



2017 Community Agenda

1. Make the NFTA Work for Buffalo Niagara

The NFTA should be accountable to all riders of the system and ensure that better access to public transit is available, especially in low income and minority communities. Erie County and New York State should designate funds from their respective budgets to ensure that the NFTA is fully funded to provide the best services for transit riders. This includes more trips on given routes, cleaner buses, and bus stops that are well maintained.

2. Increase Accommodation and Access Policies for Immigrants and Refugees in Western New York

Buffalo and Erie County should improve accommodation and language access policies, practices, and training so that immigrants and refugees receive meaningful access to government services, as required by federal and state civil rights laws. Comprehensive written Limited English Proficiency plans should be created in partnership with the community and implemented, particularly in the Buffalo Public Schools, the City of Buffalo Fire Department, and the Erie County Auto Bureau. Local governments should also explore other designations and practices in order to make this community more welcoming to New Americans.

3. Support a Fruit Belt Community Land Trust

The City of Buffalo should transfer the more than 200 vacant lots it owns in the Fruit Belt to a new Fruit Belt Community Land Trust to ensure that the neighborhood can control the fate of those lots and that any housing built on those lots is affordable to Fruit Belt residents.

4. Ensure Lead-Safe and Healthy Homes

New York State should create a cross-department, comprehensive strategy to eliminate childhood lead poisoning and other environmental home hazards negatively impacting a child's lifelong health and well-being. To affect this change, the state should:

- a) Lower the blood lead reference level for lead poisoning prevention actions to the CDC-recommended 5 µg/dL;
- b) Assume responsibility for safe rehabilitation and safe demolition of housing units constructed prior to 1978 by enacting a statewide lead-safe demolition standard and requiring that contractors performing rehabilitation activities be certified under the EPA Renovation, Repair, and Painting (RRP) rule;
- c) Engage in a lead-safe window replacement strategy to realize long-term energy savings and lead hazard reduction benefits;
- d) Establish a statewide mechanism allowing Medicaid funding for lead hazard reduction and other targeted environmental interventions in homes where children with elevated blood lead levels, chronic asthma or other qualifying conditions reside; and
- e) Encourage NYSERDA to include benefits from eliminating lead exposures in the Savings to Investment Ratio (SIR) for efficiency program calculations and in the NYS Clean Energy Plan.

5. Create a More Independent Commission on Citizen Rights and Community Relations for City of Buffalo

The City of Buffalo should amend its Charter so that the Executive Director and Commissioners of the Commission on Citizen Rights and Community Relations are elected through a special election, commissioned by an independent body of Buffalo residents appointed by community organizations invested in police accountability.

6. Reduce Poverty by Supporting Transitions off of Public Assistance

Erie County should pursue an inclusive and collaborative approach that brings together community organizations to effectively address barriers to individuals transitioning from Public Assistance. The Department of Social Services should improve existing resources for community members transitioning off public assistance to support their self-sufficiency and well-being, and take steps to address existing gaps in transition support. The County should work with community stakeholders, local employers, and community members with experience on public assistance to do a gap analysis of barriers to transitioning off public assistance and additionally design and implement a plan to address identified barriers.

7. Make the New York State Office of Persons with Developmental Disabilities Accessible for All

The Office of Persons with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) should work in coordination with state and local planning officials, the Dormitory Authority, the Niagara Frontier Transit Authority, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Health, voluntary service providers for people with disabilities, community members, and lawmakers to establish an accessible satellite office of the OPWDD within the city of Buffalo.

8. Preserve and Expand Child Care Subsidies for Working Families

New York State and Erie County should preserve and expand access to child care by taking the following steps:

- a. Increase funding for facilitated enrollment child care subsidies in Erie County up to 275% of the federal poverty level; and
- b. Increase funding for child care subsidies in Erie County for families making less than 200% of the federal poverty level.

9. Create a Signature Park on the Outer Harbor

New York State should designate the 150 acres of green space that the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation owns on the Outer Harbor as parkland.

10. Make Community Benefits Agreements to ensure that Buffalo's Banks Invest in and Support Communities of Color and Low-Income Communities

At least two additional banks in western New York should make community benefit agreements in 2017 to invest in and support communities of color and low income communities.

11. Pass the Climate and Community Protection Act

New York State should pass the Climate and Community Protection Act to:

- a. Make greenhouse gas emission reductions mandatory and legally enforceable;
- b. Promote renewable energy and energy efficiency;
- c. Direct 40% of clean energy spending to disadvantaged neighborhoods;
- d. Make sure that the green jobs created are high quality jobs; and
- e. Provide a just transition for workers and communities that have depended on fossil fuel jobs and tax revenues

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