

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 1: GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

There are many actions recommended in the preceding pages. The question may be asked, “How will they fit into the neighborhood?” The graphic below offers a “glimpse into the future,” by overlaying several of the actions recommended in this, the *Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan*, onto an image of one section of Historic Black Rock — the area around Niagara and Amherst Streets — as a way to illustrate how many of the strategies in this plan will lead to realizing the vision of area residents for a higher quality of life and bright future. Illustrated in the graphic are:

- A **strong business association and district** for Niagara Street (starting at upper left of the graphic),
- **Improved streetscape and traffic calming** on Niagara Street,
- Niagara and Amherst Sts. as a **key gateway** intersection to the neighborhood,

- Market Square park’s northeast corner as a space which could be utilized as a **play area for neighborhood children**,
- **New and renovated homes** throughout the area,
- Amherst Street as a **Cultural Route**, connecting Niagara Street’s waterfront and business corridor to a new mural at Amherst and Tonawanda Sts., with attractions located in-between,
- A new **Black Rock Heritage Park** at Dearborn and Hamilton,
- A new **Life Learning Center** at East and Hamilton,
- Recognition of the new **Buffalo Religious Arts Center** in the former St. Francis Xavier church,
- The opportunity for a new **Public Market, Arts and Culture Center** at Amherst and East Sts.,
- The entire area as a National Register Historic District,
- A new “**Life at the Time of War of 1812**” mural at Amherst and Tonawanda Sts., and
- **Historic 1830 and 1835 houses** (amongst others).

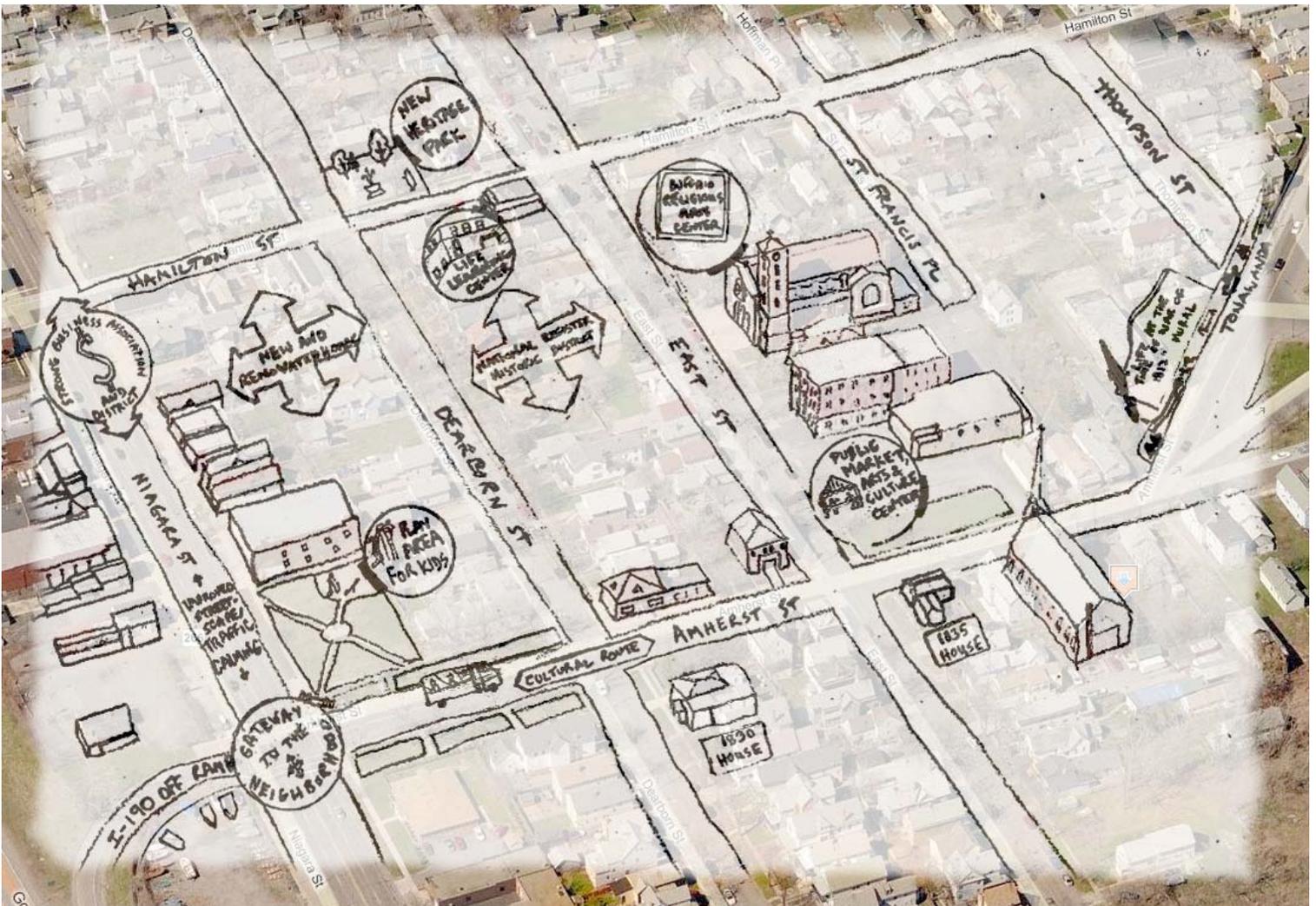


Figure 42: This is a graphic illustration of how, in one small area of Historic Black Rock, several actions recommended in this, the *Historic Black Rock: War of 1812 Bicentennial Community Plan*, will work together to realize the vision of area residents for a higher quality of life and bright future.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 2: NEXT STEPS

Actions recommended in the preceding pages of Chapter 3 were divided into Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years) and Longer Term Strategies (2-5

Years). This chapter identifies key partners and next steps for each. Key Immediate Strategies should be considered to be of immediate importance to community development and should be initiated in Year One after completion of this plan.

Goal: 1. Preserve and Strengthen Community Identity

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Support completion of an expert historic resources survey and undertake next steps of creating a State and National Register historic district and preserving historic resources.	City of Buffalo, BRR, GNPA	Assist the City of Buffalo's Senior Planner - Historic Preservation in raising funds for a consultant to undertake the survey project and hiring a consultant. Establishing a National Register historic district will help people appreciate the historic character of Historic Black Rock while avoiding the burden on property owners of a review of exterior changes by local authorities that would be in effect if a local historic district were to be established.
2. Prepare a timeline of historical events in Black Rock and vicinity.	BRR, GNPA	Work with BRR GNPA Historic Restoration Committee and local historians.
3. Promote historical event anniversary celebrations/exhibits and reenactments (for example, the War of 1812 anniversary, etc.).	BRR, GNPA	Work with BRR GNPA Historic Restoration Committee to tie into War of 1812 commemorative efforts.
4. Obtain funding for preservation-related activities from foundations and other sources.	Local Foundations, Businesses	Continue to apply for foundation funding and follow through on reporting for funds received. Four grants were applied for in 2008. Reach out to businesses in area.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Develop promotional programming and materials.	Local artist, Businesses	One suggestion might be to hold a fundraiser by developing and selling a community map that conveys the community character identified in this plan, and using the funds for this purpose.
2. Encourage the development of a historical photo and artifact library.	Fundalinski Studios	Work with Fundalinski Studios to support these efforts.
3. Do a virtual or real local history museum; start with a website and perhaps a movable display gallery.	Local web talent	Connect with residents who maintain a community blogs/website.
4. Take steps to commemorate and celebrate ties to other history related to the area,	BRR, GNPA	Use timeline project to identify different aspects of area history.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: 2. Improve Housing

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Support the strengthening of BRR NHS programs that promote better housing opportunities and conditions.	City of Buffalo, BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association	Work with BRR NHS on program development. Continue to provide strategic planning assistance to BRR NHS by serving as directors of the organization. Continue neighborhood support to tours and outreach to funding agencies. Finally, continue to facilitate community relationship between the Dearborn Street Community Association and BRR NHS in support of BRR NHS initiatives like the targeted streets program and Block-by-Block program.
2. Help create new block clubs where needed.	City of Buffalo, Board of Block Clubs, Riverside Review, Dearborn Street Community Association	Work with the Office of Citizen Services and Board of Block Clubs to make residents aware of the benefits of having a block club, perhaps through publicizing them in the Riverside Review.
3. Take advantage of code enforcement opportunities and support existing or new approaches to address problem properties.	North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association	The Black Rock Planning Neighborhood is a Comprehensive Code Enforcement area. Work with Council Member and BRR GNPA Housing Committee to assess this program and its benefits.
4. Support Judge Nowak housing court initiative.	North District Council Member, BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association	Finalize and distribute this plan for the benefit of Judge Nowak and his staff to use with funding partners.
5. Create concept plans for new housing development and facilitate their implementation.	City, BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, UB, local architects, local developers, real estate professionals	Key parcels are available for redevelopment. Work with the City to identify ownership, site conditions and funding programs and with housing and design partners to create concept plans, so that implementable projects can proceed.
6. Work with Historic Restoration Committee to develop/enhance a service for handyman/contractor referral and review in partnership with BRR NHS, so that historic structures can be better maintained by private owners.	BRR GNPA, BRR NHS, Dearborn Street Community Association	Some elements of this program are in place at BRR NHS and review of it with neighborhood input could make it an effective housing improvement service.
7. Work with BRR NHS to connect home-seekers with potential properties.	BRR GNPA, BRR NHS, Dearborn Street Community Association	Marketing materials are being revised and improved.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

**Goal: 2. Improve Housing
(continued)**

- 8. Work with BRR NHS on targeted streets program and housing-related planning. BRR NHS, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association Continue collaborative efforts as Phase I expands to Phase II.

- 9. Create a Life Learning Center, with 69 Hamilton as a possible location. North District Council Member, BRR NHS, NWBCC, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association Work with the North District Council Member and City of Buffalo's Senior Planner - Historic Preservation to preserve 69 Hamilton from demolition so that a feasibility study can be conducted. Other cities and neighborhoods have effectively reused storefronts (example: Seneca Babcock) for community services (teen center, free tax advice.)

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Monitor local property status with the help of block clubs.	City, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association	Surveying conditions has been a key initiative of the BRR GNPA/Dearborn Street Community Association in 2008. New survey techniques like taking digital camera movies from the dashboard of autos can make surveying easier and lead to more frequent surveys.
2. Encourage homesteading.	North District Council Member, BRR NHS, NWBCC, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association, Homesteaders	Successful examples of homesteading in Black Rock-Riverside are in evidence. These homestead leaders could do presentations on their experience to community groups.
3. Develop an inventory of infill lots and procedure for keeping it updated.	City, BRR GNPA, Dearborn Street Community Association	City Office of Strategic Planning personnel have computer mapping software and parcel information including vacancy. When updates to parcel information arrive (about twice a year), create new maps. Expand with field research to detail infill opportunities.
4. Support conversion of upper floors of commercial buildings to private apartments, urban lofts, and artistic spaces for all of the performing or static arts.	BRR NHS, Community Preservation Corp., Funding Agencies	Research successful examples of this being done, and match up programs and developers to available properties.
5. Track owner occupancy ratios, in an effort to keep owner occupancy at 75% or above.	City, BRR GNPA, BRR NHS	Use computer mapping to assess owner occupancy ratios, and share results with BRR NHS for planning purposes.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: 3. Improve Public Safety

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Support Buffalo Weed and Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application and its Law Enforcement, Community Policing, Prevention/Intervention/ Treatment, and Neighborhood Restoration goals.	City, D District, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA	Application has been filed and a decision on funding is expected shortly (early 2009). Should it be funded, significant community involvement will ensue. If the application is not funded, many Public Safety strategies detailed within it can still be implemented.
2. Raise community awareness of ways to reduce crime.	D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA	Meet with D District police to strategize effective ways to reduce crime, and in a collaborative effort undertake a project together to build teamwork.
3 Develop knowledge and support of community policing and law enforcement best practices and techniques so that the best ones can be implemented locally. (for example, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, Community Oriented Policing, Situational Crime Prevention, and Problem-Oriented Policing).	D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA	D District police, block clubs, business groups, and BRR GNPA can work together with the City to analyze crime problem areas and develop innovative solutions towards addressing them.
4. Develop awareness of crime trends and incidences so that better crime information can facilitate crime prevention strategies.	D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA	Meet with D District police to strategize effective ways to share crime statistics and work with partners to map/analyze.
5. Explore community partnerships that can influence crime reduction.	D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA	Gather advice from Community Policing officers and facilitate community partnering.
6. Increase awareness of Homeland Security operations in the planning neighborhood, and encourage their siting here.	North District Council Member, BRR GNPA	The BRR GNPA Black Rock Canal Park has taken a lead role in this strategy and is in an active phase that should be supported. Tours of local facilities also creates linkages between the agencies and neighborhood.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Engage more adolescents in neighborhood life and its quality of life goals. One way to do this would be to hold police sponsored events that include collaborations with local groups that celebrate local cultural groups and promote community spirit.	D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA, Riverside HS, City	This is a multi-dimensional issue. Identify local cultural groups or police-related programming that will appeal to youth. Riverside HS's rebirth also provides new opportunities for youth involvement, as do proposed Life Learning Center and youth-oriented park amenities. Continued support on the part of the community — including businesses — of Mayor Browns Summer Youth Jobs Initiative would also be beneficial.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Goal: 3. Improve Public Safety (continued)

2. Increase presence and visibility of public safety officers.	City, D District police	One suggestion may be to work with community policing officials on creating more community outreach activities.
3. Improve the communication and relationships between residents and the police force.	City	Funding of the Buffalo Weed and Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application would certainly promote this strategy.
4. Encourage prosecution of more criminals.	D District, block clubs, business association, BRR GNPA	More block clubs, a stronger business association, and activities boosting community pride will lead to less acceptance of criminal activity and more criminals being turned in for prosecution.
5. Police force more responsive to residential calls for assistance.	D District	Recently, local police have participated very enthusiastically in the preparation of the Buffalo Weed and Seed Black Rock-Riverside Site application, and local and state police also have been very active in responding to residential concerns by mounting “Operation Trick or Treat” in 2008. (see page 19) Continued work together can yield more progress.
6. Coordinate with block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association so that they can be more pro-active in their security measures.	Block clubs, property owners, businesses, and business association, BRR GNPA	As the number of block clubs and business association activities expand, consultations with police about security measures can be added to meeting programs.

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
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Commercial:

1. Revitalize business association activities on Niagara Street and encourage participation of local businesses.	Businesses, Black Rock Businessmen’s Association Members, North District Council Member, Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation	Several local examples of successful business associations exist. Hold an organizational meeting with a guest speaker from one to develop a preliminary list of initiatives that can garner wide support.
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CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes (continued)

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| 2. Hold educational sessions/distribute brochure-newsletter/do articles on good practices. | Businesses, business association, North District Council Member | Just as neighborhood planning has evolved into an effective civic activity, so has business corridor management, and this information can be shared effectively in the context of a business association planning meeting. |
| 3. Explore the benefits of looking at Niagara Street in terms of market segments. | Businesses, business association, North District Council Member | Banner programs based on street themes can reflect the identify of segments of Niagara Street in exciting, visual ways. Perhaps the city and businesses could partner to raise funds for such an effort in the context of the War of 1812 commemorations.

<i>See the next section, “5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages.”</i> |
| 4. Support transportation-related improvements that will positively impact Niagara St. | | <i>See the previous section, “3. Improve Public Safety.”</i> |
| 5. Address public safety needs of visitors. | | |

Marketing:

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| 1. Start community public interest activities. | Block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association | Examples: BRR Tour of Gardens, health fairs, farmer’s markets, home buyer seminars, business days with discounts, school and community center open houses. An excellent opportunity might be to get the Income TAXi to come for a visit. This is a new mobile tax-preparation and financial education service designed to bring free help to low-income people and neighborhoods around Western New York. Contact Diane R. Bessel, director of the Creating Assets, Savings & Hope (CASH) coalition, sponsored by the United Way. |
| 2. Seek funding. A 501c3 corporation can receive loans and grants. | Business association | Continue grant –seeking with assistance from BRR NHS and NW Buffalo Community Center. |
| 3. Develop branding. | Block clubs, property owners, businesses and business association | “Historic Black Rock” relates back to the community vision statement and the neighborhood’s strengths. That name might be used, along with a new logo. |
| 4. Market Niagara St.’s easy highway access and being minutes to downtown. | Business association | This could be part of promotional material developed by a revitalized business association. |

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

4. Revitalize Niagara Street Commercial Area, and Develop and Market the Area’s Positive Attributes (continued)

5. Build off of opportunities presented by Ed Hogle’s project (Rock Harbor Commons at Rock Harbor Village).	Block clubs/ property owners/ businesses and business associa- tion	Slated to open in 2009, this is a major project which could bring customers to several area businesses. The project’s effects on housing should also be anticipated and guided to positive outcomes.
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Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years):	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
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Commercial:

1. Open up more storefront businesses with attractive signage.	Business asso- ciation	Business district development will lead to more storefront businesses; the first step is organizational. Revitalize business association so the area is ready to seek public funds.
2. Research existing programs, promote development of new programs, and help in implementation of programs that help finance improvements that encourage business development and growth. Examples include signage, low interest loans, tax abatement, and façade improvement.	Business asso- ciation, Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation, elected officials	Again, revitalize business association so the area is ready to seek public funds. For an idea of what programs are available, visit: www.berc.org
3. Encourage development/expansion of commercial services that accommodate incidental business that arrives from visitors so it can become destination business.	Businesses and business associa- tion	As business district development makes progress, new customers will enter the area; local stores should be ready for them.

Marketing:

1. Sponsor community festivals in parks or along one or a series of closed-off streets with community service groups and businesses renting tables.	Block clubs, prop- erty owners, busi- nesses and busi- ness association	The community has open space available at Market Square Park and at Amherst and East Sts. Outdoor festivals are more noticeable to travelers-by and easy to clean up after.
2. Promote maritime activities: boating, birding, fishing, etc.	Businesses and business associa- tion	This could be part of promotional materials developed by a revitalized business association.
3. Use multicultural past and present as an impetus to organize events, festivals, goods and services that bring the neighborhood together.	BRR GNPA His- toric Restoration Committee	The area has a multicultural past worth researching, starting perhaps with the native american history that led to the naming of Scajaquada Creek.
4. Leverage direct bike path/multi-use trail connections to downtown, Tonawandas, and Scajaquada Pathway.	Business asso- ciation	This could be part of promotional materials developed by a revitalized business association.
5. Take steps to attract immigrants, yuppies, risk-takers, students, artists, musicians, craftspeople.	Business asso- ciation	Conduct a market analysis, to match up area assets with different constituencies, including the “Creative Class.”

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Support research into the feasibility and positive transformative effects of changing Niagara St., or portions of it, “from a 4-lane route to a 3-lane street” to calm traffic, improve walkability, and stimulate shopper activity in the business corridor.	Local businesses, business association, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC	A request for a traffic simulation study should be made to the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Transportation Council, so that a study can analyze the effects of changes to the design of Niagara St. or portions of it in early 2009.
2. Explore additional traffic calming measures in the neighborhood, for example by timing traffic signals, posting speed limit signs, incorporating textured crosswalks in paving, developing roundabouts.	City of Buffalo, GBNRTC	Work with City of Buffalo and GBNRTC to develop effective strategies for traffic calming measures concurrent with a traffic simulation study.
3. Plan and implement streetscape improvements, recommended at: Niagara & Amherst as the key gateway intersection, other gateways at Niagara & Tonawanda, Tonawanda & Amherst, Tonawanda & Hertel, and Niagara & Ontario; Niagara Street commercial corridor; and Amherst Street cultural corridor.	City of Buffalo, GBNRTC	Block grant funds can provide an improved street infrastructure, consisting of brighter street lighting, old-style street lamps, plantings, trees, benches, gardens, sidewalks, security cameras, and perhaps a clock on alternate corners. Seek block grant funding to be used in coordination with traffic calming measures described above.
4. Integrate a public art component into streetscape improvements.	City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, Other Business District associations	Elmwood Village Association has recently added artistically-stylized components to its streetscape, including recycling containers, brackets for hanging planters, and the like. Work with the City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, and organizations like these to determine how to develop opportunities, obtain funding, and engage artists in these public art improvements.
5. While planning improvements, keep existing streetscape and transportation infrastructure maintained to ensure pedestrian safety.	City of Buffalo, GBNRTC	A recent report in the Buffalo News highlighted the need for keeping key aspects of the streetscape and transportation infrastructure in good condition (See Buffalo News 10/06/08.)
6. Add highway signage to the I-190 that advertises traveler services in Black Rock. (See Figure 37.)	North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NYS DOT, business association	Contact the state Transportation Department Region 5 Director to determine if signs could be added for food/restaurants, gas/diesel, boat launch, and any other applicable services on Niagara Street that meet the criteria for highway notices.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

5. Enhance Community Walkability while Leveraging Existing Transportation Advantages (continued)

- 7. BRR GNPA has voted against erecting the Ambassador Bridge at this site. BRR GNPA For more information on the anticipated negative effects of the Ambassador Bridge proposal for areas in and nearby Historic Black Rock, see “Private international bridge stalled by lack of government support” in the 10/14/08 Buffalo News.

- 8. Add signage to effectively inform travelers as to highway entrances, neighborhood gateways, park entrances, historic and cultural attractions, and other neighborhood amenities. North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NYS DOT, business association In an area with as many highway ramps, waterfront access opportunities, and neighborhood amenities as Historic Black Rock, it is important for signage be in place to make getting around and enjoying the area’s attractions and amenities easy to do. Signage can accomplish this task, as it does in other municipalities and parts of the City of Buffalo. Transportation planners/designers should be consulted to make sure signage meets area needs.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Converting Niagara Street to a 3-lane street may create a need for more off-street parking. Investigate use of vacant lots, out-of-business commercial lots, and recent demolitions sites as possible off street parking opportunities.	North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, business association	Work with GBNRTC and Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets staff so that, if a need for more off street parking may result from a switch to a 3-lane Niagara Street, reuse of available sites for this purpose can be effectively considered.
2. Investigate the feasibility of relocating the I-190 inland to the Tonawanda Rail Corridor.	North District Council Member, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NYS DOT	Feasibility of this has been the subject of prior transportation studies and further investigation is required. (See “Buffalo Waterfront Corridor Initiative: A Strategic Plan for Transportation Improvements”, page 35.)
3. Encourage the use of mass transit.	BRR GNPA, NFTA	The area is well-served by bus routes; however, bus bike racks, more numerous and attractive bus shelters, availability of bus schedules through electronic communication, and implementation of ridership programs can further encourage the use of mass transit.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront)

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
<p>1. Support completion of planned improvements to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squaw Island Park, • Tow Path Park, and the • Ontario Street Boat Launch/ Cornelius Creek Park 	<p>City of Buffalo, Erie County, BRR GNPA, Elected Officials</p>	<p>Squaw Island: Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets and elected officials to fund and implement final improvements. Tow Path Park: Final improvements are underway. Ontario Street Boat Launch/ Cornelius Creek Park: Work with elected officials to fund the feasibility study based on community-supported vision for “Black Rock Canal Park.”</p>
<p>2. Support creation and maintenance of clean, safe parks, microparks, and greenway connections, and access to same.</p>	<p>North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, Buffalo Riverkeepers</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish Black Rock Heritage Park at 269 Dearborn at Dearborn & Hamilton, within the residential fabric of the community. 2. Buffalo Riverkeepers is anticipating funding to revitalize the Riverwalk area, including the former toll plaza site, the Naval Yard site, and Rich Marina. Anticipated funding will also support preparation of a feasibility study for proposed improvements associated with the Black Rock Canal Park concept for the Ontario Street Boat Launch/ Cornelius Creek Park.
<p>3. Promote waterfront development that is consistent with local, state, and federal plans and regulations.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Significant planning efforts are either underway or recently completed that will help determine the future look of our shared Buffalo waterfront. These include the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan (adopted 2006) and the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (currently in draft form). The next steps in ensuring beneficial waterfront development are to develop a familiarity with these plans, take advantage of future opportunities for public participation in shaping their provisions, and then see to compliance with them.</p>

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront) (continued)

4. Have successful community volunteer involvement in maintenance of parks and their features.

City of Buffalo, Erie County, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups like block clubs, gardening groups, local funding sources, business association, schools

Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to develop an adopt-a-park program and other volunteer opportunities.

5. Add desirable community features into parks, microparks, scenic trails, etc., like lighting, seating furniture, wi-fi, game tables, skate spots, bubblers, water fountains, etc., without creating neighborhood nuisance behavior.

City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups like block clubs, gardening groups, local funding sources, business association, schools

Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to review existing and help create new plans for parks, microparks, scenic trails, etc., and work cooperatively to identify desirable community features which can be added.

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Promote safety in the parks.	City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups	Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to assess safety in parks and strategize how to improve it.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

6. Realize the Potential of Existing Recreational Assets and Seize Opportunities for New Ones within the Neighborhood (Parks, Recreation, Waterfront) (continued)

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| 2. Improve use of the parks. | City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups | Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to strategize ways to improve use of the parks. |
| 3. Facilitate new improvements to parks. | City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups | Work with Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Erie County, and park interest groups to continually improve the parks with new improvements. |
| 4. Support new recreational trails/bike paths and greenway connections, and expansion and improvement of existing ones, like the Scajaquada Creek Bike Path, Seaway Trail, Riverwalk, to link parks/recreational assets to themselves and to other neighborhoods. | City of Buffalo, Erie County, North District Council Member, Buffalo Riverkeepers, BRR GNPA and park interest groups | Park connectivity is one of the keys to a healthy park system. Proposals for trails/bike paths and greenway connections should be developed, studied and, if they warrant, publicly supported. Recent proposals include extending the Scajaquada Pathway northward along the I-190 and revitalizing the Riverwalk area, including the Naval Yard site and Rich Marina. |

7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design

Key Immediate Strategies (1-2 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
1. Advocate for the development of design standards, zoning regulations, and special designations that protect the neighborhood character of Historic Black Rock.	City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA	Work with the City of Buffalo and community stakeholders to effect these positive changes.

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design (continued)

<p>2. Add, and customize, to the extent practicable, wayfinding signage, transit shelters, street furniture, and bike racks to leverage visual cues emanating from the neighborhood and its history.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, GBNRTC, NFTA, Other Business District associations</p>	<p>Elmwood Village Association has recently added artistically-stylized components to its streetscape, including recycling containers, brackets for hanging planters, and the like. Work with the City of Buffalo and organizations like these to determine how to develop opportunities, obtain funding, and implement improvements that add to the character of the area while providing needed conveniences.</p>
<p>3. Support Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project, so that developable land along the Tonawanda and Chandler Street rail corridors can be created and employment growth and demand for local goods and services follows.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member</p>	<p>Seek assistance from city officials and the North District Council Member to accept Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project funding and initiate project activities.</p>
<p>4. Expand park, garden and greenspace opportunities, taking advantage of emerging vacant lots.</p>	<p>BRR GNPA, Buffalo Riverkeeper, interest groups</p>	<p>Brownfield sites and vacant lots provide opportunities for new parks, gardens, and greenspaces. Work with the BRR GNPA and interest groups to continually survey the neighborhood for these opportunities and participate in planning to realize them.</p>
<p>5. Develop a vacant lot beautification program in residential areas that incorporates topsoil, trees, grass and attractive fencing.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Review the Buffalo News article, "Green Strategy Works to Increase Property Values", 11/14/08. Philadelphia's Green Strategy program works in partnership with City Hall to improve and maintain vacant lots, "We want to send a message that this space is psychologically owned by someone, and, believe it or not, that works."</p>
<p>6. Monitor major planning initiatives and promote public participation opportunities involving them.</p>	<p>North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Keep strong partnerships with North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</p>
<p>7. Ensure plan provisions are consistent with Buffalo Comprehensive Plan and City initiatives and policies.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA, community groups</p>	<p>This plan has been checked against the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan (see page 87 of that document). City initiatives and policies change, so work in partnerships to keep abreast of new developments.</p>

7. Make Distinctive Gateways and Street Themes, Leverage Land Development, and Improve Urban Design (continued)

Longer Term Strategies (2-5 Years)	Key Partner(s)	Next Steps
<p>1. Develop partnership with Department of Economic Development, Permits and Inspection Services and Office of Strategic Planning on problem properties, demolitions, foreclosed properties, and maintenance and reuse of vacant properties.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Develop a tracking mechanism to identify, report, and assess progress on addressing problems related to these properties, while also developing strategies for their reuse.</p>
<p>2. Monitor land development so that complementary projects can be built into them at an early stage. For example, as roads are rebuilt, add bike lanes and other features where appropriate to facilitate multi-modal transportation choices.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Develop a list of planning initiatives and projects in Historic Black Rock, and explore how tie-ins to them can maximize their local impact.</p>
<p>3. Promote sustainable improvements that are practicable when existing resources are improved and new assets are developed.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Identify opportunities for incorporating sustainable practices and publicize successes in the local media. For example, rain gardens on vacant lots, sustainable materials and design in rehabilitated and new buildings, landscape elements to reduce combined sewer overflows, permeable pavements where possible, raised planters, container gardens on roofs and as bollards, vertical green walls, etc.</p>
<p>4. Suggest universal accessibility be considered in all planning and design activities.</p>	<p>City of Buffalo, North District Council Member, BRR GNPA</p>	<p>Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible. Recommendations for universal design can be part of recommendations made during the public participation phase of planning and design. Universal access is well-illustrated by the Complete Streets legislation recently passed by the Buffalo Common Council. (See page 25.)</p>

CHAPTER 4: PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION 3: SUPERPRIORITIES: A LIST FOR CITY OF BUFFALO ACTION

Action Step 1: Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area Project (see page 31)
 Support Tonawanda Street Corridor Brownfield Opportunity Area project, so that developable land along the Tonawanda and Chandler Street rail corridors can be created and employment growth and demand for local goods and services follows.

Action Step 2: Historic Resources Survey (see page 14)
 Support funding and completion of expert historic resources survey and undertaking of next steps to create a State and National Register historic district and preserve historic resources.

Action Step 3: Traffic Simulation Study (see page 26)
 Support request for a traffic simulation study to the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC) in early 2009, so that changes to the design of Niagara St. or portions of it “from a 4-lane route to a 3-lane street” to calm traffic, improve walkability, and stimulate shopper activity in the business corridor can be studied in early 2009.

Action Step 4: Business Association (see page 22)
 Assist in revitalizing business association on Niagara Street and encourage participation of local businesses.

Action Step 5: Streetscape Improvements (see page 26)
 Assist planning, funding and implementation of streetscape improvements at:

<p>1. Niagara Street commercial corridor, from Amherst to Arthur</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurface street • Demarked lanes: 2 lanes each way plus a center turning lane • Demarked bike lanes • Plantings, trees, benches, banners, wayfinding signage • On-street parking • Traffic calming measures <p>2. Niagara & Amherst as the key gateway intersection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced crosswalk • Wayfinding signage • Improve Market Square Park with a children’s play space 	<p>3. Niagara & Tonawanda, Tonawanda & Amherst, Tonawanda & Hertel, and Niagara & Ontario Gateways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced crosswalk • Wayfinding signage <p>4. Amherst Street cultural corridor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demarked bike path • Enhanced crosswalk • Plantings, trees, benches, banners, wayfinding signage
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Action Step 6: Highway Signage for Traveler Services (see page 28)
 Help add highway signage to the I-190 that advertises traveler services in Black Rock.

Action Step 7: Planned Improvements to Major Waterfront Parks (see page 28)
 Support completion of planned improvements to Squaw Island Park, Tow Path Park, and the Ontario Street Boat Launch/Cornelius Creek Park

Action Step 8: Protect Neighborhood Character (see page 31)
 Help establish design standards, zoning regulations, and special designations that protect the neighborhood character of Historic Black Rock. Support creation of a vacant lot beautification program.

Action Step 9: Black Rock Heritage Park (see page 30)
 Support establishing Black Rock Heritage Park at 269 Dearborn at Dearborn & Hamilton, within the residential fabric of the community.

Action Step 10: Life Learning Center (see page 16)
 Help create a Life Learning Center as a satellite for community services in Historic Black Rock, with 69 Hamilton as a possible location.

Action Step 11: New and Renovated Homes (see page 16)
 Support the strengthening of BRR NHS programs that promote better housing opportunities and conditions. Create concept plans for new housing development and facilitate their implementation.