

Freight Planning and Policy

Recommendations

Freight Planning and Policy Recommendations

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Build Support for Long-Term Transportation Bill

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

The FAST Act authorized \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020. On September 30, 2020, as the FAST Act was set to expire, a 1-year extension was approved, providing funding for the 2021 fiscal year.

DESCRIPTION

There continues to be a need for a long-term federal transportation bill to follow the FAST Act that would enhance and modernize freight transportation infrastructure. This long-term transportation bill should also include identifying new sources of revenue as gas and diesel gas tax revenues remain stagnant and even decline, diminishing the main source of revenue for transportation infrastructure funding.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



Source: One Region Forward

IMPLEMENTATION

GBNRTC, along with transportation, freight, and logistics stakeholders should take on a collaborated advocacy role in supporting ongoing efforts by New York State Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (NYSAMPO), AASHTO, and other organizations to resolve this at the national level.

AGENCY PARTNERS



AASHTO



Department of Transportation

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not known at this time

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Stay Abreast on Transportation Master Plan Update in Niagara Region, Ontario

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

At the time of this study, the Niagara Region, Ontario was updating their Transportation Master Plan. Stakeholders from the Niagara Region and Peel Region were involved in the Stakeholder meetings for this study and provided input on existing conditions, the SWOT analysis, and recommendations.

DESCRIPTION

Stakeholders from the Niagara Region and Peel Region indicated a desire in Ontario to improve border crossing congestion and clearance times and enhance Niagara-Greater Toronto Area freight access by looking at alternative corridors (such as the Niagara-Hamilton Trade Corridor between Hamilton and Welland and NGTA East Corridor between Welland and Fort Erie).

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



Source: "How We Go" Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan

IMPLEMENTATION

GBNRTC and other freight and logistics stakeholders should remain involved in Niagara Region transportation planning as new or improved trade corridors can impact corridors and border crossings in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

AGENCY PARTNERS



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not known at this time

Create a TIP Freight Funding Block

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

A Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) freight funding block would allow freight projects to be called out as a subset of the full Transportation Improvement Program for funding.

DESCRIPTION

A TIP funding block should be created as a subset to the full GBNRTC TIP to program select smaller freight and logistics projects. This would also identify opportunities for GBNRTC to coordinate on and support state and federal grant opportunities for freight projects.

AGENCY PARTNERS



IMPLEMENTATION

Upon completion of the Niagara Frontier Urban Freight Transportation Plan 2020 Update, GBNRTC can begin creating the TIP freight funding block as part of its TIP.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



Source: One Region Forward

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not Known
at this time

Regional stakeholders indicated a need to better promote the cross-border economy by using the region's international location to grow bi-national logistics and trade, and by breaking the perception that the border is difficult to maneuver. This is further aligned with strategies outlined in the WNY REDC to "Leverage Our International Border Location". Further, the region can market inexpensive, clean, renewable energy resources derived from hydro generation stations in Southern Ontario and Western New York to promote this "Green" Cross-Border Logistics Hub.

DESCRIPTION

With multiple regions competing against each other for economic development, one way the Buffalo-Niagara region can differentiate itself; one that has gained support in concept from freight and logistics stakeholders, is to promote the region as a “Green” or “Sustainable” Cross-Border Logistics Hub. This would take advantage of the region’s unique location along the Canadian border coupled with the ability to build green, sustainable development to create and promote a unique brand for the freight and logistics industry. The WNY REDC outlines strategies to create a Regional Smart Growth Coordination Council and establish the region as a center of green innovation, which would align with this strategy when combined with the Bi-National Logistics Council and ITGO efforts. The region could establish certain brownfield redevelopment sites and Foreign Trade Zones as demonstration sites for Green Cross

Border Logistics Hubs. The sites could include Bethlehem Steel Advanced Manufacturing Park, Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park, the 133-acre site adjacent to Niagara Falls International Airport, and 50-acre site south of Niagara Falls International Airport to name a few. Additionally, when marketing the Buffalo Logistics Complex the ability to use this Green Cross-Border Logistics Hub strategy to reduce the number of truck vehicle miles traveled by moving more freight to rail can help to prioritize the need for the facility.

ELEMENTS

1. Advance ITGO Involvement on NITTEC Cross-Border Committee and WNY REDC
2. Remove Perception that the Border is Difficult to Maneuver
3. Build Upon Ontario's Strategic Investment and Procurement Agreement

IMPLEMENTATION

GBNRTC, in partnership with ITGO, NITTEC, and other entities should advocate for the creation of a “Bi-National Logistics Council” as outlined in the WNY REDC Strategic Plan. This Council would be tasked with “coordinating planning for key investments; advocating for public policy action on taxation, regulation, and infrastructure; building operational relationships among key stakeholders; and mounting a marketing and promotion strategy and program to reinforce the region as a primary hub in the global logistics network”. The Council could evolve into a number of subcommittees tasked with many of the strategies outlined in this Study update.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not Known
at this time

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Advance ITGO Involvement on NITTEC Cross-Border Committee and WNY REDC

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

When the Buffalo Niagara Partnership (BNP) reorganized its economic councils, the CanAm Council was reorganized into other councils and efforts. While the BNP still advocates for cross-border economy through partnerships with Niagara Region and Hamilton Region Chambers of Commerce, by advocating for policy that facilitates cross-border trade, and holding bi-national events, this reorganization leaves a need for a cross-border committee or alliance to regularly meet to collaborate cross-border economy, trade, and logistics and to promote the region as a bi-national logistics hub. NITTEC has a Cross-Border Committee that meets regularly on transportation and information collaboration. The NITTEC Cross-Border Committee realizes the importance of the freight and logistics industry and in 2019 extended an invitation to freight operators from the U.S. and Canada to discuss concerns with the Committee. The participation by freight operators is expected to continue and to be enhanced.

IMPLEMENTATION



There are two recommendations outlined:

1. NITTEC's Cross-Border Committee to make a permanent position available for ITGO and/or freight operators in the U.S. and Canada in order to bring a voice for the freight and logistics industry to the cross-border discussion.
2. GBNRTC, in partnership with ITGO, NITTEC, and other entities, should advocate for the WNY Regional Economic Development Council to include a member of the freight and logistics industry (potentially a member of ITGO). With an expected three-fold increase in freight volume utilizing Buffalo-Niagara region ports of entry by 2045, the region needs to be ready to facilitate cross-border trade.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



Economic Development Council Strategic Plan
Source: "A Strategy for Prosperity" – WNY Regional

AGENCY PARTNERS



Remove Perception that the Border is Difficult to Maneuver

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

There is a need to better educate and relay information on clearance procedures and border wait times, and provide information on the best times to cross (lowest wait times) and the typical peak times that would result in longer waits. This could come in the form of improved communication of wait times, expanded use of real-time information, which is outlined later in this section, and bridge authorities/ commissions could even study the use of variable pricing to try to better distribute truck traffic throughout the day or week as to spread out demand for a few peak times. This involves a collaboration of NITTEC, bridge authorities/ commissions, and trucking industry stakeholders. This portion involves the communication aspect of removing the perception, technology and infrastructure elements are expanded upon under the Expanded Intelligent Transportation Systems in the Region action item.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



Canadian Plaza at the Peace Bridge Border Crossing, Source: NORR Design

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- Create a permanent position for ITGO and/or freight operators in the U.S. and Canada on the NITTEC Cross-Border Committee.
- Expand ITS and smart mobility features to provide greater coverage area of real-time border crossing information to travelers.

LONG TERM

- Study potential use of variable pricing at border crossings to better distribute truck traffic peak demand throughout the day/ week.

AGENCY PARTNERS



Build Upon Ontario's Strategic Investment and Procurement Agreement

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

The recently signed Ontario – Maryland Strategic Investment and Procurement Agreement (SIPA), a subnational agreement focusing on increasing trade, investment, and jobs in the areas of advanced manufacturing, infrastructure, and the agri-food sector, would be expected to increase freight moving through border crossings in the Buffalo-Niagara region between Maryland and Ontario. This SIPA is the first to come out of the Ontario government's "Strategy for Trade with the U.S." As part of the strategy, Ontario is pursuing additional agreements with other U.S. states, which seek to secure improved access to investment and government procurement opportunities in the U.S. for Ontario businesses. As other SIPA's are signed, the Buffalo-Niagara region should look to position itself as the most logical ports of entry for which to conduct cross-border trade between Ontario and states in the eastern portion of the U.S. ITGO should look to spearhead similar SIPA opportunities with New York State that would help grow the freight and logistics industry in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



**Ontario
and Maryland
Strengthen
Economic
Partnership**



*Ontario and Maryland Sign Historic Investment and Procurement Agreement
Source: Government of Ontario, Newsroom*

AGENCY PARTNERS



NEAR TERM

- The WNY Regional Economic Development Council, inclusive of a member of the freight and logistics industry (potentially a member of ITGO) should work with Ontario officials to advocate for the Buffalo-Niagara region to be the preferred port-of-entry for similar SIPA opportunities.

LONG TERM

- The WNY Regional Economic Development Council, inclusive of a member of the freight and logistics industry (potentially a member of ITGO) should work with Ontario officials spearhead similar SIPA opportunities with New York State that would grow the freight and logistics industry in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

Building upon the strategy to promote the region as a Green Cross-Border Logistics Hub, there was a desire expressed by freight stakeholders to have a stronger collaboration and promotion of the freight and logistics industry in economic development efforts to the liking of those in peer cities (i.e., Kansas City, St. Louis, Toledo, Lehigh Valley, etc.). Thus, in order for the Buffalo-Niagara region to attain this, there is a need to better collaborate efforts amongst the various economic development and promotional agencies and to involve the freight and logistics industry in this collaboration. The creation of ITGO out of the 2010 study was an essential step in fostering an improved environment for the freight and logistics industry in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

The following are several strategies aimed at enhancing regional economic development collaboration and promotional efforts:

Currently, multiple entities and agencies are tasked with economic and industrial development and promotion of the Buffalo Niagara region. There is a need to align these efforts in order to collaborate strategies for economic development that support regional goals, with a single entity or committee acting as the lead for coordinated economic development efforts. This could come in the form of a Freight & Logistics Economic Task Force that is organized by GBNRTC and/or ITGO that includes members of the freight and logistics industry, members from the economic development community, as well as government entities; or could be lumped

together with the larger Bi-National efforts. ITGO has brought together many common freight interests into an organized coalition to promote the freight and logistics industry, but more collaboration and alignment of efforts is needed and the effort needs to be well funded in order to compete with peer cities. In order for ITGO to play an expanded role in promoting the freight and logistics industry and taking a lead in collaborating economic development interests in WNY, more attention needs to be paid to ITGO and it needs to be better funded.

Invest Buffalo Niagara is currently undertaking a WNY Industrial Real Estate Development Strategy to understand the regional market and characteristics of industrial and warehouse space. The study is ongoing and expected to be completed in 2021. The study will identify markets that the region should target along with strategies and infrastructure needed to facilitate targeting such markets. One of the early findings from that study is that the region continues to see a lack of industrial space and warehouse space in the market; specifically, buildings that are available for purchase. Available buildings that are over 100,000 SF in size and buildings that have significant electric infrastructure capacity (3+ MW peak demand) are fairly scarce.

- 1 Support Regional Economic Development Collaboration and Strategies
- 2 Use Invest Buffalo-Niagara Study Findings to Guide Regional Economic Development

Federal FAST Act

1 ● ● ● ● ● ●

2 ● ● ● ● ● ○

1 ●●●●●●●●○○○○○○○○

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■ ■ ■ **HIGH**

Not Known
at this time



Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council

Enhance Regional Collaboration of the Freight and Logistics Industry

Regional Economic Development and Promotional Efforts

May 2021

IMPLEMENTATION

GBNRTC should play an overall support and advocacy role to better align regional economic development with transportation planning and projects. GBNRTC and ITGO should advocate for regional collaboration amongst the WNY REDC, Invest Buffalo Niagara, GBNRTC, ITGO, industrial development agencies, economic development agencies, government and not-for-profit entities, and developers to use the results of the Invest Buffalo Niagara study to identify a strategy for targeting specific industries and addressing industrial and warehouse space needs; a subset of which can be used to target markets related to the freight and logistics industry..

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region



Sites of industrial properties that are receiving an consulting team undertaking the Invest Buffalo Niagara WNY Industrial Real Estate Development Strategy assessment

Source: Western New York site tours fuel strategy, Invest Buffalo Niagara

NEAR TERM

- GBNRTC and ITGO should advocate for regional collaboration in using the Invest Buffalo Niagara study findings to identify a regional strategy for targeting specific industries and addressing warehouse demand.

LONG TERM

- Regional collaboration of industrial and economic development is undertaken by a single entity.

AGENCY PARTNERS



Target Development of “Site-Ready” and “Pad-Ready” Sites

Facilitate Freight and Logistics Industry Expansion

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

Throughout the course of this study, stakeholders have indicated that there is a demand in the Buffalo-Niagara region for development sites that are “site-ready” or “pad-ready” and able to quickly accommodate construction of or conversion of industrial and warehouse space. These sites go beyond “shovel-ready” designation to prepare sites for quick accommodation of prospective tenants looking to be operational within a year.

Covid-19 has acted to expedite the growth in e-commerce, with consumers in search of next-day and same-day delivery of their goods. The expanded e-commerce market accelerated by Covid-19 has resulted in a number of Canadian logistics businesses looking for warehouse space (generally in excess of 200,000 square feet) in the U.S. (including the Buffalo-Niagara region). These Canadian businesses ship a majority of their inventory to the U.S. and they want to be set up for same-day and next-day shipping to their U.S. customers without having to be concerned over potential delays with border crossings, and to get ahead of any impending changes to tariffs and duties. These Canadian businesses are able to retain their employees in Canada, working remotely, while operating a highly-automated warehouse in the U.S. with only a few on-site administrative personnel. Overall, this helps Canadian companies become more efficient in working with their U.S. customer base.

At 2.6%, Buffalo-Niagara has one of the lowest industrial availability rates in the nation, according to market research conducted by CBRE|Buffalo

Further, Covid-19 has acted to expedite the growth in e-commerce, with consumers in search of next-day and same-day delivery of their goods. Further, Covid-19 has facilitated a movement by consumers to search for more

locally sourced food and to seek same-day delivery of food and produce. This has led to grocers and food producers seeing a growth in fresh food purchases, a resurgence in frozen foods, and growth in e-commerce and third-party deliveries for groceries. As a result of the growth in e-commerce, retail and distribution supply chains have had to continue to evolve. Retailers will increasingly look for ways to facilitate same-day or overnight delivery of goods directly to customers, in keeping with e-commerce service commitments. Many of these retailers will use a two-tiered distribution system whereby larger regional distribution

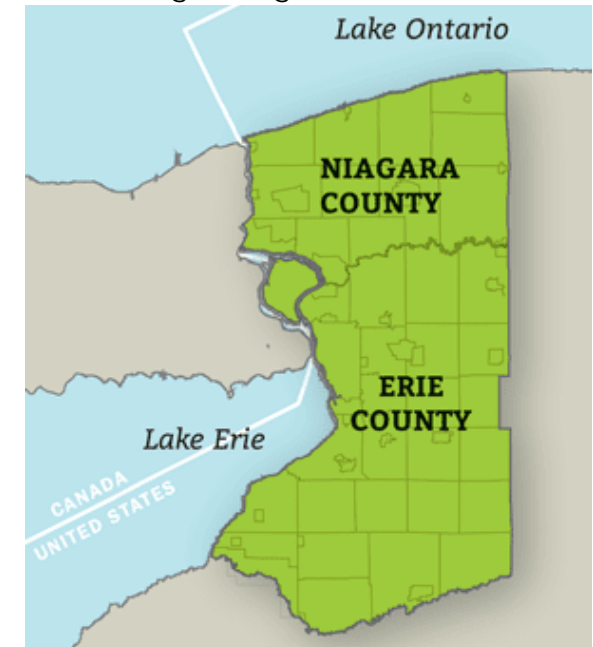


Source: Elmwood Warehousing

centers ship to smaller local fulfillment and sorting centers where small package carriers and contract drivers will deliver the goods directly to customers. The shifting retail and distribution supply chain combined with the expected increase in freight trade at Buffalo-Niagara region ports of entry will likely increase the demand for distribution warehousing, storage space (including cold-storage), and brokerage warehousing. That being said, developers in the region are reluctant to build spec space without the promise of a tenant unless there are numerous incentives to reduce financial risk, thus resulting in a gap in demand and supply. Without these “site-ready” or “pad-ready” sites, many stakeholders believe the region simply won’t be considered for many prospective projects.

LOCATION

Buffalo Niagara Region



Source: One Region Forward

DESCRIPTION

The following are several strategies aimed at targeting development of “site-read” and “pad-ready” sites that facilitate freight and logistics industry expansion:

1. Investigate Expanding “Site-Ready” and “Pad-Ready” Incentives
2. Investigate Repurposing of “Greyfield” Sites for Local Distribution and Fulfillment Center
3. Target Development of Temperature Controlled Warehousing
4. Develop a Regional GIS Database to Support Freight and Logistics Industry

Investigate Expanding “Site-Ready” and “Pad-Ready” Incentives

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

As part of the collaborated regional economic development approach outlined previously, GBNRTC should advocate for strategies that incentivize “site-ready” or “pad-ready” sites aimed at attracting such businesses. This strategy should also be approached as a program to modernize Buffalo’s industrial building stock, and ITGO, GBNRTC, and/or freight and logistics stakeholders can play a lead or support role in this. In an effort to help meet the demand for warehousing space, ECIDA is currently pursuing developers through an incentivized RFP package to spec build manufacturing/ warehousing space at Bethlehem Steel Advanced Manufacturing Park to help fill a need in manufacturing and warehousing space identified throughout the region. To accommodate a freight and logistics industry that is increasingly becoming more automated, many freight stakeholders have shown support for restructuring regional strategies and economic development based incentives to align with growth the number of businesses and in terms of square feet of development rather than only job-based or wage-based performance measures. Further, the region can market inexpensive, clean, renewable energy resources derived from hydro generation stations in Southern Ontario and Western New York as an incentive for “site-ready” and “pad-ready” sites.

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR
TERM

- As part of the collaborated regional economic development approach, advocate for strategies that incentivize “site-ready” or “pad-ready” sites.

LONG
TERM

- Utilize this strategy as a program to modernize the Buffalo-Niagara region’s industrial building stock

Pad Ready Site

- Pad Ready = “Ready to Build”
- Properly Zoned and Annexed
- Utilities to the Site and of Adequate Size
- Access is Approved
- All Governmental Approvals Complete
 - Exception of a specific building permit
- Mass Grading Complete
 - Site graded to sub-grade with building pad constructed



Example of Promotional Material for “Pad-Ready” Site
Source: National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP)

AGENCY PARTNERS



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not known
at this time

Investigate Repurposing “Greyfield” Sites for Local Distribution and Fulfillment Centers

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Many regions are looking at repurposing unproductive retail malls and large shopping centers left behind by the e-commerce market with distribution and fulfillment centers, bringing about an opportunity for “greyfield” reuse. A similar effort could be promoted in the Buffalo-Niagara region to revitalize older commercial areas, which would require a look at local Comprehensive Plans and Zoning codes to accommodate such warehouse and distribution space in older retail areas that can accommodate truck traffic. Incentive packages could be customized to target “greyfield” redevelopment of older commercial areas (New York State already provides incentives for roof-top solar installations).

AGENCY PARTNERS



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:

MEDIUM

Estimated Cost:

Not known
at this time

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- As part of the collaborated regional economic development approach, work with communities to identify “greyfield” sites that potentially would be feasible for conversion to light warehousing, distribution, or fulfillment centers.
- Work with real estate agencies, developers, warehousing operators, and economic development officials to identify resources needed to make older retail conversion to light warehousing, distribution, or fulfillment centers feasible.

LONG TERM

- As needed, update Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Codes to allow for conversion of older retail sites to light warehousing, distribution, or fulfillment centers.
- Advocate for incentives to convert larger, vacated retail sites to light warehousing, distribution, or fulfillment centers, where feasible.



Amazon distribution facility near Cleveland was built on the site of the Randall Park Mall, which closed in 2009.
Source: Retail-to-Warehouse Conversions Gain Momentum, NAIOP

Target Development of Temperature Controlled Warehousing

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

The growth in next-day and same-day food and grocery e-commerce suggests additional need for temperature-controlled warehousing that can enable localized next-day and same-day delivery of fresh and frozen foods to customers. Further, logistics providers that deliver these goods are looking to optimize their supply chain, meaning they prefer to locate closer to warehouses to minimize “deadhead” miles travelled to pick up goods but also want to be close to their consumer base to minimize travel time. A similar strategy in using an incentivized RFP package developed by ECIDA for Bethlehem Steel Advanced Manufacturing Park could be developed for seeking temperature-controlled warehousing in the region.

Targeting the above strategies towards brownfields, greyfields, or as adaptive reuse of older industrial buildings, with the ability to locate some of these facilities that generate cross-border trade within Foreign Trade Zones, would further enable the area being able to promote itself as a Green Cross-Border Logistics Hub.

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- Prepare additional RFP packages, similar to those developed by ECIDA for Bethlehem Steel Advanced Manufacturing Park, for seeking additional temperature-controlled warehousing in the region.
- Target RFPs to incentivize development of temperature-controlled warehousing within brownfields, greyfields, or adaptive reuse of older buildings, with the ability to located some facilities in Foreign Trade Zones.

LONG TERM

- Target temperature-controlled warehousing recruitment as a way to further promote the Buffalo-Niagara region as a “Green” Cross-Border Logistics Hub.

AGENCY PARTNERS



Niagara County
Center for Economic Development



Empire State
Development

INVEST BUFFALO NIAGARA

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not known
at this time

Develop a Regional Geographic Information System (GIS) Database to Support Freight and Logistics Industry

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

A GIS mapping interface is needed, and regularly updated, for use in economic development planning and marketing the region for industrial and freight/ logistics prospects. The database should identify available properties for development along with cost, their level of cleanup (greenfield, greyfield, brownfield), their status for development (approved, shovel-ready, pad-ready), and contact info for interested parties. This database should show all private and public sector properties.

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- Prepare a GIS mapping interface to be used as a single source of displaying development opportunities in the Buffalo-Niagara region.
- The GIS mapping tool can be developed as an interactive mapping tool that allows stakeholders to add/ delete/ modify information as needed.

LONG TERM

- Continuously update the GIS data to keep up-to-date mapping of development opportunities in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

AGENCY PARTNERS



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$50K for initial development of GIS mapping

Enhance Workforce Development and Access for Freight and Logistics Jobs

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

Regional stakeholders identified a need to enhance workforce development and job access for freight and logistics jobs. Workforce development is identified as one of ITGO's priorities for 2020.

DESCRIPTION

The main effort to enhance workforce development and job access for the freight and logistics industry involves establishing and implementing a new regional logistics workforce development upskilling and education program to include:

- **Regional Workforce Needs** – work directly with companies providing or requiring logistics services to determine the region's current and forward-looking personnel needs.
- **Logistics Career Promotion** – Create logistics workforce development and career path portal for students, job seekers, and workers changing careers. The portal can include job board, promotion of logistics careers, and links to education/upskilling resources.

The collaboration with NCCC is advancing, however advocates have indicated that workforce development associated with the freight and logistics industry needs adequate funding and attention from state and local workforce agencies. The New York State Department of Labor needs to establish an apprentice job title for the freight and logistics industry.

The collaboration with NCCC is advancing, however advocates have indicated that workforce development associated with the freight and logistics industry needs adequate funding and attention from state and local workforce agencies. The New York State Department of Labor needs to establish an apprentice job title for the freight and logistics industry. Also, regional economic development agencies should look to align industrial development with existing transportation options, ensuring job centers have access to transit in terms of both routing and scheduling. Improving worker access would require collaboration with regional employers, transit operators, job training centers, and community service agencies to improve job access and mobility.

Also, regional economic development agencies should look to align industrial development with existing transportation options, ensuring job centers have access to transit in terms of both routing and scheduling. Improving worker access would require collaboration with regional employers, transit operators, job training centers, and community service agencies to improve job access and mobility.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

**Not Known
at this time**

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Enhance Workforce Development and Access for Freight and Logistics Jobs

May 2021

IMPLEMENTATION

ITGO and other freight and logistics industry stakeholders should work with supply chain management and logistics centers and workforce training programs, such as at college and universities across the region (NCCC, Niagara University Center for Supply Chain Excellence, Buffalo State College, University at Buffalo, Canisius College), Northland Workforce Training Center, REDC Workforce Development Challenge, Erie-1 BOCES, WNY Talent Attraction and Retention Initiative, and other partners to secure grant funding.

NEAR TERM

- Work with supply chain management, logistic centers, workforce training programs, and colleges and universities to develop and promote workforce training programs geared towards the freight and logistics industry.
- Work directly with companies providing or requiring logistics services to determine the region's current and forward-looking personnel needs.
- Create logistics workforce development and career path portal for students, job seekers, and workers changing careers.

LOCATION

Buffalo Niagara Region



Source: One Region Forward



Northland Workforce Training Center Source: WBFO

AGENCY PARTNERS



- REDC Workforce Development Challenge
- Erie-1 BOCES
- WNY Talent Attraction and Retention Initiative

Advance Future UPWP Projects

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

In addition to the projects already identified in the UPWP, the following interchanges/intersections that were identified during this freight planning effort as high-crash locations and corridors that were identified in the Bottleneck Analysis as experiencing congestion should be considered for future UPWP projects to study and evaluate potential improvements.

DESCRIPTION

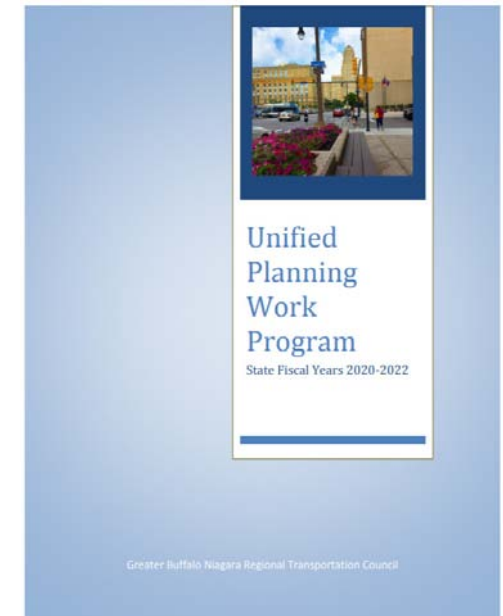
The projects on the following pages are areas that require further investigation:

1. Study I-290 Between Millersport Highway and I-90 and I-90/I-290 Interchange
2. Study I-90 Between I-290 and I-190
3. Study I-190/ LaSalle Expressway/ Niagara Scenic Parkway/ Buffalo Avenue Interchange
4. Study I-290 Interchanges at Sheridan Drive and Millersport Highway
5. Study Walden Avenue Between I-90 and Union Road
6. Study I-190 from Elm/ Oak to Porter Avenue

IMPLEMENTATION

These projects will need to be put into future UPWP plans to fund planning and/or analysis to refine specific strategies or projects before they can be implemented.

AGENCY PARTNERS



Cover of 2020-2022 GBNRTC UPWP

SUMMARY for each recommendation in the following pages

Study I-290 Between Millersport Highway and I-90 and I-90/ I-290 Interchange

Advance Future UPWP Projects

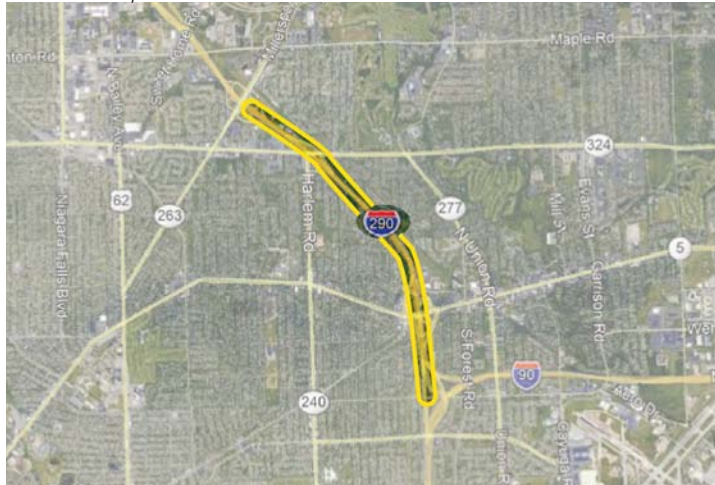
May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Both the eastbound and westbound sections of I-290 between I-90 and Millersport Highway have V/C ratios reaching capacity by 2045. In conjunction, the interchange of I-290 and I-90 has shown up as a key congestion point in bottleneck analysis for both the 2010 study and this study update. Studies have been undertaken on this interchange and improvements were made to eastbound I-90 approaching the interchange and on westbound I-90 between the I-90/I-290 merge and SR 33 Kensington Expressway, but the interchange still experiences congestion. Congestion on eastbound I-290 approaching the interchange routinely occurs in the AM and PM peak, often causing congestion beginning around Millersport Highway. This stretch of I-290 as well as the I-290/ I-90 interchange should be analyzed together to address one of the more congested interchanges in the region.

LOCATION

Amherst, New York



IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- Get recommendation into the UPWP and funded for planning study.

LONG TERM

- Undertake Analysis of I-290 between Millersport Highway and I-90; and I-90/ I-290 Interchange.
- Identify feasible alternative to advance.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$250K

AGENCY PARTNERS



*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Study I-90 Between I-290 and I-190

Advance Future UPWP Projects

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

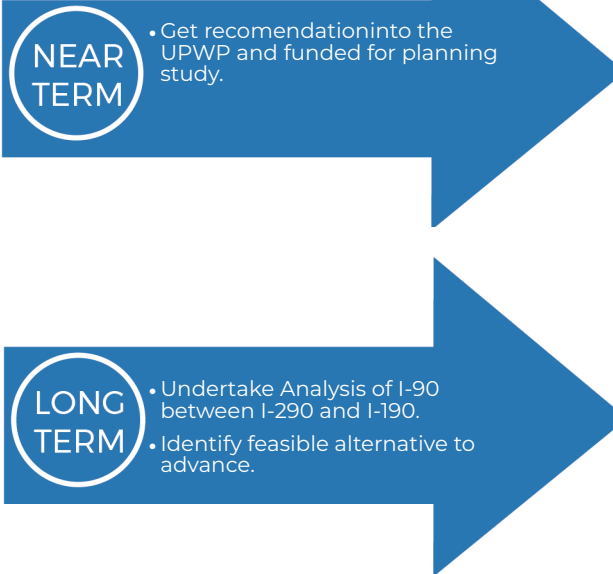
This stretch of I-90 known as the “Mainline” is identified in the Bottleneck Analysis as experiencing both recurring and non-recurring congestion by 2045. There have been several spot improvements done of the years, but the corridor still experienced congestion currently that is expected to worsen. A UPWP project should take a larger look at the corridor to identify whether additional interchange improvements or Integrated Corridor Management can address congestion or if additional capacity is needed.

LOCATION

Amherst and Cheektowaga, New York



IMPLEMENTATION



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$300K

AGENCY PARTNERS



*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

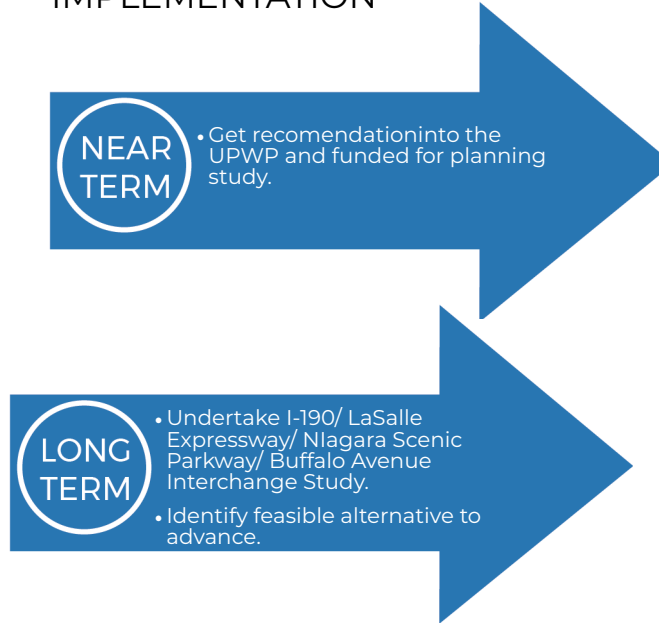
Study I-190/LaSalle Expressway/Niagara Scenic Parkway/Buffalo Avenue Interchange Advance Future UPWP Projects

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

One of the projects identified in the Niagara Falls Transportation Management Study currently underway that should be pursued is an interchange study to assess how the I-190/ LaSalle Expressway/ Niagara Scenic Parkway/ Buffalo Avenue Interchange can be reconfigured and made more safe, navigable, and act as an attractive gateway to Niagara Falls. This could involve downgrading several roadways in the area, combining interchanges, and/or removing numerous ramps to open land for public waterfront access and development. This roadway is part of the Critical Urban Freight Corridor network.

IMPLEMENTATION



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$225K

LOCATION

Niagara Falls, New York



AGENCY PARTNERS



Study I-290 Interchanges at Sheridan Drive and Millersport Highway

Advance Future UPWP Projects

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Both the I-290 Interchanges at Sheridan Drive and Millersport Highway interchanges show up as high frequency crash locations in Tech Memo #1. A UPWP project should further evaluate how these interchanges can be upgraded to improve safety. This roadway is part of the Critical Urban Freight Corridor network.

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR
TERM

- Get recommendation into the UPWP and funded for planning study.

LONG
TERM

- Undertake I-290 Interchange Study for Sheridan Drive and Millersport Highway.
- Identify feasible alternative to advance.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:

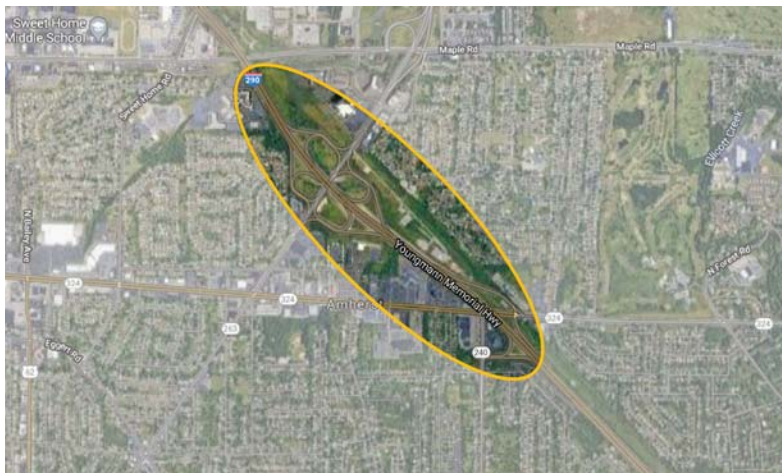
MEDIUM

Estimated Cost:

\$65K

LOCATION

Amherst, New York



AGENCY PARTNERS



*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Study Walden Avenue Between I-90 and Union Road Advance Future UPWP Projects

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

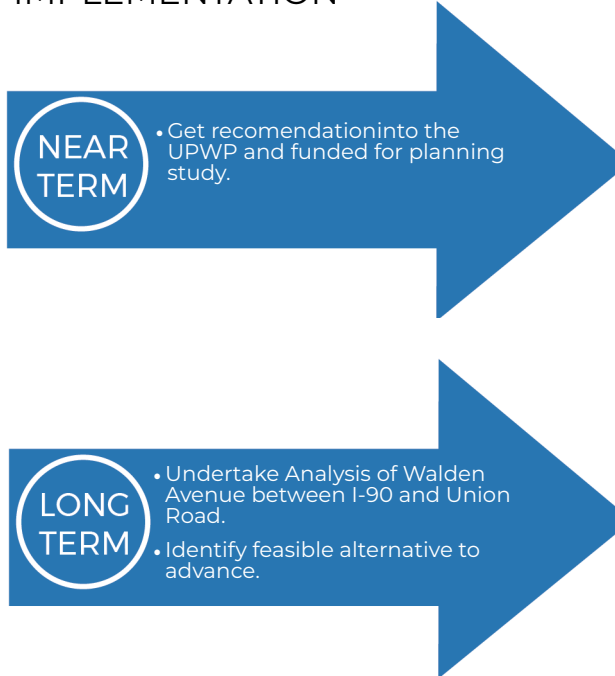
Congestion along the stretch of Walden Avenue between I-90 and Union Road is mainly caused by dense retail and numerous traffic signals in close proximity to the I-90 interchange ramps. The corridor experiences high truck usage associated with retail, a nearby truck stop, and industrial uses that are located further east and west where trucks are accessing I-90. The Walden Avenue corridor and interchange with I-90 should be analyzed for improvements, which could come in the form of short-term fixes such as traffic signal coordination; with consideration for longer-term improvements that could consist of interchange and driveway reconfigurations.

LOCATION

Cheektowaga, New York



IMPLEMENTATION



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$100K

AGENCY PARTNERS



*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Study I-190 from Elm/ Oak to Porter Avenue Advance Future UPWP Projects

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Both the northbound and southbound directions of I-190 through downtown experience volume/ capacity ratios reaching capacity by 2045, as outlined in the Bottleneck Analysis in Tech Memo #1. The corridor and associated interchanges should be analyzed for improvement to enhance safety and reduce congestions. This roadway is part of the Critical Urban Freight Corridor network.

LOCATION

Buffalo, New York



IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- Get recommendation into the UPWP and funded for planning study.

LONG TERM

- Undertake Analysis of I-190 between Elm/ Oak Interchange and Porter Avenue Interchange.
- Identify feasible alternative to advance.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$200K

AGENCY PARTNERS



*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Continue to Advance UPWP Projects that Support Freight Transportation

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

The GBNRTC UPWP identifies several planning projects that aim to enhance safety and improve transportation for the freight and logistics industry that should be advanced in upcoming years.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region, New York



Source: One Region Forward

DESCRIPTION

The projects on the following pages are UPWP projects that continue to be advanced.

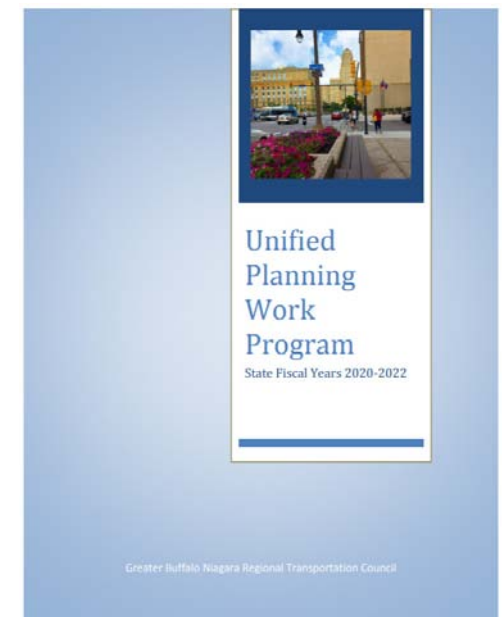
1. Conduct I-290/ Main Street Interchange Area Assessment
2. Analyze Access Improvements for I-290 Ramp to I-190
3. Analyze the Ramp Configuration on Westbound I-90 to Northbound I-190
4. Advance Analysis of I-190 Niagara/ Virginia Street Ramps
5. Develop Alternatives for Twin Cities Highway (NY Route 425) and River Road (NY Route 265)
6. Undertake Analysis of Youngs Road Interchange
7. Undertake a I-190/ Niagara Falls Boulevard Interchange Improvement Assessment

AGENCY PARTNERS



IMPLEMENTATION

These UPWP projects require additional planning and/or analysis to refine specific strategies or projects before they can be implemented.



Cover of 2020-2022 GBNRTC UPWP

SUMMARY for each recommendation in the following pages

Conduct I-290/ Main Street Interchange Area Assessment

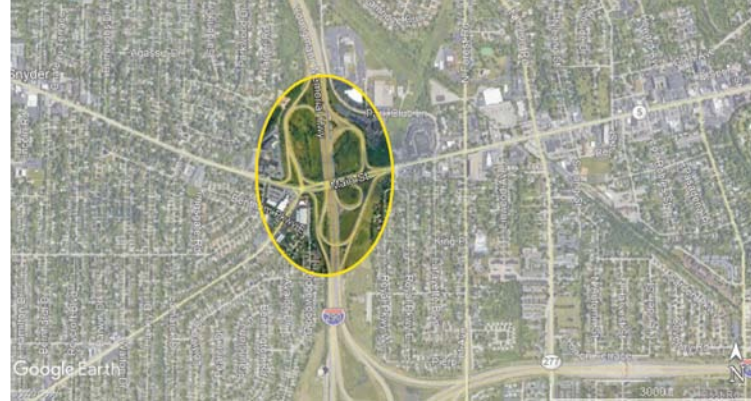
May 2021

DESCRIPTION

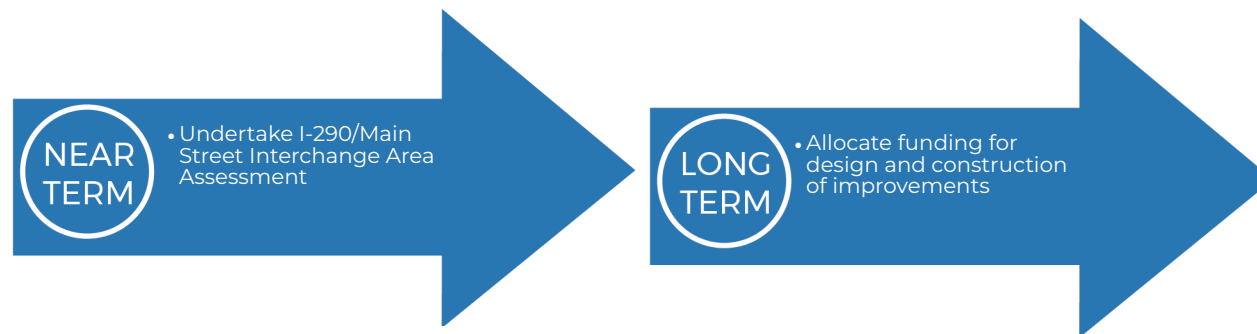
This has been identified as a location that needs attention to address safety improvements to reduce the number of crashes and attention to making the area safer and more walkable for pedestrians. This could include reconfiguring ramps.

LOCATION

Amherst, New York



IMPLEMENTATION



AGENCY PARTNERS



Department of
Transportation



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$100 K

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Analyze Access Improvements for I-290 Ramp to I-190

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

This assessment would look to reduce congestion that builds on northbound I-190 prior to the South Grand Island Bridge and improve the safety of merging vehicles onto I-190 northbound from I-290.

LOCATION

Tonawanda, New York



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



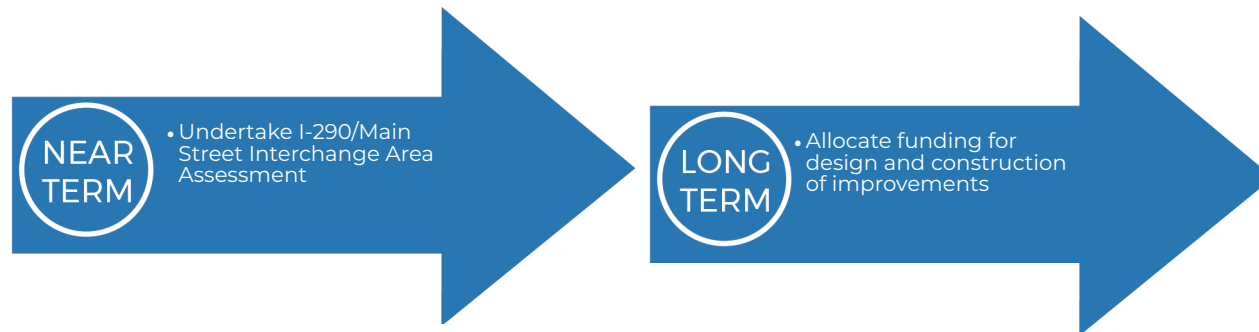
Priority:

MEDIUM

Estimated Cost:

\$65 K

IMPLEMENTATION



AGENCY PARTNERS



Department of
Transportation



Thruway
Authority

Analyze the Ramp Configuration on Westbound I-90 to Northbound I-190

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

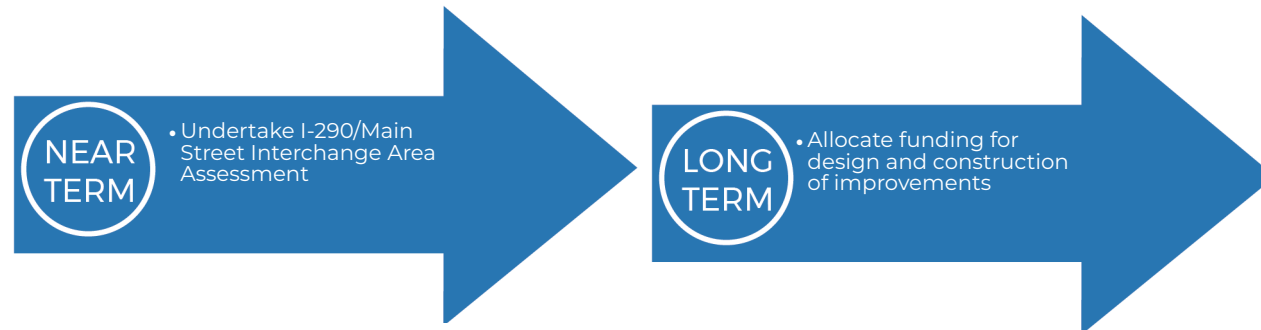
This assessment would look at ways to improve merging operations to reduce congestion and make the interchange safer.

LOCATION

Cheektowaga, New York



IMPLEMENTATION



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$65 K

AGENCY PARTNERS



Department of
Transportation



Advance Analysis of I-190 Niagara/ Virginia Street Ramps

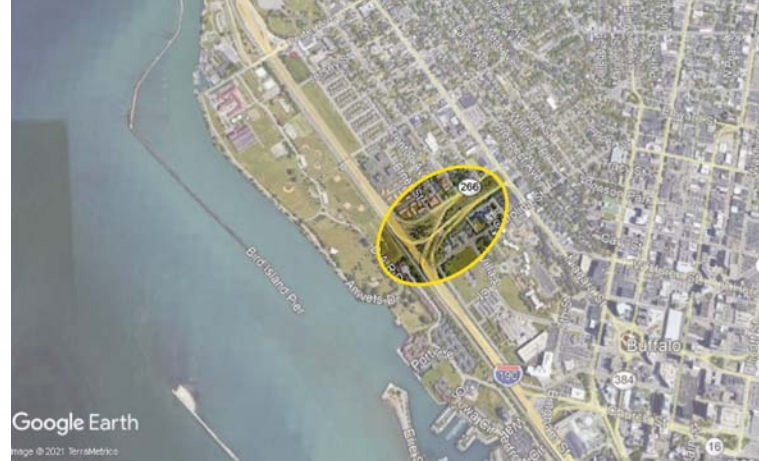
May 2021

DESCRIPTION

This assessment would look at ways to improve merging operations to reduce congestion and make the interchange safer.

LOCATION

Amherst, New York



IMPLEMENTATION



AGENCY PARTNERS



Department of
Transportation



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$300 K

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Develop Alternatives for Twin Cities Highway (NY Route 425) and River Road (NY Route 265)

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Both of these corridors in North Tonawanda are utilized by truck traffic and the planning studies will look at opportunities to implement more context-appropriate roadway features and incorporate placemaking and pedestrian/ bicycle opportunities while balancing the needs of the freight and logistics industry.

LOCATION

North Tonawanda, New York



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



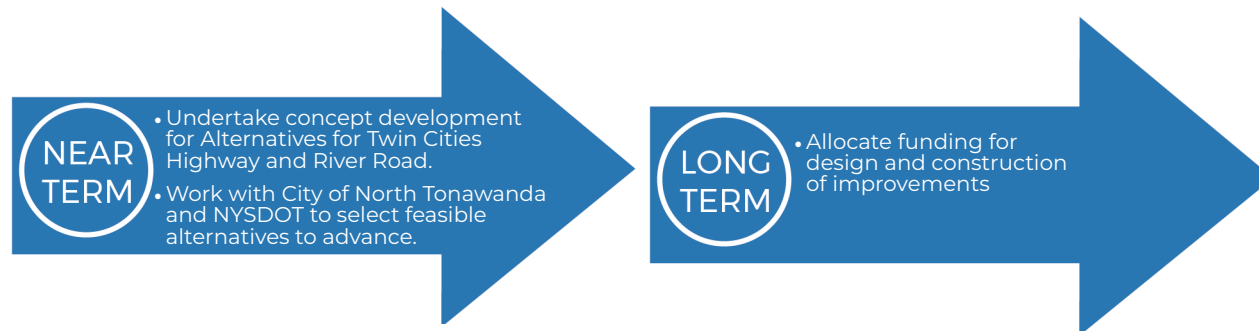
Priority:



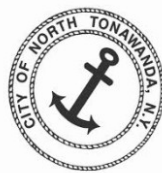
Estimated Cost:

\$150 K

IMPLEMENTATION



AGENCY PARTNERS



Undertake Analysis of Youngs Road Interchange

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

This assessment would look at alternatives and feasibility of constructing a NYS Thruway Interchange at Youngs Road. This recommendation is one of ITGO's 2020 priorities and has been identified by freight stakeholders as well as elected officials and community stakeholders, as desirable to not only provide a freight and logistics benefit to support Air Cargo at Buffalo Niagara International Airport and nearby industrial, warehousing, and logistics community, but to provide a commuting benefit that would help alleviate congestion on nearby north-south roadways (Main Street and Wehrle Drive).

LOCATION

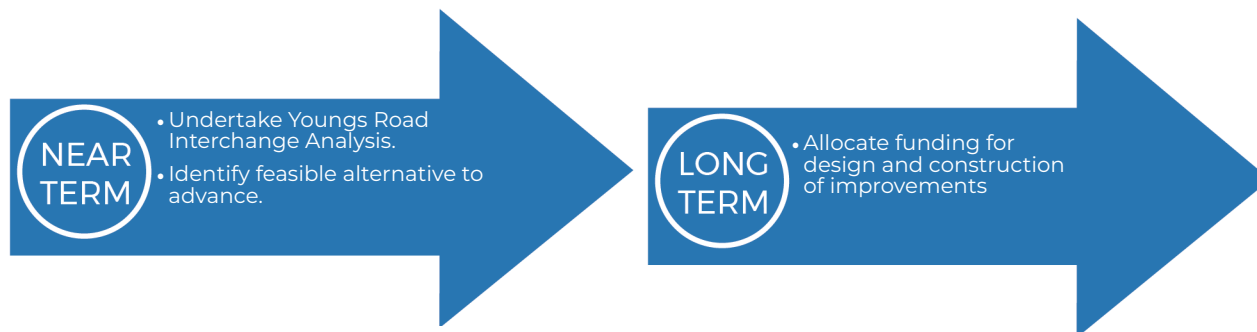
Niagara Falls, New York



AGENCY PARTNERS



IMPLEMENTATION



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$200 K

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Undertake a I-190/ Niagara Falls Boulevard Interchange Improvement Assessment

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

With emerging freight congestion portrayed in the bottleneck analysis outlined earlier in this study, further analysis will identify recommendations for reducing congestion and improving freight flows in the area, while also enhancing other multi-modal mobility.

LOCATION

Niagara Falls, NY



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



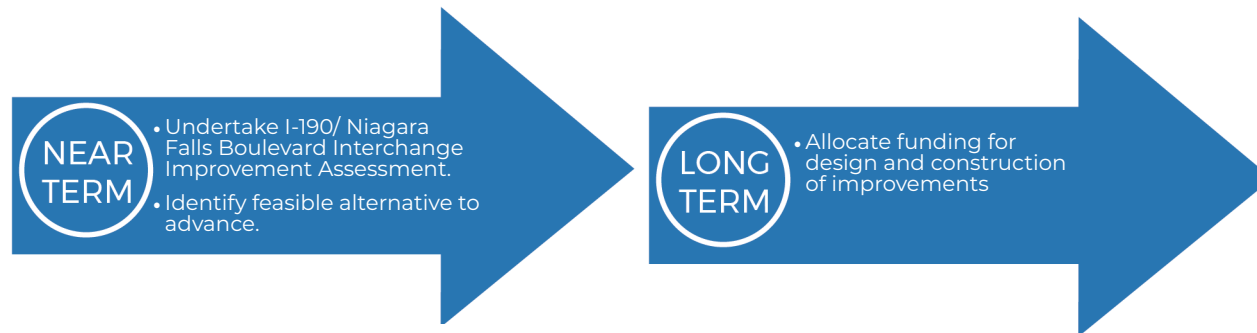
Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$150 K

IMPLEMENTATION



AGENCY PARTNERS



Department of
Transportation



Thruway
Authority

Study Ganson Street Area Plan

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

Numerous stakeholders throughout this study update process indicated that continuously conflicting land uses in former exclusive industrial areas are raising access, safety, and quality of life issues for the users of those areas. As an example, the increase in entertainment, restaurant, and residential uses in the Ganson Street area have been raised as increasing conflicts between industrial uses and the users of those non-industrial users.

DESCRIPTION

A small area plan for Ganson Street would identify a strategy to allow industrial and non-industrial uses to operate in sync. This plan will with focus on access (rail, truck, bicycle, pedestrian), safety (conflicts between pedestrians and customer vehicles and rail and truck), and quality of life issues (noise, night operations, etc.)

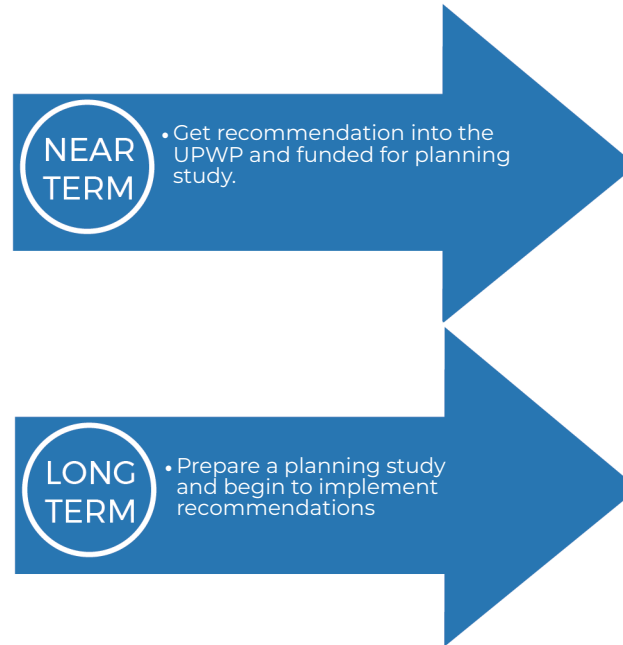
LOCATION

Buffalo, New York



IMPLEMENTATION

The findings from this study could be transferable to implementing strategies in other areas of the region experiencing a transition from industrial to mixed uses so that the various uses can continue to exist with minimal conflict.



PROJECT SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$75 K

AGENCY PARTNERS



*Planning level estimate based on similar projects



Study Rail Spur to Future WNY Agribusiness Park

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

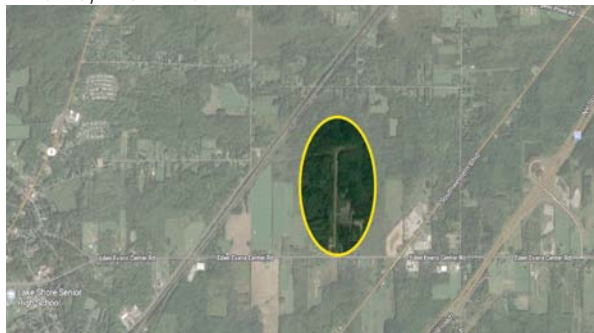
The Buffalo and Erie County Industrial Land Development Corporation (a member of ECIDA) is currently in the process of developing a Master Plan and General Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for a new agribusiness park located on the site of the former Eden Angola Airport in the Town of Evans. While the Master Plan and GEIS will study the feasibility of constructing the park, including needed utilities, transportation, stormwater, parcel size, and site amenities, it does not go as far as including a market assessment and feasibility of constructing a rail spur into the site to provide rail access.

DESCRIPTION

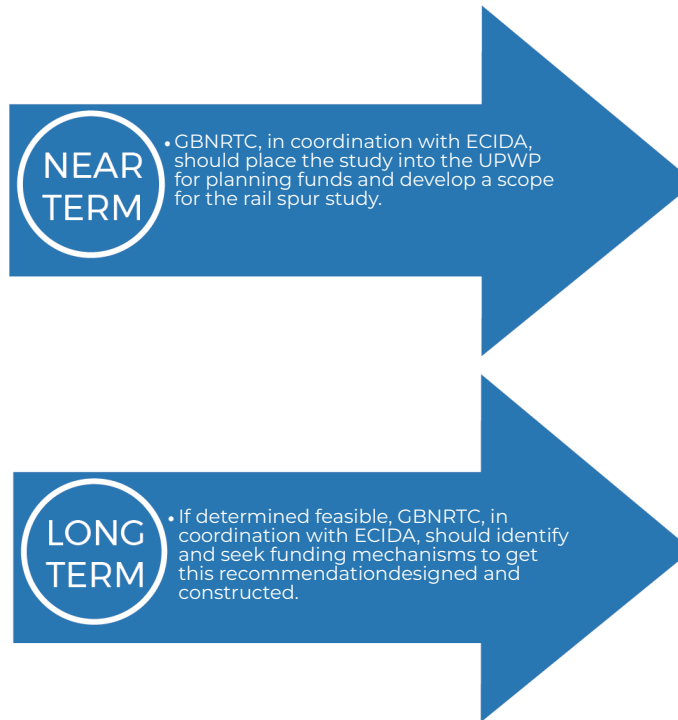
The agribusiness sector has indicated that rail usage for agricultural products is feasible in other agribusiness parks and would be a benefit to this park. As a follow up to the Master Plan and GEIS, a market and feasibility study should be undertaken to determine the feasibility of constructing a rail spur to the park, identify if construction of a rail spur into the site would provide a positive cost/benefit to filling the park, and estimating the cost and process for constructing such a rail spur would be.

LOCATION

Evans, New York



IMPLEMENTATION



AGENCY PARTNERS



SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:

MEDIUM LOW

Estimated Cost:

\$150 K

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Study of Multi-Agency Enhanced Freight Corridors

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

The FHWA Freight Flow Analysis conducted as part of this study portrays a large volume of truck traffic currently traveling between the region and the New York City Metro Area (PANYNJ) that uses U.S. 20, U.S. 20A, or NYS Route 63 to bypass the I-90 New York State Thruway to get to/ come from I-390 near Mount Morris. While the FHWA FAF indicates the growth in freight through 2045 between the Buffalo-Niagara region and New York City Metro Area shifting from truck to more rail and intermodal freight, truck traffic is expected to increase for freight coming through the region from New York City Metro Area to Southern Ontario. Further, until rail and intermodal infrastructure is able to support this growth in freight volume, trucks may be asked to handle a larger volume of freight between the regions in the meantime. With future freight flows increasing, there should also be a commitment to long-term I-390 and I-86 State of Good Repair to accommodate truck traffic. According to the Volume/Capacity analysis conducted as part of this study, capacity expansion isn't shown to be needed through 2045, as V/C ratios continue to remain acceptable.

DESCRIPTION

A larger multi-agency study is needed to assess freight movement between the Buffalo-Niagara region and the New York City Metro Area. This multi-agency study is needed to understand the larger issues of why trucks are diverting from I-390 and NYS Thruway and using surface streets through Livingston, Wyoming, and Genesee Counties, the effects of cashless tolling on the NYS Thruway, and to what extent these alternative routes need upgrades or by-passes to accommodate increasing truck traffic and to minimize impacts on local communities.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost: \$175 K

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Study of Multi-Agency Enhanced Freight Corridors

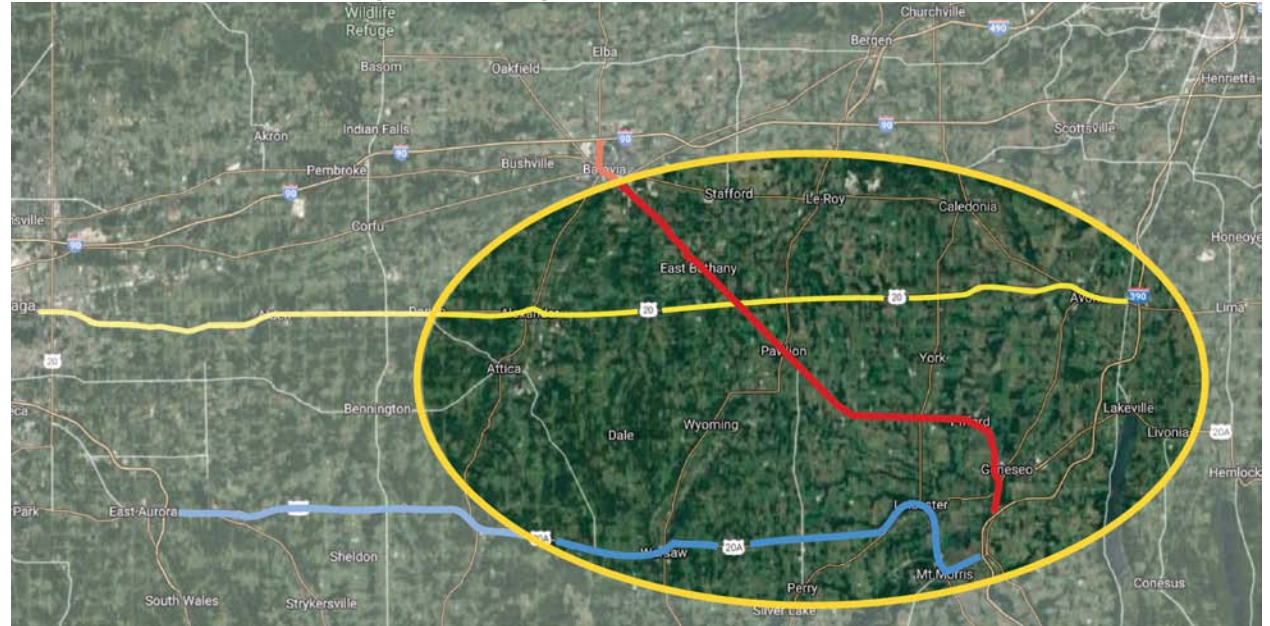
May 2021

IMPLEMENTATION

GBNRTC should coordinate a multi-agency planning study with NYSDOT and Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) and involve the trucking industry for this planning study.

LOCATION

Western New York and Finger Lakes regions



AGENCY PARTNERS



NEAR
TERM

- Get recommendation into the UPWP and funded for planning study.

LONG
TERM

- Undertake study

Develop Curbside Management and Autonomous Delivery/ Micro-Delivery Policies and Procedures

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

As supply chains continue to evolve, new delivery techniques will likely emerge in the form of autonomous delivery vehicles and micro-delivery vehicles, or delivery bots. The changing supply chains will mean an increase in delivery vehicles in urban areas specifically on neighborhood streets.

DESCRIPTION

This brings to light the importance of curbside management that both allows businesses to load delivery vehicles to ship their products directly to consumers and to allow delivery vehicles to access consumer homes. The projects on the following pages are strategies that ready the region for such technologies and advancements in the freight and logistics industry.

ELEMENTS

- 1 Develop Curbside Management Policies
- 2 Create Autonomous Delivery and Micro-Delivery Vehicle Policies

IMPLEMENTATION

While much of the autonomous and micro-delivery policies and regulations would come from federal agencies or New York State, GBNRTC should be a liaison to local municipalities in getting policies and regulations regarding curbside management and autonomous and micro-delivery vehicles into their codes that are consistent with federal and state policies and regulations, and with industry best practices. It will be beneficial to the freight and logistics industry to have consistency across jurisdictional boundaries. Being proactive regarding new technologies and advancements in freight and logistics will ready communities for the deployment of these technologies rather than waiting for the private sector to force technology on a community (similar to how e-scooters were brought on the scene without policies or procedures in place).

These projects will need to be put into future UPWP plans to fund planning and/or analysis to work with local municipalities to refine specific strategies that can be implemented. The current UPWP already identifies providing support to the City of Buffalo to develop a flexible curb space framework, additional support should go towards other urbanized communities.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

\$80 K
both projects

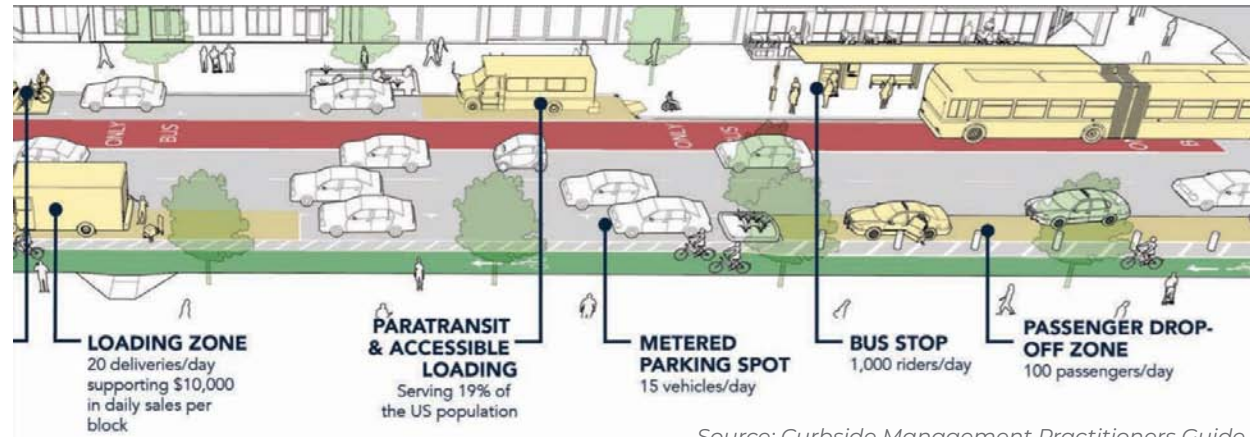
*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Develop Curbside Management Policies

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Curbside management policies would be aimed at removing static use of roadway curbsides and transitioning to dynamic use that reflects the demand for curbside space during different times of the day, week, and/or year, recognizing the need to share curbside space with delivery vehicles. The ideal curbside management strategy would involve the use of smart mobility technology that could work in a connected environment with vehicles to relay real-time information about what curbside usage is permitted and where. For instance, a delivery vehicle pulling up to a curb looking to pick up or make a delivery would be alerted as to whether the curb use is active for deliveries or not and can potentially be reserved by said delivery vehicle ahead of time. This technique is similar to real-time parking management strategies used by cities to assist commuters and visitors find parking, only this approach is directed at the freight and logistics industry.



Source: Curbside Management Practitioners Guide, Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- Identify the scope for a curbside management policy planning effort in the UPWP, identify municipal stakeholders that would be involved, and work with various parties interested in using/ sharing curbside space to craft strategies.

LONG TERM

- Implementation of curbside management policies by local municipalities.

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region, New York



Source: One Region Forward

Create Autonomous Delivery and Micro-Delivery Vehicle Policies

May 2021

DESCRIPTION

Autonomous delivery vehicles are driver-less vehicles that pick-up products from source locations (businesses, warehouses, manufactures, etc.) and deliver them to consumers. Micro-delivery techniques reflect the use of non-traditional delivery devices, such as delivery robots and drones that make deliveries directly to consumers, and could be used in connection with a larger delivery vehicles that arrives in a neighborhood and then sets a smaller bot or drone to make the final product delivery to the consumer's door.

These technologies may also necessitate the need for communal neighborhood drop-off/pick-up zones that residents can use, like a mini P.O. box. This would allow delivery vehicles, robots, and drones to make one stop at a communal location rather than multiple trips throughout a neighborhood. Policies on how these vehicles/ devices may operate on and across streets and sidewalks and where they may "park" will need development. Policies on the operation of package drones similarly need development; for example, should they be restricted to flight paths over existing rights of way, where can they land, and what protections are needed should packages come loose and fall from overhead.

AGENCY PARTNERS



LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region, New York

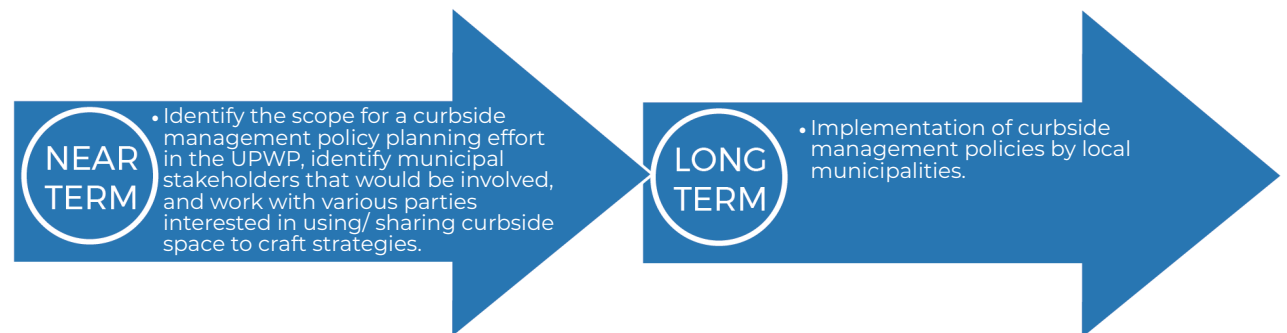


Source: One Region Forward



Examples of Autonomous Delivery Vehicles.
Source: Tech TV

IMPLEMENTATION



Initiate Long-Term Planning for International Rail Crossings

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

The Buffalo-Niagara region consists of only one active international rail crossing – International Rail Bridge. There is a need to ensure that this crossing – International Rail Bridge – remains in a state of good repair. It is also necessary to look at opportunities for redundancy in international rail crossings, especially in the event that the International Bridge has to be closed for some time due to construction or an incident.

DESCRIPTION

Two strategies are aimed at protecting and enhancing international rail crossings in the Buffalo-Niagara region and are discussed on the following pages:


1. Upgrade International Rail Bridge to State-of-Good-Repair
2. Assess Whirlpool Rapids Bridge Improvements Assessment

IMPLEMENTATION

GBNRTC should act as a liaison for the region in coordinating with bi-national stakeholders on a strategy for improving existing international rail bridges, planning for redundancy in international rail crossings, and identifying potential funding sources for such improvements.



Whirlpool Rapids Bridge



International Rail Bridge

SUMMARY

- 1 Upgrade International Rail Bridge to State of-Good-Repair
- 2 Whirlpool Rapids Bridge Improvements Assessment

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost:

Not known
at this time

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Upgrade International Rail Bridge to State-of-Good-Repair

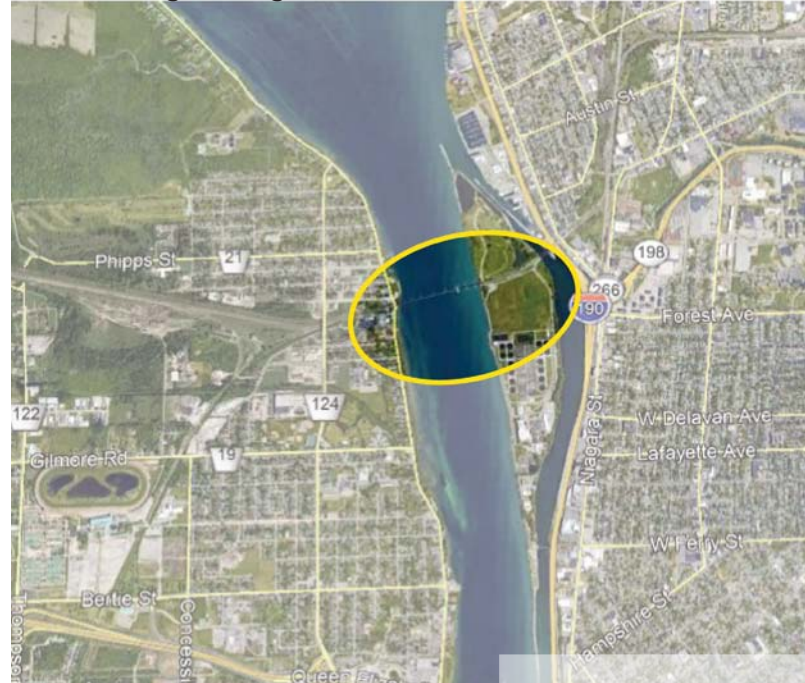
May 2021

DESCRIPTION

The International Railroad Bridge is the only bridge currently being used for cross-border rail traffic. It is owned by the Canadian National (CN) Railway, which operates train to connect with CSX and NS Yards in the Buffalo-Niagara region. The International Rail Bridge has been identified in documents as needing repairs and improvements, including foundation upgrades, in order to maintain and extend its useful life. While this bridge is owned by a railroad company, it will likely require a bi-national, multi-agency collaboration effort to address improvements, to which this coordination effort should begin soon. If rail rerouting is needed, upgrades would be needed to the Whirlpool Rapids Bridge (see following project).

LOCATION

Buffalo-Niagara Region

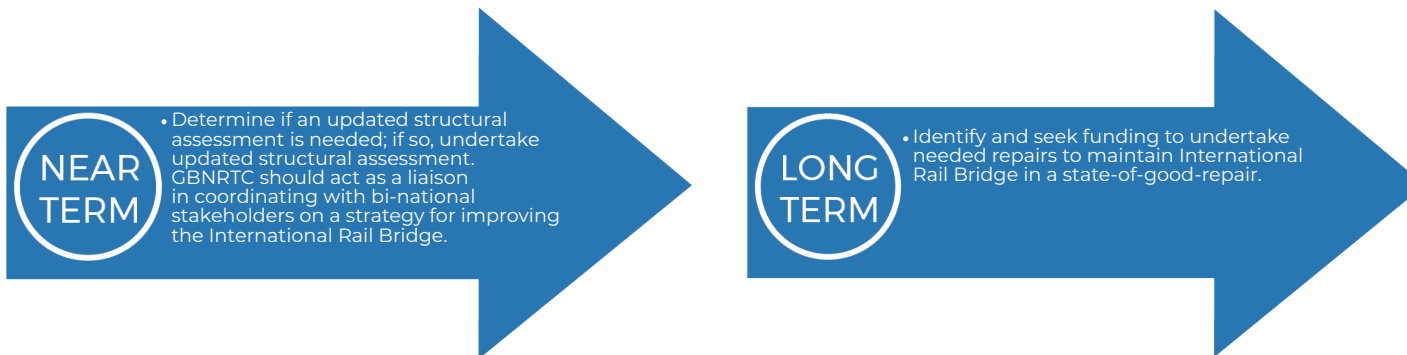


International Rail Bridge

AGENCY PARTNERS



IMPLEMENTATION



Assess Whirlpool Rapids Bridge Improvements

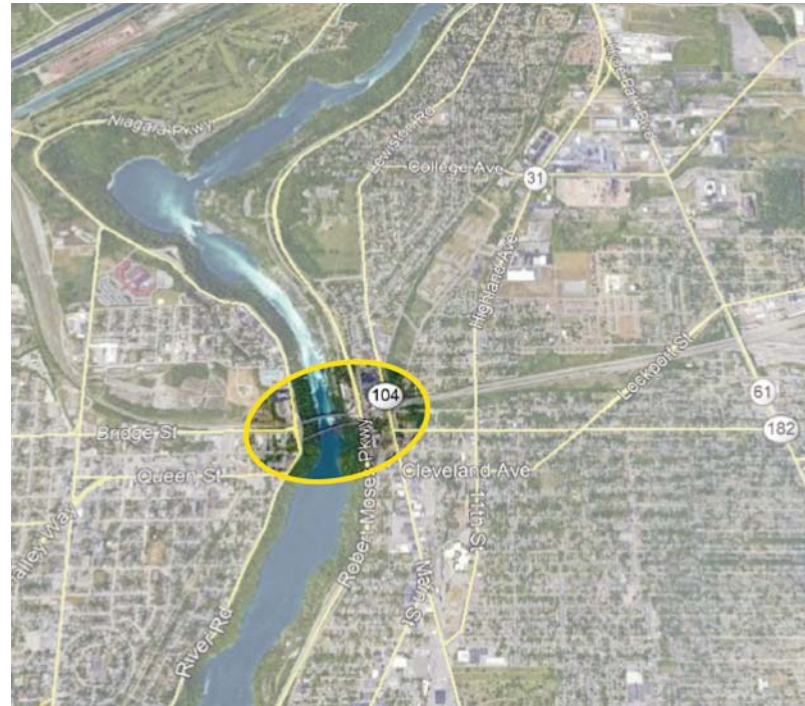
May 2021

DESCRIPTION

The Whirlpool Rapids Bridge is located on the upper portion of the bridge (with vehicular traffic on the lower portion). The rail bridge is down to a single track that runs down the center of the bridge. The bridge is used by Amtrak for its Maple Leaf Service to Toronto and is currently not used for freight rail traffic. Currently, Amtrak trains operate on the bridge at 5mph as a precautionary measure to reduce the vibration impact on the bridge. The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission will soon begin a load rating assessment on the Whirlpool Bridge that may offer additional insight into needed repairs for the bridge if the bridge were to be used for freight rail again, even temporarily to offer a detour route should the International Bridge need to be closed for repairs or reconstruction. Regarding the rail portion of the bridge, there is dispute as to who has maintenance responsibility for improvements, which will need to be resolved.

LOCATION

Niagara Falls, New York



Whirlpool Rapids Bridge

AGENCY PARTNERS



IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- The Niagara Falls Bridge Commission will soon begin a load rating assessment on the Whirlpool Bridge that may offer additional insight into needed repairs for the bridge if the bridge were to be used for freight rail again, even temporarily to offer a detour route should the International Bridge need to be closed for repairs or reconstruction.

LONG TERM

- Identify and seek funding to undertake needed repairs to maintain International Identify and seek funding to undertake needed repairs identified as part of the load rating assessment. al Rail Bridge in a state-of-good-repair.

Collaborate with the Port of Buffalo on New Market Business Planning

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

The Port of Buffalo is a privately-owned port and has a new general manager that is interested in expanding business opportunities but is not familiar with public-private partnerships related to transportation funding. The 2010 study recommended pursuing a roll-on/roll-off (Ro/Ro) service, which allows trailers used in over-the-road transport to be loaded onto or off of a cargo ship between Buffalo and Detroit and containerized service between Buffalo and either Halifax or Montreal. Further, the Port of Buffalo indicated a need for infrastructure upgrades at the site, including upgrading the lighting system, installing new scales, power upgrades, improvements to the conveyor systems, and installation of break bulk lifting to allow for handling of ship containers.



Port of Buffalo, Source: New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co.

DESCRIPTION

Before any Ro/Ro service is pursued, a more detailed New Market Business Plan should be initiated by the Port of Buffalo, with assistance from the region's interest public and private sectors, to identify if new markets are feasible for the Port and to identify what upgrades to the Port are needed prior to pursuing.

For context, the Port of Cleveland is currently developing a similar Business Plan to establish new container feeder service linking the Port of Cleveland with the Port of Montreal, and potentially other ports on the St. Lawrence Seaway. The Business Plan, under development as of the preparation of this update, indicates a potential for the Port of Cleveland to operate feeder service to allow for international container shipments bound for east coast ports to be brought inland via feeder service and then loaded to rail or truck for final delivery to the Midwest. The Business Plan also indicates that there may be cost savings in shipments due to port congestion, however, a major constraint to this being feasible are the expansions at PANYNJ and Port of Montreal underway that will expand rail lift capacity to allow container to rail service, which is more cost effective than container feeder service. Further, short sea shipments are subject to Harbor Maintenance Taxes, which are not imposed on shipments made by rail or truck, further hindering the financial feasibility.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:

MEDIUM

Estimated Cost:

\$350 K

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Collaborate with the Port of Buffalo on New Market Business Planning

May 2021

IMPLEMENTATION

NEAR TERM

- GBNRTC should initiate a kick-off with the Port of Buffalo general manager to introduce them to the Metropolitan Planning process, identify opportunities to collaborate on efforts and funding, and to further scope a new market

LONG TERM

- GBNRTC should work with project partners to identify and seek funding opportunities to implement strategies related to the new market business plan.

LOCATION

Lakawanna, New York



AGENCY PARTNERS



Empire State Development



Western New York Regional Economic Development Council

Develop Buffalo Logistics Complex

Lakeside Commerce Park Cross-Docking Facilities

May 2021

BACKGROUND/NEED

The creation of the International Trade Gateway Organization (ITGO), as recommended in the 2010 Niagara Frontier Urban Area Freight Transportation Study, was an essential step in fostering an improved environment for the freight and logistics industry in the Buffalo-Niagara region.

ITGO has established a strategic relationship under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Port Authority of New York/ New Jersey (PANYNJ) to promote the Buffalo-Niagara region as a “strategic international gateway”, creating a relationship based on joint marketing and sharing of resources and data.

DESCRIPTION

The strategic partnership with PANYNJ should continue and, with the anticipated increase in freight trade between the region and PANYNJ expected to increase by 1.6 million tons by 2045, support for the construction of the Buffalo Logistics Complex Cross-Docking Facility should be prioritized.

Therefore, while construction of the Buffalo Logistics Complex Cross-Docking Facility is still a priority, in the near-term, a new site must be identified. Once a new site is identified, the facility should be advanced in the form of securing new development partners, identifying funding and financing opportunities and/or public-private partnerships, and undertaking infrastructure enhancements. The estimated overall cost of the facility when it was to be located at Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park was \$20.75 million, so similar expenses can be anticipated at another site. The recommendation has the support of the freight and logistics community as well as the agribusiness industry.

SUMMARY

Goals Met:

Federal FAST Act



NYS Freight Plan



WNY REDC Strategic Plan



GBNRTC Moving Forward 2050



Freight Modes Benefited:



Priority:



Estimated Cost: **\$20.75M**
(includes \$1.5M for rail spur)

*Planning level estimate based on similar projects

Develop Buffalo Logistics Complex

Lakeside Commerce Park Cross-Docking Facilities

May 2021

IMPLEMENTATION

In conformance with ITGO's 2020 priorities, the region should continue to strengthen and enhance ITGO's relationship with PANYNJ through the MOU, while raising the profile of the connection with the WNY state delegation, WNY REDC, and the Governor's office, collaborating with PANYNJ on interaction with both rail lines and ocean carriers, and strengthening relationships with additional contacts at PANYNJ to prepare for upcoming retirements.

With the anticipated increase in freight trade between the region and PANYNJ expected to increase by 1.6 million tons by 2045, support for the construction Buffalo Logistics Complex should be prioritized. This includes support for the construction of a transloading facility at Lakeside Commerce Park in the form of funding and financing opportunities, public-private partnerships, and infrastructure enhancements. Infrastructure needed at the site includes construction of a rail siding, transloading docks, and warehousing facility. It is important to note that a federal INFRA grant proposal will need a sponsor an applicant who can administer the project and organize a (20-40%) non-federal match.

LOCATION

A site at the Lakeside Commerce Park was previously identified and a developer partner announced, however, as of late 2020, the developer has since dropped plans for a Cross-Docking Facility for a solar energy facility due to subsurface contamination of the site. A new site will need to be identified.

AGENCY PARTNERS



NEAR TERM

- Strengthen Relationship with PANYNJ
- Identify new site and new development partners for Buffalo Logistics Complex Cross-Docking Facility
- Work with WNY delegation to support project

LONG TERM

- Apply for funding to leverage development.
- Work with railroads to bring needed improvements to rail yard/spur.