

NYS Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program

Community Renewal and Revitalization Through Brownfield Redevelopment

Through the Department of State's Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program (BOA), more than 100 communities across the State are laying the groundwork to revitalize neighborhoods affected by brownfields or economic distress. The BOA Program provides communities with expertise and financial assistance, up to 90 percent of the total eligible project costs, to complete redevelopment and implementation strategies. Through the BOA Program, brownfields are transformed from liabilities to community assets that generate businesses, jobs and revenues for local economies and provide new housing and public amenities. The BOA approach is being emulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, as indicated by a recent announcement of 23 project areas across the nation.

Through a community-driven process, BOA Program outcomes include:

Effective strategies to achieve revitalization - BOA Plans establish clear and effective community supported area-wide and site specific redevelopment strategies that specify how areas and sites can be cleaned-up and redeveloped more quickly.

Priorities for investment - Priorities for public and private investment are established that lead to redevelopment and other actions for community renewal.

Informing site clean-ups - By conducting site assessments, to better understand contamination issues, clean-up options and costs are better understood.

Shovel ready sites - A portfolio of sites that are or near shovel ready and ripe for redevelopment and investment

for a range of businesses and uses.

Environmental justice - Environmental justice issues and concerns related to negative environmental consequences are addressed and countered.

Marketing to attract investors - Marketing materials are generated, such as site renderings to illustrate redevelopment potential, descriptive brochures, web displays, requests for developer proposals and others to attract interest and investment.

Public and private partnerships - Multi-agency and private-sector partnerships are established to leverage investments to redevelop sites, improve supporting infrastructure, and provide needed community facilities.

Program funding supports a variety of community revitalization activities including community visioning and other public participation processes; existing conditions analysis; economic and market studies to assist in determining the best use of brownfields and vacant sites; investigations to assess site contamination and environmental conditions; site-specific redevelopment plans; environmental impact assessments and statements; marketing to attract developer interest; local law changes; architectural and street-scape design guidelines; and other actions to spur investment in, clean-up of and redevelopment of brownfield sites. These types of activities are permitted in three program steps: ***Pre-Nomination Study, Nomination, and Implementation Strategy***

Communities in Action

Communities are using the BOA Program to attract new uses and businesses such as housing and retail, commercial, manufacturing, business incubators and public amenities such as parks or recreation facilities.

See below how some New York State communities are using BOA to pave the way to revitalization. The following project descriptions portray custom approaches adopted by communities according to their unique needs and circumstances, and new accomplishments as they continue to emerge.

Home of the “Square Deal”

How Broome County plans to reclaim an old industrial neighborhood and preserve its proud heritage.

Large vacant factory buildings are starting to see signs of new life in a 230-acre area in Broome County, where the City of Binghamton meets the Village of Johnson City. Known as the Endicott-Johnson (EJ) Industrial Spine BOA, redevelopment planning is building on the area’s strengths as having the region’s premier health care and performing arts establishments, a walkable historic district, and easy access to rail and interstate highways. With visibility from NY Route 17, (future I86), the potential for new light industrial and retail business is significant at two large strategic sites. After close to 50 years of decline, county residents are eager to once again profit from these and other assets, including sound infrastructure and the availability of vacant sites ideally suited for redevelopment.

Residents from around the Southern Tier commonly experience nostalgia for this once proud neighborhood, where generations of their families made a living in its vast factories and benefited from the company’s philanthropy. The villages that were home to EJ are still marked by the “Square Deal Arches”, recalling an era of prosperity that ended in the 1960’s. Not willing to forsake its heritage, this community aims to reclaim the neighborhood – the journey began with a vision for the future, anchored in the past. The vehicle for that journey is found in BOA.

Since commencing the BOA plan, visible progress can be seen in various pockets of the EJ Spine. A new light manufacturing facility has taken over an old factory building in the “Willow Street Business District”, (identified as such in the BOA plan), and will soon expand into a neighboring property. A new retail establishment was recently built on formerly contaminated land conveniently located near the highway. Across the street, a long vacant Entertainment center made way for a new bank constructed in period-style, and a nearby historic park was revitalized. Prime property in the BOA, also near the highway, is now home to a newly constructed \$50 million state of the art printing facility, owned and operated by the Gannett Corporation. The catalytic effect of the Gannett

project is clear and ongoing.



New Gannett Corporation facility has been a catalyst for new economic activity in Broome County’s EJ BOA

With funds provided from the Restore NY program, a large unsalvageable factory building at the south end of the BOA was demolished to prepare the site and an adjacent building for expansion of the light manufacturing operation that opened next door. Using BOA to leverage other public funds for implementation paid significant early dividends for this community.

Now gearing up for the next phase of the BOA plan, two strategic properties containing large factory buildings will undergo detailed re-use strategies and other pre-development activities designed to bring these sites back to productive use.

Industrial Gateway Leads to One of Most Popular U.S. Tourist Destinations

*Buffalo Avenue Industrial Corridor ...
“A Gateway in the Rough”*

With all its majestic beauty and humbling power, Niagara Falls has fascinated generations. As countless millions have visited the Falls, American Industrialists were also attracted by the promise of cheap electrical power and a favorable location with respect to potential consumers. A key gateway to the

Falls is the Buffalo Avenue corridor, once known as a former world center of electro-chemical manufacturing, now home to the remains of the many industries that have long since fallen or relocated.

Convinced the once thriving Buffalo Avenue corridor holds promise for future economic prosperity, City officials are using BOA funds to revitalize and restore this vital gateway. The area-wide approach that frames the BOA plan is allowing the City to build on its substantial advantages, like proximity to the waterfront, exceptional transportation access, existing infrastructure, and availability of large strategic tracts of land for redevelopment.

Significant signs of new life are already emerging in the Buffalo Avenue corridor. Work is expected to begin soon on an exciting project that will bring 110 new jobs to the community. Norampac, a Division of a major Canadian manufacturer of containerboard products, and its partners plan to invest over \$400 million to demolish an abandoned and contaminated mill next to its active plant and build a new state-of-the-art facility on the same site. The company has been approved to receive low-cost hydropower from the New York Power Authority (NYPA) and is participating in DEC's Brownfield Cleanup Program. The new plant will use environmentally friendly production techniques to recycle up to 2,500 tons of old cardboard per day for new linerboard product.

A vacant contaminated site on Niagara Falls Boulevard in the BOA recently became the home of Ashland Advanced Materials, which has invested \$8 million on acquisition and equipment. The company intends to eventually create 75 jobs, producing products and services that will support the manufacturing of lithium batteries for hybrid-electric vehicles and fuel and solar cells for clean, renewable energy. To assist their new business, Ashland Advanced materials was awarded low-cost hydropower from NYPA, and \$200,000 from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), to develop and implement a detailed marketing and sales plan to expand to international markets. Ashland Advanced Materials is also participating in the State's Brownfield Cleanup Program.

As further witness to the City's revitalization efforts in the BOA, a \$1.3 million Restore NY award was made last year, a portion of which will be dedicated for revitalization in the gateway corridor. Another portion of the funding will be used for renovations to a former municipal building immediately adjacent to the BOA, for conversion to a mixed use building that will include an assisted living facility and commercial space.

Continued participation in the BOA program will enable the City to build on these catalytic activities by undertaking a range of flexible pre-development activities, including land use and zoning changes, targeted marketing programs, and environmental assessments that will help attract additional investment. Successful redevelopment in the corridor will also require transportation and gateway improvements, and infrastructure upgrades, all of which are being planned for in the City's BOA.



Concept Perspective View for Hyde Park Blvd./Buffalo Ave. and Water Intakes Node

RiverBend Development Initiative Moves Forward in South Buffalo

Former industrial giant to reclaim position of strength and vitality

Major development planning is now underway in the South Buffalo BOA with initial focus on a key area known as RiverBend. With support from the Department of State, City stakeholders are completing a site development plan for RiverBend, with the goal of creating a new community on the banks of the Buffalo River. The new RiverBend community will foster long term economic growth and become a model for sustainable development.

The Peninsula portion of RiverBend will be a dense, high value mixed use destination and commercial hub with unique opportunities for waterfront access and recreation. The RiverBend Employment Center, immediately south of the Peninsula, will be developed as a business and industrial area with opportunities for higher salary jobs, and attractive employment spaces focused on public open space at an important new intersection.

RiverBend is part of the 1,900- acre South Buffalo BOA, an area poised to take advantage of prime waterfront locations, recent investments in the Outer Harbor and Buffalo River for business development and waterfront access, access to major highways, a bi-national bridge, environmentally rich setting and proximity to railways.

As the BOA plan continues to progress, urban design guidelines will be developed; incentives will be created to attract desired land uses; and site plan alternatives will be prepared. To confirm the viability of identified redevelopment opportunities, feasibility analyses will be conducted for an environmental research and education center, a community center, and an 18-hole golf course.

Momentum is building. In the wake of the City's spring 2009 designation as a *Spotlight Community*, the City was awarded \$2.4 million in Regional Blueprint funding from Empire State Development Corporation for construction of North Canal Road in the Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park, located in the BOA. The City also leveraged more than \$200,000



Conceptual model of new RiverBend community

and a commitment of staff resources from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), to complete environmental site assessments on strategic sites. The spotlight initiative was designed to link communities participating in the BOA program with the Governor's Smart Growth Cabinet to obtain commitments and improve coordination with state and federal agencies to support timely advancement of BOA projects.

CBO Promotes "Airport Village" in Downtown Jamaica

Greater Jamaica Development Corporation using BOA approach to revitalize downtown transportation hub.

A unique aspect of the Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program is the ability to fund and directly partner with community based organizations engaged in revitalizing communities affected by brownfields and economic distress. The Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC) is one such organization, founded in 1967 for the purpose of revitalizing downtown Jamaica, Queens – a culturally and historically rich community.

The GJDC goal is to transform Downtown Jamaica by creating an environment suited for airport related businesses and travel that will include a hotel, offices, retail, wholesale merchandising, and housing. Through the BOA program, the GJDC is focusing on an



Proposed Jamaica Station Plaza

important transit area that integrates a major train hub with New York City subway lines and a connecting JFK airport monorail system. BOA funding has been used to conduct an in-depth analysis of three strategic sub-zones in this 40-acre area in downtown Jamaica, each having its own specific land use characteristics and strategic redevelopment potential.

Looking forward, GJDC intends to focus on completing plans to improve critical infrastructure that will support the redevelopment of strategic sites. Land use implementation techniques will be identified, including urban design guidelines; incentives will be created to attract development; and feasibility studies and site plan alternatives for key sites will be developed. In addition, a marketing strategy will be developed to brand the Airport Village and aid in recruiting aviation sector entrepreneurs and other businesses to redevelop and occupy facilities on underutilized or vacant properties.

New Zoning to Encourage New Mixed-Use Development

SoBRO's BOA on the South Bronx Waterfront in Port Morris

The BOA program is playing a dynamic role in the redevelopment of the Harlem River waterfront in the South Bronx. For over one hundred years this stretch of waterfront thrived as a manufacturing and warehousing district. Today through a unique collaboration between the South Bronx Overall Development Corporation (SoBRO) and the New York City Department of City Planning, revitalization planning is underway to create a vibrant, mixed use neighborhood, offering waterfront housing and employment options.

With a commitment to improving life in the South Bronx and strengthening the local economy, SoBRO is using BOA to develop a comprehensive strategy to revitalize this 200-acre area on the South Bronx waterfront in Port Morris. Armed with extensive zoning and land use analyses completed for the BOA, stakeholders advocated for a City rezoning that would promote commercial and residential opportunities, as well as preserve current light manufacturing uses. The result was the City's adoption of the Lower Concourse Rezoning which zoned the area from manufacturing to mixed-use (MX), in order to

introduce new opportunities for residential development and waterfront access.

BOA funds were also used to create information rich strategic site profiles used to identify key development sites. A process was then developed to evaluate and rank catalytic sites based on zoning restrictions, environmental concerns, mass transit, and vehicular access. This new development tool is a model that can potentially be replicated in other communities to identify and assess unique revitalization opportunities.

BOA funding is now being used to advance redevelopment on strategic sites by completing site specific feasibility analysis and conceptual designs, in an effort to engage property owners and draw potential developers. Site marketing materials will also be created to attract developer interest.



Rail Road Station to Anchor Downtown "Transit Village"

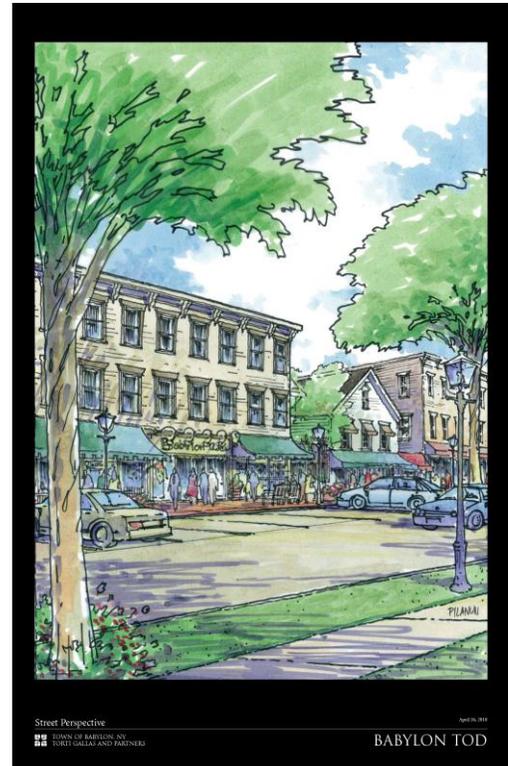
Update on the Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan: Wyandanch Rising

The stage is set in the Town of Babylon's Hamlet of Wyandanch, for community revitalization that embraces the best of smart growth principles and sustainable design. The Wyandanch BOA study area encompasses 105 acres largely situated along *Straight Path*, the primary commercial corridor within the hamlet, and the most economically distressed

on Long Island. Returning dormant and underutilized properties to productive use will provide opportunities to attract to this community a mix of commercial, retail and cultural uses, needed jobs, and affordable housing. Centered in an area around the Long Island Rail Road train station, a primary objective is to return over 200 properties identified as being contaminated, vacant, or underutilized into a transit-oriented sustainable development.

Babylon's future "transit village" is now one step closer to reality, as significant progress has been made towards implementation. This fall, with the assistance of the NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation, the Empire State Development Corporation, and other State and Federal funding sources, the Town began construction of a sewer extension that will enable new commercial and residential development. The Town is also working with the Federal Transit Administration and the Metropolitan Transportation Administration to design an intermodal facility at the Long Island Railroad station to enable structured parking and redevelopment of surface parking lots. In addition, a request for proposals to complete a phase one redevelopment that will include public and private components is being formulated. Also moving ahead are major park improvements and a trail plan to connect the community to Belmont Lake State Park.

The "Wyandanch Rising" plan is continuing to advance, as the Town has begun to complete comprehensive design standards and guidelines, and a form-based code to guide downtown redevelopment; create targeted development incentives to attract desired land uses; and prepare site plan alternatives for specific strategic sites. BOA sites will also be marketed, and a local management structure will be formed to ensure plan implementation.



**Office of Coastal, Local Government and Community Sustainability
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