



## SOUTH BUFFALO BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA Buffalo, New York

RCLCO, as part of a multidisciplinary team led by Urban Strategies, Inc., was tasked with evaluating the future development opportunities in the South Buffalo Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA). The South Buffalo BOA consists of approximately 1,800 acres just south of the Buffalo River and downtown Buffalo, with Route 5 and the Lake Erie waterfront to the west, the South Buffalo neighborhood to the east, and the City of Lackawanna to the south. The BOA is mix of vacant or underutilized industrial sites, new industrial park development, recreational and open space sites (including the Olmstead South Park and the Tift Nature Preserve), and neighborhood housing and retail. The BOA represents a powerful opportunity for the City to attract new commercial development, create jobs, leverage the impressive recreational amenities, and reconnect the surrounding neighborhood to a revitalized waterfront.

Immediately we saw the BOA as paying an important role in support of a growing regional and City economy. Because of this, RCLCO focused first and foremost on broader economic growth opportunities in the region, and analyzed the extent to which the BOA could play a role in supporting – or even catalyzing – these growth opportunities. Thus, we completed a regional economic analysis in order to identify the opportunities associated with a variety of different sectors (including manufacturing, life sciences, financial services, and alternative energy) – this analysis was not based merely on historical trends, but focused as well on emerging sectors which the City could capture. We then looked at how existing economic and physical assets in the BOA could be leveraged to capture emerging growth sectors and generate long-term economic opportunities for the region.

Throughout the process we were involved in a number of stakeholder interviews and conversations in order to inform our recommendations. As part of the final deliverable, we provided the City with a number of strategic priorities and action items to help them implement their long-term economic vision.



The specific uses that become part of our recommendations included:

- The opportunity for the current ethanol production facilities to allow for the transition in alternative energy research.
- The opportunity for creating flex/R&D space on the BOA that offered a place for growth and expansion of research and production related to life sciences and high-technology.
- The opportunity for back-office space and support functions to locate in an office park in the BOA.
- Regional and local tourism draw by leveraging existing recreational and cultural amenities and revitalizing the waterfront.
- A reconnection of neighborhood-serving commercial uses to the adjacent South Buffalo neighborhood.

Our recommendations were well received at a number of presentations to the planning team, the City of Buffalo (mayor and council members), and local economic development professionals. Moving beyond the BOA boundaries, many of our recommendations have been incorporated into a broader economic strategy for the City.

### CONTACT:

**Mark Reid**  
Urban Strategies, Inc.  
257 Adelaide Street West, Suite 500  
Toronto, ON Canada M5H1X9