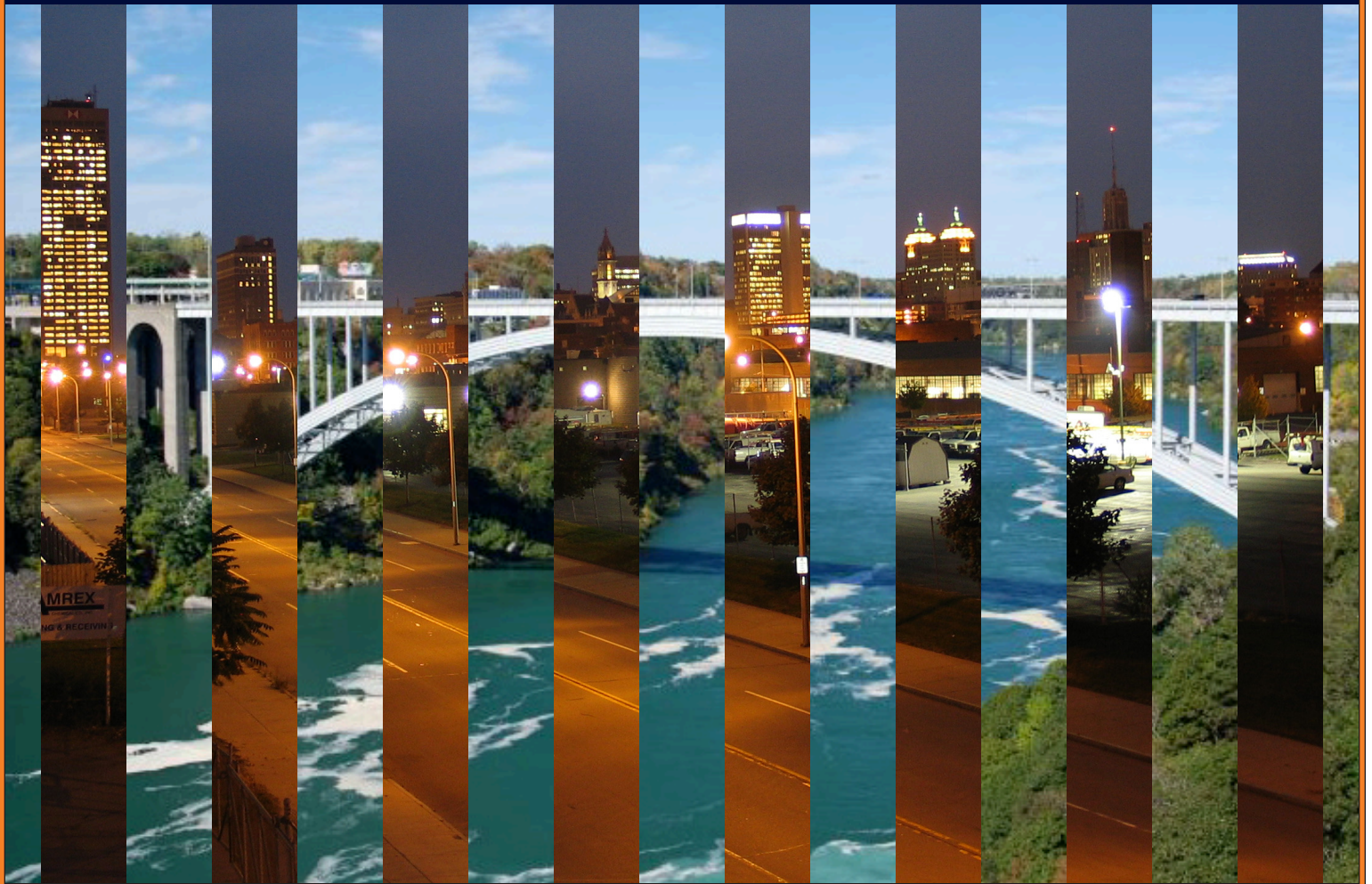




# 2009 REGIONAL AGENDA

A collaborative effort of the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, counties of Erie and Niagara, and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership



# 2009 REGIONAL AGENDA TOP PRIORITY: UB2020

◇ **UB2020** can be one of the largest economic development initiatives in the history of the Buffalo Niagara region.....**page 1**

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◇ The Buffalo Niagara region is thriving in a number of **target industry sectors** and it is imperative that specific focus from the state and federal governments is put on growing these industries ..... **page 2**

◇ Policy and funding priorities related to **transportation** are vital to the growth of our Buffalo Niagara’s target industry sectors and the economic strength of the region ..... **page 3**

◇ Investing in our communities’ **revitalization and redevelopment** – and ensuring adequate economic development resources for municipalities – is essential to bringing the Buffalo Niagara region from its “rust belt” past into the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy..... **page 4**

◇ To combat the nation’s highest energy costs, New York must create a comprehensive **energy policy** for the Buffalo Niagara region with a focus on economic development..... **page 5**

◇ The Great Lakes region is one of the most productive and prolific economic region’s in the world – in fact, much of the nation’s success is attributable to its economic impact, workforce and industry; the **Great Lakes Business Agenda** outlines steps the federal government can take to ensure its vitality ..... **page 6**



***2009 Regional Agenda  
Top Priority  
UB2020***

***The outcomes of the UB2020 program can be the largest economic development initiative in Buffalo Niagara's history. In the midst of a state financial crisis, great steps forward can be taken through regulatory reforms that would give UB more flexibility in implementing this highly-aggressive growth plan. The potential economic impact of UB2020 in the second poorest city in the nation is a natural opportunity for a pilot project allowing UB this flexibility within the SUNY system.***

**State Policy**

- A rational tuition strategy to provide for small, regular increases in tuition allowing parents and students to better plan and budget while giving the university a predictable funding stream by which to grow programs and invest in excellence. There currently is no tuition policy in NYS.
- Provide UB access to capital markets through the NYS Dormitory Authority to allow the University to leverage critical capital funds at no cost to the taxpayer.
- Spending and contracting deregulation for land and equipment by reforming policies that hamper efficient business practices and cut down on bureaucratic delays that cost taxpayers money.
- Ability to lease and sell land, enabling UB to leverage taxpayers' investment with private funds, allowing UB to create agreements with private partners for use of its land and facilities and move quickly and nimbly when opportunities arise. Current restrictions limit its ability to form partnerships that would benefit UB and the local economy.

## ***2009 Regional Agenda***

### ***Target Industry Sectors***

***The Buffalo Niagara region offers great advantage to companies engaged in a number of target industry sectors. State and federal attention focused on these sectors is vital to their development and growth – spinning off vitality and opportunity for the community as a whole.***

#### ***Target Industry Sector – Life Sciences***

##### **Downtown Buffalo Academic Health Center**

- Downtown acquisition, construction and development fund - \$100MM state
  - \$25 million toward a multi-modal transportation structure
  - \$10 million for recruitment of scientists
  - \$25 million for land acquisition supporting University at Buffalo (UB) plans for a downtown campus
  - \$20 million for site preparation, acquisition, and infrastructure
  - \$20 million for neighborhood development
- Workforce development - \$2MM
  - \$2 million for programs, including job training, to link emerging jobs to Buffalo's youth and residents.

#### ***Target Industry Sector - Tourism***

##### **Niagara Experience Center**

- Site Acquisition, Design and Beginning Phases of Construction of Niagara Experience Center - \$20MM federal/\$20MM state

## ***2009 Regional Agenda Transportation***

***Buffalo Niagara's transportation system is its lifeblood that enables several of the region's target industry sectors to thrive. With funding streams for transportation in jeopardy, it is imperative that we prioritize transportation and logistics projects to have the greatest impact and return-on-investment, while continuing to fight, as a region, for our share of transportation dollars.***

### **SAFETEA-LU**

- Reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU by Congress
  - Streamline process
  - Provide greater flexibility to states and regions in how transportation funding is utilized

### **Peace Bridge Expansion Project**

- Expedited approvals – a “record of decision” by the Federal Highway Administration requested by Spring 2009 and an executed lease agreement with the General Services Administration for the new Customs plaza.

### **Transportation Funding**

- Equitable distribution of NYSDOT transportation maintenance and improvement funding

### **Olcott Harbor Breakwater**

- Construction of Olcott Harbor Breakwater - \$1.8MM federal

### **Niagara Falls International Airport**

- Construction of Niagara Falls International Airport Terminal - \$14.5MM state

### **Niagara Falls International Railway Station**

- Construction of Niagara Falls International Railway Station - \$17.8MM (\$9.5MM federal/\$8.3MM state)

## ***2009 Regional Agenda Community Development***

***With federal and state financial crises a reality, local municipalities look to Washington and Albany for answers as to how to continue to proactively invest in economic development. Again, investment must be prioritized and maximized to have the greatest economic impact on the community.***

### **Spaulding Fibre**

- Completion of Spaulding Fibre Redevelopment Area – Roadway construction, final demolition and remediation - \$2MM federal

### **Buffalo/Lackawanna Waterfront Corridor**

- Sewer construction enabling development on the Buffalo/Lackawanna Waterfront Corridor (Outer Harbor) - \$38MM federal (\$9.2MM for improvements to Erie County Sewer District No. 6)

### **Buffalo Revitalization Initiative**

- Property acquisition, remediation and development - \$15MM federal
- Business district revitalization - \$15MM federal

### **Maintain Local State Aid**

- Extend Restore NY program
- Maintain state funding level provided to municipalities

### **Brownfields Cleanup**

- Recapitalize the NYSDEC Environmental Restoration Program

### **Local Revenue Streams**

- Lessen cities' reliance on state aid by allowing utilization of revenue opportunities that do not burden taxpayers, such as authorization for a red light camera system and elimination of the state practice of sharing certain locally generated revenue streams, for example, motor vehicle moving violations, marriage licenses and handicapped parking fees.

## ***2009 Regional Agenda***

### ***Energy***

***New Yorkers pay among the nation's highest energy bills. In Buffalo Niagara, where the economy is anchored by manufacturing industries and other large energy users, the sting of those high costs is especially strong. New York needs a comprehensive energy policy that deals with energy issues such as production, delivery, reliability, cost and the regulatory environment in an integrated fashion focused on economic development.***

- Redeploy “rural and domestic” power for economic development uses within the franchise territories of three upstate utilities
- NYPA should negotiate contracts with existing RP/EP customer as soon as possible
- The proceeds from the sale of unallocated and/or allocated but unused EP/RP power should be used for economic development purposes within a 30 mile radius of the Niagara Power Project
- Current New York State power programs should be centralized with a focus on streamlining the application process for greater ease, consistency and transparency
- Reduce taxes and other statutory and regulatory costs on energy
- Promote effective infrastructure investment in the energy delivery (transmission and distribution) system – and do so in a manner that balances return on investment for upstate businesses with price impacts on those businesses
- Renew Article X of the New York Public Service Law
- Modify the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) to include effective, meaningful consumer protection measures

## ***2009 Regional Agenda Great Lakes Region***

***The bi-national Great Lakes region is the most important economic region in North America, accounting for 33% of the U.S. population, 32% of its GDP, 30% of its merchandise exports and 28% of its patents – even in the face of a significant reordering of the world’s economy. The Great Lakes Business Agenda was crafted by U.S. metropolitan chambers in the Great Lakes region in collaboration with the Brookings Institution, is aimed at restoring the region’s economic competitiveness and performance.***

### **Great Lakes Business Agenda**

- Federal government support for the policy priorities of the *Business Agenda for Economic Transformation in the Great Lakes Region*
  - Create federal transportation infrastructure policy and funding that supports the unique needs of inland metropolitan regions that today operate as global gateways and centers of trade and commerce
  - Create a 21<sup>st</sup> century northern border with Canada that balances national security with economic security
  - Establish federal immigration policy that facilitates significant international talent attraction, integration and retention
  - Build an innovation strategy that fuels research, development and commercialization activity in the Great Lakes region
  - Renew and leverage the Great Lakes and its natural attributes to transform the economic region by supporting business development and research opportunities compatible with fresh water technology