore and discuss how the structure and governance of the Regional TOD Committee, what duties the Committee would entail, and obtain acceptance from agencies and jurisdictions on participation and responsibility.
- Mid-Term – Regional TOD Committee working under a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or other structure and implementing key action items and creating/ identifying locally recommended TOD incentives/funding resources.
- Long-Term – Possibilities of the Regional TOD Committee include:
 - Under MOA, work to support efforts of those with powers to implement and advocate for TOD and TOD-supportive infrastructure and implement value capture mechanisms.
 - Operate as a committee of a local development agency/ corporation that has the unique powers and authorities to incentivize/implement TOD

Additionally, the Regional TOD Committee can consider the following powers in the mid to long-term:

- Recommend funding utilizing TIF, PIF, and/or SADs.
- Discuss how best to structure and effectuate joint development projects.
- Influence land use and other regulatory policy supportive of TOD.

GENERAL RECOMMENDED POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Below are the new or amended policies that are recommended for implementation, with a description of the recommendation and why it's important to developing TOD, how the policy recommendation should be applied, what agency would have the lead on implementing this strategy, and overall priority in implementing the policy (i.e., very high, high, medium).

Entity	Policy Recommendation	Description	Application/ Action Plan	Lead Agency	Priority
Regional	Establish a TOD Regional Committee	A Regional TOD Committee would consist of stakeholders from GBNRTC, NFTA, other involved regional agencies, municipalities and municipal departments, taxing jurisdictions, and other TOD stakeholders to guide policy and infrastructure strategies, review development and policy applications for consistency with the TOD plan, develop mechanisms for financing TOD infrastructure, and facilitate TOD.	Draft an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding to establish a Regional TOD Committee and work with municipalities and jurisdictions to create a regional committee.	TBD	Very High
	Adopt a TOD/ Joint Development Policy	NFTA should adopt a formal TOD/ Joint Development policy or action plan to set the stage for how TOD/ Joint Development would occur at Metro Rail stations.	The TOD/ Joint Development policy should outline how NFTA would staff such efforts, market land, solicit for development, select a development partner, negotiate a Joint Development lease or disposition of land, etc. More on Joint Development is provided in the financing section of this Plan.	NFTA	Very High
	Issue RFP's for Joint Development	The NFTA Real Estate Market Analysis will identify those NFTA owned sites that are marketable for Joint Development projects, which will begin to facilitate TOD in key station areas.	Upon completion of the NFTA Real Estate Market Analysis, NFTA, in collaboration with other municipal agencies where appropriate, should initiate RFP's for Joint Development at key NFTA owned Metro Rail station sites. The RFP's should establish guidelines for development to follow TOD criteria.	NFTA with assistance from TOD Regional Committee and other municipal agencies when appropriate.	Very High
	Lobby for Transit TIF Districts	Either through the Article VII budget language or stand-alone legislation, establish a process for the recoupment of costs for major capital construction through the creation of transit TIF districts for transit and related infrastructure.	If adopted, NFTA should lobby state legislators to get such benefits expanded to the Buffalo-Niagara metropolitan area to allow for the creation of transit TIF districts.	NFTA or Buffalo Niagara Partnership	High
	PILOT Increment Financing (PIF) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	A PIF structure allows for the diversion of money which is otherwise payable to a taxing jurisdiction under a PILOT into a fund that is usable to offset a developer's project costs, to repay project financing, or to fund infrastructure, all as provided in the respective inducement resolution. In terms of the Metro Rail Corridor, project specific PIFs would generally be developed as projects within the Metro Rail Corridor are proposed which seek IDA financial incentives. Specific infrastructure necessary for the project and/or general infrastructure in the area of the project (or beyond) could be funded through PIF.	It would likely make sense, well in advance of specific project applications to the Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) or the Amherst Industrial Development Agency (Amherst IDA) to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to establish a framework for implementing project specific PIFs along the Metro Rail Corridor once applications are received. Since such project specific PIFs would also require approval of all affected taxing jurisdictions, it might make sense to include the County and affected school districts in any MOA discussions.	ECIDA	High
	TOD Assistance	Provide TOD assistance to developers, not-for-profits, municipalities, and communities, and offer training to local Planning and Zoning Boards on TOD.	Provide a staff person within NFTA, GBNRTC, or from the TOD Regional Committee that can provide routine and on-demand TOD assistance in the form promoting funding/ financing opportunities and conducting outreach, messaging, and education on how transit can add value to real estate or a neighborhood.	TBD	High

Entity	Policy Recommendation	Description	Application/ Action Plan	Lead Agency	Priority
	Expand Go Buffalo Niagara Transportation Options	Expand the Go Buffalo Niagara initiative, a transportation management program focused on working with employers to promote employee use of alternative transportation. This program can be expanded to offer additional transit benefits to employers and employees along the Metro Rail Corridor.	Identify employers, institutions, and residential communities along the Metro Rail Corridor that would be interested in participating in the Go Buffalo Niagara initiative to promote transit use. Examples could include Sisters Hospital, Canisius College, Medaille College, and Tri-Main Center.	GBNRTC	High
	Develop a specialized TOD Fund	Many cities have worked with not-for-profits, Community Development Financing Institutions (CDFI's), philanthropic organizations, and the business sector to establish and capitalize TOD Funds. TOD Funds help investment in infrastructure to facilitate TOD, help finance TOD projects, and offer incentives to employers, employees, and residents within a TOD. This could also take the form of a TOD Live/ Work Fund to encourage people who work along Metro Rail to live along Metro Rail, funded by employers as a means of equitable housing- which provides a market for developers.	Continue to work with National LISC, Buffalo LISC, and/or other institutions to establish and fund a TOD Fund.	TOD Regional Committee with assistance from GBNRTC	Medium
	Partner with Buffalo Erie Niagara Land Improvement Corporation (BENLIC)	Numerous regions and transit agencies have partnered with local Land Banks to assemble key parcels near transit stations for TOD. The land banked parcels would then become available for Transit-Oriented Development.	Initiate discussion with BENLIC to develop a strategy for assembling key parcels near Metro Rail stations that might facilitate TOD.	TOD Regional Committee with assistance from GBNRTC and community partners	Medium
	Allow on-street parking near proposed station areas	On-street parking helps to activate streetscapes and helps storefronts survive by having short-term parking near their front doors. A change to the traffic policies and patterns along major streets would be required to calm traffic, increase walkability, and provide on-street parking.	As walkability improvements are made and construction of the Metro Rail extension begins, policies should be amended to allow on-street parking on streets where TOD is proposed.	NYSDOT, Erie County, Town of Amherst, Town of Tonawanda, City of Buffalo	Medium
City of Buffalo	Expand Better Buffalo Fund	The Better Buffalo Fund is used to fund infrastructure improvements or help bridge financing gaps for redevelopment projects. The current geography of the Better Buffalo Fund is the Central Business District, including Larkinville and Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.	Seek New York State acceptance to amend the Better Buffalo Fund language to adjust the boundaries to cover all of Main Street in the City of Buffalo, allowing the Fund to be used as a TOD redevelopment tool along Main Street.	City of Buffalo and Empire State Development	Very High
	Evaluate potential to develop parking management district	Currently, Buffalo Civic Auto Ramps manages parking ramps in the City and the City of Buffalo Parking Department manages on-street parking. The income from either goes towards the General Fund and is not dedicated towards infrastructure improvements in any area. Creating a parking management district would allow income from parking around Metro Rail stations to go towards infrastructure investments dedicated to facilitating TOD. This allows money spent on parking in the station area to be dedicated back to improvements to the station area.	The first step would be to evaluate the feasibility of developing a parking management district. If feasible, the next step would be to implement a parking management district and begin identifying funds for infrastructure improvements.	City of Buffalo	Medium
	Amend Green Code to allow for higher densities at LaSalle station	Overall, the Green Code is very TOD supportive. Depending on the desired TOD at LaSalle station, the Green Code may need to be amended to allow for slightly higher densities in the interior section of the LaSalle site (currently maximum is 3-4 stories). It is possible to increase densities slightly in the interior portions of the site without negatively impacting Main Street or the surrounding neighborhoods.	This can either be a proactive revision to the Green Code, or reactive to a development plan for the site dependent upon the density distribution of the site.	City of Buffalo (or applicant seeking amendment)	Medium

Entity	Policy Recommendation	Description	Application/ Action Plan	Lead Agency	Priority
Town of Amherst	Implement proposed Imagine Amherst zoning revisions	The Town of Amherst has been developing new zoning for its commercial districts (covering Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road). The Imagine Amherst zoning revisions will reflect more of a form based code that encourages mixed-uses, active streetscapes, and increased density. These code changes would ultimately facilitate the development of Transit-Supportive and Transit-Oriented Development.	The Town of Amherst should finalize Imagine Amherst zoning revisions and have the Town Board adopt new zoning for the commercial districts, at least for those areas along Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road.	Town of Amherst	High
	Update Comprehensive Plan	The current Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan was amended in 2015, but does not reflect the Metro Rail extension to the Northtowns. The Comprehensive Plan should be updated to reflect the Metro Rail extension and prepare Amherst for transportation, land use, and other community implications. This will also help determine where Transit-Oriented Development should occur and where park-and-ride will be acceptable.	As the Metro Rail extension Environmental Impact Statement and preliminary design progresses, the Town of Amherst should update its Comprehensive Plan in the next couple years to reflect the project.	Town of Amherst	High
	Amend Parking Standards	Revise the Town of Amherst Zoning Code (or include as part of the new commercial zoning under Imagine Amherst) to amend the parking standards to reflect a more TOD supportive standard. This would include reducing or eliminating parking minimums, not allowing parking in front or side yards, requiring shared parking in certain areas where TOD is promoted, etc.	The Town of Amherst should revise their parking standards, possibly as part of the larger zoning revisions under Imagine Amherst, to reflect more TOD supportive parking standards.	Town of Amherst	High
	Implement Stormwater Management Best Practices along Niagara Falls Boulevard	Currently, there are sanitary and storm sewer capacity issues along and adjacent to the Niagara Falls Boulevard corridor causing drainage issues, especially near the intersection of Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road, and constraining redevelopment opportunities. Implementing stormwater management best practices that include green stormwater practices as part of roadway construction or redevelopment will help alleviate stormwater issues. Along with the implementation of green stormwater practices, there will be a need to increase sanitary sewer capacity through a series of capital projects and inflow & infiltration reduction measures.	Implement policy to require green stormwater management practices as roadway construction occurs or as redevelopment occurs along Niagara Falls Boulevard.	Town of Amherst and NYSDOT	Medium
Town of Tonawanda	Update Comprehensive Plan	The current Town of Tonawanda Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2014, but does not reflect the Metro Rail extension to the Northtowns. The Comprehensive Plan should be updated to reflect the Metro Rail extension and prepare Tonawanda for transportation, land use, and other community implications. This will also help determine where Transit-Oriented Development should occur and where park-and-ride will be acceptable.	As the Metro Rail extension Environmental Impact Statement and preliminary design progresses, the Town of Tonawanda should update its Comprehensive Plan in the next couple years to reflect the project.	Town of Tonawanda	High
	Revise Zoning along Niagara Falls Boulevard	Currently, the Town of Tonawanda's Zoning Code for commercial zoning along Niagara Falls Boulevard reflects more of a suburban strip commercial code. Revision of the code would require redevelopment to be in accordance with Transit-Supportive and Transit-Oriented Development principles.	The Comprehensive Plan amendment should support revision of the zoning code to revise or implement new TOD supportive zoning along Niagara Falls Boulevard.	Town of Tonawanda	High

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Policy Recommendation</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
	Amend Parking Standards	Revise the Town of Tonawanda Zoning Code (or include as part of the new commercial zoning) to amend the parking standards to reflect a more TOD supportive standard. This would include reducing or eliminating parking minimums, not allowing parking in front or side yards, requiring shared parking, etc.	The Town of Tonawanda Zoning Code should be revised, possibly as part of larger zoning revisions, to reflect more TOD supportive parking standards.	Town of Tonawanda	High
	Implement Stormwater Management Best Practices along Niagara Falls Boulevard	Currently, there are sanitary and storm sewer capacity issues along Niagara Falls Boulevard causing drainage issues, especially near the intersection of Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road, and constraining redevelopment opportunities. Implementing stormwater management best practices that include green stormwater practices as part of roadway construction or redevelopment will help alleviate stormwater issues.	Implement policy to require green stormwater management practices as roadway construction occurs or as redevelopment occurs along Niagara Falls Boulevard.	Town of Tonawanda and NYSDOT	Medium
Other	Allow on-street parking near proposed station areas	This would require a change to the traffic patterns along major streets that calm traffic, increase walkability, and provide on-street parking. On-street parking helps to activate streetscapes and helps storefronts survive by having short-term parking near their front doors.	As walkability improvements are made and construction of the Metro Rail extension begins, policies should be amended to allow on-street parking on streets where TOD is proposed.	NYSDOT, Erie County, Town of Amherst, Town of Tonawanda, City of Buffalo	Medium

10. FUNDING AND FINANCING MECHANISMS

10.1. INTRODUCTION

The following is a “toolkit” that can be used by implementing agencies and stakeholders for identifying potential mechanisms to fund and/or finance infrastructure improvements. Many of these funding and financing mechanisms can also be considered by NFTA to fund and finance the Metro Rail extension and operation. This section includes a detailed discussion of value capture methods for both site-by-site as well as corridor-wide infrastructure projects.

There are a range of funding and financing mechanisms used around the country to fund and finance transit and transit-supportive infrastructure to stimulate TOD development. Funding and financing mechanisms can be broken down into a number of categories:

- Direct fees
- Debt
- Tax abatements, credit and credit assistance
- Equity
- Grants and other philanthropic sources
- Value capture

Figure 44 provides a discussion on various funding and financing mechanisms that are either currently available in the Buffalo Niagara Region or that other areas in the country have utilized and could be considered here. The table is meant to be an exhaustive list of mechanisms. The recommended funding and financing mechanisms that should be pursued for Transit-Oriented Development and Transit-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor are discussed in further detail at the end of this chapter, but involve a mix of PILOT Increment Financing and joint development projects.

10.1.1. DIRECT FEES

User fees and rates are charged for the use of public infrastructure, such as transit, parking, utilities, and bridges. Local governments or agencies are able to issue bonds backed by user fee revenue to pay for new or improved infrastructure. Such fees and rates are typically set to cover a system's yearly operating and capital expenses, including annual debt service for improvements to the system.

Figure 44. Examples of Direct Fees

<i>Program</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Available in Buffalo Region?</i>
Fare Revenue	Fare revenue is a significant funding source for transit operations. Fare revenue is generally used by transit providers to offset annual operating costs, but is sometimes bonded against to raise proceeds for capital projects.	Yes
Peace Bridge Toll Revenues	The Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority and NFTA are linked by statute. Each year, the Bridge Authority contributes \$200,000 to NFTA for operations and capital improvements. This annual contribution was agreed upon in 1957 and has not been adjusted for inflation since that time. If an adjustment to this contribution were agreed upon to reflect current year dollars, NFTA could see an additional \$450,000 in annual revenue from the Bridge Authority. These additional revenues could leverage financing to cover a portion of the capital costs involved in improving station areas and readying sites for TOD.	Yes
Go BNMC and Go Buffalo Niagara	The existing Go BNMC and Go Buffalo Niagara transportation demand management programs open an opportunity for NFTA to gain additional ridership and fare collection by coordinating with employers to bring Metro Rail and Metro Bus “Bundles” for employees. These “bundles” also offer a pre-tax payroll deduction, saving up to 30% on the cost of a monthly pass. As these programs continue to expand throughout Downtown Buffalo, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, and along Main Street, it will open up opportunities for additional Metro Rail ridership.	Yes
Erie County Sales and Property Taxes	A portion of the sales tax that Erie County collects (1/8 of a percent) is dedicated to NFTA. In 2017, NFTA received about \$20 million in sales tax revenue. With a county-wide sales tax of 8.75% (4% state and 4.75% Erie County), it would likely be unfavorable to levy any additional sales tax dedicated to funding transit. New York State does allow local jurisdictions to impose locally administered taxes, such as taxes on hotel occupancy, energy, and telecommunications. Additionally, a portion of the property taxes collected by Erie County that New York State received is dedicated to NFTA. In 2017, this amount was \$3.65 million.	Yes
Mortgage Recording Tax	A Mortgage Recording Tax (MRT) is a one-time levy on recorded mortgages. Annual revenue growth increases with the value of mortgages. The MRT assessed in Erie County is 1% of the value of the mortgage recorded. This tax is divided into three components: the municipality's portion (.50%) and the NFTA's portion of the tax are broken down into two .25% components. In 2018, NFTA projects to receive approximately \$10.5 million in revenue from the MRT.	Yes
Motor Vehicle Registration and Driver's License Fee	New York State requires motor vehicles and motorcycles to be registered and titled with the Department of Motor Vehicles. This registration fee is renewed every two years. Additional fees could be levied on motor vehicle registration or driver's licenses to fund transit projects; however, this would become a statewide fund for transit unless Erie County administered a separate fee on motor vehicle registrations specifically for NFTA operational and capital projects.	Available but not currently used

<i>Program</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Available in Buffalo Region?</i>
Parking Surcharge	A surcharge placed on existing parking fees collected within a certain geography (i.e. downtown or BNMC) can provide an additional revenue source dedicated to enhancing transit. New York City implements an additional sales tax on parking fees. A Payment-In-Lieu-Of-Parking or a Parking Management District can be established as a means for developers to make a one-time payment or pay an annual tax to a municipality or a parking district in exchange for meeting minimum parking requirements on site. The revenue flows into an enterprise fund in each parking district and funds public parking construction and operations. Funds can also be used to fund transportation management programs, public transit, and related public infrastructure such as lighting, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements. Creating a corridor-level parking management model would set parking prices and manage parking demand across a transit corridor, including both transit station parking and surrounding on-and off-street parking. Revenue from parking fees throughout the corridor are pooled to finance structured parking or other improvements along the transit system, generating more revenue than a station by station approach.	Available but not currently used
Tourism Taxes	A rental car tax is levied on the amount charged for auto rental, either on a per day basis or percentage of total rental charge. Similarly, hotel taxes are levied on the amount charged for hotel room charges on a per day basis or percentage of total rental charge. Entertainment and meal taxes are levied as a percentage of the total amount charged for entertainment and prepared meal purchases, respectively. Entertainment taxes may also be assessed as a flat dollar fee for entrance to major venues. Most, but not all, of these taxes are intended to impact tourists and non-residents. The taxes leverage existing collection mechanisms and revenue growth fluctuates with economic cycles. Hotel taxes in New York State already exist, however municipalities have the ability to create local occupancy taxes often referred to as “a bed tax” which are administered locally and are not subject to state and local sales tax. Both Erie and Niagara County already collect these taxes as general fund revenues. A portion of these funds could be dedicated towards NFTA for continued operation and capital improvements, especially to enhance Metro Rail service, but local approval is required.	Available but not currently used
Rideshare Surcharge	The Rideshare Surcharge represents an attempt to level the playing field between ride-hailing services and transit by implementing a surcharge on each rideshare transaction occurring within a certain geography that would go towards providing revenue to the transit agency. In November 2017, the City of Chicago implemented an additional 15-cent per trip surcharge to the existing city-wide ride-hailing surcharge of 52 cents per trip, to inject an additional \$18 million in revenue for the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) to fund various bus and train capital projects. Chicago is the first city to implement a rideshare surcharge dedicated specifically for transit, and should be monitored as a possible revenue source for NFTA.	No- but NFTA charges a \$3.50 surcharge for rideshare trips accessing Buffalo-Niagara International Airport property.

10.1.2. DEBT

Debt tools are mechanisms for borrowing money to finance infrastructure. Local governments and agencies can access credit through private lending institutions, the bond market, or other specialized mechanisms that the Federal government and states have established for financing particular types of infrastructure, such as revolving loan funds.

BETTER BUFFALO FUND – TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

Available in the Buffalo Region? Yes- Along Main Street in City of Buffalo

Description: Administered by Empire State Development under the Buffalo Billion, the Fund is a grant and revolving loan fund for up to \$2 million in gap financing (generally not to exceed 20% of total project cost) for adaptive or infill capital projects (with at least 10% equity) that:

- Promote dense development (housing, employment, retail) in proximity to transit stops
- Encourage the use of multi-modal transportation
- Stimulate pedestrian activity through retail and neighborhood-oriented businesses and services, quality public spaces, and accessible walkways.

The TOD Fund is open to adaptive reuse or infill projects located in Downtown Buffalo and areas along Main Street (as well as other bus transit corridors). The TOD Fund may be used for:

- Acquisition of land, buildings, machinery, and/or equipment
- Environmental remediation
- New construction, renovation, or leasehold improvements
- Acquisition of furniture and fixtures
- Soft costs of up to 15% of total project costs
- Planning and feasibility studies related to a specific capital project

There is a preference for projects that include market rate or mixed-income rehabilitated, converted, or infill housing (excluding single-family). The Funds are administered in two forms: loans and grants, as outlined

below. Empire State Development prefers to award the most assistance in the form of loans.

- Interest Rate: 3%
- Term: 10-20 years for loans; 5 years for grants
- Debt Coverage Ratio: 1.10
- Third Party Guarantees: For loans- personal guaranty from any 20% or more owner; corporate guaranty from any 50% or more owner. For grants- from any 50% or more owner (corporate or personal)
- Compliance: Loans- loan becomes due if borrower sells the property or materially changes the use of the property from that described in the application. Grants- in the event of a default, all or a portion of the grant may be subject to recapture.
- Minimum Assistance Amount: Loans- \$250,000; Grants- \$100,000
- Maximum Assistance Amount: Loans- \$2 million; Grants- \$2 million

TOD Fund projects are evaluated based on:

- Demonstrates sufficient planning to implement within the stated timeline
- Is ready to move forward upon award announcement
- All approvals and permitting are in place
- Budget is complete, and all sources and uses of funds are clearly defined and documented
- Budget documents a need for this funding that cannot be obtained through equity or conventional financing
- Extent and percentage of funding required by Fund as well as additional financial support is sufficient to show viability of project
- Evidence or commitments for the balance of project financing
- Adherence to TOD principles
- There is use of innovative, sustainable, green technologies or materials
- Builds on strengths and encourages development close to anchor institutions, employment centers, transportation nodes, key regional assets, and areas of market strength
- Complies with City's Comprehensive Plan and Green Code, and the goals of Buffalo Billion Investment Development Plan
- Shows demonstrated local support

- Demonstrates how and to what extent the project will achieve net benefits
- Is highly visible where the community can see on-the-ground improvements
- Evidence of project partners successfully completing other projects

The last round of TOD Fund awarded projects totaled \$7.95 million for 8 projects. The TOD Fund is currently being used for 1665 Main Street (ground floor retail and 5 floors of 60 apartments) and 1373 Main Street (converting 2nd floor into 6 apartments).

BUFFALO BUILDING REUSE PROJECT (BBRP) & BUFFALO BUILDING REUSE LOAN FUND (BBRLF)

Available in Buffalo Region? Yes,

The BBRP is a public/ private effort amongst the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Urban Development Corporation (BUDC), Buffalo Niagara Partnership, and private real estate and development industry that seeks to make Downtown Buffalo more competitive for private investment.

The BBRP uses a framework for where to direct reinvestment funds. It contains for project recommendations that are then broken down into multiple actionable items.

- Make downtown more attractive to existing and future potential tenants with appropriate space and amenities
- Establish a “smart” development process and management structure
- Develop effective tools that encourage investment and redevelopment (improve existing tools: develop new)
- Communicate the benefits of downtown for live, work, play activities to attract more private investment downtown.

A key strategy of the BBRP is the creation of the Buffalo Building Reuse Loan Fund (BBRLF). The Loan Fund provides low interest gap financing for adaptive reuse and new construction projects in Downtown Buffalo, including the Central Business District, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (south of Summer/ Best), Canalside, and Larkinvile. Eligible projects may receive a maximum of \$750,000 in financing for up to 54 months. Applications are accepted on a quarterly basis. The loan program is a key strategy of the Buffalo Billion Initiative.

The BBRLF was initiated in 2012 with \$3 million from Empire State Development Corporation’s City-by-City Program. In 2015, the Loan Fund was boosted by a \$9 million infusion from 5 banks- Evans Bank, First Niagara Bank, HSBC, KeyBank, and M&T- as well as the New York Business Development Corporation.

The Loan Fund is offered as one of two loan types:

- Short-term bridge (construction) financing - \$750,000 maximum loan, 54-month maximum term, for financing grants, tax credit equity, or other take-out financing through construction.
- Interim Financing (“mini-perm”) - \$750,000 maximum loan, 54-month maximum term, for financing projects through a lease-up and stabilization period.

Loans are priced at Prime + 2%, and can be subordinated to a primary lender and can also be structured as interest-only loans. Loan finding is maximized relative to the total project cost. The applicant must be willing to commit a minimum of 10% cash equity into the project.

The focus of issuing BBRLF loans is on:

- Adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized Class B & C commercial structures or new construction on vacant lots in strategic locations.
- Mixed-use projects with a significant proportion of residential units, and that include a storefront or first-floor retail use.
- Target investment areas within downtown that will leverage existing residential developments or other anchor economic drivers to begin to create the critical mass necessary to support new retail and other neighborhood services and amenities.
- Projects that are proximate or linked to public transit facilities and/or that provide opportunities for other sustainable transportation modes.

TOD FUNDS

Available in Buffalo region? Not currently

TOD Funds are loan funds that pool money from different investors with varying risk and return profiles. TOD funds have a dedicated purpose, which is clearly defined before the fund is formed, and are managed by professionals with fund formation and loan underwriting experience. TOD Funds help investment in infrastructure to facilitate TOD, help finance TOD projects, and offer incentives to employers, employees, and residents within a TOD. Communities have been increasingly interested in using TOD funds as a property acquisition tool to support affordable housing development, particularly near transit. Nationally, LISC has been a key partner in organizing TOD funds and contributed to the discussion regarding TOD funds in Buffalo. TOD funds could also take the form of a TOD Live/ Work Fund to encourage people who work along Metro Rail to live along Metro Rail, funded by employers as a means of equitable housing- which provides a market for developers. Some examples of TOD funds are discussed below:

Detroit, MI

The Woodward Corridor Investment Fund in Detroit, led by Capital Impact Partners with partners The Kresge Foundation, MetLife, PNC Bank, Prudential, M&M Fisher, Calvert Foundations, and Living Cities, is a \$30 million fund that offers long-term, fixed rate loans for the building and renovation of multi-family and mixed-use properties in the neighborhoods along the Woodward Corridor.

Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN

In 2007, the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative (CCFC), a partnership of 12 local and national philanthropic organizations in the Minneapolis-St. Paul region, was formed to catalyze change along the new Green Line by promoting affordable housing, strong local economy, vibrant TOD, and effective communication and collaboration. CCFC created a Catalyst Fund through which since 2008 has made more than 160 grants, totaling nearly \$12 million and leveraging more than \$54 million of additional investment. In addition to the Catalyst Fund, other funds supporting TOD along the Central Corridor include:

- Land Acquisition for Affordable New Development Fund: Minnesota

Housing, the Metropolitan Council, and the Family Housing Fund (a community development corporation) collaborated to create an \$11-million pilot fund to support land acquisition by cities, community development corporations, or housing authorities with preference given to projects near transit. The fund is intended to support mid-term project-level investments. The acquired parcels cannot have ready-to-go projects, and funds must be spent within one year and repaid within five years. Any appreciation in the value of land acquired through the program can be rolled into the project to support affordable housing, and any losses in land value will be covered by the fund. A pilot loan program started in 2009, when the City of St. Paul borrowed \$2 million to make a strategic property purchase along the light-rail alignment.

- LISC Acquisition and Predevelopment Funds: The Twin Cities LISC supports nonprofit developers in the Big Picture Project. The Big Picture Project aims to accelerate development at Green Line stations along the Eastern stretch of University Avenue, where the market for TOD is weaker than other areas by offering short-term acquisition loans and predevelopment recoverable grants that provide money for expenses incurred before permanent construction financing is secured. Twin Cities LISC is focusing \$13 million in grants and favorable financing to support projects that serve transit riders and walkers, provide workforce housing, create public space and pocket parks, and preserve the identity of neighborhoods. The grants are repaid at 0% interest from construction or permanent financing proceeds. The amount of funding and terms vary annually. Following the opening of the Green Line, rents along the corridor have risen 46%. The Big Picture Program looks to support equitable TOD and help retain the affordable housing base that exists in several neighborhoods.

Phoenix, AZ

LISC Phoenix established a \$20 million regional TOD fund called the Sustainable Communities Fund (SCF) to “incentivize, leverage, and guide development of equitable TOD in areas well served by high capacity transit.” A TOD Guidebook was prepared to help evaluate development along the Phoenix Metro LRT and to identify which projects would be eligible for the Sustainable Communities Fund.

Denver, CO

In 2010, Denver-area partners launched the Denver Regional TOD Fund, aimed at creating and preserving affordable housing along current and future transit corridors across seven counties. The Fund is structured as a unique blend of risk and return requirements and is capitalized with \$24 million of acquisition loan capital available to qualified borrowers. The fund's main purpose is to aid developers, not-for-profits, and housing authorities to acquire and hold strategic transit-accessible properties for preservation or future affordable housing development purposes or mixed-use projects that provide community and/or not-for-profit space. As of 2016, the Fund had provided nearly \$20 million for the creation and preservation of more than 1,100 affordable homes and 100,000 square feet of community space.

The TOD Fund is set up as follows:

- **Borrower Equity** – Borrowers contribute at least 10% cash equity for each property and are responsible for preparing a development and financing plan.
- **Credit Enhancement/ Top Loss** – Public and quasi-public dollars leverage private capital by providing credit enhancement via loan-loss absorption and low returns.
- **Grant/ PRI Capital** – Grants and foundation/ philanthropic capital are typically lent via program related investments seeking modest financial return.
- **Senior Debt (Bank/ CDFI)** – More traditional loan capital from banks and CDFI's.

The terms of the TOD loan are up to 5 years and can finance up to \$5 million. Interest rates are currently in the 3.65%-4.1% range. NFTA should continue to coordinate with the local Buffalo LISC office and national LISC representatives, as well as local philanthropic institutions, community development funding institutions (CDFI's), and community development not-for-profits agencies to develop a dedicated TOD Fund for the Amherst-Buffalo Corridor.

Low-interest loan financing used to acquire land for affordable housing projects that are in proximity to transit. Minnesota's Land Acquisition for Affordable New Development (LAAND) initiative was developed by Minnesota Housing, The Metropolitan Council, and the Family Housing Fund to provide a statewide, flexible source of funding to encourage communities to meet their affordable housing needs. The Program requires that land costs in the area of the proposed project are an impediment to affordable housing development. Projects constructed on land acquired through the loan program shall have a minimum of 20% of housing units developed for affordable units (source: www.mnhousing.gov).

LAND ACQUISITION FOR AFFORDABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Available in Buffalo Region? Not currently.

10.1.3. TAX ABATEMENT/ CREDITS & CREDIT ASSISTANCE

Tax Abatements/ Credits refer to an ability for a developer to obtain tax abatements over a certain period and/or the ability to earn tax credits for developing equitable, mixed-use TOD.

Credit assistance improves a borrower's creditworthiness by providing a mechanism that reduces the chances of a default. Borrowers can thus access better borrowing terms, which can expedite the implementation of infrastructure projects. Credit assistance tools require some source of revenue to pay back debt; their use is not otherwise linked to the strength of the local real estate market.

NYS SECTION 485-A

NYS Section 485-a of the Real Property Tax Law authorizes a declining 12-year partial exemption from real property taxes and special ad valorem levies for non-residential property converted to a mix of residential and commercial uses. The 485-a Law establishes a calculation method for which exemptions shall follow and may not be granted concurrent with or subsequent to any other exemption for the same improvements.

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

NYS SECTION 485-B

NYS Section 485-b of the Real Property Tax Law allows for a municipality and/or school district to adopt a partial exemption from real property taxes for commercial, business, or industrial property. Municipalities may limit the exemption to specific geographic areas and to sectors of businesses. Generally the amount of the exemption in the first year is 50% of the increase in the assessed value attributable to the improvements, with the amount then decreasing by established amounts in each of the next 9 years.

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

ECIDA ADAPTIVE REUSE PROGRAM

The Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) Adaptive Reuse Program is an effort to advance a regional strategy for development consistent with the Framework for Regional Growth by encouraging the

redevelopment of old structures or sites for new purposes consistent with this plan. Adaptive reuse projects present unique challenges to development by private market activity, such as:

- Higher costs associated with development of sites and structures
 - Environmental Remediation Issues
 - Building Code Issues
 - Physical Development Issues
- Local real estate values that do not support increased upfront development costs
- The Adaptive Reuse Policy focuses on:
 - Redevelopment of blighted sites and or structures
 - Promoting infill development that utilizes existing public infrastructure
 - Supporting the Framework for Regional Growth Plan
 - Creating new economic activity at difficult sites and buildings
 - Promoting a green redevelopment strategy
 - Helping maintain neighborhood fabric and historic character

To date, more than 4 million square feet of vacant properties have been redeveloped and revitalized as a result of the ECIDA Adaptive Reuse Program. A recent study indicates that for every \$1 of taxes abated, the program has produced \$36.10 in benefit to the community by leveraging private investment, job growth, building a larger permanent tax base, and contributing to the vitality of the region. In total, the Adaptive Reuse Program has issued \$27 million in abatements over 8 years, leveraging \$638 million in overall investment. When abatements expire, Adaptive Reuse Program projects have added \$4.7 million in new local tax revenue annually.

The ECIDA, as a result of an independent study, will explore potential revisions to the Adaptive Reuse Program. The study offers ongoing concerns about the long-term feasibility of project beyond the tax abatements due to the region's relatively low leasing rates and high construction costs. The study indicates that, depending on site conditions, projects could cost \$50,000 or more per unit in public financial support to fill the gap between what it will cost to develop housing and the sale price or rent level that housing will command in today's marketplace. If/ when revisions are made, provisions should be added to promote TOD

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

AMHERST IDA TAX EXEMPTIONS

The Amherst Industrial Development Agency (AIDA) offers three tax incentives to eligible projects:

- Sales tax exemption – approved projects assisted through the AIDA are exempt from payment of sales tax on construction materials, equipment, and fixtures.
- Mortgage Recording Tax Exemption – Approved projects are exempt from the 1% New York State Mortgage Recording Tax for commercial property.
- Property Tax Abatement – Eligible projects adding new taxable assessed value can apply for a tax abatement under the Countywide IDA PILOT policy which classifies projects by use and occupancy. Each project receiving an abatement from real property taxes is subject to a PILOT agreement. The PILOT policy for each classification requires payments to be made in accordance with a graduated scale over a 7 or 10-year period after which the property pays full as if owned taxes.

The AIDA puts eligible companies in contact with other state and local resources that provide workforce training funding.

Similar to ECIDA, the AIDA is active in promoting adaptive reuse and neighborhood redevelopment projects for those projects that must overcome building and site development challenges associated with remediation costs, physical development issues, and promotion of smart growth goals and objectives consistent with the One Region Forward Plan and Framework for Regional Growth. Since 2000, the AIDA has approved 56 redevelopment projects totaling over \$230 million in new investment. These renovated, repurposed, and expanded facilities will pay over \$19 million in new property taxes over the course of their PILOT periods

(Available in the Buffalo region--Amherst only.)

FEDERAL INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT PROGRAM FOR INCOME PRODUCING PROPERTIES

Owners of income producing real properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are eligible for a 20% Federal income tax credit for the substantial rehabilitation of historic properties. The final dollar amount is based on the cost of the rehabilitation; in effect, 20% of the rehab costs will be borne by the Federal government. The work performed (both

interior and exterior) must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and be approved by the National Park Service. Property owners can apply for a reduced 10% credit, which requires no design review at the state or Federal level, but there is a "wall test" requiring that three of the original four external walls remain intact. Non-for-profit and public agencies can tap into the value of the historic tax credit by transferring (or 'syndicating') the tax credit to a corporate investor, or in certain instances, individuals, who then use the tax credit to offset some of their own tax liability.

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

NYS REHABILITATION TAX CREDIT FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES

This tax credit must be used with the Federal Investment Tax Credit Program for Income Producing Properties. Owners of income producing properties that have been approved to receive the 20% Federal rehabilitation tax credit automatically qualify for the additional state tax credit if the property is located in an eligible census tract and state fees have been paid. Owners can receive an additional 20% of the qualified rehabilitation expenditures up to \$5,000,000. The state program has been extended to December 31, 2019.

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

NEW MARKET TAX CREDITS (NMTC)

The NMTC program looks to attract capital to low income communities by providing private investors with a Federal tax credit for investments made in businesses or economic development projects located in some of the most distressed communities in the nation. A NMTC investor receives a tax credit equal to 39% of the total Qualified Equity Investment (QEI) made in a Community Development Entity (CDE) and the Credit is realized over a seven-year period, 5% annually for the first three years and 6% in years four through seven. If an investor redeems a NMTC investment before the seven-year term has run its course, all Credits taken to date are recaptured with interest. The NMTC expires on December 31, 2019.

(Available in several Census Tracts in the City of Buffalo.)

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS (LIHTC)

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program is currently the country's most extensive affordable housing program. Investors buy income tax credits in qualified properties that have received state allocation, creating cash equity for owners that reduces project development debt burden. In exchange, the owner agrees to rent a specific number of units to qualified tenants at specified rents, usually below-market. Two levels of tax credits are available: one at 9% of depreciable basis, competitively allocated; the other, at 4% of depreciable basis, comes with state bond financing, which is capped and allocated by a state agency, which may or may not be very competitive.

(Available in several Census Tracts in the City of Buffalo and the Town of Amherst)

TOD PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT PROGRAM

Reduces the operating costs of TOD projects by offering tax exemption over the course of several years. Similar to NYS 485-a and 485-b laws, this is specific to TOD projects. In Portland, OR, the TOD Property Tax Abatement Program, managed by the Portland Development Commission, offers a 10-year maximum property tax exemption for projects on vacant or underutilized sites along transit corridors that utilize TOD concepts (source: Portland Development Commission).

(Not currently available in the Buffalo region.)

QUALIFIED OPPORTUNITY FUND

The new Federal Tax Cuts and Job Acts of 2017 includes a provision that allows investors to defer capital gains invested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund and to permanently exclude capital gains from the sale or exchange of an investment in the Fund. The law requires that a Qualified Opportunity Fund invest the funds it receives in an area or areas designated as Qualified Opportunity Zones. This new program is intended to spur investment in low income areas and in areas adjacent to low income areas.

An Opportunity Zone is defined as a low-income Census Tract with an individual poverty rate of at least 20% and median family income no greater than 80% of the area median. A population census tract that does not meet the low-income test may be designated as a Qualified Opportunity Zone if (1) the tract is contiguous with the low-income community that

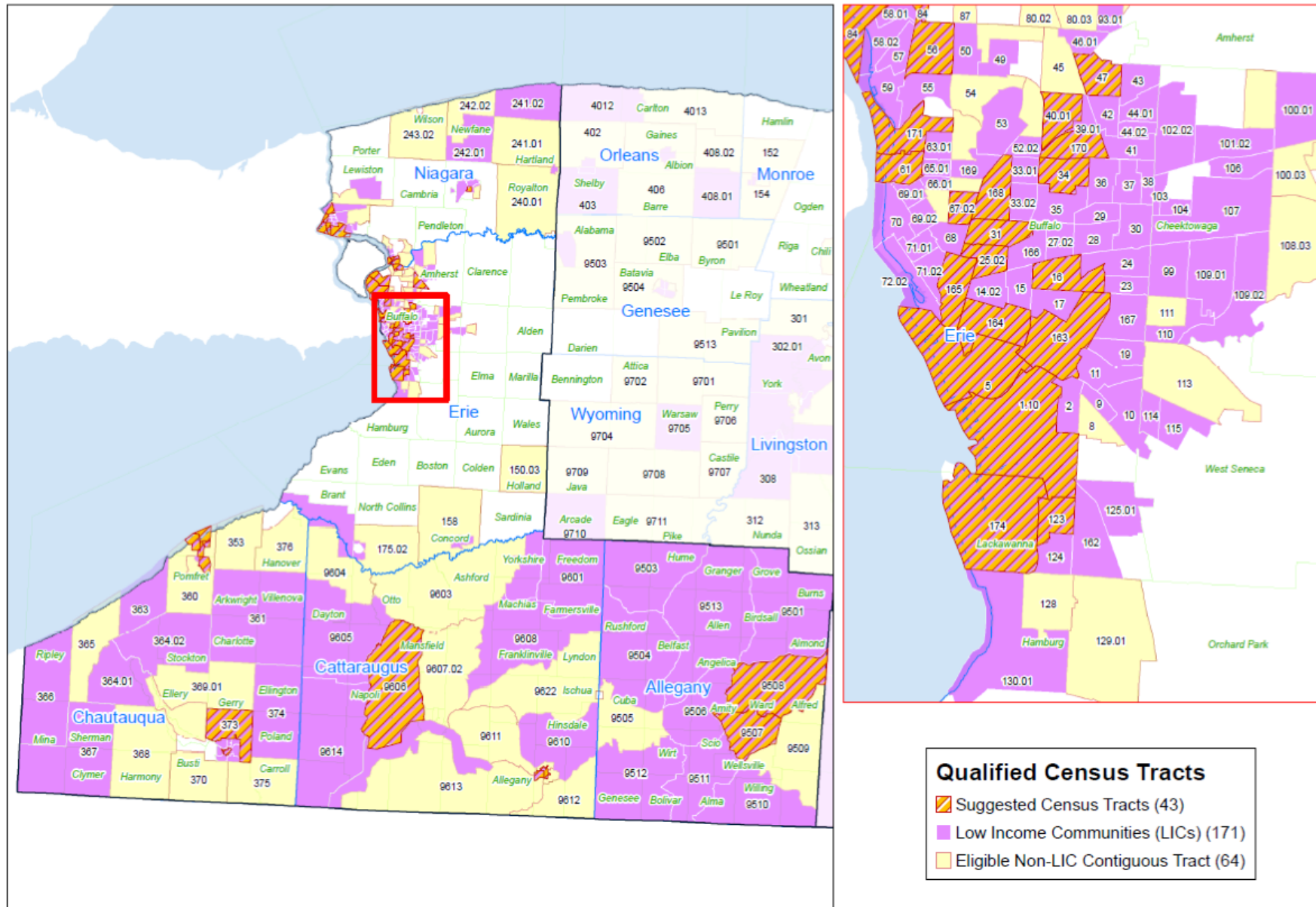
is designated as a qualified opportunity zone, and (2) the median family income of the tract does not exceed 125 percent of the median family income of the low-income community with which the tract is contiguous, except that not more than 5 percent of the population census tracts designated in a State may be a contiguous area that does not otherwise qualify as a low-income community.

Governors must provide a list of census tracts to be designated as "Qualified Opportunity Zones" to the Secretary of Treasury within 90 days of December 22 (the date President Trump signed the tax legislation into law). Governors can request a 30-day extension. The Secretary of Treasury is required to act on the nominations of a governor within 30 days of receiving the nomination. Based on analyses by Empire State Development (ESD), New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), New York State Department of State (DOS), and the State's Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs), New York State has recommended 514 census tracts to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for designation as Opportunity Zones. There are several recommended Census Tracts along the Metro Rail Corridor in the City of Buffalo and Town of Amherst (see Map X).

The law states that in making nominations, governors shall provide particular consideration to areas that: (1) are currently the focus of mutually reinforcing state, local, or private economic development initiatives to attract investment and foster startup activity; (2) have demonstrated success in geographically targeted development programs such as promise zones, the new markets tax credit, empowerment zones, and renewal communities; and (3) have recently experienced significant layoffs due to business closures or relocations.

The law defines Qualified Opportunity Fund as an investment vehicle organized as a corporation or a partnership for the purpose of investing in Qualified Opportunity Zone Property (other than another Qualified Opportunity Fund) that holds at least 90 percent of its assets in Qualified Opportunity Zone Property. The provision allows for the temporary deferral of inclusion in gross income for capital gains reinvested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund and for the exclusion from gross income of the post-acquisition capital gains on investments in opportunity zone funds that are held for at least 10 years. Taxpayers can continue to recognize losses associated with investments in Qualified Opportunity Zone Funds as under current law. The maximum amount of the deferred gain is equal to the amount invested in a qualified opportunity fund by the taxpayer during the 180-day period beginning on the date of sale of the asset to

Recommended Census Tracts for Designation as Opportunity Zones



Western New York - Federal Opportunity Zones



which the deferral pertains. If the investment in the Qualified Opportunity Fund is held by the taxpayer for at least five years, the basis on the original gain is increased by 10 percent of the original gain. If the opportunity zone asset or investment is held by the taxpayer for at least seven years, the basis on the original gain is increased by an additional 5 percent of the original gain. If the investment is held by the taxpayer until at least December 31, 2026, the basis in the investment increases by the remaining 85 percent of the deferred gain.

Qualified Opportunity Zone Property is defined as “any qualified opportunity zone stock, any qualified opportunity zone partnership interest, and any qualified opportunity zone business property.” The term Qualified Opportunity Zone Business Property means “tangible property used in a trade or business of the qualified opportunity fund if (1) such property was acquired by the qualified opportunity fund by purchase (as defined in section 179(d)(2)) after December 31, 2017, (2) the original use of such property in the qualified opportunity zone commences with the qualified opportunity fund or the qualified opportunity fund substantially improves the property, and (3) during substantially all of the qualified opportunity fund’s holding period for such property, substantially all of the use of such property was in a qualified opportunity zone.” The law further states that “property shall be treated as substantially improved by the qualified opportunity fund only if, during any 30-month period beginning after the date of acquisition of such property, additions to basis with respect to such property in the hands of the qualified opportunity fund exceed an amount equal to the adjusted basis of such property at the beginning of such 30-month period in the hands of the qualified opportunity fund.”

The final guidelines for the Opportunity Funds have not yet been released by the U.S. Treasury

(Available in Buffalo region. Recommended Census Tracts have been provided to U.S.)

10.1.4. EQUITY

Equity tools allow private entities to invest (i.e., take an ownership stake) in infrastructure in expectation of a return. Unless the public sector is willing to directly pay the private partner for constructing, financing, operating, and/or maintaining a facility, equity sources are typically available only for infrastructure that generates a significant return on investment, such as parking facilities, utilities, toll roads, or airports. The availability of equity is not typically tied to the strength of the local real estate market, except where the potential source of revenue is tied to real estate values.

AIR RIGHTS

Air rights refer to the right to develop, occupy, and control the vertical space above a property. Air rights can either be bought, leased, or transferred to a developer, such as what is currently underway at the Allen Street Station. This is most often seen in transit projects where the space above a transit station or a yard is developed by a private developer to build Transit-Oriented Developments. NFTA could potentially raise significant capital and O&M funds for agency needs by selling or leasing air rights above existing Metro Rail stations or above the DL&W Terminal/Yard.

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

SPONSORSHIPS, NAMING RIGHTS & ANCHOR INSTITUTION PARTNERSHIPS

It is becoming increasingly popular for local government and transit agencies to urge anchor institutions, non-profit or private entities such as universities, hospitals, and corporations that are inextricably tied to their locations because of real estate holdings, to orient their development decisions and day-to-day operations around improving the economic health of surrounding neighborhoods and encouraging transit use and TOD. These anchor institutions bring new funding sources to the table and can facilitate infrastructure development by providing upfront funding for and/or by championing transit, public infrastructure, and TOD investment. Several examples are outlined below:

The Cleveland Clinic and University Hospital teamed up to purchase the naming rights for the nearby Greater Cleveland RTA’s BRT line on Euclid Avenue, formerly called the “Silver Line.” The two hospitals committed \$250,000 annually for 25 years to rename the route the “Health Line.”

As part of the Woodward Corridor project in Detroit, institutions along Woodward Avenue like Wayne State University, the Detroit Medical Center, and Henry Ford Health Systems, are contributing \$3 million each and will receive a basic station design that they can customize and enhance to promote their brand. Quicken Loans has pledged \$10 million for the rights to name the 3.3-mile streetcar line for 10 years- the “Q-Line”.

In Seattle, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, University of Washington/ UW Medicine, Evergreen Bank, Vulcan Real Estate, Pacific Place, Seattle Children’s Hospital Research Institute, Pan Pacific Hotel Seattle, and Group Health collectively provide up to 25% of the funds required to operate the South Lake Union streetcar line.

NFTA is currently looking at opportunities for naming rights at existing Metro Rail stations as a source of revenue, and should continue to explore such opportunities with proposed Metro Rail stations as well. It is important to note that there is a tremendous cost to changing station names and lines (both at the renamed facilities and on system maps), so naming rights should be long-term.

(Available in the Buffalo region.)

10.1.5. GRANTS AND OTHER PHILANTHROPIC SOURCES

Grants are funds that do not need to be paid back and are typically provided by a higher level of government to a lower level of government (e.g., from the federal government to states or localities, or from states to local governments) or by a philanthropic entity. The most common federal grants that are commonly applied to TOD projects are listed below:

- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Urbanized Area Formula Funding Program (GBNRTC)
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants

There are several philanthropic organizations and foundations that have foundation money available for community development programs, such as the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr Foundation, Margaret L. Wendt Foundation, and John R. Oishei Foundation. NFTA should discuss potential TOD funding and grant matching opportunities with these foundations.

10.1.6. VALUE CAPTURE

Value capture tools capture a portion of the increased value of property or the savings resulting from publicly funded infrastructure. Value capture mechanisms are typically established by a local government or regional governing body in accordance with state law. They sometimes require a vote by the affected property owners. Depending on the tool, value capture can entail the creation of a new assessment, tax, or fee (e.g., a special tax or development impact fee); the diversion of new revenue generated by an existing tax (e.g., tax-increment financing); or a revenue-sharing agreement that allows a government agency to share some of the revenue generated by developing publicly owned land (e.g., joint development). Value capture tools are generally most applicable to strong real estate markets because they depend to some extent on new development or property value appreciation to generate revenue.

Depending on the predictability of the revenue stream, value capture mechanisms can either be used for pay-as-you-go improvements or, when the revenue stream is expected to be consistent over time, as with a special assessment or tax-increment financing, can finance the issuance of revenue bonds. Although state law usually defines how and where these mechanisms can be used, they are typically not confined to revenue-generating infrastructure and can be used to fund all types of TOD infrastructure, including utilities, roads, pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and parking facilities.

This report is focused on identifying practical Value Capture mechanisms that NFTA and/or municipal agencies can implement to promote Transit-Oriented Development. This section offers a discussion assessing certain existing New York State statutes as they relate to possible funding and financing options for TOD and infrastructure to support TOD in relation to the existing Metro Rail service and the extension of Metro Rail service to the Northtowns. Specifically, this section addresses the legal and other considerations associated with the following value capture mechanisms to provide funding for TOD and TOD-supportive infrastructure costs associated with improvements around existing and proposed Metro Rail stations:

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF);
- PILOT Increment Financing (PIF);
- Special Assessment Tax Districts (SAD); and,
- Joint development projects¹

¹ Such funding mechanisms may also be available to provide funding streams for

TAX-INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) works differently in each state, but typically captures the increase in property tax revenue (and, in some states, sales and income tax revenue) that occurs in a designated area after a set year. The tax increment is collected for a set period (usually between 15 and 35 years) and the tax increment can be used to secure a bond, allowing the issuer to collect the money up front, or it can be done as a pay-as-you-go basis over time. TIF allows the public sector to “capture” the value of growth that results from new development and increasing property values.

Municipalities in New York are authorized to issue tax increment bonds that are payable from, and secured by, increased real property taxes in order to establish a TIF district (see, General Municipal Law Ch. 24 Article 18-C (970A - 970-R) [“TIF Law”]). A “tax increment” is the difference between the amount of property tax revenue generated before TIF district designation and the amount of property tax revenue generated after TIF designation. Under TIF Law § 970-P, only property taxes generated by the incremental increase in value of TIF districts are available for TIF projects. Property taxes collected on properties included in the TIF district at the time of its designation continue to be distributed to the school districts and other taxing jurisdictions in the future. Existing property taxes cannot be reduced by TIF district creation; rather, only taxes derived from newly increased property values can be used to repay TIF bonds

TIF bonds are revenue bonds. Repayment comes solely from the tax increment created by new development. TIF is a value capture tool used to revitalize “blighted” properties by investing in needed infrastructure. It can be used by municipalities to stimulate investment in targeted areas by capturing the future tax benefits of increased real estate value in order to pay for the present cost of infrastructure improvements. The TIF Law was enacted in response to a finding that “blighted” areas threaten the economic and social well-being of the people of the State. Blighted areas are characterized by one or more conditions set forth in § 970-C of the TIF Law; these conditions include “(i) a predominance of buildings and structures which are deteriorated or unfit or unsafe for use or occupancy, or (ii) a predominance of economically unproductive lands, buildings or structures, the redevelopment of which is needed to prevent further deterioration which would jeopardize the economic well-being of the people” (see, TIF Law § 970-C).

Metro Rail expansion and operation. However, the focus of this memorandum is the utilization of such tools to provide funding for TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure.

TIF bonds may only be used: (1) to promote the redevelopment of blighted areas (TIF Law § 970-B), (2) where such redevelopment cannot be accomplished by private enterprise alone (TIF Law § 970-B), (3) in accordance with a locally-approved development plan (TIF Law § 970-G), and (4) for specified objects and purposes (TIF Law § 970-O).

While the TIF Law is the primary source for the rules on establishing TIF, other statutes also affect the planning and implementation of a TIF development plan. For example, NY Local Finance Law (LFL) governs the issuance of bonds by a municipal corporation. Under § 10.00 of the LFL, a municipality is granted the power to contract indebtedness for any object or purpose set forth in § 11.00 of the LFL. Included in the allowable objects and purposes in § 11.00 of the LFL is the acquisition or construction of a rapid transit railroad or mass transit capital program. TIF Law § 970-O provides that the revenue from TIF bonds must only be used for certain objects and purposes, including any public improvements or services authorized by § 11.00 of the LFL.

How to Implement TIF

As an initial step, the relevant project area or areas (which will become the TIF district) must be defined, keeping in mind that the project area must first be subject to a finding of being “blighted.” Once it is established that the proposed project area is blighted, under TIF Law § 970-D and § 970-E, legislative bodies of municipalities are empowered to conduct project feasibility studies of designated survey areas and select project areas based on the results of those survey area studies. Any person, group, association or corporation may request the relevant legislative body to designate a survey area for project study purposes, and may submit with that request any plans showing the proposed redevelopment of such area or any part thereof. The TOD Committee would be responsible for working with the legislative bodies in Buffalo, Amherst, and Tonawanda to ensure that a project area or areas are defined in proximity to the Metro Rail Corridor.

After the legislative body of each affected municipality, acting separately or jointly, as discussed below, finalizes a “project area,” and has made the appropriate blight finding, the legislative body prepares a preliminary plan for redevelopment in accordance with § 970-E of the TIF Law. In the case of Metro Rail Corridor, the preliminary plan would feature the extension of, and improvements to, the Metro Rail system as the basis for redeveloping areas around the Metro Rail Corridor and highlight the need for TOD and specific TOD-Supportive Infrastructure as part of that plan. The legislative body must provide for the review of such preliminary plan by the relevant

planning agency and any other agency or department of the municipality with responsibility for zoning or land use planning within the project area. The preliminary plan must also be provided to the school board of any affected school districts in the project area for review, in accordance with § 970-F(o).

If the legislative body, by resolution, approves the preliminary plan, it must provide for preparation of a redevelopment plan containing certain specified information identified in § 970-F (TIF Redevelopment Plan). Importantly, the TIF Redevelopment Plan may provide for the issuance of bonds by the municipality and for the use of the proceeds from their sale in carrying out the TIF Redevelopment Plan. See TIF Law § 970-F(i). The plan must also provide for the relocation of families and persons to be displaced from housing facilities in the project area as a result of the plan.

Under TIF Law § 970-G, before any TIF Redevelopment Plan may be finalized and adopted, it must be submitted to the local planning agency for review; this review would consider the conformity of the TIF Redevelopment Plan with any locally approved comprehensive plan. Additionally, any TIF Redevelopment Plan must be submitted to the school boards of all impacted school districts. In order to be subject to such redevelopment plan and allocation of taxes, each school board of each affected school district must adopt a resolution approving such plan and allocation.

Under TIF Law § 970-H, the legislative body must conduct a public hearing on the TIF Redevelopment Plan and must conduct subsequent public hearings at least biennially for the purpose of reviewing the plan for each TIF Redevelopment Plan within its jurisdiction and evaluating its progress. After the close of the public hearing on the TIF Redevelopment Plan, the legislative body may, by resolution, adopt the TIF Redevelopment Plan.

Section 970-N of the TIF Law allows for two or more municipalities to jointly exercise the powers granted in relation to a TIF district by either designating the legislative body of one of the municipalities to act as agent for all affected municipalities, or by establishing a municipal redevelopment authority with each involved legislative body appointing the members. If multiple municipalities choose to act jointly, each municipality must still follow the procedure for adopting a redevelopment plan, as outlined above. If the legislative bodies by special act establish a municipal redevelopment corporation, that entity may only administer the TIF Redevelopment Plan adopted by the legislative bodies. Thus,

creating a municipal redevelopment corporation does not lessen each municipality's powers or responsibilities related to creating and approving a TIF Redevelopment Plan

Legal Challenges Associated with Implementing TIF

The first legal challenge involved in implementing a TIF project area or areas along the Metro Rail Corridor would be making the necessary blight findings. Generally, well-developed, productive areas within Buffalo, Amherst, and Tonawanda would need to be included in a TIF project area or areas. However, we note that a defined "project area" would be analyzed as a whole, and the presence of unblighted areas does not prevent an overall blight finding. TIF Law, § 970-C(g) provides that a project area "need not be restricted to buildings, improvements or lands which are detrimental or inimical to the public health, safety or welfare, but may consist of an area in which such conditions predominate and adversely affect the entire area" or "whose inclusion is found necessary by the municipality for the effective redevelopment of the area of which they are a part." Additionally, "the inclusion of unblighted lots within a designated urban redevelopment area does not prevent a determination that the total area is in fact 'blighted.'" Nonetheless, the requirement of a finding of blight for a TIF project area or areas along the Metro Rail Corridor may make it difficult to use TIF.²

Another important legal challenge in implementing a TIF project area or areas along the Metro Rail Corridor is the requirement that all affected taxing jurisdictions must consent and approve the TIF Redevelopment Plan, and resulting tax allocations. Because it is likely that a TIF project area or areas along the Metro Rail Corridor will cross multiple municipalities and school districts, there would be a complicated political dynamic to consider throughout the planning process, with different and nuanced concerns at the forefront for each taxing jurisdiction. A TOD Committee could facilitate this process by working with the affected municipalities and school districts to ensure that their various interests are represented. In addition, with multiple municipalities involved, creation of a municipal redevelopment corporation may make sense.

A final legal consideration should be the requirement found in TIF Law § 970-J, which provides that no person or family of low or moderate income shall be displaced unless and until there is suitable housing available and ready for occupancy by such displaced person or family at rents

² Relatedly, but likely less of an impediment, TIF Law § 970-E requires the legislative body to explain why a proposed preliminary plan for redevelopment would not be undertaken without implementing TIF. In the case of Amherst and Tonawanda, this would mean explaining why the Metro Rail Extension alone would not be sufficient to redevelop blighted areas.

comparable to those paid at the time of their displacement. If any persons will be displaced by a TIF Redevelopment Plan, this is another hurdle that must be addressed

Other Challenges Associated with Implementing TIF

Assuming the TOD Regional Committee could overcome some of the legal challenges associated with creating a TIF project area or areas along the Metro Rail Corridor, (including approval from all taxing jurisdictions), it would then face the difficult task of securing TIF bonds. Since the TIF statutes were amended in 2012, it has become very difficult to issue TIF bonds. Under § 970-O of the TIF Law, a municipality is not permitted to pledge its full faith and credit or the faith and credit of the State to the payment of the principal and interest of TIF bonds. Thus, principal and interest on TIF bonds may only be paid from the tax increment revenue generated by the creation of the TIF district. This, in turn, requires strong underwriter confidence in future TIF revenue, because only property taxes generated by the incremental increase in value of TIF districts are available to pay back bonds. In addition, although these bonds are required to be non-recourse by statute, Article VIII of the NY State Constitution assures the holders of municipal bonds or notes that the municipality's full faith and credit is pledged to the repayment of the bonds or notes. This conflict between the NY State Constitution and the TIF Law has not been resolved, leading to additional market uncertainties (although use of a municipal redevelopment corporation may solve this conflict). While a detailed analysis of the shortcomings of the current TIF Law are beyond the scope of this memorandum, it is safe to say that in order to make TIF bonds a reality for TOD and/or TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor, the TIF Law would need to be amended so as to make TIF bonds more attractive to underwriters. This would likely require some level of collaboration between lawmakers and underwriters during any TIF Law amendment process.

There is also a construction risk associated with revenue from TIF bonds. If construction takes substantially longer than planned, the anticipated revenue from additional property taxes might be slow to materialize, which creates significant problems if all of the bond money has been spent and the bonds need to be repaid. This is another issue which may need to be addressed in the TIF Law amendment process.

Recent Examples of TIF Legislation

New York State

In the proposed FY 2019 New York State Executive Budget, legislation would establish a process for the recoupment of costs for major capital construction by MTA within a city of a population of one million or more. This legislation essentially allows for the creation of transit TIF districts throughout the New York City metropolitan area that allow for the use of increases in the fair market value of real property resulting from transit access to provide funding for transit programs. If adopted, NFTA should lobby to get such benefits expanded to the Buffalo-Niagara metropolitan area to allow for the creation of transit TIF districts.

Northwest Indiana

Similar to the Illinois bill, the Indiana General Assembly in 2017 passed legislation that allows cities and towns to set up Transit Development Districts (TDD) in a half-mile radius around commuter stations. Like a TIF district, a TDD would capture the increase in property taxes resulting from development in that district and use that revenue to pay off a long-term load to build infrastructure or to upgrade transit services. Unlike the traditional TIF, a TDD can also capture the increase in local income tax revenue in that district.

Chicago

In 2016, the State of Illinois, and subsequently, the City of Chicago, adopted a law that modifies Tax Increment Financing to allow for the creation of specialized Transit TIF districts. Amongst the modifications was a change in definition - a traditional TIF could only be used in areas meeting specific blighted criteria and for redevelopment and affordable housing projects. The Transit TIF can be used in any area surrounding a transit station or transit project and can use funds to pay for transit related projects. Under a Transit TIF, a special district is created where the property tax base is frozen for 35 years (traditional TIFs are frozen for 23 years). As property values increase over time, the added property tax revenues (tax increment) is used to repay the bonds and loans used to finance transit projects. Also, under a Transit TIF, Chicago Public Schools and other taxing bodies (i.e., libraries, fire districts, water reclamation district) keep all of the base tax revenue as well as incremental tax growth revenue.

Miami

In 2018, the Miami-Dade County Commission created several Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Districts to allow for the incremental increase in property tax revenues from the districts to help pay for the expansion

of the region's Metrorail system. The Transportation Infrastructure Improvements District is expected to generate \$17 million by 2023

PILOT INCREMENT FINANCING (PIF)

Due to the many challenges associated with implementing TIF, some municipalities in New York, including Buffalo, have turned to PIF for infrastructure financing. A PIF is the difference between the current amount of PILOT payment that is paid to the Affected Tax Jurisdiction under a PILOT agreement and the amount of taxes that would have been paid if the property were on the tax rolls. This "increment" is collected from the developer with some or the entire amount used to retire the debt from financing certain improvements or costs that are essential to the project.

General Municipal Law § 874 provides that each IDA shall establish a uniform tax exemption policy, with input from affected taxing jurisdictions, which shall be applicable to the provision of financial assistance under payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) agreements. Prior to providing financial assistance to a particular development, an IDA must adopt a resolution, which must be consistent with the uniform tax exemption policy adopted by the IDA, unless the agency has followed the procedures for deviation from such policy, known as a non-standard PILOT. See Gen. Mun. Law § 859-a.

A PILOT program functions in the following way; property owned or under the control of IDAs is tax-exempt under General Municipal Law § 874(1). In order to take advantage of the exemption offered to IDAs, fee title or a leasehold interest in economic development projects is transferred from private owners, who are not tax-exempt, to an IDA for the duration of the proposed project. The real estate tax exemption is offset by PILOTS to be made by the private owner. At the end of the project, title reverts back to the original owner, who then pays taxes in a normal manner.

PILOT payments are divided among the affected taxing jurisdictions in accordance with the uniform tax exemption policy (UTEP), unless the IDA follows the procedure for deviating from the uniform policy, and notifies each affected taxing jurisdiction of the proposed deviation and the reasons therefor. In Erie County, the IDA must also notify all other IDAs within Erie County of such proposed deviation and the reasons thereof. Each of the other IDAs may submit written comments to the IDA proposing to deviate. Based on the comments from the affected taxing jurisdictions and other IDAs, the IDA will make its decision on the proposed deviations and provide a written explanation of such decision. ECIDA covers all of Erie County, but has agreed not to do PILOTS in Amherst unless the Amherst IDA agrees.

A PIF structure allows for the diversion of money which is otherwise payable to a taxing jurisdiction under a PILOT into a fund that is useable to offset a developer's project costs, to repay project financing, or to fund infrastructure, all as provided in the respective inducement resolution. The IDAs would also need the approval of all affected taxing jurisdictions, because under General Municipal Law § 858(15), unless otherwise agreed by the affected taxing jurisdictions, all PILOT agreement payments must be allocated among the affected taxing jurisdictions in proportion to the amount of real property tax and other taxes which would have been received by each affected taxing jurisdiction had the project not been tax exempt due to the status of the IDA involved in the property. Revenue from PIF thus depends on the revenue generated from future PILOT agreements upon consent of the taxing jurisdictions.

General Municipal Law § 864 also authorizes IDAs to issue bonds. General Municipal Law § 874(2) provides that any bonds or notes issued pursuant to the law on IDA tax exemptions shall be exempt from state taxation, except for transfer and estate taxes. Interest on IDA bonds might also be exempt from federal taxes. Any resolution authorizing such bonds may contain provisions which limit the purpose to which the proceeds of sale of the bonds may be applied, but such provisions are not required.

How to Implement PIF

In terms of the Metro Rail Corridor, project specific PIFs would generally be developed as projects within a certain distance of the Metro Rail Corridor (maybe within ½ mile of the Metro Rail Corridor, for example) are proposed which seek IDA financial incentives. Specific infrastructure necessary for the project and/or general infrastructure in the area of the project (or beyond) could be funded through PIF. It would likely make sense, well in advance of specific project applications to the Erie County Industrial Development Agency (ECIDA) or the Amherst Industrial Development Agency (Amherst IDA) to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to establish a framework for implementing project specific PIFs along the Metro Rail Corridor once applications are received. Since such project specific PIFs would also require approval of all affected taxing jurisdictions, it might make sense to include the County and affected school districts in any MOA discussions.

Assuming an MOA is in place, a prospective developer would later apply to the relevant IDA for tax incentives in the form of a PILOT agreement. If the requested PILOT is then granted, the relevant IDA would use the agreed upon amount from the PILOT revenue (typically a percentage) to fund

apportion of the developer's project costs, to repay project financing, or to fund infrastructure, as agreed upon. In order for a particular project to be eligible for tax incentives, it must comply with the particular IDA's UTEP, which stipulates, among other things, which types of projects qualify for tax incentives. Typically, similar to TIF, there is no real property tax abatement on the pre-improved assessed value of the real property.

Legal Challenges Associated with Implementing PIF

The main legal challenge associated with implementing project specific PIFs along the Metro Rail Corridor will be the need to negotiate an acceptable PILOT agreement with the relevant IDA and taxing jurisdictions. For each proposed PIF, each taxing entity and the relevant IDA would be required to adopt an approval resolution. One way to try and make this process as smooth as possible would be to negotiate a binding MOA amongst the taxing authorities which establishes a framework for implementing project specific PIFs once applications are received.

Other Challenges Associated with Implementing PIF

Securing a PILOT agreement is a difficult process in itself. Developers need to comply with various IDA requirements, and it is ultimately at the discretion of the affected IDA whether or not to enter into a particular PILOT agreement. In order for projects to be eligible to enter into PILOT agreements, those projects must comply with the relevant UTEP, which prohibits certain types of projects altogether, among other restrictions. Additionally, IDAs typically demand employment covenants and other concessions in exchange for financial assistance. Thus, not every development project can be expected to apply for PILOTs. Additionally, PIF bonds may or may not be tax exempt. PIF bonds can be triple tax free if certain requirements are met, but careful attention must be paid in order to assure compliance with those requirements.

SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS (SADS)

Under the Real Property Tax Law § 102(15), “special assessment” means a charge imposed upon benefited real property in proportion to the benefit received by such property to defray the cost, including operation and maintenance, of a special district improvement or services. There are a number of SAD statutes that could be used to support TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor.

Business Improvements District

General Municipal Law Ch. 24 Article 19-a (§ 980) (Business Improvement District Law) authorizes local legislative bodies in New York to establish business improvement districts (BID), through a BID plan. A BID is a geographic area where local stakeholders oversee and fund the maintenance and operation of their commercial district. The BID Law focuses on improvements such as the renovation of streets and sidewalks, the creation of parks and parking lots, the installation of better lighting and signage, enhanced sanitation services, and services to enhance the security of persons and property. Downtown Buffalo already has a BID along the Metro Rail Corridor which is managed by Buffalo Place Inc.

BIDs are funded through a special assessment imposed on properties that receive benefits from the district’s improvement, proportionate to the benefits received. Subject to certain rights of property owners, a BID is created by the legislative body of a municipality, through a process which includes preparing and filing a district plan, providing notice and public hearing regarding the district plan, adopting a local law approving the establishment of the district, and passing a review of the proposed BID by the state comptroller.

Town Improvements Districts

Under Town Law Ch. 62 Article 12 (§ 190) (Town Law), a town’s board may establish improvement districts for limited purposes including “a sewer, drainage, water, water quality treatment, park, public parking, lighting, snow removal, water supply, sidewalk, a fallout shelter district or refuse and garbage district, aquatic plant growth control district, ambulance district, watershed protection improvement district, and in any town bordering upon or containing within its boundaries any navigable waters of this state, a harbor improvement district, a public dock district, or beach erosion control district.” To create an improvement district, a petition

for the establishment of such district shall be signed and submitted to the town board by resident owners, representing at least one-half of the assessed valuation of all the of taxable real property within the proposed district. The petition is supported by maps and plans of the district, and subject to notice and hearing requirements³.

Mass Transit Capital Project Funding

Although directed more toward funding Metro Rail Extension rather than supporting TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor, it is worth noting that General Municipal Law Ch. 24 Article 5-I § 119-r (Mass Transportation and Airport and Aviation Facilities Law or MTA Law) authorizes municipal corporations⁴ to adopt local laws authorizing the making of contracts with other municipalities and/or mass transportation service authorities for the purpose of providing mass transportation services. The MTA Law provides that municipalities have the power to adopt local laws to authorize entering into such contracts, in addition to local laws authorizing the appropriation of funds to finance such mass transportation services. Municipalities also have the power to adopt local laws to authorize “the making of unconditional grants of money or property to a public authority providing mass transportation services to all or part of such municipal corporation in order to assist such public authority in meeting its capital or operating expenses, provided such money does not consist of borrowed funds and such property has not been acquired by the use of borrowed funds.” Thus, for example, Amherst could enter into a contract with NFTA to extend Metro Rail to Amherst and could allocate funds for same provided such funds are not borrowed. However, the authority to designate a SAD to support the Metro Rail Extension is granted exclusively to specific municipal corporations in the NYC Metro area for mass transit projects undertaken with the MTA and only through 2021⁵. Thus, although the MTA Law generally allows Buffalo, Tonawanda, and Amherst to dedicate revenue to NFTA for mass transit, such funding cannot come from SADs as the statute is currently written⁶.

³ Cities do not have explicit authority to establish improvement districts. However, certain counties and villages may also establish special districts subject to special assessments, for specific services or benefits rendered to promote the health, welfare, and safety of its inhabitants. See Real Property Tax Law § 102 (16); Alternative County Government Law § 551; Village Law § 22-2200

⁴ The MTA law defines municipal corporation as “A city, town, village, county not wholly contained within a city, special transportation district, public benefit corporation or other public corporation, or two or more of the foregoing acting jointly.” General Municipal Law § 119-q

⁵ The statute only authorizes municipalities in Dutchess, Nassau, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Suffolk and Westchester counties to create SADs in support of mass transit.

⁶ The Legislature is currently considering a bill that would authorize the New York City transit authority, the MTA, to create SADs to fund capital improvements.

Legal Challenges Associated with Implementing a SAD

As discussed above, BIDs and town improvement districts may be good funding mechanisms to support TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor and the legal challenges are limited to correctly forming the SAD under the applicable statutes.

Other Challenges Associated with Implementing a SAD

SADs have been criticized as an abuse of taxpayer monies, and New York Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli has also criticized SADs noting that SADs generate confusion among taxpayers regarding how much they actually pay for the benefits received, because there is no set standard billing practices and methods for collecting taxes, assessments, and fees. The Comptroller also notes that the districts operate largely outside the scope of government oversight, which triggers accountability issues. There are also concerns regarding cost and efficiency. Findings from an operating cost analysis suggest that smaller, commissioner-run districts tend to levy higher taxes on residents compared to large, town-run districts in rendering the same scope and quality of services, due to an efficiency gap.

In addition, it is noted that SADs are subject to New York's 2% property tax cap. The 2% tax cap law imposes a limit on the annual increase of property taxes levied by local governments and school districts to two percent of the prior year or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. A municipality's tax levy must incorporate any special district tax for purposes of the 2% tax cap calculation, if a special district is established, administered, and governed by the governing body of another local government—such as a tax levy imposed by a town or county board, under its authority, to support an improvement district created, administered, and governed by that town or county board. If the special district (i) has a separate independent elected board, and (ii) has the authority to levy a tax, or can require a municipality to levy a tax on its behalf, the tax levy limit applies to the special district itself. In order to exclude a special district from a municipality's tax cap calculations, the State Comptroller must make a determination that the district is independent.

Finally, we note that recent changes to Federal Tax Law which place a cap on the amount of state and local taxes that can be deducted from federal income may make it practically or politically difficult to create new SADs along the Metro Rail Corridor.

JOINT DEVELOPMENT

Joint development projects involve a public/private partnership to construct and operate a development on publicly owned land. The public entity typically grants a long-term ground lease to a private developer who then builds and operates a development on the leased land. The public entity usually receives annual lease payments for the land as well as some portion of revenue (gross or net) from the development.

According to FTA guidance, the development and the property must have a physical and a functional relationship. Using joint development projects to support TOD and TOD-Supportive infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor would work as follows: a municipality which owns property along the Metro Rail Corridor (or an entity to be created with power to acquire and dispose of real property) would issue a request for proposals (RFP) to developers for specific parcels of land owned by the municipality/entity in proximity to existing or proposed Metro Rail stations. The RFP would require developers to propose specific projects for the parcels to be developed as well as propose timelines and proposed economic return to the municipality/entity. After an evaluation process, the municipality/entity would enter into a ground lease with the selected developer based on their design, economic return to the municipality/entity, ability to meet the municipality's/entity's other requirements, and the municipality's/entity's assessment of the financial capability of each developer to successfully finance and complete their proposed projects in accordance with their response to the RFP.

The typical lease would be an unsubordinated ground lease with a term of 99 years. The ground lease could provide two main revenue streams to the municipality/entity: (1) base rent, and (2) some percentage of gross receipts or revenue. The base rent charged to a developer could also include an escalation provision, whereby the base rent increases every 5 or 10 years, by some percentage of either CPI or an updated appraisal, for example. The developer's public contributions, design, public amenities, community enhancements, and community contributions could also be considered as part of the return to the municipality/entity, especially, but not limited to, where the municipality/entity currently has such obligation and manages to shift that obligation to the developer either through the RFP or during lease negotiations.

Joint development can also take the form of the sale of development rights for upfront capital funding. It is also popular to undertake a public-private partnership for the construction of parking facilities that can be

used for transit customers, but that also generate parking revenue that provide a revenue stream for private entities (i.e. parking fees or leasing arrangements).

Legal Challenges Associated with Implementing Joint Development

For existing stations built with federal money, the FTA must approve any subsequent lease agreement for a Joint Development Project. If federal funds were used for the construction of a particular existing station within the Metro Rail Corridor, the federal government possesses a financial interest in the real property that NFTA acquired with FTA funds for each station. As a result, FTA determines the useful life of the station, when FTA's financial and ownership interests take effect, and how the station will be depreciated.

For example, when NFTA and UB entered into a lease agreement related to improving the existing Allen-Medical Campus Station Building, FTA determined the useful life of the station, the new elevators to be installed, and the new skylights to be installed. FTA also determined when FTA's financial and ownership interests would take effect for each of these items. In all instances, FTA's financial interest took effect only from the date the improvements were placed into use, placing all construction risk on NFTA until project completion. This is not the only way this situation may evolve and is cited as an example of just one way it has been addressed with FTA's involvement. Further, one of the stipulations in FTA's approval of that lease was that NFTA could not transfer FTA's financial interest into any labor costs, construction costs, or operational costs. FTA's financial interest could only be transferred into the physical capital assets and equipment.

For existing stations built with federal money, the requirement that FTA must approve any subsequent lease creates some challenges. NFTA must maintain control over the station in a manner that is satisfactory to FTA. NFTA must also use the station and other federally-funded improvements for public transportation purposes consistent with all applicable Federal laws.

Although this challenge does not currently affect proposed stations to be built as part of the Metro Rail Extension, if federal funds are used to build new stations in the future, FTA oversight of potential Joint Development Projects could create an additional challenge, particularly for any new underground stations. Nonetheless, while coordination with and/or approval from FTA creates some challenges, Joint Development Projects

have become fairly common for transit authorities and should not be considered a significant obstacle.

The other legal challenges associated with the Joint Development Project process involve legal compliance with any solicitation of development proposals and negotiation of mutually acceptable lease agreements with selected developers that meet the legal obligations of the municipality/entity engaged in the Joint Development Project.

Other Challenges Associated with Implementing Joint Development

Identifying where and how many Joint Development Projects to do relative to existing and proposed Metro Rail stations will be the first major challenge. For locations where Joint Development Projects are deemed feasible and desirable, the municipality/entity engaged in the Joint Development Project would need to acquire and/or condemn land for each project. Numerous factors would need to be considered including the costs and obligations associated with displacing existing businesses and residents and having enough land for the project under consideration.

Another important consideration is the timing of the issuance of RFPs, particularly for new stations where the RFP should be issued sufficiently in advance of construction so that the development is completed at approximately the same time. However, the RFP cannot be issued before the extension has progressed sufficiently to generate serious interest from developers to respond to the RFP. Prior to releasing the RFP, the municipality/entity engaged in the Joint Development Project should consider undertaking an outreach campaign to regional and national developers to ensure a favorable reception. To the extent that the municipality/entity engaged in the Joint Development Project will have architectural requirements or guidelines, those need to be carefully thought through prior to the release of the RFP. The terms and conditions of the RFP also need to be carefully considered. For example, the RFP must be commercially reasonable so as to allow future developers to obtain financing, but on the other hand, it should be structured to ensure sufficient future revenue. Accordingly, careful thought needs to be put into the RFP process.

PART 2: SUMMARY OF VALUE CAPTURE MECHANISMS

The above section highlights four different potential value capture strategy methodologies. There are a host of important considerations to explore in determining the best options relative to value capture mechanisms to support TOD and TOD-Supportive infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor. These considerations differ for each of the value capture strategies and will also be impacted by the proposed uses of the value capture funding streams.

TIF and SADs are likely to be the best options for issuing bonds to support TOD and more complex or expensive TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor. As discussed above, implementing a TIF project area or areas along the Metro Rail Corridor is anticipated to be a somewhat long and complicated process. There are legal hurdles to overcome such as the fact that TIF bonds can only be used to promote the redevelopment of blighted areas, where such redevelopment cannot be accomplished by private enterprise alone. In addition, the TIF Redevelopment Plan must be approved by each and every affected taxing jurisdiction. Negotiations with affected taxing jurisdictions are typically challenging. In addition, once a TIF Redevelopment Plan has been approved, it is very difficult to secure TIF bonds because a municipality is prohibited from pledging its full faith and credit to the repayment of TIF bonds meaning that only property taxes generated by the incremental increase in value of TIF districts are available to pay back bonds. In addition, the prohibition against pledging municipal full faith and credit violates a provision of the NY State Constitution leading to additional market uncertainties (although use of a municipal redevelopment corporation may resolve this particular conflict).

Creation of a SAD to support TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor should generally be a more straightforward process although the level of complexity will depend on the purpose of the SAD and how the tax revenue is used. Creation of improvement districts for specific types of infrastructure under Town Law is relatively straightforward while creation of a BID, which could be used to fund various types of municipal services and infrastructure within an established improvement district, is more complicated. Obtaining local stakeholder support for a SAD will be critical to any such effort and proponents should be prepared to address the typical criticisms associated with SADs such as lack of transparency and lack of accountability. Given the choice between establishing a TIF or a SAD, under current law, a SAD should be viewed as a more reliable source of funding.

Implementation of PIF will be a project specific endeavor as projects within a certain distance of the Metro Rail Corridor are proposed which seek IDA financial incentives. In addition to potential Project funding, specific infrastructure necessary for the project and/or general infrastructure in the area of the project (or beyond) could be funded through such a PIF. **It is recommended that the TOD Regional Committee explore PIF as a mechanism to support TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor. To facilitate this process, it is recommended that an MOA be negotiated with the relevant IDAs, the County, and affected school districts to establish a framework for implementing project specific PIFs once applications are received.**

Joint Development Projects can be a good option to support TOD and to help fund TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor provided a municipality along the Metro Rail Corridor or an entity to be created to support TOD owns or has a willingness to acquire property along the Metro Rail Corridor. While one of the goals of undertaking a Joint Development Project would be to create a TOD, this mechanism should be viewed as more of a funding mechanism for the municipality or entity willing to undertake the complexities of such a project including land acquisition, navigating the RFP process and negotiating a lease. To the extent such a project involves Metro Rail stations built with federal money, the FTA must approve the lease structure. However, Joint Development Projects have become fairly common for transit authorities and obtaining such approval, while generally a lengthy process, are not a significant obstacle. **It is recommended that the TOD Regional Committee carefully consider Joint Development Projects and their potential to support TOD and TOD-Supportive Infrastructure along the Metro Rail Corridor. In addition, we would note that PIF and Joint Development Projects are not mutually exclusive and a Joint Development Project could be subject to a PIF. Thus, the TOD Regional Committee should explore the feasibility of both approaches.**

11. STATION AREA PLANS

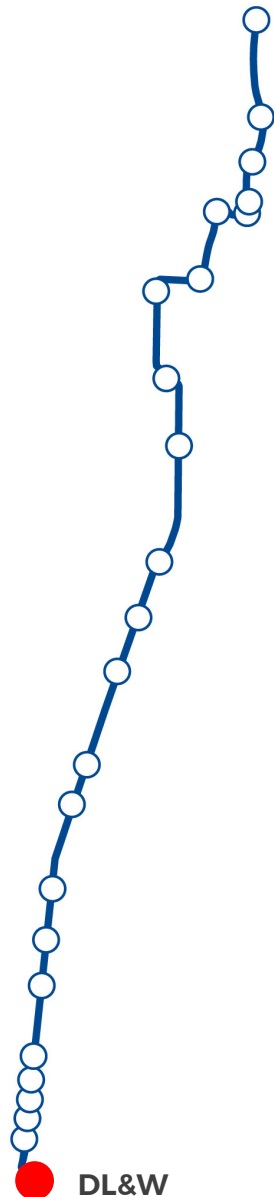
11.1. INTRODUCTION

Building off the input from stakeholders and the community at TOD workshop #3 in October 2017 where participants were asked which station areas had the best potential for Transit-Oriented Development, the Steering Committee selected six station areas to develop station area plans for. These station areas represent a range of TOD typologies across multiple jurisdictions - DL&W, Summer-Best, Utica, LaSalle, Boulevard Mall, and Audubon.

11.2. STATION AREA PLANS

The following station area plans are built around a vision for their future build-out along with a number of themes that line up with the Transit-Oriented Development focus strategies outlined in the Priority Infrastructure and Policy Strategies chapter. The station area plans are meant to be conceptual as to not focus on design detail, but capture a vision as to how the community and stakeholders foresee these station areas evolving as Transit-Oriented Development and transit-supportive communities. As these station area plans are realized, specific design details will continue to emerge, guided by these station area plans. Accompanying the station area plans is a discussion of the station area plan vision as well as an outline of key infrastructure strategies that should be undertaken to help achieve the station area plan vision.

11.3. DL&W



The DL&W station area plan centers on the new Metro Rail station that will be located within a reactivated DL&W Terminal, providing enhanced transit access to the Cobblestone District.

11.3.1. DL&W STATION AREA FRAMEWORK

The focus of this station area plan is to build off the investment in DL&W Terminal, which includes creating a new Metro Rail station on the first level along with reactivation of the 2nd level. The South Park Avenue and Buffalo River frontages are also activated through new public access improvements. New TOD development is focused on the blocks where surface parking currently exists to reactivate urban blocks. Key activity corridors and major connections are focused on enhancing connectivity between Cobblestone and adjacent neighborhoods as well as within the Cobblestone District, and specifically enhancing connectivity to the DL&W Terminal Station. The key east-west spine is Perry Street, and the key north-south spine is Mississippi Street. Both of these streets should comprise of active street fronting uses that generate streetscape activity and result in a more engaging and intriguing atmosphere. To break up the large blocks and create a more urban grid, Mississippi Street and Columbia Street are extended through to Scott Street.

Leveraging Transit as a Catalyst for Cobblestone District/ Waterfront Revitalization

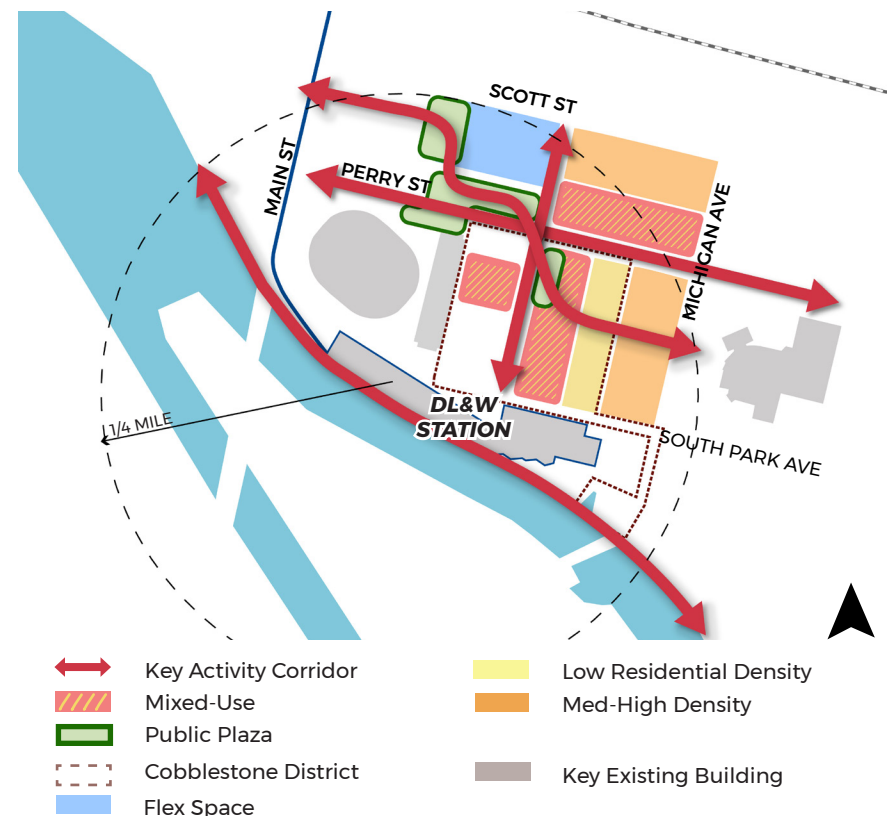


Figure 45. DL&W Station Area TOD Framework

11.3.2. DL&W STATION KEY THEMES

<i>Complete Street</i>	Focus on enhancing connectivity and activating streetscape
<i>Engaging Civic Space</i>	Use DL&W as a focal civic space and integrate complimentary future development
<i>Progressive Parking</i>	Convert surface parking to structured parking; provide on-street parking
<i>Mixed-Use Development</i>	Development should be mixed-use, focused on residential and entertainment
<i>TOD Density Distribution</i>	Density along “Cobblestone Streets” should be focused on mid-rise with higher density between Perry and Scott
<i>Repurposing & Infill Development</i>	Repurpose DL&W; Focus infill development on surface parking lots

11.3.3. CONNECTIVITY

Activating both the South Park Avenue and Buffalo River sides of DL&W Terminal are emphasized in this plan. New stair towers located at strategic locations along South Park Avenue would not only provide a means of public access to DL&W Terminal, but would add elements to the streetscape that will improve its connection with the neighborhood. Complete Street treatments would be added to Perry Street and Michigan Avenue to provide traffic calming as well as multi-modal opportunities and on-street parking. Enhanced civic space includes improvements to the Shoreline Trail, a relocated Bricks for Buffalo location at the foot of Main Street, intermodal comfort station within or adjacent to DL&W Terminal, improved overlook near the Edward M. Cotter Fireboat, and new greenway

that traverses the Cobblestone neighborhood. An expanded Bike Ferry route could bring stops to DL&W Terminal as well as locations further up the Buffalo River, helping to add an additional multi-modal element to this station, water-based transportation.

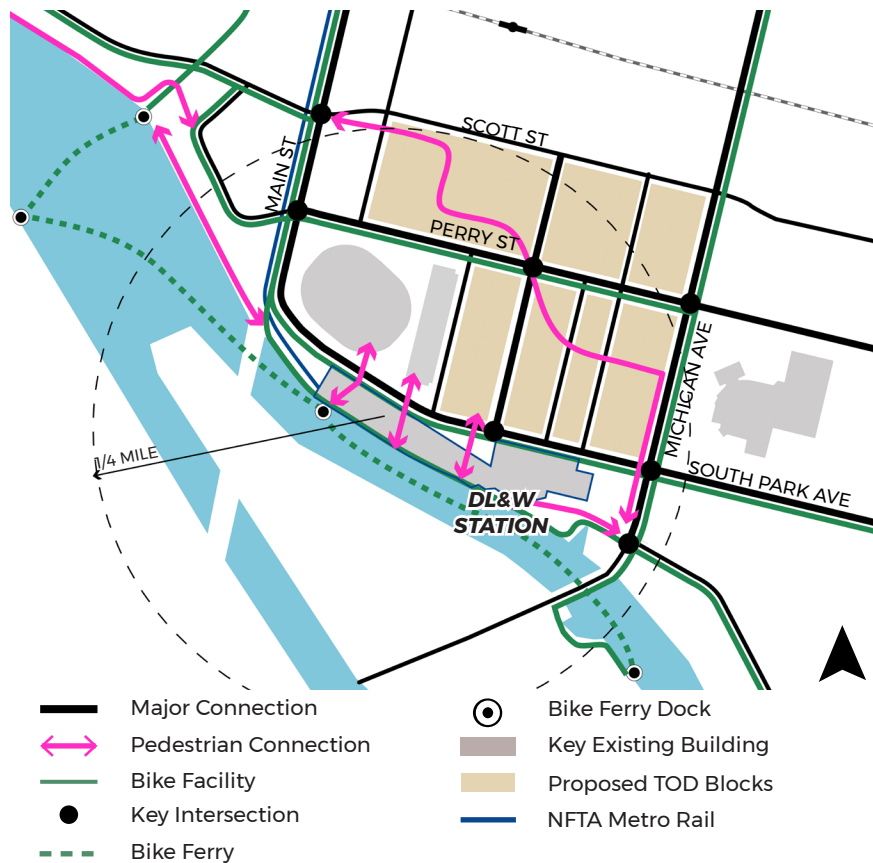


Figure 46. DL&W Station Area Connectivity

11.3.4. OPEN SPACE

The Shoreline Trail will continue to act as a key multi-use asset that will connect DL&W Terminal Station with Canalside, Old 1st Ward, and the Outer Harbor. The Shoreline Trail is proposed to become part of a larger Empire State Trail effort that will connect points along the Western New York waterfront. As development of the surface parking lots evolves, a new greenway corridor could be incorporated to traverse the neighborhood providing a green, open space connection between Canalside, Cobblestone, and the waterfront. Part of this greenway corridor would create an open space along Perry Street just east of the existing HSBC Atrium Building that can be used as a civic or assembly space in association with arena and neighborhood events. In addition, the streetscapes and landscapes of

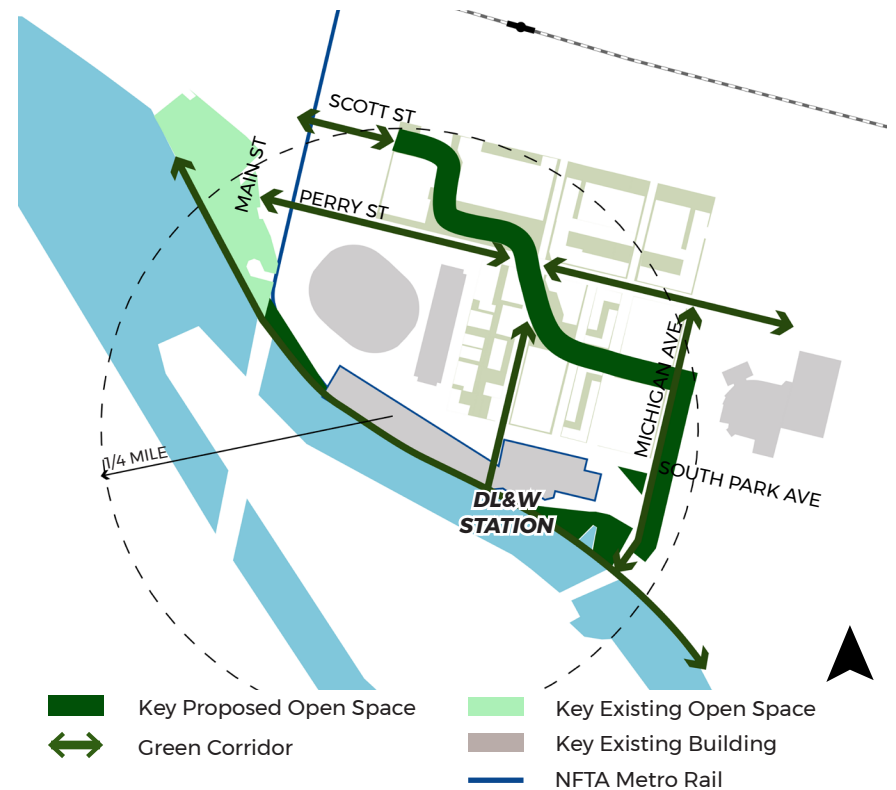


Figure 47. DL&W Station Area Civic and Open Space

many of the major corridors are enhanced to offer a more comfortable and enjoyable walking experience. The overall civic and open space plan aims to better connect the Canalside and Cobblestone neighborhoods as well as enhance public access to the waterfront.

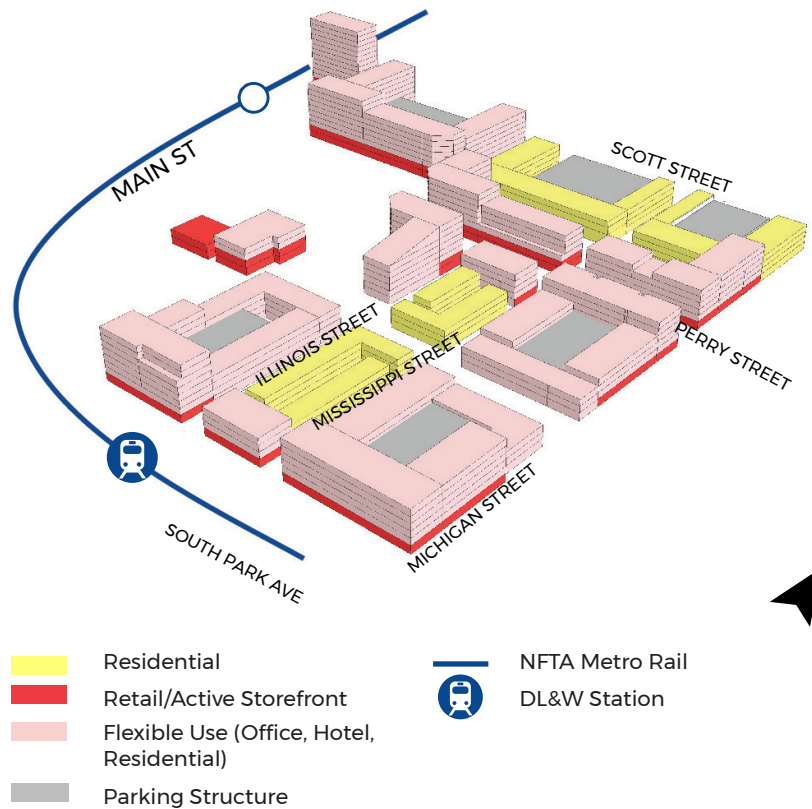


Figure 48. DL&W Station Area Mix of Uses

11.3.5. MIX OF USES

The DL&W station area is envisioned to truly capture a wide range of mixed-uses, similar to those seen throughout Downtown Buffalo, with an emphasis on uses that complement the existing entertainment venues and new residential that will help generate a neighborhood feel with activity extending beyond that of area events. Active storefront uses (i.e., retail or restaurant) should be provided along the major corridors (shown in red) with upper floors taking on whatever mix of uses the market demands (shown in pink). Since development is proposed on the surface parking lots, parking is replaced with structured parking (shown in grey) that is wrapped with development that would serve both nearby events and the development.

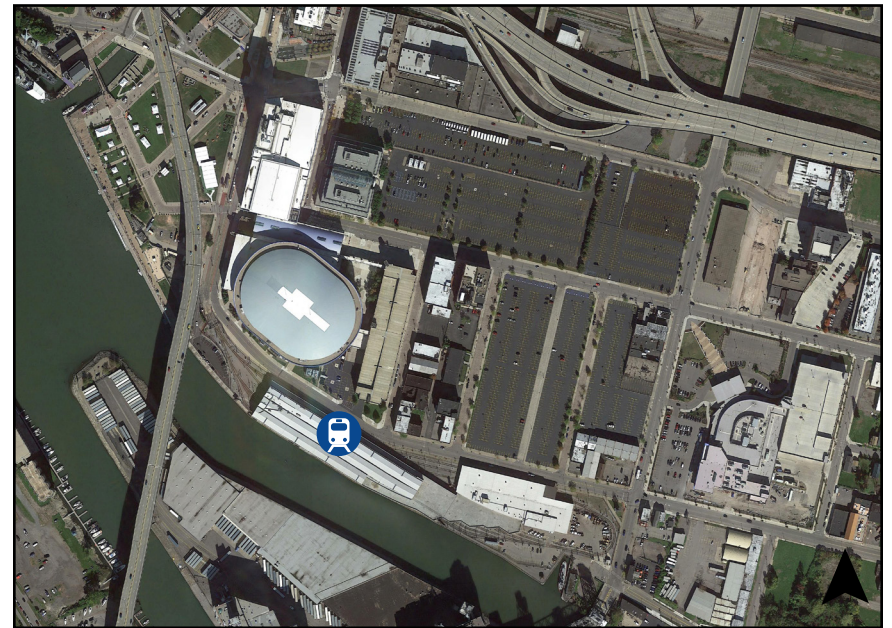


Figure 49. Existing DL&W Terminal Station Area Aerial

In addition to the reactivation of the DL&W Terminal, new Transit-Oriented Development is focused on the surface parking lots that exist throughout Cobblestone. The preferred Transit-Oriented Development is dispersed with the greatest density fronting Perry Street, Scott Street, and South Park Avenue with less density fronting the “Cobblestone” streets. This allows for greater activation of Perry Street into a regional entertainment corridor, connecting KeyBank Center, HARBORCenter, Canalside, and Buffalo Seneca Creek Casino and allows the “Cobblestone” streets to become more neighborhood oriented. There is also increased density in the block closest to Washington Street where higher densities currently exist adjacent to HARBORCenter and One Canalside.



Figure 50. DL&W Illustrative Plan

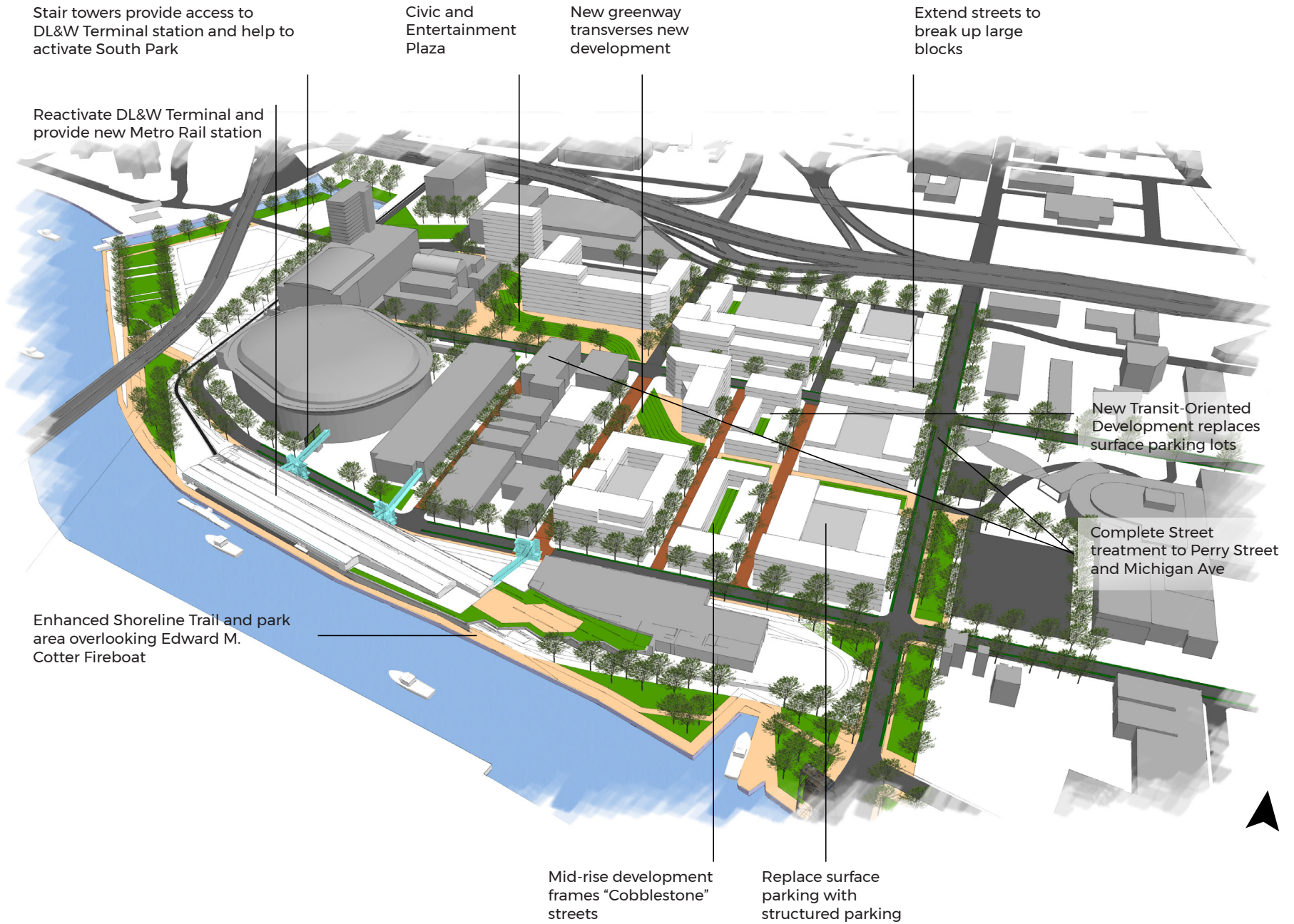


Figure 51. DL&W Station Area Massing Concept

11.3.6. DL&W STATION AREA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The following table identifies specific key infrastructure investment strategies for the DL&W station area that are the focus of implementing the DL&W station area plan vision. While there are likely additional infrastructure needs above and beyond those listed below, the table highlights the priority infrastructure investments that are deemed to have the most catalytic impact on facilitating Transit-Oriented Development in each of the focus station areas. Each strategy is outlined with a description, action plan, the lead agency that would be charged with implementing the strategy, and the priority of the strategy in facilitating TOD, identified as very high, high, or medium.

Table 33. DL&W Infrastructure Investment Strategies

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Realignment/ activation of DL&W Terminal frontage along South Park Avenue	The streetscape and public realm elements along South Park Avenue will begin to activate the frontage of DL&W Terminal, providing access to the new station and creating an active and inviting environmental that attracts new transit ridership. Direct connections to KeyBank Center and the KeyBank Center Parking Ramp will help to enhance accessibility to the new DL&W Terminal station, creating opportunities for increased transit ridership during arena events and opening opportunities for park-and-ride, which utilizes the parking ramp. As redevelopment of Cobblestone continues, additional access points will facilitate access between the station and Cobblestone District.	South Park Avenue will need to be realigned to provide additional space on the south side for bump-outs that accommodate the DL&W Terminal entrance towers, wider sidewalks, bicycle facilities, utility relocation, and on-street parking.	City of Buffalo (possibly under NFTA funding for DL&W Terminal)	Very High
Upgrades to Shoreline Trail	Upgrades to the Shoreline Trail will help improve access to/ from the new DL&W Terminal Station and improve walkability and bike access between Canalside, Cobblestone, Old 1st Ward, and Outer Harbor. The Shoreline Trail is eventually expected to become part of the Empire State Trail.	Upgrades should take the form of improved surface (full asphalt surface), providing amenities, signage and wayfinding, appropriate scale lighting, and access to/from the station and 2nd floor of DL&W.	NFTA or New York State in association with Empire State Trail development	High

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Realignment/ activation of DL&W Terminal frontage along South Park Avenue	The streetscape and public realm elements along South Park Avenue will begin to activate the frontage of DL&W Terminal, providing access to the new station and creating an active and inviting environment that attracts new transit ridership. Direct connections to KeyBank Center and the KeyBank Center Parking Ramp will help to enhance accessibility to the new DL&W Terminal station, creating opportunities for increased transit ridership during arena events and opening opportunities for park-and-ride, which utilizes the parking ramp. As redevelopment of Cobblestone continues, additional access points will facilitate access between the station and Cobblestone District.	South Park Avenue will need to be realigned to provide additional space on the south side for bump-outs that accommodate the DL&W Terminal entrance towers, wider sidewalks, bicycle facilities, utility relocation, and on-street parking.	City of Buffalo (possibly under NFTA funding for DL&W Terminal)	Very High
Upgrades to Shoreline Trail	Upgrades to the Shoreline Trail will help improve access to/from the new DL&W Terminal Station and improve walkability and bike access between Canalside, Cobblestone, Old 1st Ward, and Outer Harbor. The Shoreline Trail is eventually expected to become part of the Empire State Trail.	Upgrades should take the form of improved surface (full asphalt surface), providing amenities, signage and wayfinding, appropriate scale lighting, and access to/from the station and 2nd floor of DL&W.	NFTA or New York State in association with Empire State Trail development	High
Intersection improvements to intersection of Michigan Avenue and Ohio Street	Improvements will provide a safer, more comfortable crossing that connects the Shoreline Trail running alongside DL&W Terminal with the Ohio Street multi-use trail and Michigan Avenue Bridge, creating an enhanced multi-use connection between Canalside, Cobblestone, Old 1st Ward, and Outer Harbor. This will also help enhance the eventual Empire State Trail.	Implement intersection improvements in the form of enhanced, high-visibility crossing, curb bump outs, enhanced lighting, and traffic calming features.	City of Buffalo	High
Bike share facility and bike storage at DL&W Terminal	As DL&W Terminal station becomes activated, there will be a need to improve connectivity with other multi-modal transportation modes to create a multi-modal hub. A first step will be to place a bike share station and bike storage within or adjacent to DL&W Terminal. Further, the concept would be expanded to provide a multi-modal hub with bathroom and changing facilities, repair station, and other amenities.	Work with Reddy Bike Share and GoBike Buffalo to bring bicycle facilities to DL&W Terminal.	Multiple agencies	High

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Perry Street Complete Street	Perry Street connects major destinations in Cobblestone. In order to develop this corridor as an “entertainment corridor” that connects Canalside, KeyBank Center, HARBORCenter, and Buffalo Seneca Creek Casino, Complete Streets treatments in the form of walkability improvements, bike facilities, streetscape enhancements, and traffic calming are needed.	Reallocate existing street to allow for one travel lane in each direction, bike lane, and on-street parking. Provide street trees and streetscape amenities. Improve walkability through activating streetscape, improved pedestrian facilities (see below cross-section).	City of Buffalo	High
Michigan Avenue Complete Street	Michigan Avenue acts as a connection between the Central Business District, Cobblestone, and Ganson Street. There are bike lanes on a portion that were added as part of the reconstruction related to Buffalo Seneca Creek Casino, however, the remainder of the roadway lacks Complete Street elements. Complete street treatments in the form of walkability improvements, bike facilities, streetscape enhancements, and traffic calming are needed.	Reallocate existing street to allow for one travel lane in each direction, bike lane, and on-street parking. Provide street trees and streetscape amenities. Improve walkability through activating streetscape, improved pedestrian facilities (see below cross-section).	City of Buffalo	Medium
Mississippi Street and Columbia Street “extensions”	The extension of Mississippi Street and Columbia Street from Perry Street to Scott Street would break up the existing large block, creating development opportunities and enhanced walkability and connectivity.	As redevelopment of the HSBC parking lot (owned by Erie County Industrial Development Agency) becomes imminent, work with developer, ECIDA, or implement a capital project to extend streets to create smaller blocks and improve connectivity.	Private developer, ECIDA, and/ or City of Buffalo	Medium (takes on heightened priority as development opportunity is eminent)
Cobblestone wayfinding and signage	There is a need across Cobblestone for consistent wayfinding and signage to identify key destinations and the new DL&W Terminal Metro Rail station. Wayfinding and signage will facilitate transit accessibility, usage, and walkability.	Consult with a firm to develop and implement wayfinding and signage across Cobblestone.	TBD	Medium

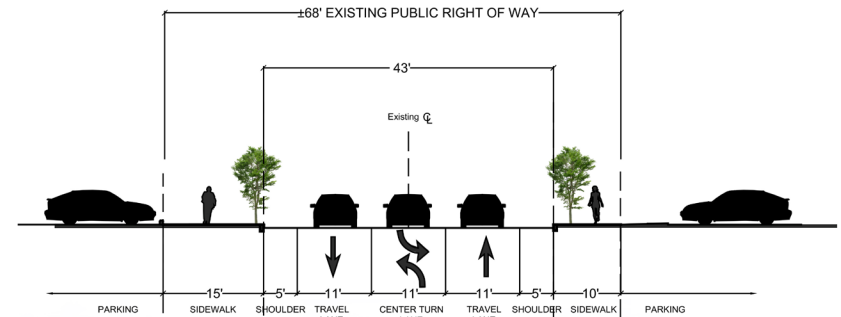
<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Buffalo River floating docks	Incorporate removable floating docks along the bulkhead wall of DL&W Terminal to provide public access to the water and opportunities for recreational and commercial watercraft docking.	First, work with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify navigable waterway restrictions. Requires construction of a gangway to access the floating docks, pilings to support floating docks, and ancillary facilities to accommodate watercraft docking.	Private developer, NFTA, and/ or City of Buffalo	Medium

11.3.7. DL&W STATION AREA COMPLETE STREETS CONCEPTS

Included as some of the infrastructure investment strategies mentioned in the above table are complete street treatments to Perry Street and Michigan Avenue. The below figures portray potential complete street treatment concepts for each street.



EXISTING



PROPOSED

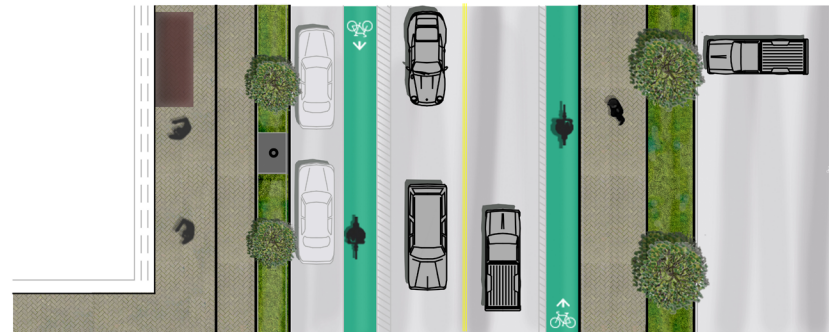
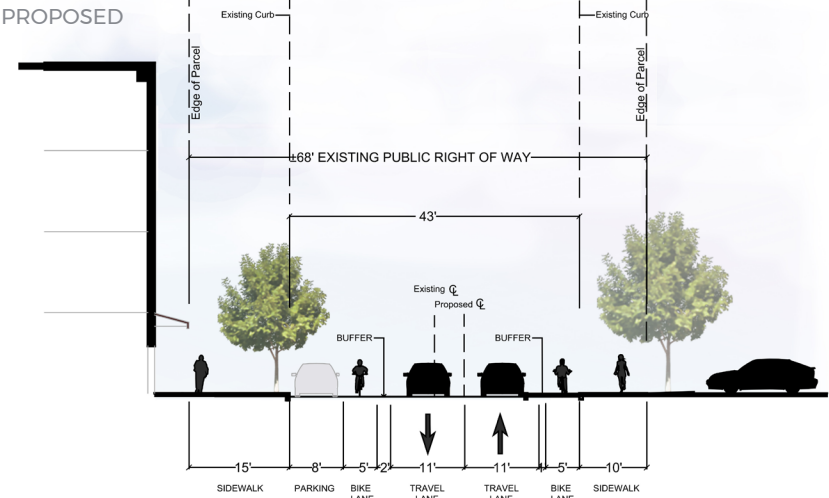


Figure 52. Complete Street Treatment for Michigan Avenue

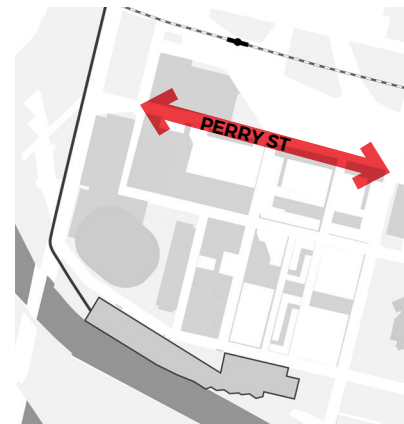
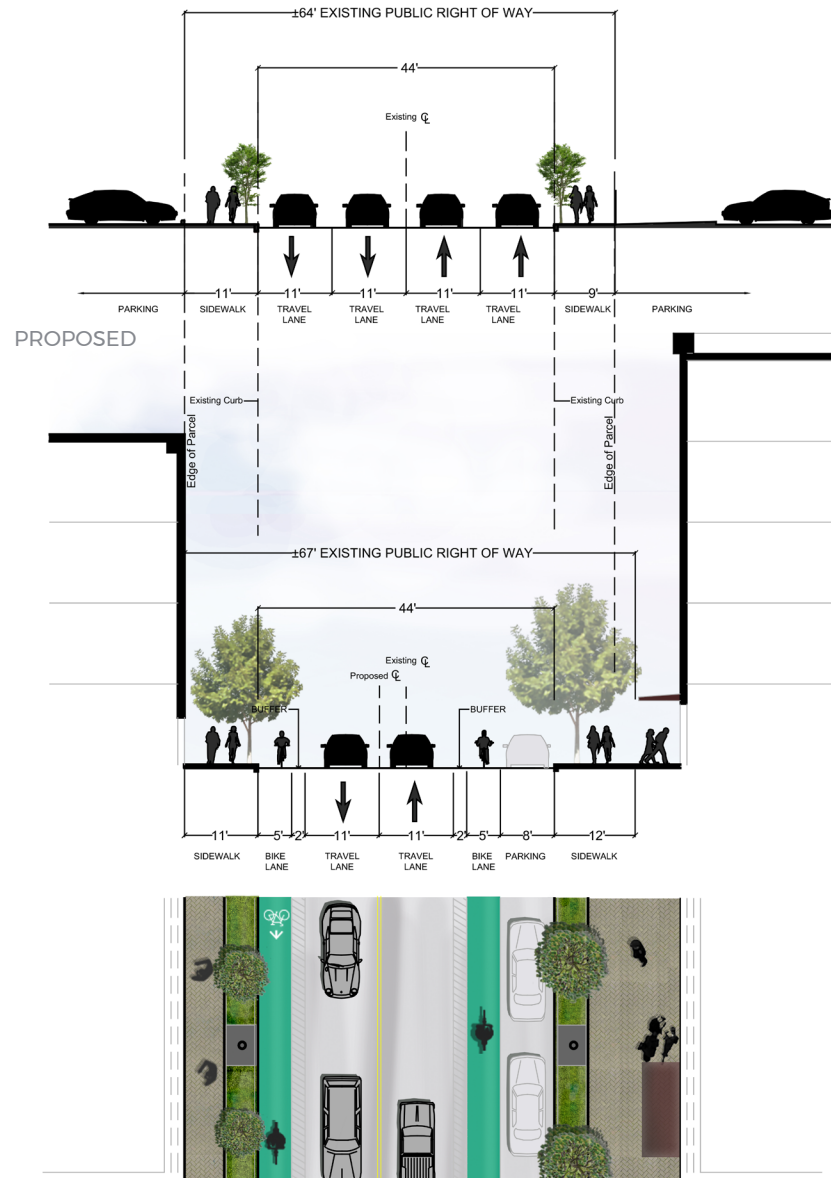
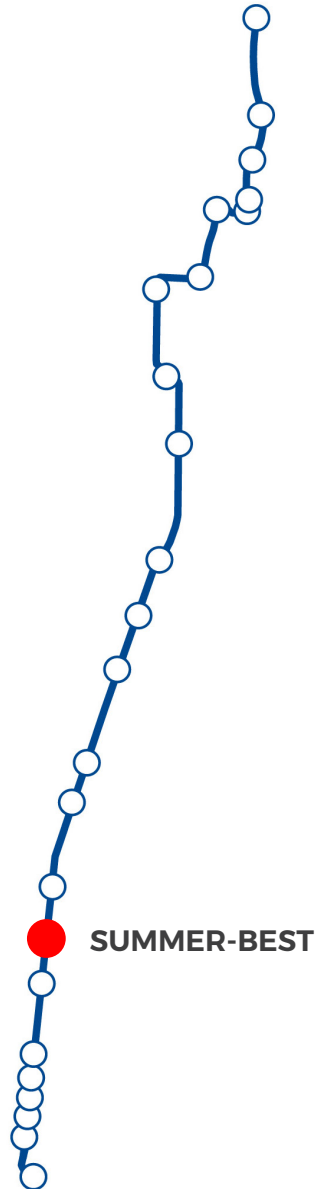


Figure 53. Complete Street Treatment for Perry Street

11.4. SUMMER-BEST



The Summer-Best station area plan is centered on the existing Summer-Best Station at the intersection of Main Street and Best Street.

11.4.1. SUMMER-BEST STATION AREA FRAMEWORK

The focus of the Summer-Best station area plan is to build off the recent investment and growth at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus to spur complimentary development. New Transit-Oriented Development is focused on the block encompassed by Main Street, Dodge Street, Ellicott Street, and Best Street, where the Summer-Best Station building is located. Secondary Transit-Oriented Development looks to infill vacant or underutilized property along Main Street with street fronting urban development with context appropriate residential development extending back beyond Main Street, transitioning to adjacent neighborhoods. The key east-west spine is Summer Street/ Best Street, and the key north-south spine is Main Street. A new greenspace would be created on the vacant land at the southeast corner of Main Street and Best Street to bring an engaging civic space to the area, helping to bridge the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus with Summer-Best Station.

Redevelopment Capitalizing on the BNMC with Transition to Adjacent Neighborhoods

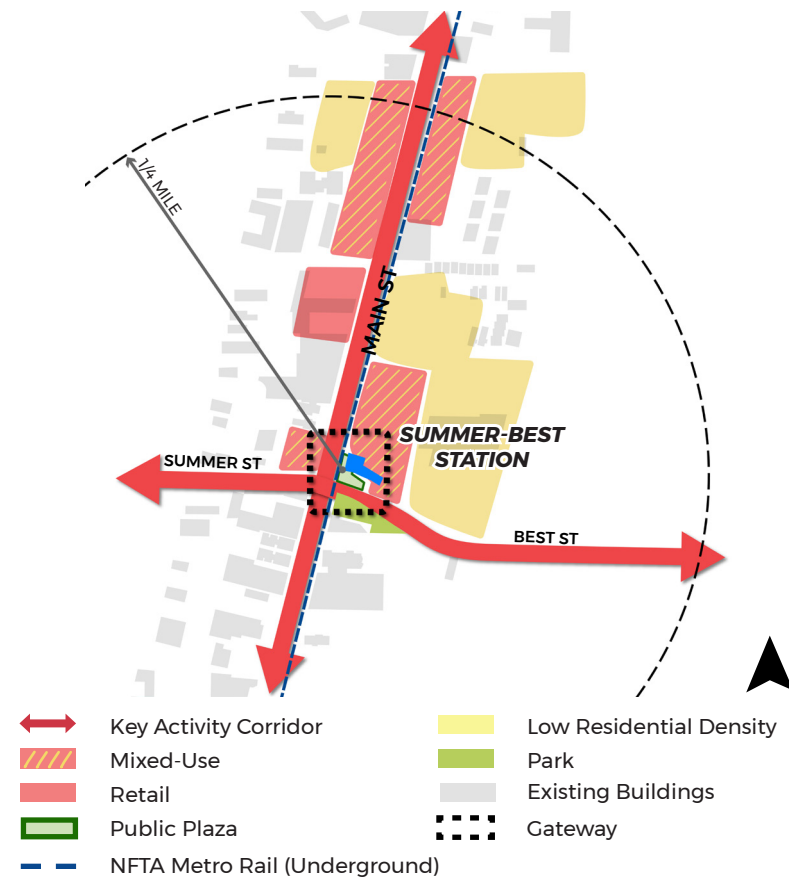


Figure 54. Summer-Best Station Area Framework

11.4.2. SUMMER-BEST KEY THEMES

<i>Complete Street</i>	Focus on improving multi-modal mobility on Main St and along major east-west roads
<i>Engaging Civic Space</i>	Focus on station improvements and providing multi-modal connections; provide active civic space on "Best parcel"
<i>Progressive Parking</i>	Dedicated on-street parking on Main St and promote active streetscape, pushing parking to rear
<i>Mixed-Use Development</i>	Development should accommodate and compliment expanding BNMC
<i>TOD Density Distribution</i>	Focus densest development near BNMC, transitioning to medium density along Main St
<i>Repurposing & Infill Development</i>	Focus infill development on vacant and underutilized sites along Main St and repurposing of existing building stock; avoid creeping in neighborhoods

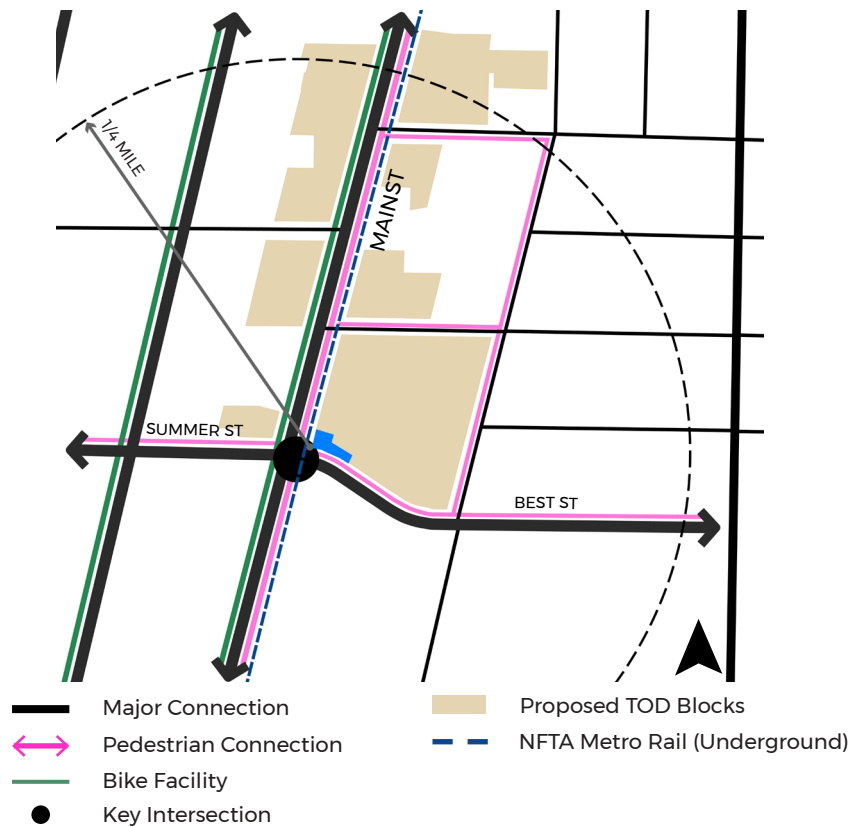


Figure 55. Summer-Best Station Area Connectivity

11.4.3. CONNECTIVITY

Expanding the catchment area of the Summer-Best station is a key component of improving the connectivity of the station area. This entails improving walkability and multi-modal opportunities along Main Street, Summer Street, and Best Street to create more comfortable and desirable walking conditions. This would help expand the transit-supportive catchment area of the station west to Elmwood Avenue and east to Jefferson Avenue. Complete Street treatments to Main Street are vital to enhance walkability, provide traffic calming, and offer multi-modal opportunities

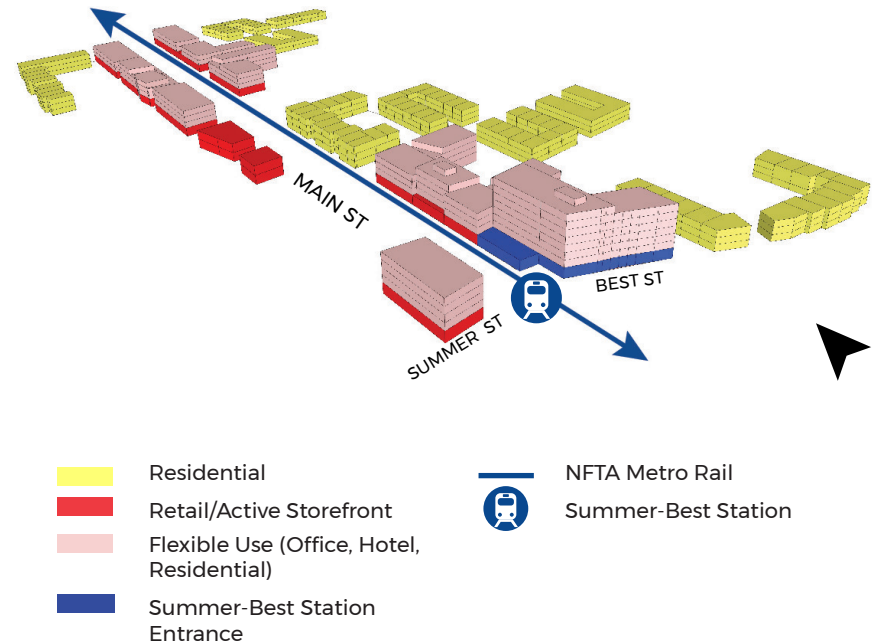


Figure 56. Summer-Best Stations Area Mix of Uses

11.4.4. MIX OF USES

The preferred TOD plan is to replace the existing Summer-Best station building with a new mixed-use building that is built over the station. A new station lobby (similar to that at Allen/ Medical Campus) within a new building fronting the corner of Main Street and Best Street would frame a civic plaza that would act as both an active transfer area providing enhanced amenities and a passive area for seating and public art. The greatest density is thus focused at the Summer-Best Station site, with other slightly less dense development along Main Street infilling underutilized land and surface parking, transitioning to medium-density development adjacent to neighborhoods. The mix of uses in the Summer-Best station area focuses active storefront activity along Main Street to create an active

and inviting streetscape (shown in red). Development fronting Main Street would be mixed-use with upper floor uses meeting market demand (shown in pink). Transitioning from Main Street, strictly medium-density residential uses like townhouses, rowhouses, or loft style residential, would act as a transition from the higher-density mixed-use development on Main Street to adjacent residential neighborhoods (shown in yellow). Depending on market strength, parking would be accommodated through both structured parking (near the Summer-Best Station) and surface parking that would be located to the rear of street fronting development. The Summer-Best Station and Mid Main area thus acts as the transition between BNMC and adjacent neighborhoods.

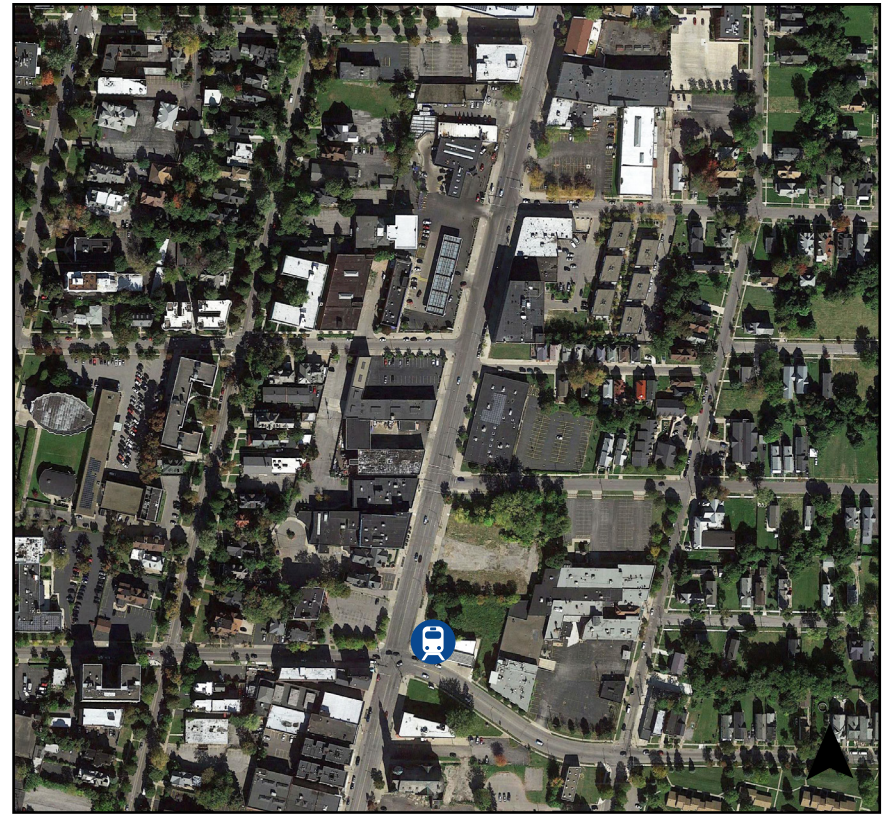


Figure 57. Existing Summer-Best Station Area Aerial



Figure 58. Summer-Best Station Area Illustrative Plan



Figure 59. Summer-Best Station Area Massing Concept

11.4.5. SUMMER-BEST STATION AREA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The following table identifies specific key infrastructure investment strategies for the Summer-Best station area that are the focus of implementing the Summer-Best station area plan vision. While there are likely additional infrastructure needs above and beyond those listed below, the table highlights the priority infrastructure investments that are deemed to have the most catalytic impact on facilitating Transit-Oriented Development in the Summer-Best station area. Each strategy is outlined with a description, action plan, the lead agency that would be charged with implementing the strategy, and the priority of the strategy in facilitating TOD, identified as very high, high, or medium

Table 34. Summer-Best Infrastructure Investment Strategies

<i>Priority Infrastructure Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Intersection improvements to Main Street and Summer Street/ Best Street	Improvements to numerous Main Street intersections were identified as needed to enhance walkability to Metro Rail stations. Focusing on the intersection of Main Street and Summer Street/ Best Street will directly improve connectivity to the Summer-Best Station.	Improvements can take the form of curb bump outs, enhanced/ high-visibility crossings, additional streetscape amenities, and traffic calming. These improvements could be implemented as part of a larger Main Street Complete Streets project or as spot improvements in the near-term.	City of Buffalo	Very High
Streetscape enhancements to Summer Street and Best Street	During the study workshops, several people indicated that they feel the catchment area of the Summer-Best Station can be expanded by providing more comfortable and desirable walking conditions along Summer Street and Best Street. This would expand the catchment area of the station west to Elmwood Avenue and east to Jefferson Avenue.	General walkability improvements to include street trees, improved crossings, street amenities, bike facilities, signage and wayfinding, pedestrian scale lighting, and active street scape/ storefronts.	City of Buffalo and developers	Very High
Develop greenspace at southeast corner of Main Street and Best Street	When Best Street was realigned, this area was vacated and remains as a City owned (BURA) parcel. This area should be developed as a pocket park to bring an engaging civic space to the area, helping to bridge the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus with Summer-Best Station.	Work with the City, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, developers, and/or not-for-profit organizations or community groups to develop this greenspace.	Numerous agencies	High

<i>Priority Infrastructure Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Bike share facility and bike storage	As the footprint of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus expands to the Summer-Best Station, there will be a need to improve connectivity with other multi-modal transportation modes to create a multi-modal hub. A first step will be to place a bike share station and bike storage within or adjacent to Summer-Best Station.	Work with Reddy Bike Share and GoBike Buffalo to bring bicycle facilities station.	Multiple agencies	High
Station area wayfinding and signage	A need to better direct people to Metro Rail stations within adjacent neighborhoods presents a need for consistent wayfinding and signage. Wayfinding and signage will facilitate transit accessibility, usage, and walkability and can be presented in a way that indicates the walking time to a Metro Rail station rather than distance.	Consult with a firm to develop and implement wayfinding and signage.	TBD	High
Improved NFTA Metro Bus station	Citing a need for improved intermodal connectivity between Metro Bus and Metro Rail, provide an enhanced station with real-time information, enhanced amenities, and bus canopy that would allow for enhanced, weather-protected experience in transferring between Metro Bus and Metro Rail.	Develop a prototype bus station/ canopy for use at Metro Rail stations that would offer customers an enhanced experience for transferring between Metro Bus and Metro Rail.	NFTA	Medium

11.4.6. SUMMER-BEST STATION AREA COMPLETE STREETS CONCEPTS

One infrastructure strategy that spans multiple stations and is recommended as a corridor-wide improvement is the Main Street Complete Street treatment. The entire stretch of Main Street from Goodell to Kenmore Avenue was identified as in need of Complete Streets treatment that would bring opportunities for bicycle travel, improved walkability, traffic calming, and enhanced transit access to Main Street. Implementing a complete street treatment along Main Street was identified in the Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan as a catalytic project, and is currently being pushed into further design by the City. This Summer-Best station area plan should be collaborated with the City of Buffalo to shape this project and implement a complete street solution to Main Street as a high priority. Initially this could include restriping Main Street to reduce the number of travel lanes and accommodate bike lanes and/or on-street parking. Ultimately, Main Street gets a complete makeover with new public realm amenities, streetscape enhancements, intersection improvements, etc.

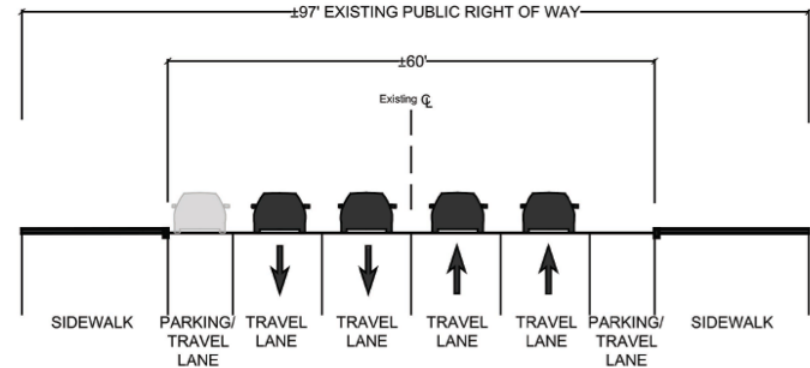


Figure 61. Existing Main Street 6-Lane Configuration, Goodell to SR 198

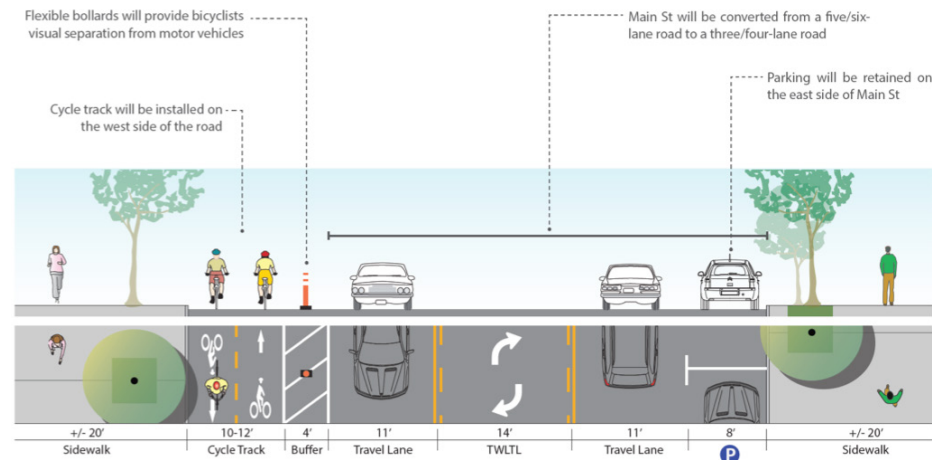
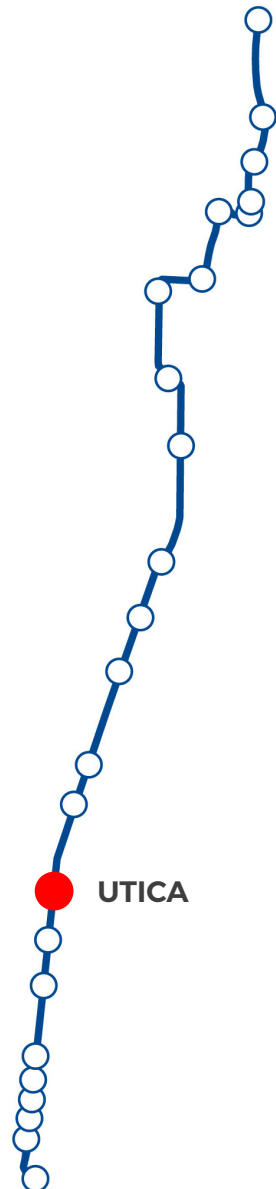


Figure 60. Concept for Complete Street Treatment on Main Street (as taken from Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan).

11.5. UTICA



The Utica station area plan is centered on the existing Utica station located on the northeast corner of Main Street and Utica Street.

11.5.1. UTICA STATION AREA FRAMEWORK

The focus of this station area plan is to “fill in the corners,” which means to bring active storefront development up to the intersection to frame an urban, transit-oriented neighborhood at the intersection of Main Street and Utica Street. New Transit-Oriented Development is focused on overbuild of the Utica station and the properties on the west side of Main Street that have expansive surface parking lots that can be infilled. Secondary Transit-Oriented Development looks to infill vacant and underutilized property along Main Street with street fronting development, with context appropriate residential development extending back beyond Main Street, transitioning to adjacent neighborhoods. The key east-west spine is Utica Street, and the key north-south spine is Main Street. A new bus pull-off is located on Utica Street that will replace the existing bus loop. This bus pull-off will include an enhanced transfer area that will make the transfer between Metro Bus and Metro Rail more comfortable while also providing a more identifiable station for the community.

Creating a Multi-Modal Hub of Community Based Activity

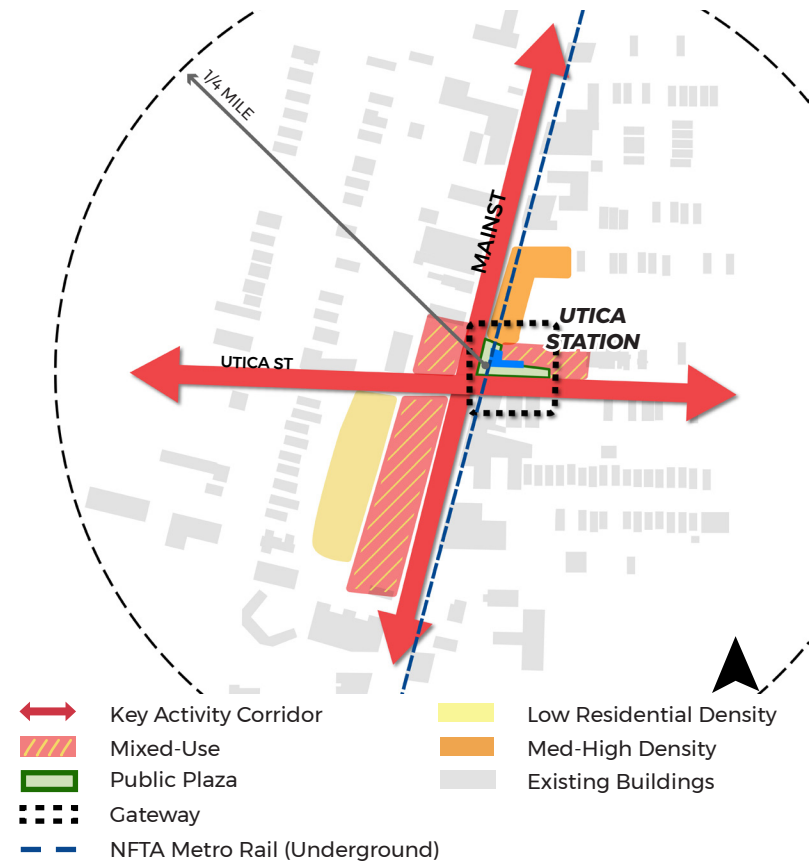


Figure 62. Utica Station Area TOD Framework

11.5.2. UTICA STATION AREA KEY THEMES

<i>Complete Street</i>	Focus on improving multi-modal mobility on Main Street and along major east-west roads.
<i>Engaging Civic Space</i>	Focus on station improvements and providing multi-modal connections; create a community hub within and adjacent to the station.
<i>Progressive Parking</i>	Dedicated on-street parking on Main Street and promote active streetscape, pushing surface parking to the rear.
<i>Mixed-Use Development</i>	Development should be focused on framing an urban, transit-oriented neighborhood at the intersection of Main Street and Utica Street that continues to evolve this neighborhood center.
<i>TOD Density Distribution</i>	Focus densest development as an overbuild of Utica Station, transitioning to lower density towards adjacent neighborhoods.
<i>Repurposing & Infill Development</i>	Focus infill development near the intersection of Main Street and Utica Street and on sites with expansive surface parking.

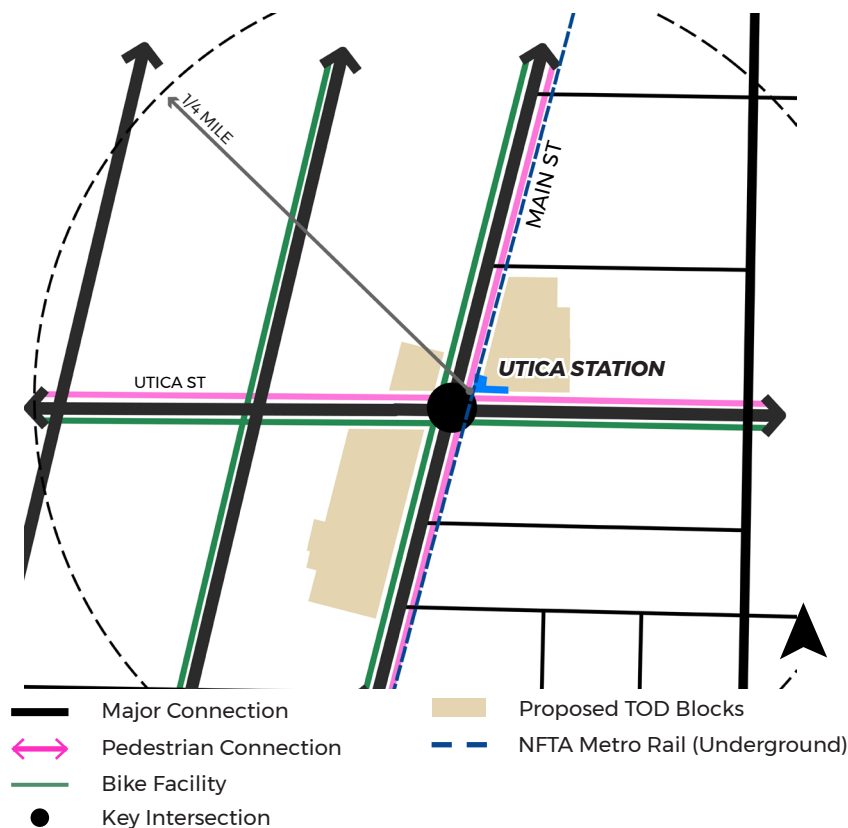


Figure 63. Utica Station Area Connectivity

11.5.3. CONNECTIVITY

Expanding the catchment area of the Utica station is a key component of improving the connectivity of the station area. This entails improving walkability and multi-modal opportunities along Main Street and Utica Street to create more comfortable and desirable walking conditions. This would help expand the catchment area of the station west to Elmwood Avenue, north to the Main-Ferry neighborhood, and east to Jefferson Avenue. Complete Street treatments to Main Street are vital to enhance walkability, provide traffic calming, and offer multi-modal opportunities. An enhanced multi-modal hub will make the transfer between Metro Bus and Metro Rail more comfortable.

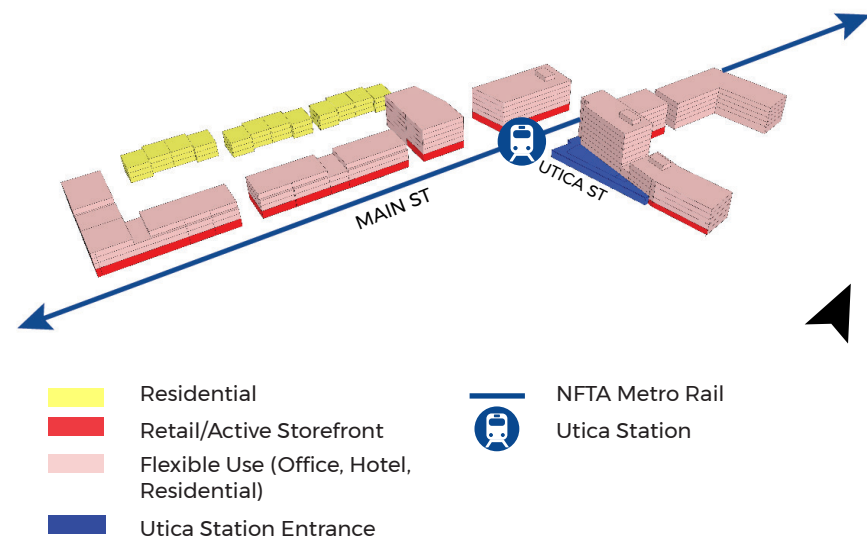


Figure 64. Utica Station Area Mix of Uses

11.5.4. MIX OF USES

The preferred TOD plan is to replace the existing Utica station building with a new mixed-use development that is built over the station, offers a new lobby (similar to that at Allen/ Medical Campus), creates a new multi-modal hub that fronts the intersection of Main Street and Utica Street, and provides upper floor uses that can expand transit use. The greatest density is thus focused at the Utica Station site, with other slightly less dense development along Main Street, transitioning to medium-density development adjacent to neighborhoods.

The mix of uses in the Utica station area focuses active storefront activity along Main Street to create an active and inviting streetscape (shown in

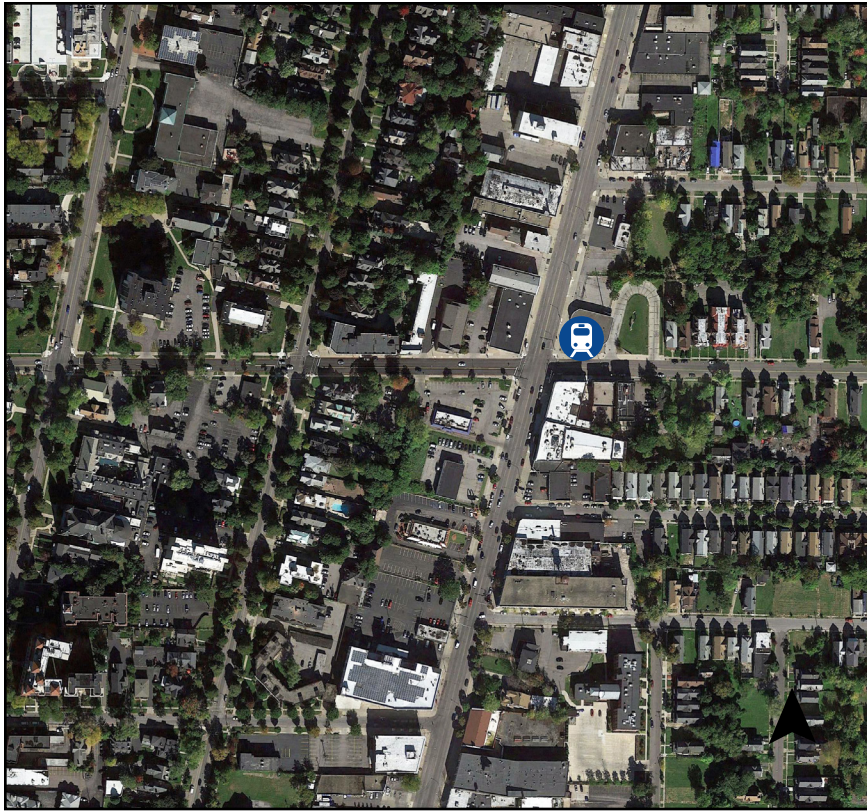


Figure 65. Existing Utica Station Area Aeria

red). The focal point is bringing street fronting development to all corners of that intersection to frame an active, urban neighborhood. Development fronting Main Street would be mixed-use with upper floor uses meeting market demand (shown in pink). Medium-density residential uses (like townhouses, rowhouses, or loft-style residential) would help transition denser mixed-uses along Main Street to adjacent residential neighborhoods (shown in yellow). Since density is slightly less than that at Summer-Best Station, most parking would be accommodated by surface parking that would be located to the rear of street fronting development.



Figure 66. Utica Station Illustrative Plan

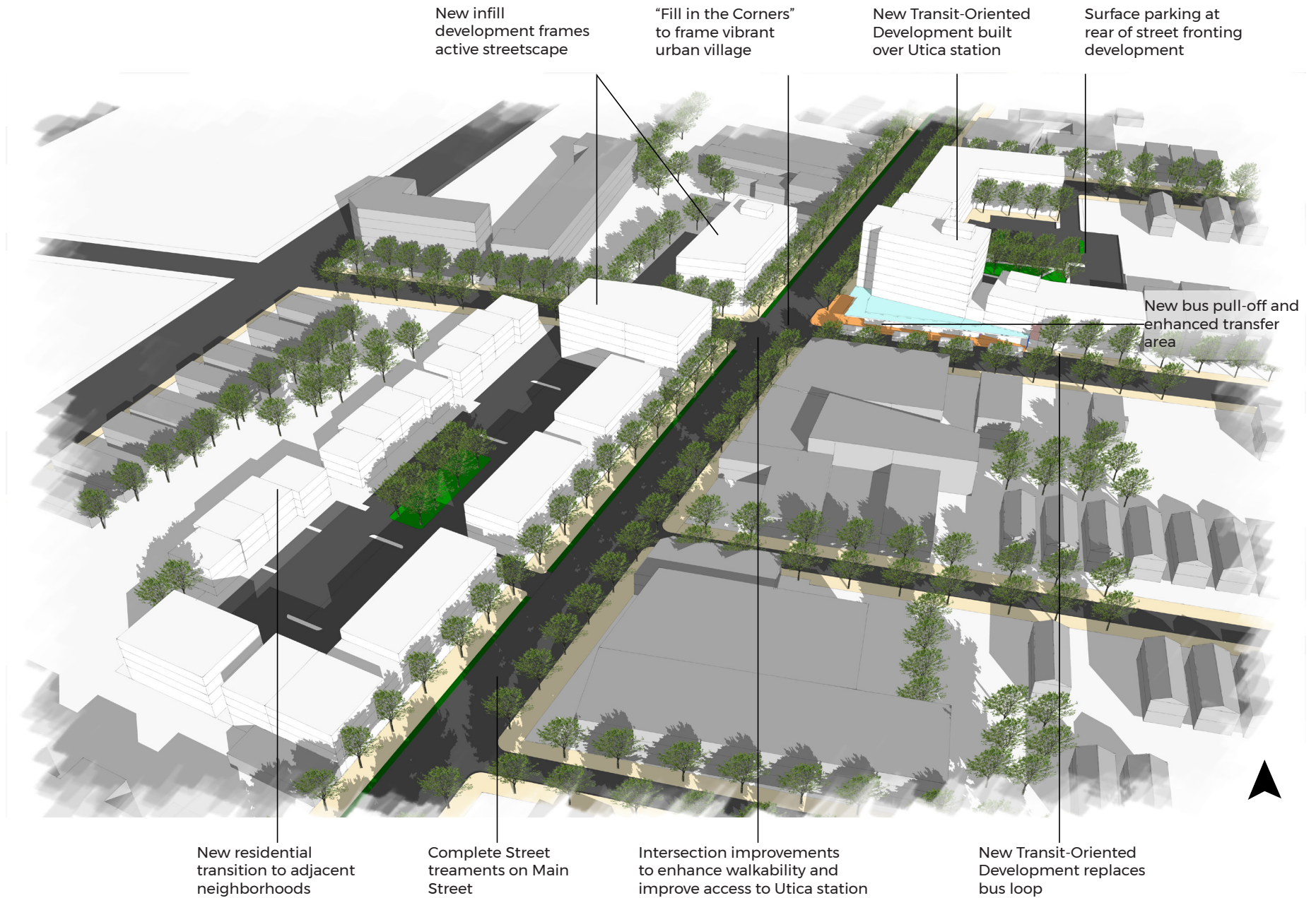


Figure 67. Utica Station Area Massing Concept

11.5.6. UTICA STATION AREA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The following table identifies specific key infrastructure investment strategies for the Utica station area that are the focus of implementing the Utica station area plan vision. While there are likely additional infrastructure needs above and beyond those listed below, the table highlights the priority infrastructure investments that are deemed to have the most catalytic impact on facilitating Transit-Oriented Development in the Utica station area. Each strategy is outlined with a description, action plan, the lead agency that would be charged with implementing the strategy, and the priority of the strategy in facilitating TOD, identified as very high, high, or medium.

Table 35. Utica Infrastructure Investment Strategies

<i>Priority Infrastructure Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Intersection improvements to Main Street and Utica Street	Improvements to numerous Main Street intersections were identified as needed to enhance walkability to Metro Rail stations. As a priority, the intersection of Main Street and Utica Street should be treated. Implement walkability, multi-modal, and public realm enhancements at the intersections to improve walkability and connectivity between the east and west sides of Main Street.	Improvements can take the form of bicycle facilities, curb bump outs to reduce the crossing distance, enhanced/ high-visibility crossings with ped countdown heads, traffic calming with raised, textured, or patterned intersection, pedestrian lighting, streetscape enhancements, and on-street parking lane/ bus pull-off areas. These improvements could be implemented as part of a larger Main Street Complete Streets project or as spot improvements in the near-term.	City of Buffalo	Very High
Utica Neighborhood Greenway	Implementing the Utica Neighborhood Greenway project will improve east-west connectivity between surrounding neighborhoods and Utica Station.	The Utica Neighborhood Greenway project was identified in the Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan as a catalytic project. The project includes providing bicycle facilities, enhanced streetscape, and traffic calming. Coordinate with the City of Buffalo to implement this project.	City of Buffalo	High

<i>Priority Infrastructure Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Station area wayfinding and signage	A need to better direct people to Metro Rail stations within adjacent neighborhoods presents a need for consistent wayfinding and signage. Wayfinding and signage will facilitate transit accessibility, usage, and walkability and can be presented in a way that indicates the walking time to a Metro Rail station rather than distance.	Consult with a firm to develop and implement wayfinding and signage.	TBD	High
Bike share facility and bike storage	As Utica station continues to develop into community hub, there will be a need to improve connectivity with other multi-modal transportation modes. A first step will be to place a bike share station and bike storage within or adjacent to Utica Station.	Work with Reddy Bike Share and GoBike Buffalo to bring bicycle facilities station.	Multiple agencies	High
Intersection improvements to Main Street and Ferry Street	As redevelopment continues to occur around the intersection of Main and Ferry, intersection improvements and near-term streetscape enhancements along Main Street are necessary to better connect this area with Utica station.	These improvements could be implemented as part of a larger Main Street Complete Streets project or as spot improvements in the near-term to accommodate and support ongoing redevelopment. This could entail working with developers to provide PILOTs that would pay for streetscape improvements.	City of Buffalo	High
Improved NFTA Metro Bus station and pull-off area, and enhanced civic space	Citing a need for improved intermodal connectivity between Metro Bus and Metro Rail, provide an enhanced station with real-time information, enhanced amenities, and bus canopy that would allow for enhanced, weather-protected experience in transferring between Metro Bus and Metro Rail. This also includes providing a new bus pull-off area on Utica. Also, enhance the public realm in front of Utica station along Main Street and Utica Street to create an active and intriguing civic space.	This would include using extra sidewalk space created by curb bump-outs to provide an enhanced bus waiting area, canopy, and more intriguing civic space. In addition, remove the existing bus loop east of Utica station to create a larger development site at the station site, and provide improvements to Utica Street to accommodate 4 bus pull-offs on the north side and 1 bus pull-off on the south side of Utica.	NFTA	High

11.5.5. UTICA STATION AREA COMPLETE STREETS

One infrastructure strategy that spans multiple stations and is recommended as a corridor-wide improvement is the Main Street Complete Street treatment. The entire stretch of Main Street from Goodell to Kenmore Avenue was identified as in need of Complete Streets treatment that would bring opportunities for bicycle travel, improved walkability, traffic calming, and enhanced transit access to Main Street. Implementing a complete street treatment along Main Street was identified in the Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan as a catalytic project, and is currently being pushed into further design by the City. This Utica station area plan should be collaborated with the City of Buffalo to shape this project and implement a complete street solution to Main Street as a high priority. Initially this could include restriping Main Street to reduce the number of travel lanes and accommodate bike lanes and/or on-street parking. Ultimately, Main Street gets a complete makeover with new public realm amenities, streetscape enhancements, intersection improvements, etc.

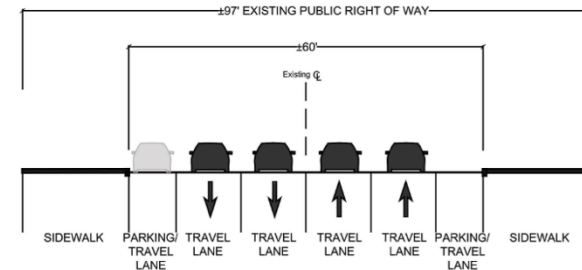
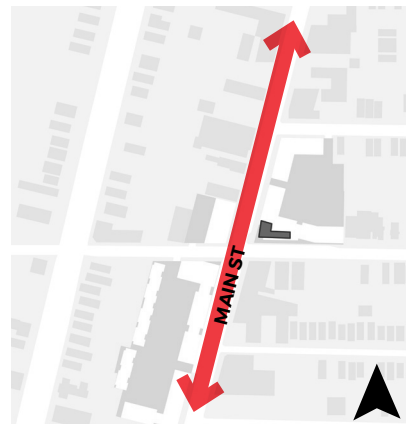


Figure 69. Existing Main Street 6-Lane Configuration, Goodell to SR 198

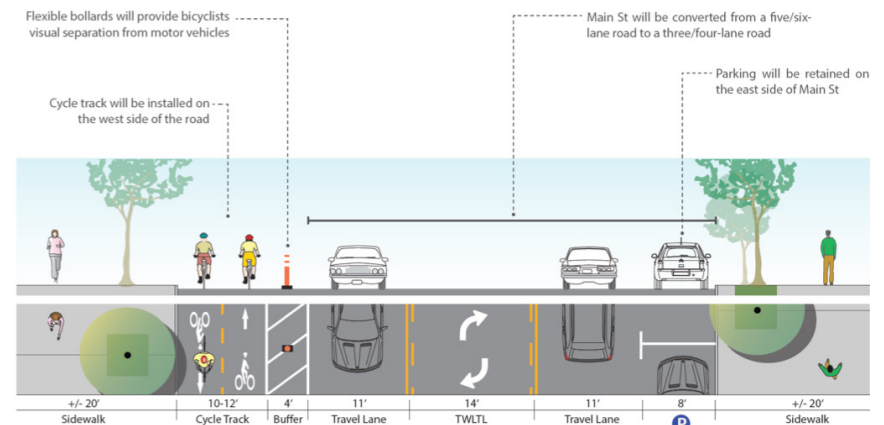


Figure 68. Concept for Complete Street Treatment on Main Street, as taken from Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan

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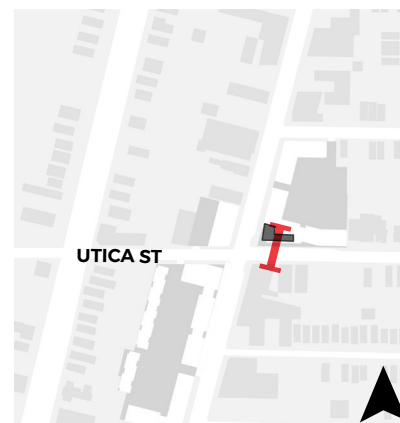
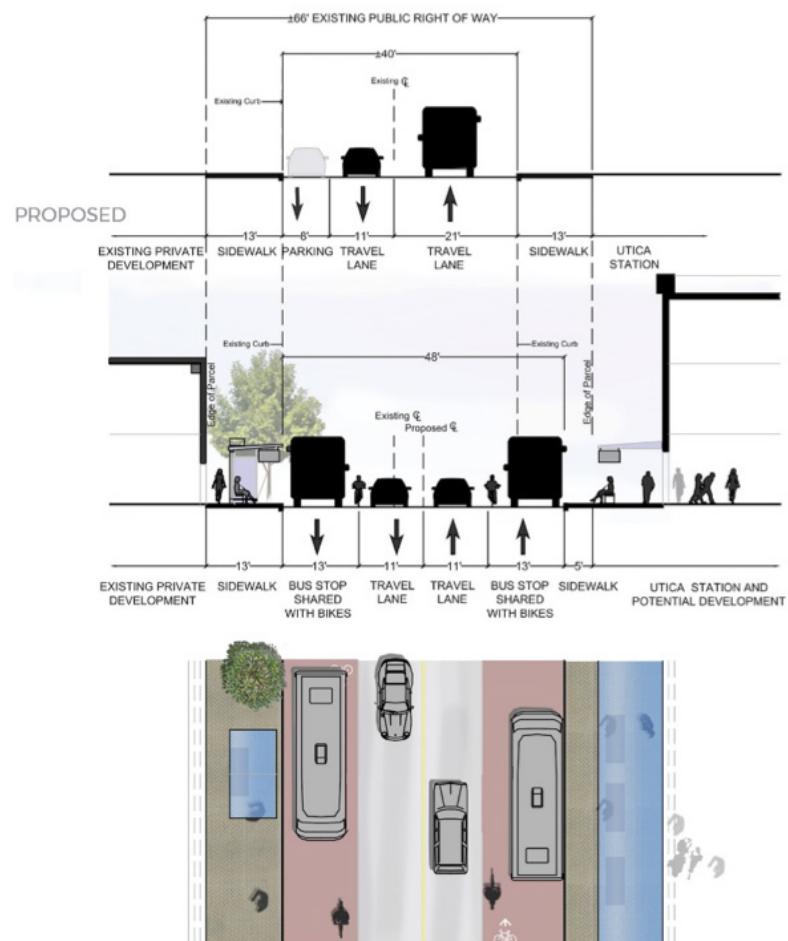


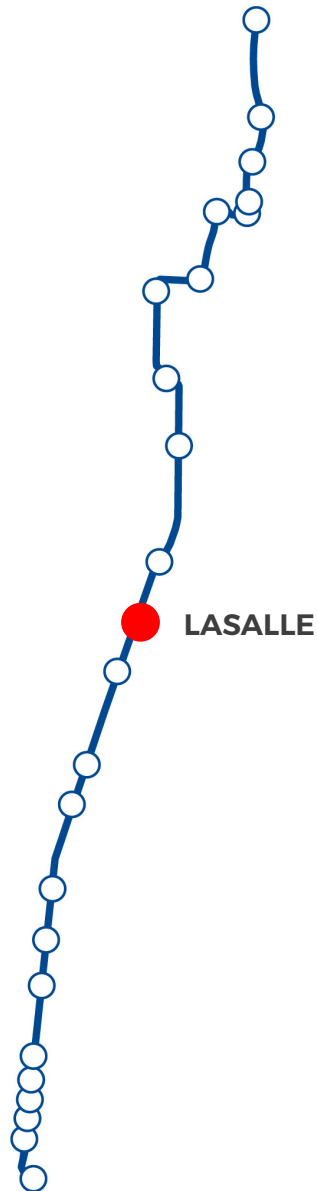
Figure 70. Utica St Proposed Complete Streets Improvements





Figure 71. Summer-Best Station and Utica Station Combined Illustrative Plan

11.6. LASALLE



The LaSalle station area plan covers the existing LaSalle station as well as the adjacent park-and-ride lot and nearby properties.

11.6.1. LASALLE STATION AREA FRAMEWORK

The focus of this station area plan is to pilot a Transit-Oriented Development and mobility hub at a publicly owned site – the park-and-ride lot that is partially owned by NFTA and City of Buffalo. New Transit-Oriented Development is focused on overbuild of the LaSalle station as well as on the adjacent park-and-ride lot. The LaSalle station area should build off the multi-modal opportunities presented by the North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails to create a mobility hub and strengthen the University Heights neighborhood economically by offering a type of development not currently available. Complete Street treatments would be implemented along Main Street improving walkability and better tying in the east side of Main Street to LaSalle station. A new roadway would be extended into the site, aligning with Minnesota Avenue, that would open up the parking lot for development opportunities. Open space would connect the site to Shoshone Park and extensions of trails and bike lanes would connect the LaSalle station area to adjacent neighborhoods.

Piloting a TOD & Mobility Hub at a Publicly Owned Site

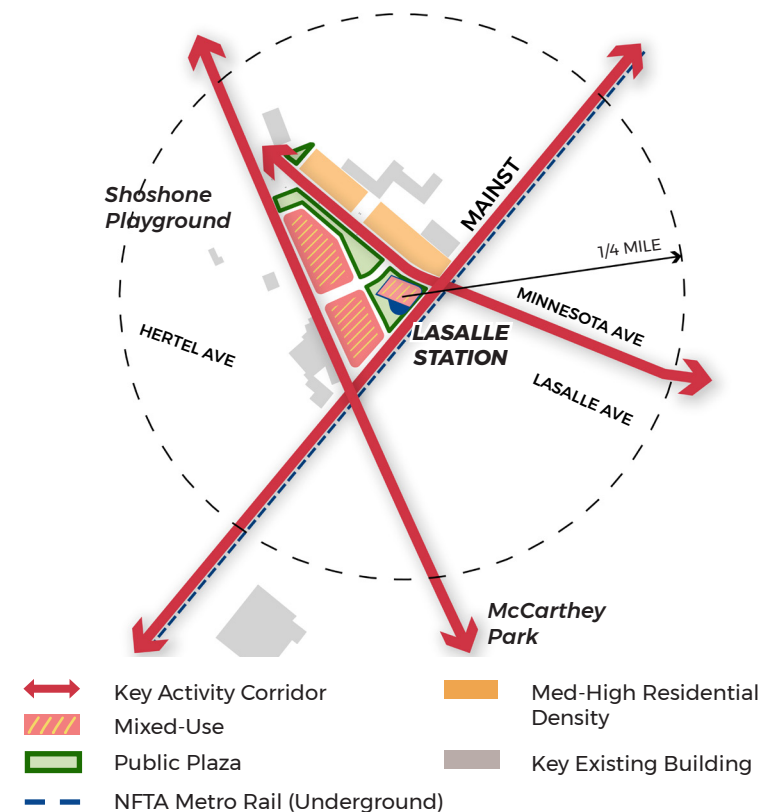


Figure 72. LaSalle Station Area TOD Framework

11.6.2. LASALLE STATION AREA KEY THEMES

<i>Complete Street</i>	Focus on providing Complete Street treatments and improving crosswalks in vicinity of station; capitalize on Rails-to-Trails to create a mobility hub.
<i>Engaging Civic Space</i>	Focus on station improvements and providing multi-modal connections; provide open space that connects site to Shoshone Park; provide engaging civic space to tie development to Main Street.
<i>Progressive Parking</i>	Replace surface parking with structured parking that serves both park-and-ride and site development.
<i>Mixed-Use Development</i>	Development focused on creating new active neighborhood that compliments University Heights.
<i>TOD Density Distribution</i>	Focus densest development as station overbuild and along a spine created by civic space and a new roadway that extends from Main Street into the site.
<i>Repurposing & Infill Development</i>	Focus new TOD development over station and throughout surface parking lot.

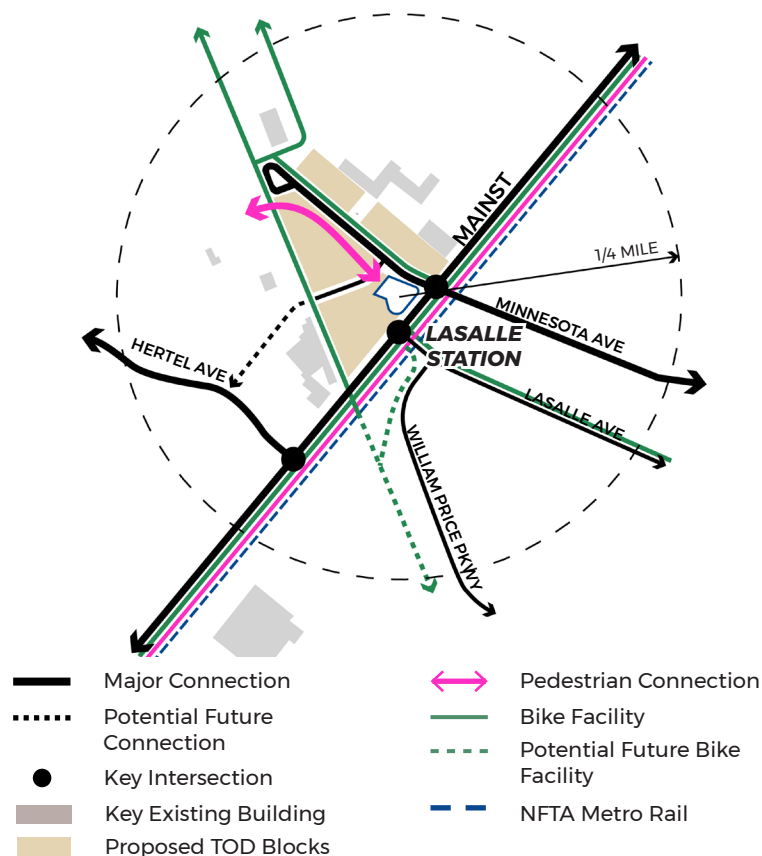


Figure 73. LaSalle Station Area Connectivity

11.6.3. CONNECTIVITY

Expanding the catchment area of LaSalle station throughout University Heights and better connecting the station with nearby neighborhoods is a key connectivity objective. Currently, the site is long and lacks connectivity. An extension of Minnesota Avenue into the site would open up opportunities for development, and in doing so, connect this development with Main Street. In the future, a connection could also be made to Beard Avenue that would shorten the distance to Hertel Avenue. An extension of the Rails-to-Trails to the east side of Main Street or extension of bike lanes along existing streets would further enhance connectivity to the station.

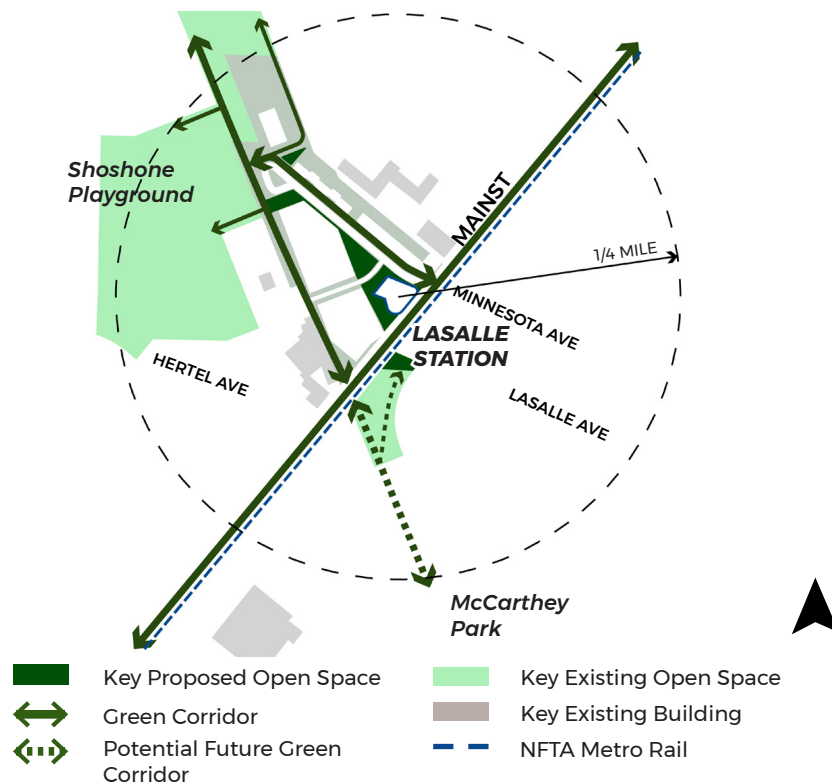


Figure 74. LaSalle Station Area Civic and Open Space

11.6.4. OPEN SPACE

Incorporating the North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails into the LaSalle station area TOD, connecting the site with Shoshone Park, improving walkability along Main Street, and tying in an enhanced Metro Bus pull-off will work to create a mobility hub at the station and open space connectivity to adjacent parks and trails. Further, improved crosswalks across Main Street and extending bike facilities east of Main Street will help expand the catchment area and help develop a mobility hub at this location. The Rails-to-Trails path would take two routes through LaSalle; if bicyclists want to use the path to get to Main Street, they would use the branch that runs along the western side of the LaSalle station area, if bicyclists want to access LaSalle station, they would use an on-street network that branches off near Shoshone Park

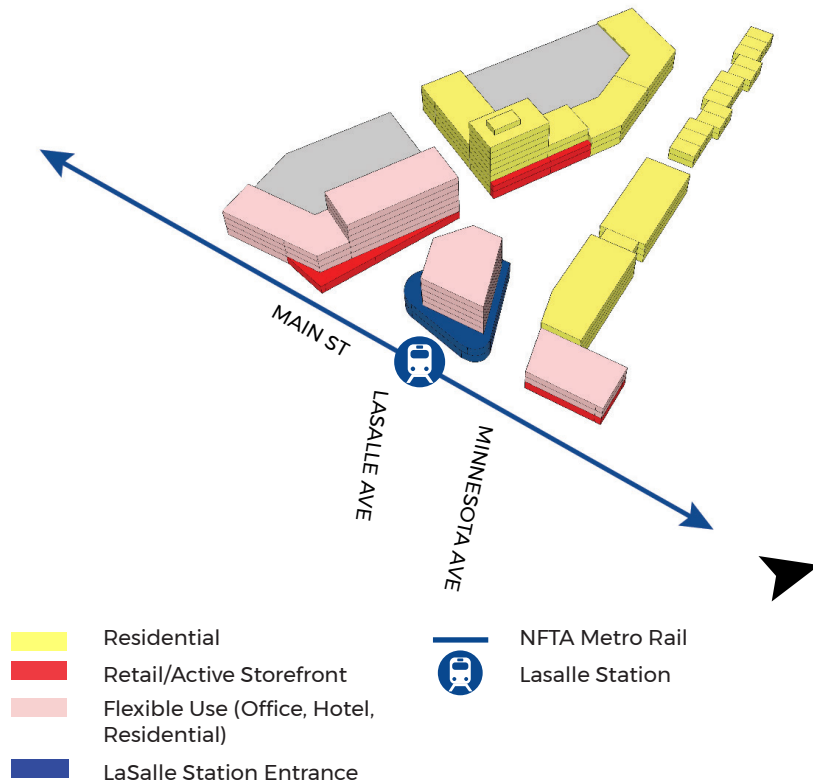


Figure 75. LaSalle Station Area Mix of Uses

to the station. An active civic plaza near the station will generate activity along Main Street as well as draw interest into the site from Main Street. Within the site, connections to Shoshone Park would help tie the LaSalle station and Transit-Oriented Development to adjacent neighborhoods.

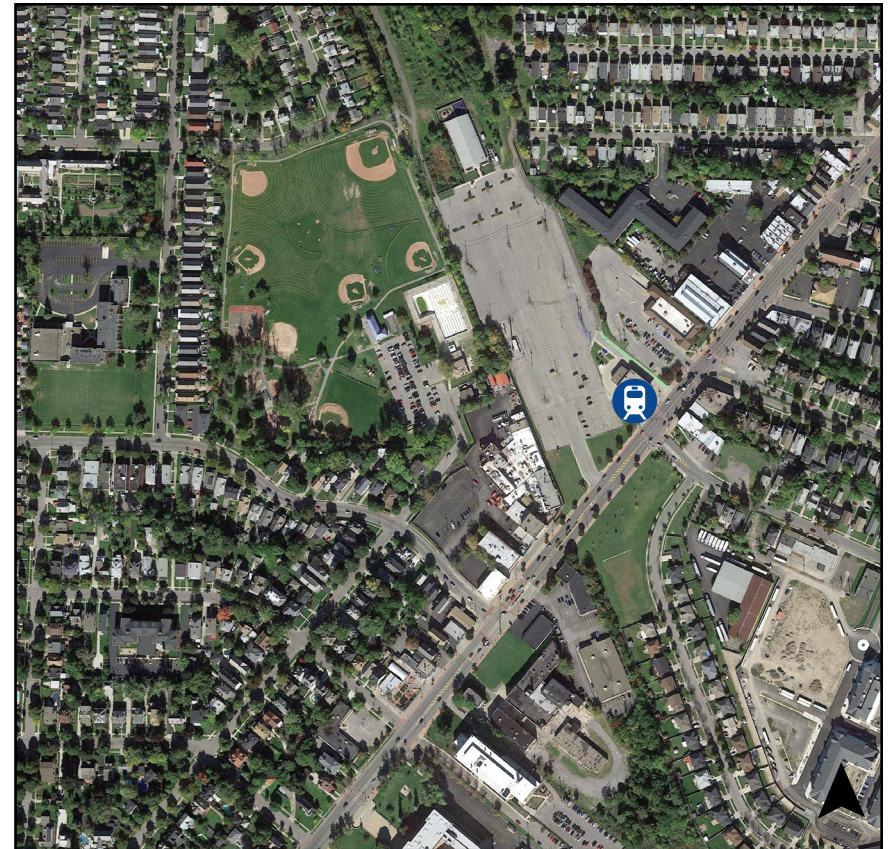


Figure 76. Existing LaSalle Station Area Aerial

11.6.5. MIX OF USES

The preferred Transit-Oriented Development plan is to replace the existing LaSalle station building with a new iconic, mixed-use building that is built over the station, offers a new lobby (similar to that at Allen/ Medical Campus), creates a new mobility hub that draws upon the Rails-to-Trails, and provides upper floor uses that can expand transit use. The greatest density is thus focused at the LaSalle station site and along a spine created by the civic plaza and extension of Minnesota Avenue that frames the site's viewshed from Main Street. Nearby single use development can eventually be replaced with denser, mixed-use development.

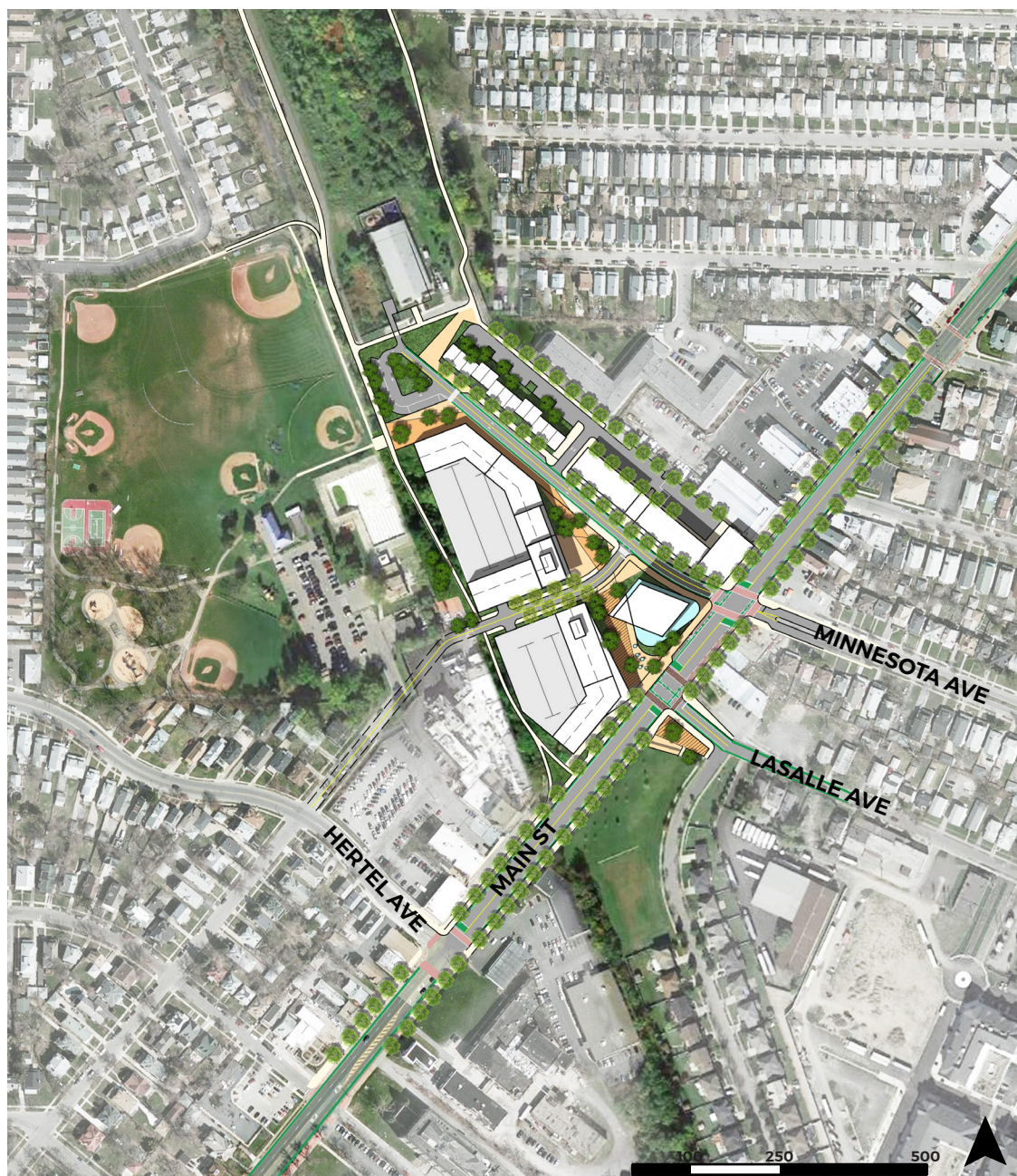


Figure 77. LaSalle Station Area Illustrative Plan

The mix of uses in the LaSalle station area focuses on storefront activity which is mainly placed on a civic space created around the station and along a spine that reaches into the site (shown in red). The most intense uses would be located towards Main Street (shown in pink), with mainly residential towards the rear of the site (shown in yellow) to facilitate transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods, Shoshone Park, and the existing day care. Most parking would be accommodated by structured parking that would be wrapped with development and built to accommodate site development as well as park-and-ride commuters. Parking for less dense development could be accommodated by on-street parking or surface parking lots. A parking area at the rear of the site could accommodate overflow parking for Shoshone Park.



Figure 78. LaSalle Station Area Massing Concept

11.6.6. LASALLE STATION AREA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The following table identifies specific key infrastructure investment strategies for the LaSalle station area that are the focus of implementing the LaSalle station area plan vision. While there are likely additional infrastructure needs above and beyond those listed below, the table highlights the priority infrastructure investments that are deemed to have the most catalytic impact on facilitating Transit-Oriented Development in the LaSalle station area. Each strategy is outlined with a description, action plan, the lead agency that would be charged with implementing the strategy, and the priority of the strategy in facilitating TOD, identified as very high, high, or medium.

Table 36. LaSalle Infrastructure Investment Strategies

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Main Street/ LaSalle Avenue Intersection and Main Street/ Minnesota Avenue Intersection Improvements	Improvements to numerous Main Street intersections were identified as needed to enhance walkability to Metro Rail stations. Implement walkability and public realm enhancements at the intersections to improve walkability and connectivity between the east and west sides of Main Street.	This should include curb bump outs to reduce the crossing distance, streetscape enhancements, extension of the North Buffalo Rail Trail across Main Street, and raised, textured, or patterned intersections to slow traffic.	City of Buffalo	Very High
Creation of a multi-modal/ mobility hub at LaSalle station	The North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails project offers a great opportunity for a multi-modal hub at this location. The ultimate concept would be to provide a multi-modal hub with bike share station, bike storage, bathroom and changing facilities, repair station, and other amenities.	Work with Reddy Bike Share and GoBike Buffalo to bring multi-modal hub to LaSalle station.	Multiple agencies	Very High
Station area wayfinding and signage	A need to better direct people to Metro Rail stations within adjacent neighborhoods presents a need for consistent wayfinding and signage. Wayfinding and signage will facilitate transit accessibility, usage, and walkability and can be presented in a way that indicates the walking time to a Metro Rail station rather than distance.	Consult with a firm to develop and implement wayfinding and signage.	TBD	High

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Minnesota Avenue extension	Extend Minnesota Avenue into the site to break up the size of the large site and enhance access and connectivity. Extending Minnesota Avenue would provide improved access into the site from Main Street. At some point in the future, a connection through to Beard Avenue would enhance connectivity to Shoshone Park and Hertel Avenue from the site and University Heights	As redevelopment of the LaSalle Station parking lot becomes eminent, work with developer or implement a capital project (possible as part of a PILOT) to extend streets to create smaller blocks and improve access and connectivity.	Private developer	High
North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails extension across Main Street via LaSalle Avenue	The North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails was identified as a catalytic success story in connecting neighborhoods to LaSalle station. Extend North Buffalo Rails-to-Trails from its current terminus near the LaSalle station, across Main Street, as a continuation as bike lanes along LaSalle Avenue.	Seek grant funding for design and construction to implement extension or incorporate parts of the trail extension as part of a development of the site and/ or through a PILOT.	City of Buffalo, Erie County, GoBike Buffalo, private developer	High
Removal of bus loop and creation of enhanced NFTA Metro Bus station and civic plaza at south end of LaSalle Station	As part of Main Street Complete Streets treatment, bus pull-off areas should be incorporated on Main Street with enhanced bus stop that includes real-time information, enhanced amenities, and canopy to provide improved transfer between Metro Bus and Metro Rail. As part of the project, the bus loop can be removed to make way for a civic plaza that opens up the station to the redevelopment.	As redevelopment of the site occurs and complete street treatment is implemented on Main Street, the two would collaborate to eliminate the bus loop and generate a civic plaza. The civic plaza could also be implemented through a PILOT with a developer.	NFTA, City of Buffalo, and/or private developer	Medium

11.6.7. LASALLE STATION AREA COMPLETE STREETS CONCEPTS

One infrastructure strategy that spans multiple stations and is recommended as a corridor-wide improvement is the Main Street Complete Street treatment. The entire stretch of Main Street from Goodell to Kenmore Avenue was identified as in need of Complete Streets treatment that would bring opportunities for bicycle travel, improved walkability, traffic calming, and enhanced transit access to Main Street. Implementing a complete street treatment along Main Street was identified in the Buffalo Bicycle Master Plan as a catalytic project, and is currently being pushed into further design by the City. This LaSalle station area plan should be collaborated with the City of Buffalo to shape this project and implement a complete street solution to Main Street as a high priority. Initially this could include restriping Main Street to reduce the number of travel lanes and accommodate bike lanes and/or on-street parking. Ultimately, Main Street gets a complete makeover with new public realm amenities, streetscape enhancements, intersection improvements, etc.

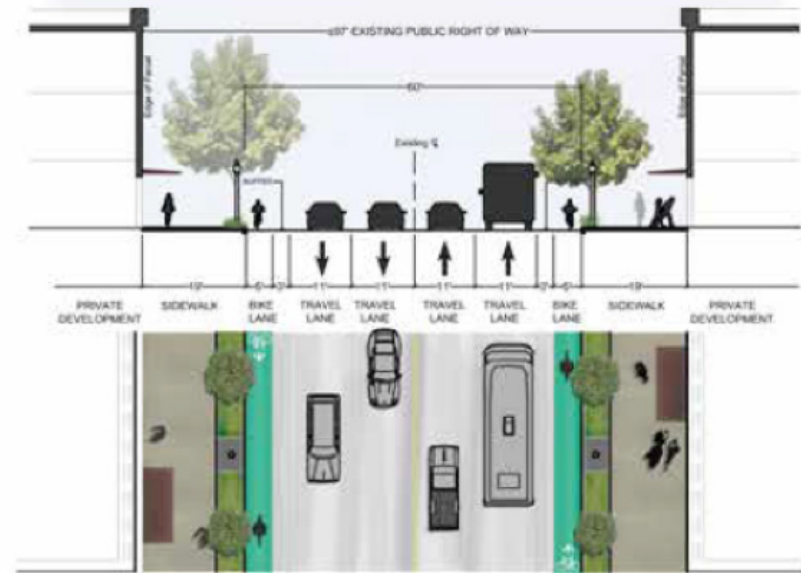
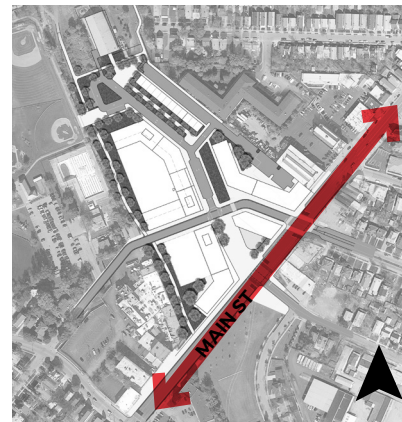
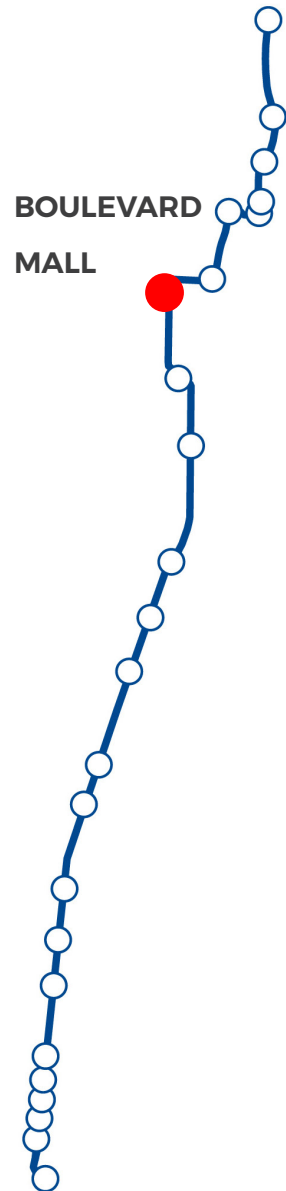


Figure 79. Complete Street Treatment for Main Street in Vicinity of LaSalle Station



11.7. BOULEVARD MALL



The Boulevard Mall station area is centered on a station proposed as part of the Metro Rail extension. The station would be located either along Niagara Falls Boulevard or, as is the case in the following station area plan within the Boulevard Mall site.

11.7.1. BOULEVARD MALL STATION AREA FRAMEWORK

The focus of this station area plan is to remake the Boulevard Mall into a transit-oriented “Live, Work, Play” neighborhood. New Transit-Oriented Development is centered on a new Metro Rail station located central to the Boulevard Mall site, surrounded by Transit-Oriented Development. Secondary Transit-Oriented Development looks to infill vacant or underutilized property along Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road with street fronting transit-supportive development that allows for a transition to adjacent neighborhoods. Complete Street treatments to Niagara Falls Boulevard, Maple Road, and Alberta Drive will provide much needed walkability and multi-modal transportation improvements. A new street network and smaller block sizes within the Boulevard Mall site will break up the large site and improve connectivity.

Repurposing the Boulevard Mall as a Live-Work-Play Neighborhood

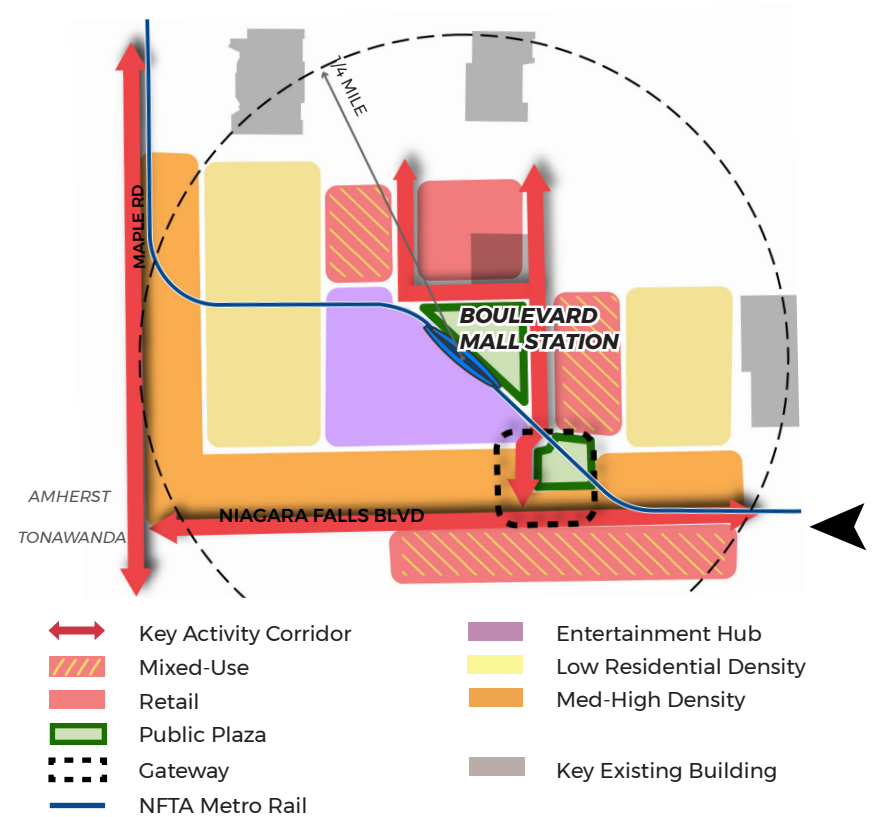


Figure 80. Boulevard Mall Station Area TOD Framework

11.7.2. BOULEVARD MALL STATION AREA KEY THEMES

<i>Complete Street</i>	Focus on vastly improving the walkability and bikeability of Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road; provide additional access throughout Boulevard Mall site to improve connectivity within the site and with surrounding neighborhoods.
<i>Engaging Civic Space</i>	Integrate station into a development on the Boulevard Mall site; look to activate streetscape around station and create comfortable connections to station from Niagara Falls Boulevard.
<i>Progressive Parking</i>	Replace some surface parking with parking structures that accommodate both transit park-and-riders and site development and are flexible to be converted to other uses as demand warrants.
<i>Mixed-Use Development</i>	Development focused on repurposing the mall site to create a “Live-Work-Play” neighborhood unlike any found in Amherst currently.
<i>TOD Density Distribution</i>	Focus densest development at center of site near the transit station, transitioning to medium density uses that transition to adjacent lower density residential neighborhoods.
<i>Repurposing & Infill Development</i>	Focus on repurposing Boulevard Mall site, infill opportunities on surface parking lots.

11.7.3. CONNECTIVITY

The key feature is breaking up the large Boulevard Mall site with additional cross streets that provide improved access through the site and ultimately better connectivity between the proposed station location and neighborhoods beyond the Boulevard Mall site. This entails improving walkability and multi-modal opportunities along Niagara Falls Boulevard, Maple Road, and Alberta Drive to create more comfortable and desirable walking conditions and to draw transit riders from a larger catchment area besides just the Boulevard Mall site. Complete Street treatments to Alberta Drive and Maple Road are seen as a more favorable alternative

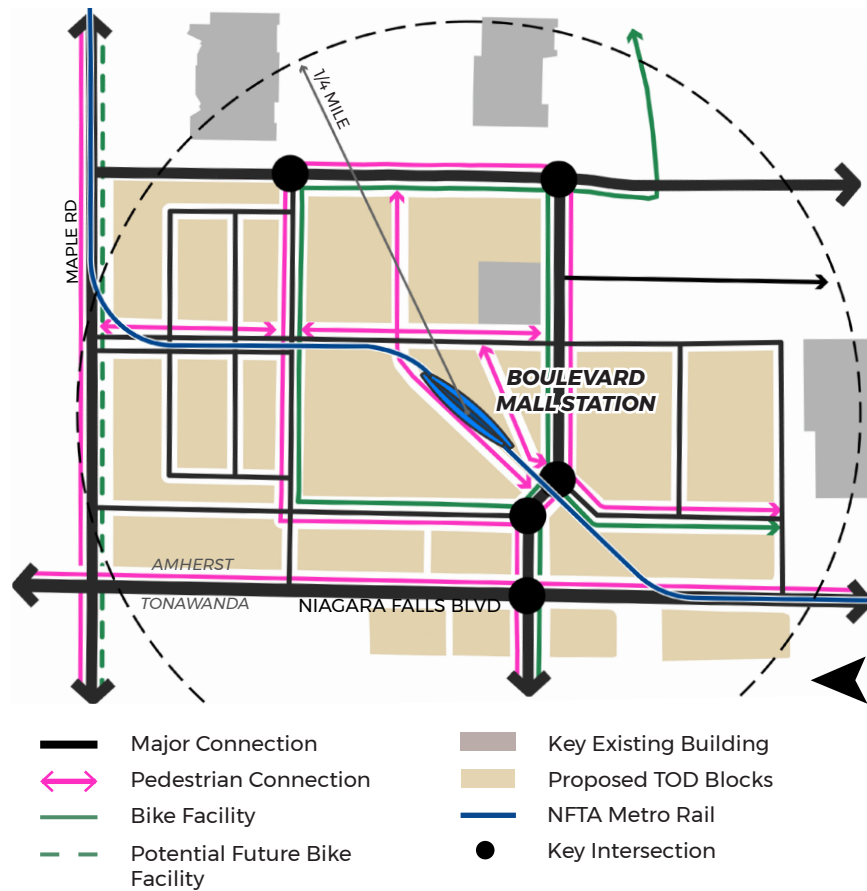


Figure 81. Boulevard Mall Station Area Connectivity

to other streets, allowing for a connection to the Inter-Campus Bikeway. Incorporating a cycle-track along Maple Road will further expand bicycling opportunities east of the site.

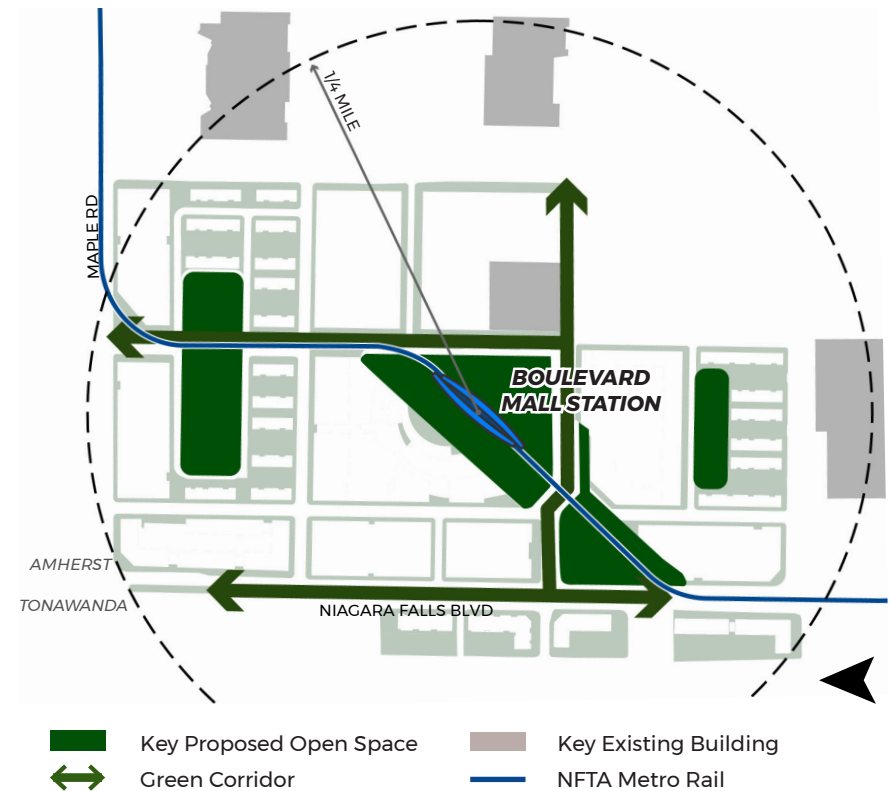


Figure 82. Boulevard Mall Station Area Civic and Open Space

11.7.4. OPEN SPACE

As part of the new Boulevard Mall station and Boulevard Mall Transit-Oriented Development, it will be important to make the station visible and accessible from Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road. This would be accomplished by creating an expansive greenway corridor that opens up views of the transit station from Niagara Falls Boulevard and also provides a comfortable means of access to/from the station. This area would also be used as an active entertainment venue and community gathering place. Green stormwater practices would be incorporated along Niagara Falls Boulevard to help alleviate stormwater sewer capacity issues.

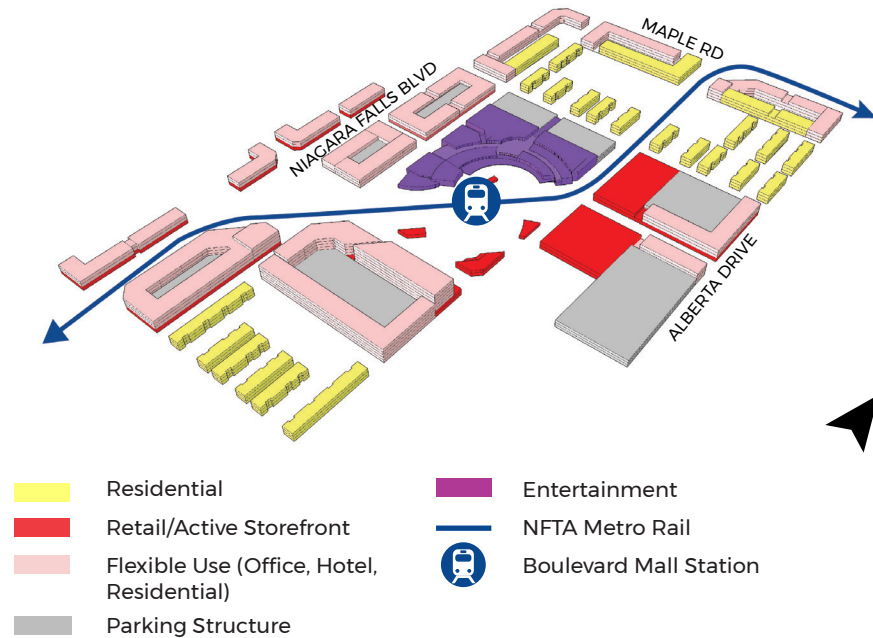


Figure 83. Boulevard Mall Station Area Mix of Uses

11.7.5. MIX OF USES

The key objective is to replace the existing Boulevard Mall, which is struggling with high vacancy, with a new Transit-Oriented Development that creates more density and a greater mix of uses that will generate both transit use and new economic activity. The greatest density and activity is focused near the station location, central to the site.

As is typically seen with these type of Transit-Oriented Developments, there is a central focal point, in this case the transit station, that is surrounded by an active and engaging civic space that acts as a social gathering and event place. This civic space is framed by an entertainment hub (shown in purple) that typically includes a mix of themed restaurant and retail space, cinemas or other performance areas, and other entertainment venues.

Density transitions to medium-density development along the periphery of the site and along Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road adjacent

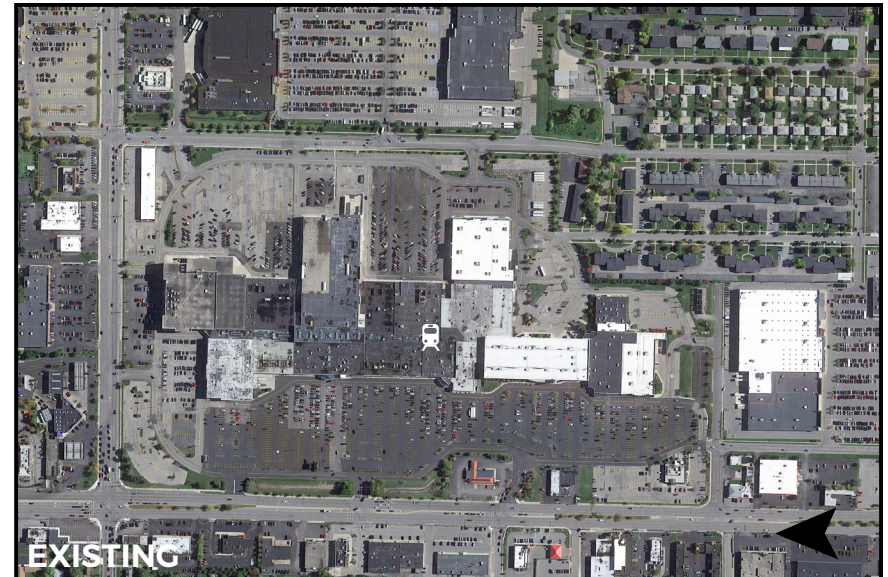


Figure 84. Existing Boulevard Mall Station Area Aerial

to neighborhoods. Mixed-use buildings (shown in pink) extend from the transit station, creating active storefronts along newly created internal streets (shown in red) and along existing streets (Niagara Falls Boulevard, Maple Road, and Alberta Drive) which help to generate active streetscapes and improve walkability. Finally, medium-density residential (townhouses, rowhouses, or loft-style) offer various residential opportunities within the Boulevard Mall redevelopment to offer a mix of residential uses (shown in yellow). Parking would be accommodated through a mix of structured parking wrapped with development nearest to the station with surface parking that would be located to the rear of street fronting development in lower density areas.

It is noted that the proposed TOD density setup does not comply with existing zoning and will require new zoning to accommodate the desired forms of development. Rezoning would also be needed on the Tonawanda side of Niagara Falls Boulevard.

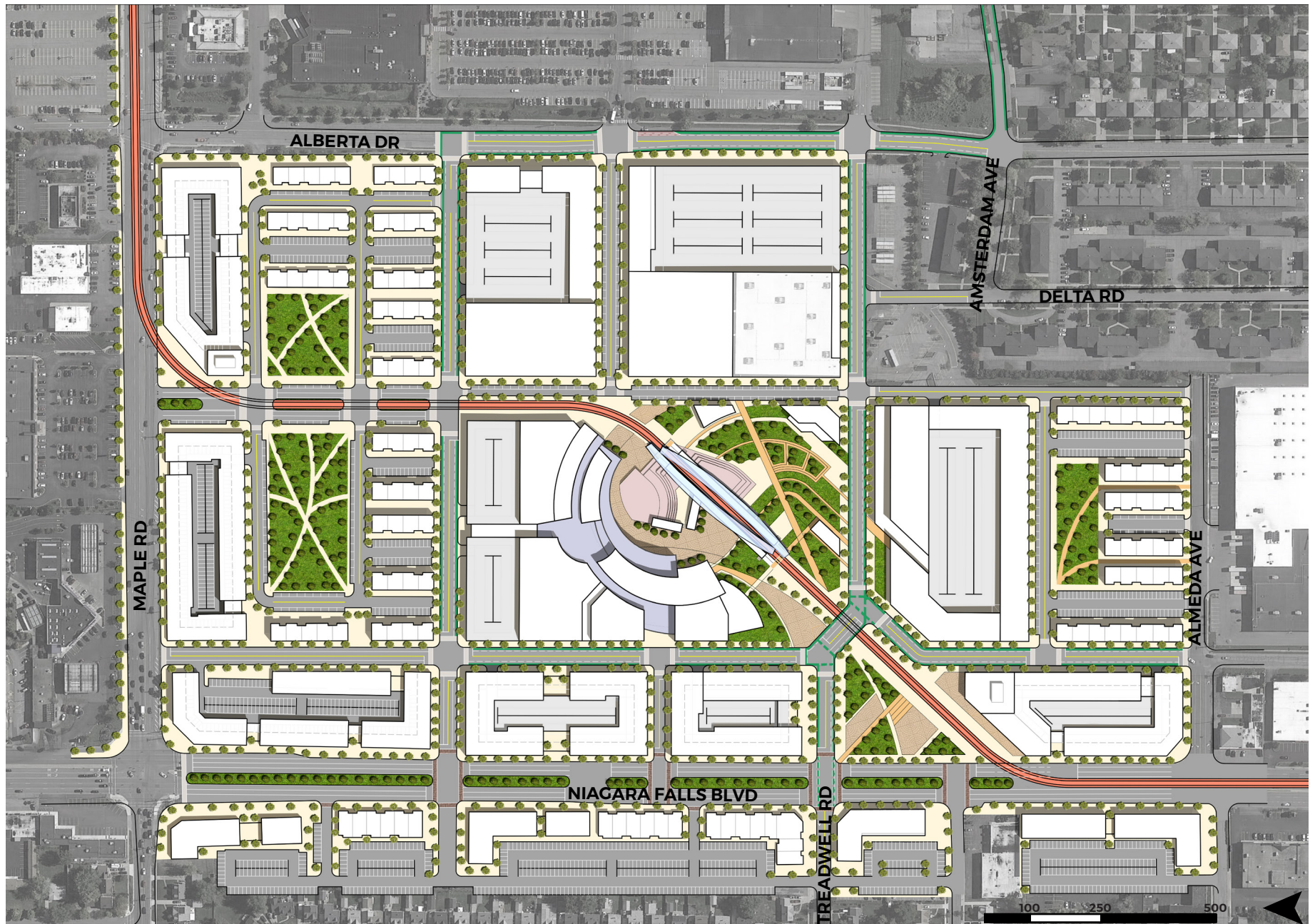


Figure 85. Illustrative Plan

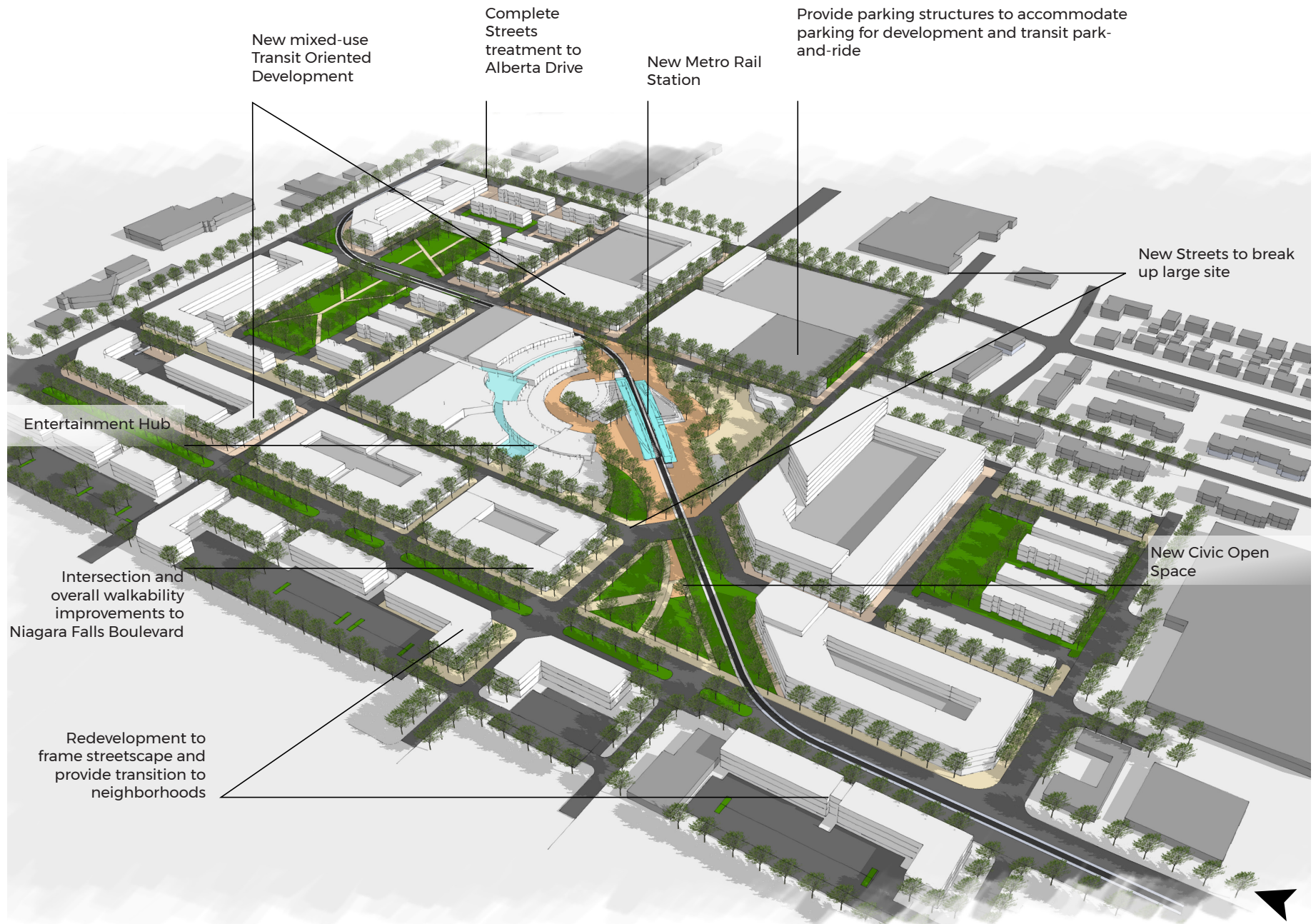


Figure 86. Boulevard Mall Station Area Massing Concept

11.7.6. BOULEVARD MALL STATION AREA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

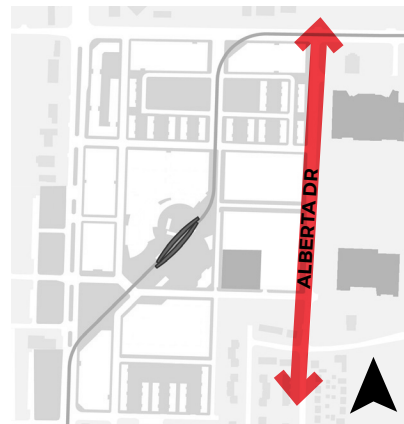
The following table identifies specific key infrastructure investment strategies for the Boulevard Mall station area that are the focus of implementing the Boulevard Mall station area plan vision. While there are likely additional infrastructure needs above and beyond those listed below, the table highlights the priority infrastructure investments that are deemed to have the most catalytic impact on facilitating Transit-Oriented Development in the Boulevard Mall station area. Each strategy is outlined with a description, action plan, the lead agency that would be charged with implementing the strategy, and the priority of the strategy in facilitating TOD, identified as very high, high, or medium.

Table 37. Boulevard Mall Infrastructure Investment Strategies

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Walkability improvements to Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road	Due to the unknown nature of redevelopment, the initial focus should begin with walkability improvements to Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road to prepare for enhanced transit access.	Walkability improvements should include intersection treatments, providing a sidewalk along the west side of Niagara Falls Boulevard, traffic calming, lighting, streetscape enhancements, and bicycle facilities.	NYSDOT, Eric County DPW, Town of Amherst, and Town of Tonawanda	Very High
Upgrade sanitary and storm sewers along Niagara Falls Boulevard	One of the constraints to redevelopment is capacity issues of the sanitary and storm sewers along and adjacent to Niagara Falls Boulevard.	Implement a capital project to upgrade sanitary and storm sewers, reduce inflow and infiltration, and increase capacity.	Town of Amherst, Town of Tonawanda, Erie County	High
Complete Streets treatment along Alberta Drive and Maple Road	As redevelopment of the Boulevard Mall progresses, there is the ability to improve connectivity to areas along Alberta Drive and Maple Road and beyond by improving multi-modal connectivity to the Boulevard Mall Station. Complete Streets on Alberta would act as an alternative bicycle route to Niagara Falls Boulevard.	Alberta Drive can be restriped from a 4-lane roadway to a 2-lane roadway to allow for bike lanes and possibly on-street parking. A road diet can be implemented along Maple Road and cycle track included to provide east-west bicycle connectivity. A bicycle network can connect Boulevard Mall with the Intercampus Bikeway using Amsterdam Avenue and Emerson Drive to Sweet Home.	Town of Amherst and Eric County DPW	Medium

11.7.7. BOULEVARD MALL STATION AREA COMPLETE STREETS CONCEPTS

As mentioned, the inclusion of walkability improvements to Niagara Falls Boulevard and Maple Road are essential to create a transit-supportive environment. At the Transit-Oriented Development workshops, most participants felt that including Complete Street treatments to Alberta Drive was a more comfortable option than providing bicycle facilities along Niagara Falls Boulevard. This could also better tie into the existing Inter-Campus Bikeway via Emerson Drive..



EXISTING

PROPOSED

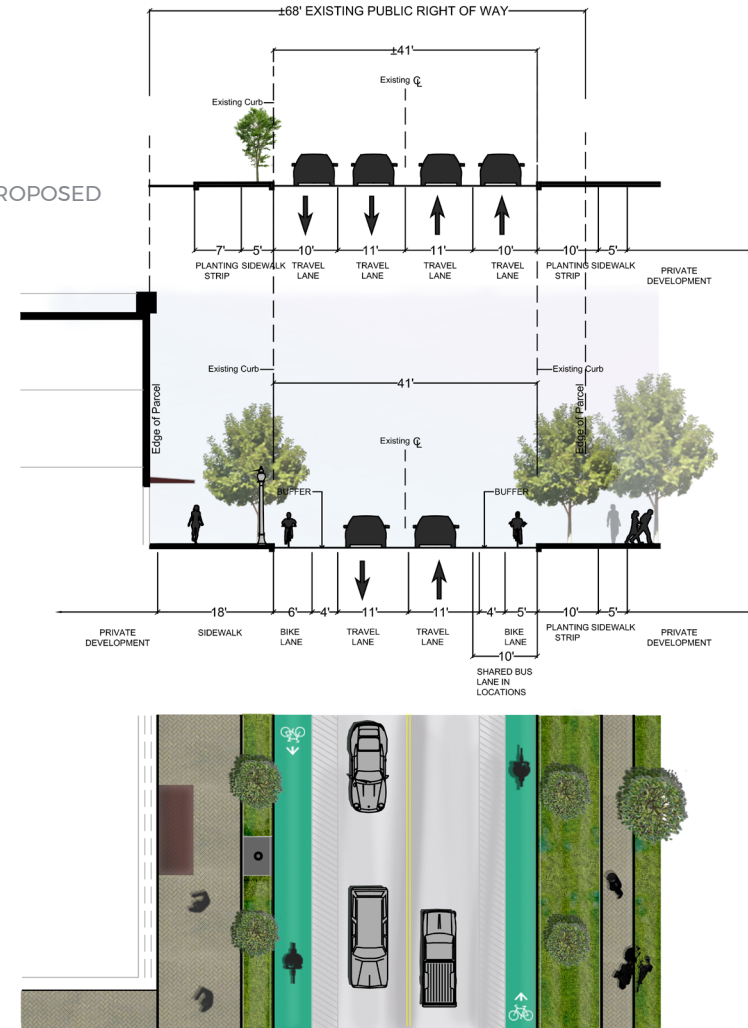
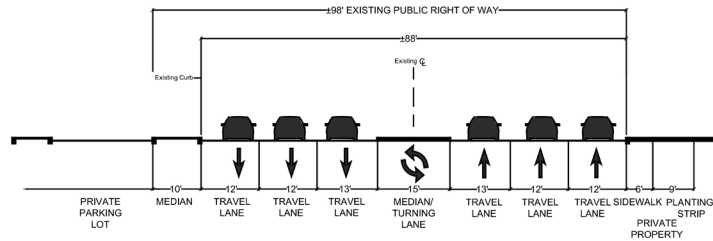
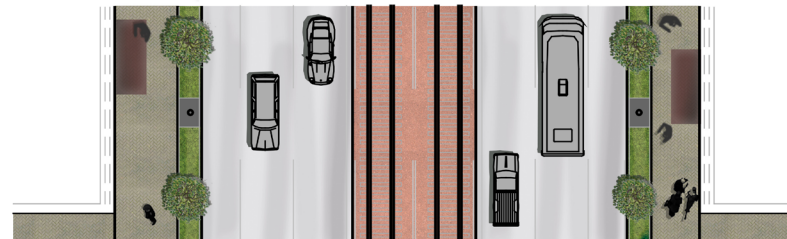
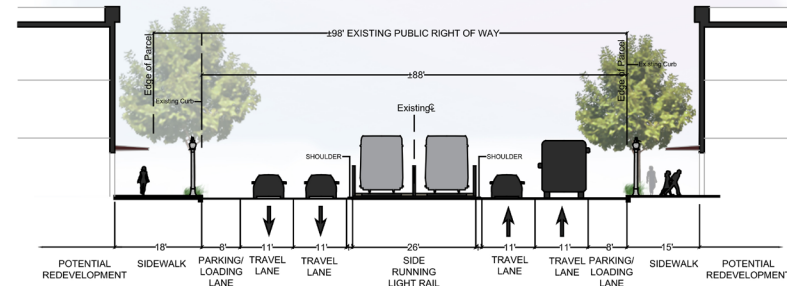


Figure 87. Concept for Complete Street Treatment on Alberta Drive

EXISTING



PROPOSED - WITH MEDIAN RUNNING METRO RAIL



PROPOSED - WITHOUT MEDIAN RUNNING METRO RAIL

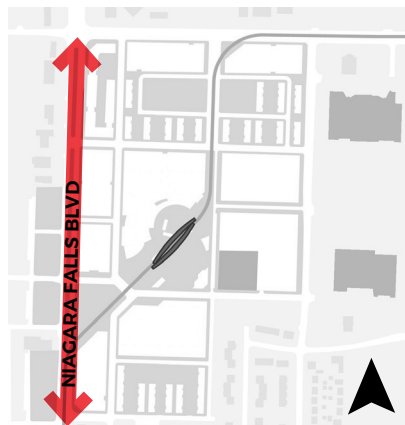
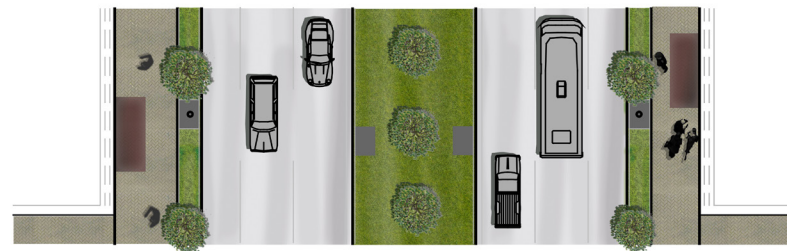
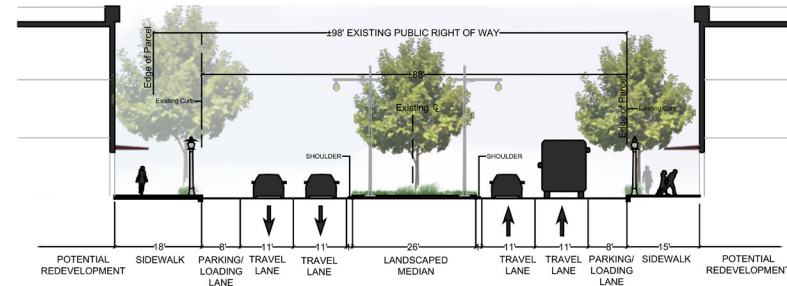
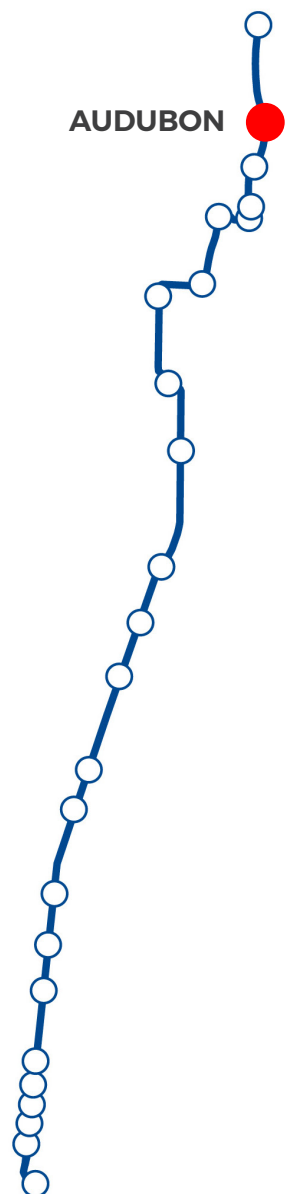


Figure 88. Concepts for Light Rail Along Niagara Falls Boulevard

11.8. AUDUBON



Transit serving the Audubon station area is centered on a station proposed as part of the Metro Rail extension. The station would be located along Audubon Parkway either near the intersection of Sylvan Parkway or, as is the case in the following station area plan- near the Amherst Town Complex, which includes the police/ court building, senior center, and library.

11.8.1. AUDUBON STATION AREA FRAMEWORK

The focus of this station area plan is to create a Transit-Oriented neighborhood center within the traditional office park setting of Audubon, utilizing the civic services at the Amherst Town Complex as a generator. New Transit-Oriented Development is centered on a new Metro Rail station located along Audubon Parkway adjacent to the Amherst Town Complex. Utilizing government owned land on the east side of Audubon Parkway, development frames the entry road to the Town Complex and provides a neighborhood center with active streetscape and upper floor mixed-uses. Secondary Transit-Oriented Development looks to infill underutilized property and parking areas along Audubon Parkway with mixed-use, transit-supportive development that helps to create a more walkable and transit-supportive environment. Complete Street treatments to Audubon Parkway and Sylvan Parkway will improve walkability and multi-modal transportation opportunities. Utilizing the existing Audubon trail network and creating a new connection to the Weinberg Campus area improves connectivity and accessibility to/from the station.

Reimagining an Office Park as a Transit-Supported, Mixed-Use Center

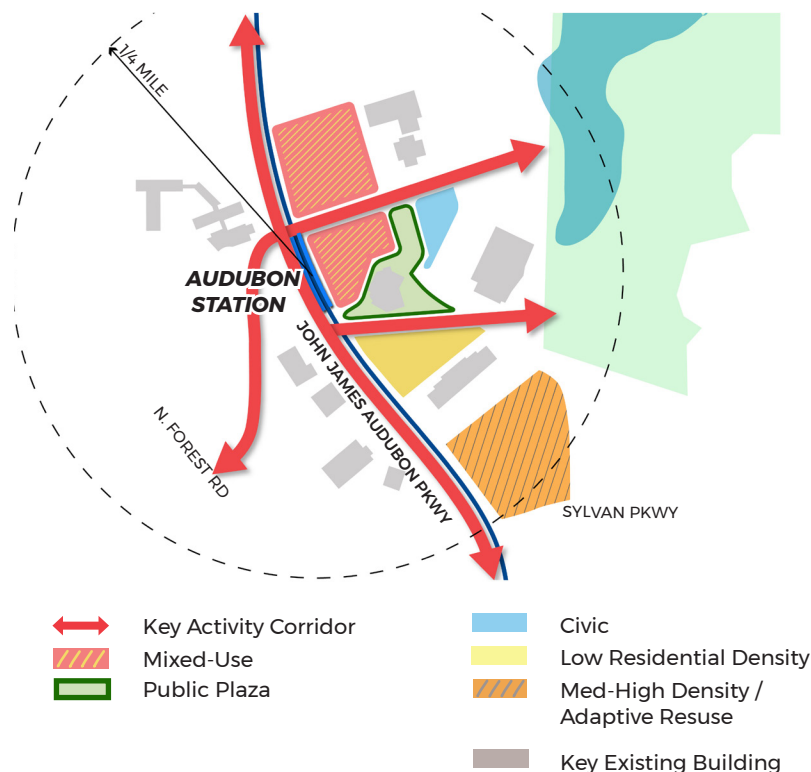


Figure 89. Audubon Station Area Plan Framework

11.8.2. AUDUBON AREA KEY THEMES

11.8.3. CONNECTIVITY

The area along Audubon Parkway currently is very unwalkable and caters to vehicular transportation. In order to provide enhanced

<i>Complete Street</i>	Focus on vastly improving walkability and connectivity throughout the Audubon community and along Audubon Parkway, providing adequate multiple connections to the station.
<i>Engaging Civic Space</i>	Integrate a station into the Amherst Town Complex site and activate space around a station as a civic space; provide connections to Weinberg Campus and Audubon community.
<i>Progressive Parking</i>	Consider incorporating a Park & Ride at this location, relocate parking to periphery of TOD to create an active center around station.
<i>Mixed-Use Development</i>	Development focused on mixed-uses providing residential, office, retail, and public service around the station that offers a neighborhood center for Audubon.
<i>TOD Density Distribution</i>	Focus medium-density development closest to station area and, as market allows, expand TOD development along Audubon.
<i>Repurposing & Infill Development</i>	Infill development on existing open space and parking lots adjacent to station.

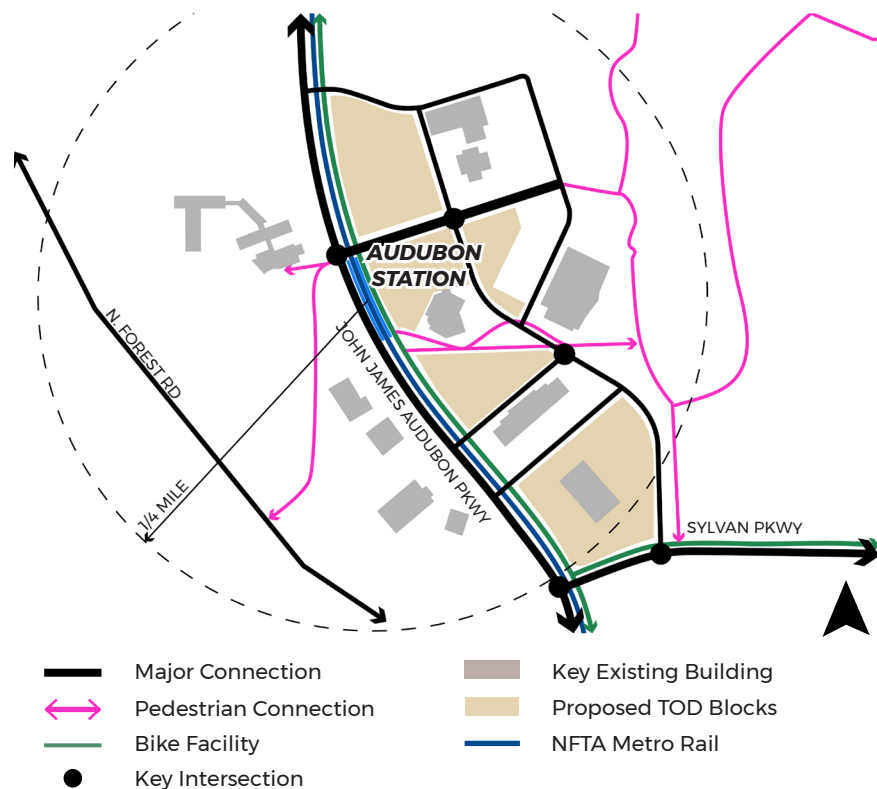


Figure 90. Audubon Station Area Connectivity

connectivity between the Metro Rail station and nearby uses, sidewalks and multi-use trails should be provided along Audubon Parkway, tying into the existing Audubon trail network and ultimately expanding the catchment area of the station. Sylvan Parkway is also seen as a major connection to the retail centers along Millersport Highway.

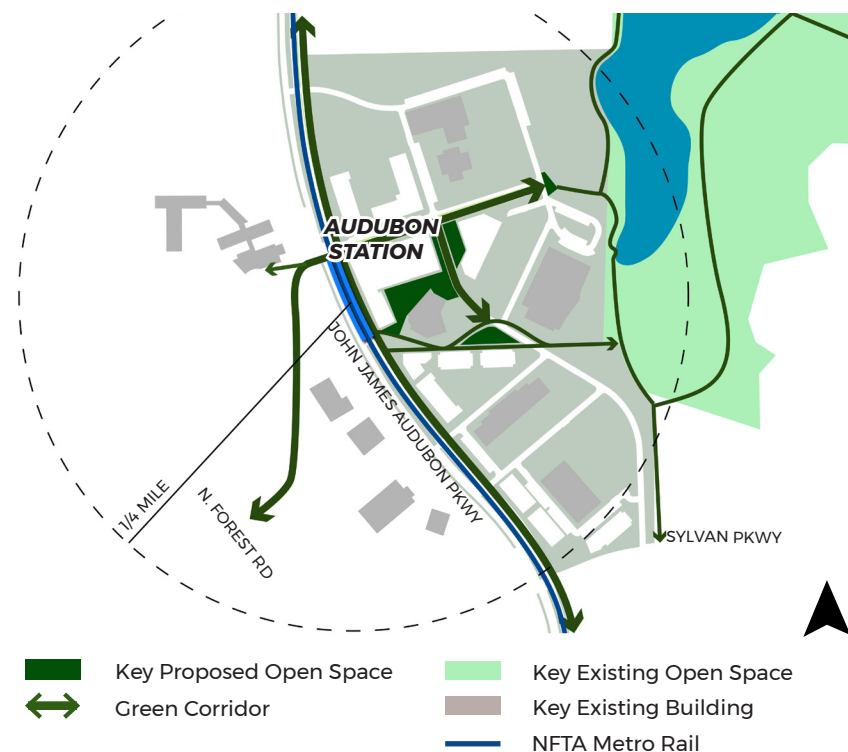


Figure 91. Audubon Station Area Civic and Open Space

11.8.4. CIVIC AND OPEN SPACE

The new Audubon station will tie into the civic space already in place at the Amherst Town Complex and create additional active civic spaces nearest to the station. The existing Audubon trail network would tie the station area into Walton Woods Park and a new trail would provide access to the Weinberg Campus area. A new multi-use trail would parallel Audubon Parkway providing much needed multi-modal transportation linkages along the roadway.

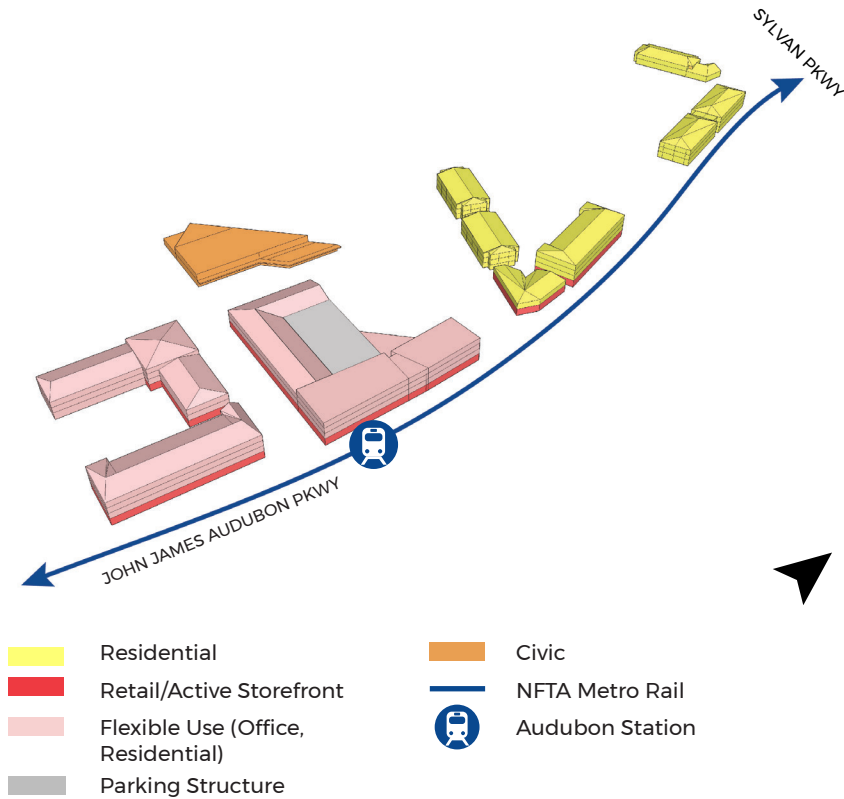


Figure 92. Audubon Station Area Mix of Uses

11.8.5. MIX OF USES

The key objective of the Audubon station area is to infill available vacant property and surface parking lots with new mixed-use Transit-Oriented Development to complement existing office uses and create an active neighborhood center at the Amherst Town Complex. The greatest density is focused nearest to the station framing the access road to the Amherst Town Complex. Secondary Transit-Oriented Development extends south along Audubon Parkway to infill vacant and underutilized land with street fronting mixed-uses that help expand the reach of the station area.

The focal point is the intersection of the Town Complex access road and Audubon Parkway, where new street fronting uses frame the street, providing active storefronts (shown in red) and upper floor mixed-uses (shown in pink) to create an active and vibrant neighborhood center.



Figure 93. Existing Audubon Station Area Aerial

Additional medium-density residential or mixed-use buildings (shown in yellow) are extended along Audubon Parkway to infill vacant and underutilized spaces near existing office buildings; depending on demand, this development could also be office or commercially focused.



Figure 94. Audubon Station Area Illustrative Plan



Figure 95. Audubon Station Area Massing Concept

11.8.6. AUDUBON STATION AREA INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

The following table identifies specific key infrastructure investment strategies for the Audubon station area that are the focus of implementing the Audubon station area plan vision. While there are likely additional infrastructure needs above and beyond those listed below, the table highlights the priority infrastructure investments that are deemed to have the most catalytic impact on facilitating Transit-Oriented Development in the Audubon station area. Each strategy is outlined with a description, action plan, the lead agency that would be charged with implementing the strategy, and the priority of the strategy in facilitating TOD, identified as very high, high, or medium.

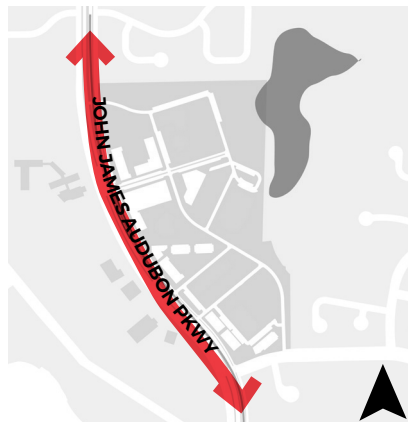
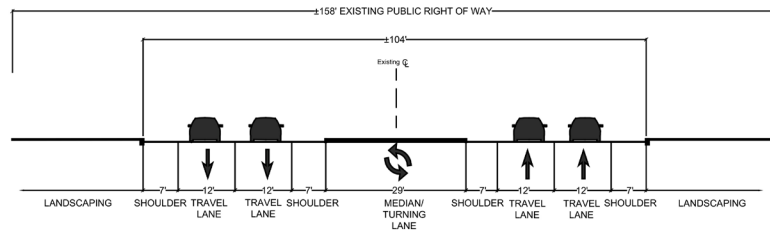
Table 38. Audubon Infrastructure Investment Strategies

<i>Priority Infrastructure Investment/ Strategy</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Application/ Action Plan</i>	<i>Lead Agency</i>	<i>Priority</i>
Install sidewalk/ multi-use trail along Audubon Parkway	There are currently no pedestrian or bicycle facilities along Audubon Parkway to connect various destinations, making the area very unwalkable and automobile oriented. Focus should be on implementing a road diet to Audubon Parkway and including sidewalk and/or multi-use trail along Audubon to provide multi-modal access to various destinations.	As a first phase, focus should be on providing a sidewalk and/or multi-use trail along Audubon between the Amherst Town Center and North Forest Road. Later phases would extend a sidewalk and/or multi-use trail along the entire stretch of Audubon Parkway.	Town of Amherst	Very High
Complete Street treatment along Sylvan Parkway	Sylvan Parkway is a 4-lane roadway with no pedestrian or bicycle facilities. The roadway connects Audubon Parkway with commercial areas along Millersport Highway. There is excess capacity on Sylvan Parkway that can be reallocated for multi-modal facilities.	Restripe the roadway from 4-lanes to 2-lanes and provide a separated or protected multi-use trail between Audubon Parkway and Millersport Highway. Improve pedestrian crossing at Sylvan Parkway and Millersport Highway.	Town of Amherst and NYSDOT	High
Streetscape enhancements to Audubon Parkway	As part of the construction of a sidewalk/ multi-use trail along Audubon Parkway or later during the construction of Metro Rail, also include streetscape enhancements to improve the attractiveness and comfort of walking.	Streetscape enhancements would include street trees, signage and wayfinding, lighting, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, etc.	Town of Amherst	High
New greenway trail from Audubon Parkway to North Forest Road	There is an abundance of senior and assisted living residences located along North Forest Road. Construction of a new multi-use trail connecting the Weinberg Campus to the area along Audubon Parkway where a new Metro Rail station is proposed would provide for enhanced access and connectivity.	Work with property owners and seek grant dollars to design and construct the multi-use trail. Ultimately, this trail would tie into the Walton Woods trail system.	Town of Amherst and property owners	Medium

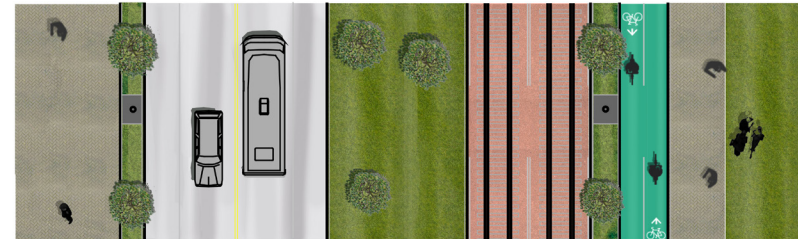
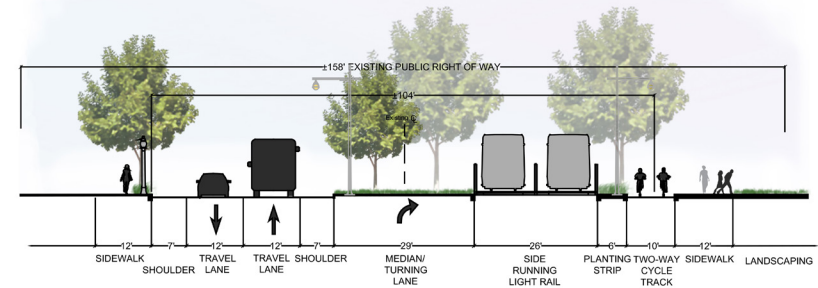
11.8.7. AUDUBON STATION AREA COMPLETE STREETS

Providing a complete street treatment to Audubon Parkway, in the form of new sidewalks, multi-use trail, enhanced intersection crosswalks, and improved streetscape and amenities, is needed to help create a transit-supportive environment that is conducive to walking and will begin to transform the auto-centric environment of Audubon Parkway.

EXISTING



PROPOSED - WITH SIDE RUNNING METRO RAIL



PROPOSED - WITH METRO RAIL STATION

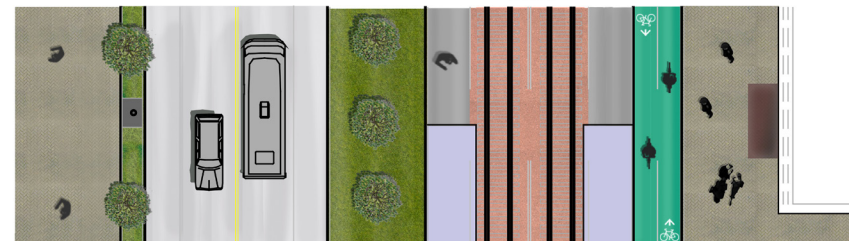
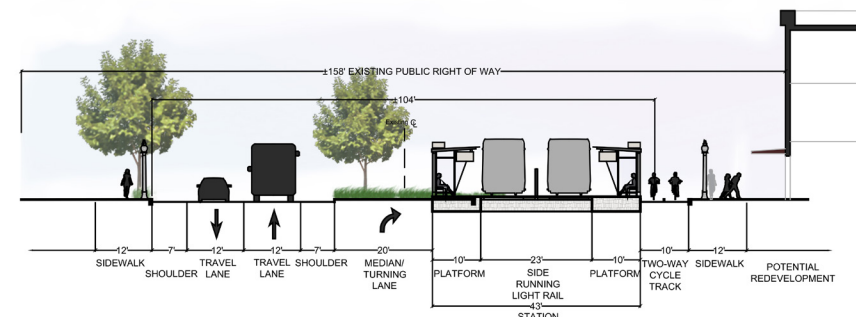


Figure 96. John James Audubon Parkway Proposed Complete Streets Improvements

