

Buffalo Together Community Fund Report

BuffaloTogether
Community Response Fund

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To Our Community,

Resilience is woven into the very fabric of who we are. From the community organizers who make change happen against all odds to the business leaders who work tirelessly to uplift local economies and create opportunities in a place that has been long overlooked, our strength comes from our shared struggle and determination.

Over the past two years, we, the Buffalo Together Community Response Fund Steering Committee, have embarked on a deep learning journey. We sought to understand the best practices for dismantling the systems that have oppressed us for so long – systems that have left entire neighborhoods, especially on Buffalo’s East Side, systematically disinvested and disenfranchised.

Our nation has suffered far too much from gun violence, often fueled by hate, but this time it hit home. Our friends, families, neighbors, and loved ones were changed forever. On May 14, 2022, we didn’t just lose ten precious souls; we lost elders, mentors, mothers, and fathers – pillars of our community – because of hate. We honor their memory, and we honor the countless generations before us who fought for justice, for equality, and for a future better than the present.

Together, we raised over \$6.3 million, not just to address the immediate needs of our grieving community, but to confront the longstanding systemic issues that allowed this tragedy to occur. Through this fund, we provided \$655,000 in emergency grants to 86 local organizations. Today, this fund represents a long-term commitment – a promise to transform our community, to build generational wealth, and to ensure development without displacement. We are guided by the principles of safety, resilience, health, and wealth. Our strategy focuses on addressing key issues like affordable housing, food access, racial healing, and economic empowerment so that the East Side can truly thrive.

This isn’t just about responding to a moment of crisis. It’s about addressing the deeper, systemic problems that brought this pain to our doorstep – the disinvestment, the neglect, and the disenfranchisement that have plagued our community for decades. We are committed to changing that narrative. Together, with local organizations, anchor institutions, and, most importantly, our neighbors, we will ensure that the growth happening benefits all of us. We will foster equity, and we will ensure that our community reaps the rewards of the investments made in our neighborhoods.

We know this will not be easy. There will be challenges, setbacks, and moments where progress seems frustratingly slow. But we will persevere – because our history tells us that we can and we will. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us – the elders, the organizers, the fighters – and together, we will bring about the transformation that our community has so long deserved.

This investment strategy is not just a plan. It is a heartfelt commitment to our community, to our future, and to the generations yet to come. We dedicate it to those who still cannot enter Tops today, to the innocent bystanders, to those injured who survived, and to the ten people who lost their lives that day:

Celestine Chaney
Roberta Drury
Andre Mackniel
Katherine Massey
Margus Morrison

Heyward Patterson
Aaron Salter, Jr.
Geraldine Talley
Ruth Whitfield
Pearl Young

Their names will not be forgotten, and neither will our collective commitment to justice, equity, and real, lasting change.

In solidarity,

Buffalo Together Community Response Fund Steering Committee



The Buffalo Together Community Response Fund Investment Strategy¹

May 14, 2022, was a day of tragedy, trauma, and despair for the East Side of Buffalo. Ten Black lives were taken and three people were injured in a senseless, hateful massacre aimed at terrorizing and destroying a community. While the community will never be the same, we recognize the intersectionality of this violent incident with the long history of structural racism and segregation that made the East Side a target. Leaders in the community vowed to respond to the massacre as pattern shifters, healers, and agents of racial justice and change. They recognized that despite this attempt to destroy the spirit, heart, and liveliness of the Black community, the East Side of Buffalo, and its residents, are resilient. The East Side would emerge stronger, closer, and able to flourish. It would do so by replacing poverty and harm with creativity and tenacity.

1. This is a summary of a larger document entitled: “Buffalo Together Community Response Fund Investment Strategy” from February 16, 2024, which will be made available after final editing. The point of this synopsis is to support the critical work that needs to occur first to support the longer-term vision of a transformative process. This report is collaboratively produced by Rainbow Research and Buffalo Together.

2. Photo featured on Wikipedia’s link to Google search of “May 14, 2022, shooting,” photo by André Carrotflower.

Buffalo Together Community Response

The Buffalo Together Community Response Fund (BTCRF) was formed in the aftermath of the massacre to work toward a more just and equitable community. The BTCRF initially was a collaboration of 14 local funding organizations coordinated by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo and United Way of Buffalo and Erie County, created with the financial support from 100 local and national foundations and corporations, as well as more than 2,000 community members. To date, the BTCRF has raised \$6.3 million. Immediately following the massacre, the BTCRF provided emergency response grants totaling \$655,000 to 86 community-based organizations serving the East Side who were classified as, or sponsored by, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. The \$6.1M remaining in pledges and contributions collected was designated for the creation of a long-term community investment strategy for the East Side to address the systemic issues that led to this community becoming a target for the shooting.

After the disbursement of the emergency response funds, the original 14 funders ceded their authority to the community to be responsible for the creation of a long-term investment strategy on the East Side. Two co-chairs were appointed to focus on accelerating the revitalization of the East Side by addressing economic and racial inequities through this community-informed process. The co-chairs named were Dr. LaVonne Ansari, CEO and Executive Director of the Community Health Center of Buffalo, Inc.; and Thomas Beauford, Jr., President & CEO of the Buffalo Urban League. Dr. Ansari and Mr. Beauford assembled a steering committee representative of the community to move the process forward. Following the establishment of the BTCRF Steering Committee,³ it conducted a national search for a consultant who would help identify critical issues and develop potential solutions for the East Side. Funding for this consultant was raised separately and did not come out of the BTCRF. The search resulted in Rainbow Research being identified as this consultant. Rainbow Research is a Minneapolis-based, intercultural social-justice-focused research, evaluation, and capacity-building firm, which works to prioritize the lived experience of people impacted by the poor functioning of human systems.

The Rainbow Research team (see Appendix 2), led by Dr. Samuel Grant, listened to perspectives from individuals and focus groups who live on the East Side and throughout the City of Buffalo. They met with family members of the victims and survivors, youth, youth workers, faith-based leaders, government officials (Mayor Byron Brown, Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz, Erie County Legislature Chairwoman April Baskin, and Majority Leader of the New York State Assembly Crystal Peoples-Stokes), business leaders, funders, community advocates, nonprofit leaders, block club leaders, and policymakers. In addition, individuals from the Urban League, United Way, the Black Chamber of Commerce, and education all generously shared their personal experiences. Rainbow Research hired six Lived Experience Consultants – residents of the East Side who were contracted to provide guidance, share experiences and their network contacts, make suggestions, and help answer questions related to the East Side from their perspective. What emerged through these conversations was a robust shared vision where:

“The East Side of Buffalo, New York, is an inclusive and prosperous community where residents choose to reside for generations, contribute and participate in an ongoing and evolving investment strategy, and enjoy a great quality of life, perpetuating a cultural community and financial legacy, of improved health and intergenerational wealth.”

The elements of the vision and the investment strategy are designed and grounded in “wealth building” solutions and “development without displacement” to be managed in a way that integrates four non-negotiables identified by the Steering Committee and those interviewed early in this process. These four non-negotiables are: (1) safety, (2) resilience, (3) health, and (4) wealth.

Participants of focus groups and individual interviews identified the following priorities for accomplishing the shared vision for the East Side:

- Homeownership, affordable housing, and generational wealth transfer
- Thriving and interconnected businesses
- Economic self-sufficiency
- A healthy population with accessible health services and a healthy and stable local food system
- Safe and walkable streets
- An investment strategy inclusive of cultural and historic preservation
- A collectivist quality with mutual trust and good relationships among residents, workers, and business owners
- Healing and transformation for the repeated traumas experienced by the community and negative mindset impacting members of the community
- Community strategies that organize people from an asset-based perspective and a talent-based perspective
- Quality education, equitable educational resource distribution, and assessments
- Digitally and technologically sound community resources that foster advancement and innovation for students, businesses, entrepreneurs, and East Side residents
- An age-friendly community that values and supports its elderly residents with services tailored to their needs
- Culturally appropriate and people-centered anchor institutions and learning centers
- Representative Black leadership across all decision-making levels – using their power and influence to link city and regional development opportunities and objectives to the well-being and non-negotiable objectives of the East Side investment strategy

3. See Appendix for list of members.



The Community of the East Side of Buffalo: Assets, Investments, and Opportunities

As of 2019, 85% of Black Buffalonians lived east of Main Street, making Buffalo one of the most segregated cities in the country.⁴ A new opportunity for the East Side is to turn the negative impacts of racial segregation into a strategy that channels that concentration effect into a source of regional power. A common understanding of why the East Side has not progressed over the past 30 years is an important source of knowledge power that then supports the development of local cultural, economic, and political power.⁵ The East Side needs to leverage the building of local power into strategies to eradicate concentrated poverty, which has resulted in 4 of 10 children in the community living in scarcity.⁶ **These conditions have not changed because of a lack of data,⁷ but rather from the lack of a coordinated effort.**

The East Side of Buffalo contains 42% of the city’s residents (more than 108,000 people), 40% of the land in the city, 30% of jobs in the city, 27 employers with more than 100 workers, one-third of the city’s businesses, almost half of the manufacturing jobs in the city, and the majority of its population of color. 78% of the East Side population are people of color, and 63% of residents are African American.⁸ Decades-long concentrated racialized poverty and racially discriminatory public policies have shaped the reality of racial prejudice that Black residents must struggle against every day. Residents of the East Side continue to experience the threat of displacement and other forms of marginalization. The table that follows provides some insight into this reality.

American Community Survey – 2021 Data

Unemployment Rate	7.7%
Black or African American Unemployment Rate	11.1%
White Unemployment Rate	6.2%
Median Household Income (Inflation Adjusted)	\$42,186
Median Household Income for Black Residents (Inflation Adjusted)	\$32,086
Median Household Income for White Residents (Inflation Adjusted)	\$52,967
Buffalo Population Between the Ages 1–64 Who Live in Poverty	24.8%
Black or African American Residents Who Live in Poverty	31%
White Residents Who Live in Poverty	19%

The socioeconomic profile of Buffalo’s East Side is right in line with a Rust Belt region. Regardless of race, many people suffer from the limitations of an economy that’s not designed for mutual thriving. This furthers racial divides due to the simple fact that individuals who will benefit from strategies aimed at aiding everyone in the region are also vulnerable to divide-and-conquer politics. Politics designed to keep communities separated and weak due to racism, classism, sexism, nationality, and citizenship status.

Black Buffalonians have nearly double the unemployment rate, a much higher poverty rate, a lower homeownership rate, significantly less valued homes for those who are homeowners, a higher percentage of cost-burdened households, and \$20,000 less in household median income. Homes in Black communities on average are worth 23% less than the same home would be in a white community, and the lost equity is worth \$156 billion.⁹ The lower socioeconomic status of Black individuals in the

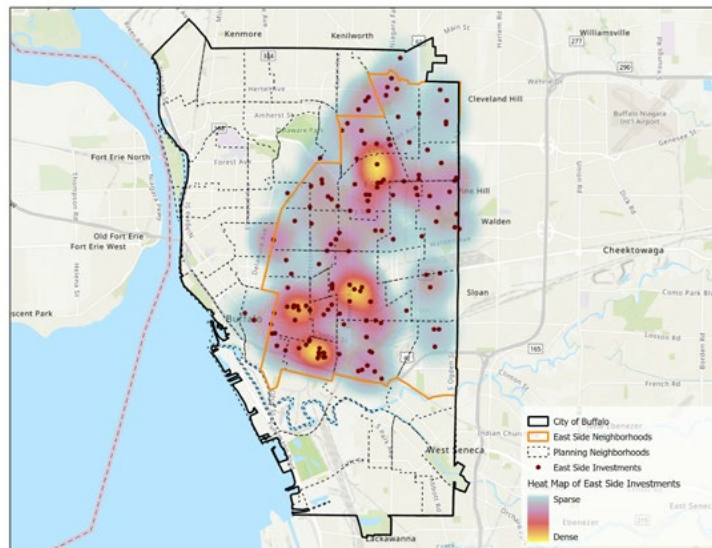
local economy persists even though significant investments have been made on the East Side over the past 14 years to improve conditions.

Data scientists Dr. Sureshi Jayawardene and Rahel Tekle of the Rainbow Research team studied available data on investments made since 2011 and developed a heat map. The heat map documents the change in land and housing values in the region in relation to infrastructure investments (e.g., East Side Avenues Report, LISC 2022 “With/In” Report, Buffalo Billion documents, City of Buffalo documents, and other information shared by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, the John R. Oishei Foundation, and the University of Buffalo Research Institute).

The heat map analysis¹⁰ shows a clear pattern of a limited relationship between financial and non-financial investments and the development of greater well-being and wealth for low-to-moderate-income residents on the East Side. In other words, the millions of funds invested have not improved the tens of thousands of lives of East Side residents. This pattern of investment must change.

With the major investments made on the East Side over the past 30 years, why isn’t life for Black residents improving as well?

STATE INVESTMENT ON THE EAST SIDE SINCE 2011 ~236,897,225



Among the strategies to “improve” conditions on the East Side with city investments was to demolish many housing units considered to be in substandard condition. While this was an important step, it was not followed up with strategies that prioritized increasing local ownership and control of land and housing opportunities for residents.

The following table shows vacant residential, commercial, and industrial land on the East Side between 2017 and 2024. Even with all the investments made on the East Side over the past eight years, we have not seen a significant reduction in vacant land or the utilization of it in ways that most benefit the community. High variability of land prices indicates that prior investments have significantly altered land prices in some areas, but not in others. For example, two vacant lots at 432-424 Hickory Street sold for more than \$424,000.¹¹ Also in Willert Park, but further away from the medical corridor, three vacant lots being sold together at 32, 34, and 38 Wilson are listed for \$36,000.¹² Because there is not an ecosystem approach to investing in East Side properties, investments cannot deliver their full potential.

VACANT LAND

Vacant Land	2023-24	% in East Side 2024	2020-21	% in East Side 2021	2017-18	% in East Side 2018
Residential	13,054	83%	12,935	84%	12,447	84%
Commercial	1,682	70%	1,652	71%	1,861	72%
Industrial	457	47%	455	46%	435	48%
Total	15,193	81%	15,042	81%	14,743	81%

An essential question is who forms, who informs, and who benefits from investment decisions. By utilizing a community district strategy, the vacant lot and dilapidated structure issues can be addressed at scale, more affordably, and with more community benefit.

Structural racism, as it has evolved and become normalized through systems in the Buffalo Niagara Region, is an unfortunate part of the core operating culture. Even when people have an explicit commitment to anti-racism, they are unable to transform what is hidden in the operating dynamics of systems.

4. https://ppgbuffalo.org/files/documents/data-demographics-history/a_city_divided__a_brief_history_of_segregation_in_the_city_of_buffalo.pdf
5. <https://www.investigativepost.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/TaylorHL-The-Harder-We-Run.pdf>
6. <https://www.investigativepost.org/2021/10/12/buffalos-persistent-poverty/>
7. <https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/map/NY/Buffalo/context#loc=12/42.8978/-78.8508>
8. “East Side Avenues: Why Invest on Buffalo’s East Side?”
9. See Andre Perry’s 2020 book *Know Your Price: Valuing Black Lives and Property*.
10. This can be found on the BTCRF website after final edits are completed before the end of September 2024.
11. <https://www.redfin.com/NY/Buffalo/422-Hickory-St-14204/home/73088176>
12. <https://www.redfin.com/NY/Buffalo/38-Wilson-St-14206/home/73119801>

“Whatever we work on has to focus on inclusion, but more importantly, equity. Our success as a community and a country will depend on what we do with this moment.”

– Marie A. Cannon, MSW, Erie County Department of Social Services

Racial Healing and Mental Health

Desmond Tutu, who led the Truth and Reconciliation Process in South Africa, said “There is not future without forgiveness.” By his actions and leadership, he also demonstrated that there is no harmony without reconciliation, and that truth and reconciliation are important to reducing the negative energy of the past. **The BTCRF intends to incorporate methods of healing and reconciliation work to be practiced and supported on the East Side and across the region.**

BTCRF recognizes that racism is a mental health issue because it causes trauma – trauma that is passed down from one generation to the next. At the core of the investment strategy is BTCRF’s commitment to support, expand, complement, and influence racial healing strategies in the East Side and broader Western New York community. Given the fact that a commitment to racial healing has been made and resources raised to invest in racial healing through the Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable, BTCRF plans to partner with the Roundtable and other organizations administering racial healing circles and strategies, supplementing efforts, and connecting community for participation. BTCRF also proposes the development of and investment in a racial healing fellowship cohort model in two-year cycles over the next ten years. Each cohort of 8 to 10 participants will invest 20 hours per month learning about and leading with a racial healing and equity framework – combining action to work on our trauma and work on social change as necessary complements to each other – in alignment with Dr. Roderick Watts’ sociopolitical development model (2003). Steven Biko, who led the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa, said “The greatest weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the minds of the oppressed.”

During the process of generating this investment strategy, members of the BTCRF Steering Committee had to continually work on and through their own racial trauma individually and collectively. To offer the level of creative leadership necessary in Buffalo, the Steering Committee and its partners will continue this racial healing and racial justice work. The two are combined in this strategy because we have been so conditioned to think about healing as something we do individually, and we separate it from strategy.

Structural racism, engrained in the core operating system of the United States of America, will not dissolve without a struggle. It has invaded the consciousness, feelings, intuitions, behaviors, and dreams of the American people. The young man who took ten Black lives on May 14, 2022, did not come to the decision to massacre on his own. He was inspired by racist conditioning. Understanding the root structure of his conditioning so it can be eradicated at the root is one aspect of what residents of the East Side seek to understand and act upon, to feel safe. How do we get rid of this mindset – the mindset to murder, to commit a racist massacre? How do we move past an organized worldview based on racism and foster one that is based on belonging and beloved community (Powell, Menendian, and Ake, 2019)?

The East Side Investment Strategy

The May 14 massacre targeted Black life. This investment strategy centers on Black well-being and wealth in the context of mutual prosperity. The investment strategy proposes a five-year plan to be carried out through June 1, 2029. The BTCRF Steering Committee in no way suggests the investment strategy as an easy solution for the East Side. The expectation is that this strategy represents the planting of seeds that will sustain continued work and bring additional investment for the growth and improved quality of life for residents living on the East Side. These steps will begin to dismantle systems of oppression impacting quality of life and mindset.

The proposed investment strategy starts by **setting conditions for the East Side to be safe, resilient, and generate new processes, policies, norms, and patterns that support continually increasing health and wealth for existing East Side residents.** Again, we prioritize the four non-negotiables built into each strategy recommendation – safety, resilience, health, and wealth.

Alongside the BTCRF, Rainbow Research identified community models that had similar characteristics to Buffalo’s East Side and had carried out one or more innovative strategies to revitalize their communities

**“In every community,
there is work to be done.
In every nation, there
are wounds to heal.
In every heart,
there is the power
to do it.”**

– Marianne Williamson

through investments and partnerships. Specific models were shared with aims to improve well-being and generate wealth, analyze existing investments, and propose specific investment strategies. The proposed strategies are based on pre-existing research and assets, as well as new innovations.

The implementation of each strategy should build toward persistent safety and accountability; increasing mental, emotional, physical, ecological, and aesthetic health; intergenerational wealth creation; and development without displacement.

The investment strategy requires a continued stream of both financial and non-financial investments, accountability mechanisms, and performance measures to ensure that investments are sustained and protected from disruption. This is best sustained over decades with new advancements outlined as evaluation of this effort, and research into other options to consider as the work evolves. To evaluate the success of the effort, the BTCRF Steering Committee discussed developing a score card that lists each of the priorities, strategies, progress, and expectation of completion. The members have been in touch with University at Buffalo faculty who could help in the design and management of a score card.

To mark the early stage of the investment strategy between now and June 2029, it is critical to prioritize a mindset shift within the community. This mindset should encourage residents to use their collective capabilities to drive change in the interest of all existing East Side residents. This includes systems and policy change that facilitates development without displacement, ending the long-ingrained patterns of structural racism and economic injustice that have prevented investments made on the East Side from benefitting people across the spectrum of incomes, race, and culture.

The direct engagement and leadership of East Side residents was necessary in the development of this strategy, and it will remain necessary as this strategy is implemented and improved over time. Regional partners are asked to fully commit to being engaged and accountable partners with Buffalo Together as the evolving strategy is put into play. **Always remember the community’s voice and vision, not just now, but consistently.** There have been clear requests for:

- New affordable and well-designed homes with both ownership and affordable rental opportunities
- Easy access to multiple sources of healthy and affordable food
- Economic self-sufficiency, including thriving and interconnected businesses, anchor institutions, and services tailored for residents of all ages
- Accessible health services
- Safe and walkable streets with protection enhanced in collaboration with local leaders (pastors, former gang leaders, and community safety strategies)
- Improved internet access
- Educational opportunities to learn and lead with evolving technologies that are shaping this century
- Investments in community resources, including new youth spaces that are safe places to be and to engage with mentors in learning the skills and accessing the resources necessary to become 21st century leaders that foster advancement and innovation
- Culturally appropriate and people-centered anchor institutions and learning centers that train for diverse jobs with living wages and career ladders
- The renaissance of the East Side’s historic cultural legacy

The existing pattern of investments on the East Side do not substantially eradicate the burden of low-valued homes for homeowners who would like to build wealth; the high-cost rents that exceed 30% of income for renters; an excess of substandard housing on the East Side with inadequate support to address it in ways that benefit existing residents; the lack of access to fresh, healthy food; and an overabundance of vacant lots with no resident influence and local businesses to assume collective ownership. These are only some of the issues faced by the East Side when it comes to investments.

A simplified picture of the theory of change for this investment strategy.



Models for Change

There are no guarantees for success when a group commits to do something extraordinary. There are, however, certain elements that a national investigation of potential strategies has determined are critical to the success of this investment strategy on the East Side. These elements are found in the two frameworks the BTCRF Steering Committee have situated in the investment strategy. The first framework is Nwamaka Agbo's Restorative Economics. Restorative Economics centers on healing and restoration of vulnerable communities who have been marginalized and oppressed by a polluting and extractive economy, by investing in strategies that create shared prosperity and self-determination for a just transition to the next economy.¹³ It is designed to build community wealth through community control of assets. Restorative Economics offers a power-building and protective factor for the Black community on the East Side so they can enter negotiations and dialogues about their common future with others from a position of consciousness, capability, and regional influence power. The second framework is John Powell's Targeted Universalism, which targets gradations of support to groups that need more investment while also consciously moving everyone toward a common goal. Targeted Universalism brings diverse groups into dialogue to explore how they can partner for common benefit.

13. <https://www.nwamakaagbo.com/restorative-economics#:~:text=Restorative%20Economics%20centers%20on%20healing,transition%20to%20the%20next%20economy>

“We don’t just sit in a room by ourselves and develop a plan, we want to make sure we are responding to the needs of our community.”

– Dr. Tonja M. Williams Knight, Buffalo Public Schools

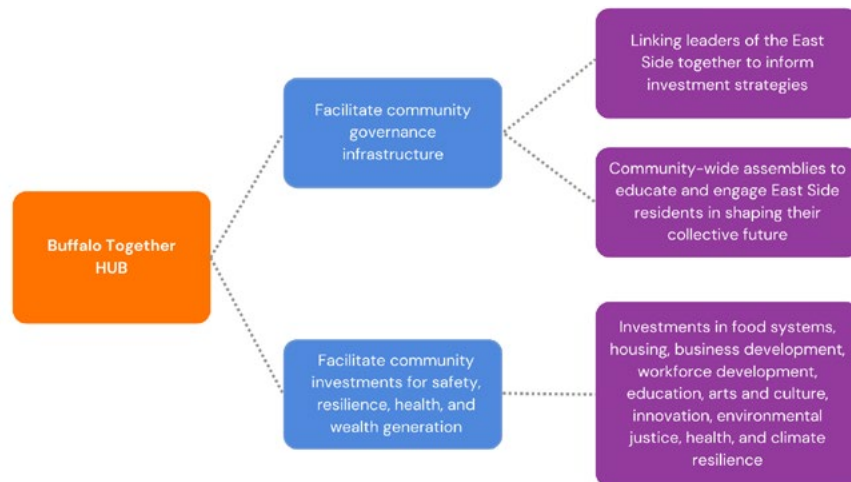
Recommendation 1

Buffalo Together HUB: A Coordinating and Advocacy Entity

The East Side has considerable assets that could be the basis of a community-led infrastructure created to design and implement targeted investment strategies that address the greatest needs while lifting up the entire community. Among these assets are block clubs, faith institutions, artists and cultural organizations, Black businesses, social innovators, advocates, grassroots organizers, workforce and business developers, seniors, and legacy institutions within the community. Presently, many of these assets are operating in a fragmented way and have traditionally been isolated. A key to the success of this investment strategy is getting the many assets on the East Side to work collaboratively.

The East Side investment strategy is designed to facilitate development without displacement and to build legacy wealth for the community. Rainbow Research recommends that BTCRF become a nonprofit entity that functions as a coordinating anchor institution that also holds funding for community benefit. The entity will function as a HUB for the East Side and will continue to work with community members and community-based organizations and institutions to coordinate the integration of existing assets and link them to infrastructures in the region through which decisions are made that shape policy and investments that impact the East Side.

The key to channeling these investments and shaping policy wisely is the construction of the linked community and regional leadership ecosystems. By training and preparing people from the community to be leaders in all regional and statewide infrastructures in which ideas are generated, decisions are made, and from where investments are allocated, East Side residents have more agency and self-determination, preventing further erosion by external interests. This training would also support the evolution of a community mindset that is thoroughly committed to making sure the region grows together rather than apart. Moving toward East Side and common prosperity is based on a central community infrastructure.



The Buffalo Together HUB will function as a coordinating entity to facilitate community education, connection, and community investments. It will gather information from community partners and distribute that information to stakeholders. The HUB will focus on development of ideas and opportunities, vacant lot reuse and development, safety policies and processes, zoning policies and changes that impact the community, utility maintenance, and programs in the community and region. It will act as an advocate and connector to and for existing assets and efforts underway on the East Side, including the Jefferson Avenue Business Association, the NAACP's Jefferson Ave Plan, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the effort to develop an East Side food co-op; support and leverage for the East Side Avenues initiative; partner with the Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable; and leverage investments being made by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the EPA, and the Biden Administration to promote climate resilience and climate justice on the East Side.

Responsibilities of the Buffalo Together HUB

The Buffalo Together HUB should develop East Side leadership to support and reinforce the implementation of strategies and accountability of institutions and systems. This must include an effective process to include the community in consideration of options and the development of a community-wide decision-making process. This activity is to occur on two levels: the neighborhood level and the entirety of the East Side. For example, as neighborhood plans are discussed, the neighborhood in question will be called upon to consider the outcome of the strategy and how it may impact adjacent neighborhoods. To ensure the benefits to one neighborhood are beneficial to the East Side as a whole, regular East Side-wide community assemblies will link projects and share innovations that support increasing safety, resilience, health, and wealth creation. This process is coordinated and managed by the Buffalo Together HUB.

Because the BTCRF Steering Committee is made up of full-time employed individuals, all of which are in positions of leadership, it can be expected that turnover will occur. Therefore, sustaining the transformative anchoring capacity of Buffalo Together requires the engagement of a broader base of leaders. By the end of 2024, expanded leadership should be recruited and onboarded with compensation. The leadership base for community leadership must match the prioritized investment areas. These leaders do more than just represent the community at city and regional power tables. They also coordinate regular community-wide assemblies to engage the voice and vision of East Side residents and bring the perspectives of a cultural power base from the East Side to wield economic and political power. The Rainbow Research team recommends adding a food system champion, a local business developer, two people involved in the Kensington Lid project with a diverse perspective, one or more persons from the Black Chamber of Commerce, a member from the Jefferson Business Association, a staff member of Exchange Center at Beverly Gray, and a housing expert.

The Buffalo Together HUB should actively engage and build the leadership of residents on the East Side to build personal, cultural, social, economic, ecological, and political power to influence their own destiny and contribute to a better destiny for the region. There are many organizations on the East Side that are building the voice and power of residents, including Voice Buffalo, Open Buffalo, John R. Oishei Leaders of Color, Buffalo Urban League, Community Health Center of Buffalo, business associations on the commercial corridors on the East Side, the Black Buffalo Chamber of Commerce, and faith-based associations among many others. Inviting and supporting these organizations to work together advances continual leadership development. The Buffalo Together HUB, as a transformative anchor, can contribute to the East Side's base building organizations by supporting the connection of leaders to regional infrastructures where decisions are being made that impact the community and working with these groups to prepare leaders to effectively analyze and evaluate decision environments according to a racial equity analysis that is popularized across the East Side to build personal, cultural, social, economic, ecological, and political power.

True transformation starts with a paradigm shift in the beliefs and behaviors of everyone working in service of the East Side, and those who live there and are shaped by the East Side's daily realities. This includes family members impacted by the May 14 massacre, funders, policymakers, residents, business owners, nonprofit leaders, educators, and advocates. A community divided cannot build and sustain cultural power to generate economic and political change in the community and region.

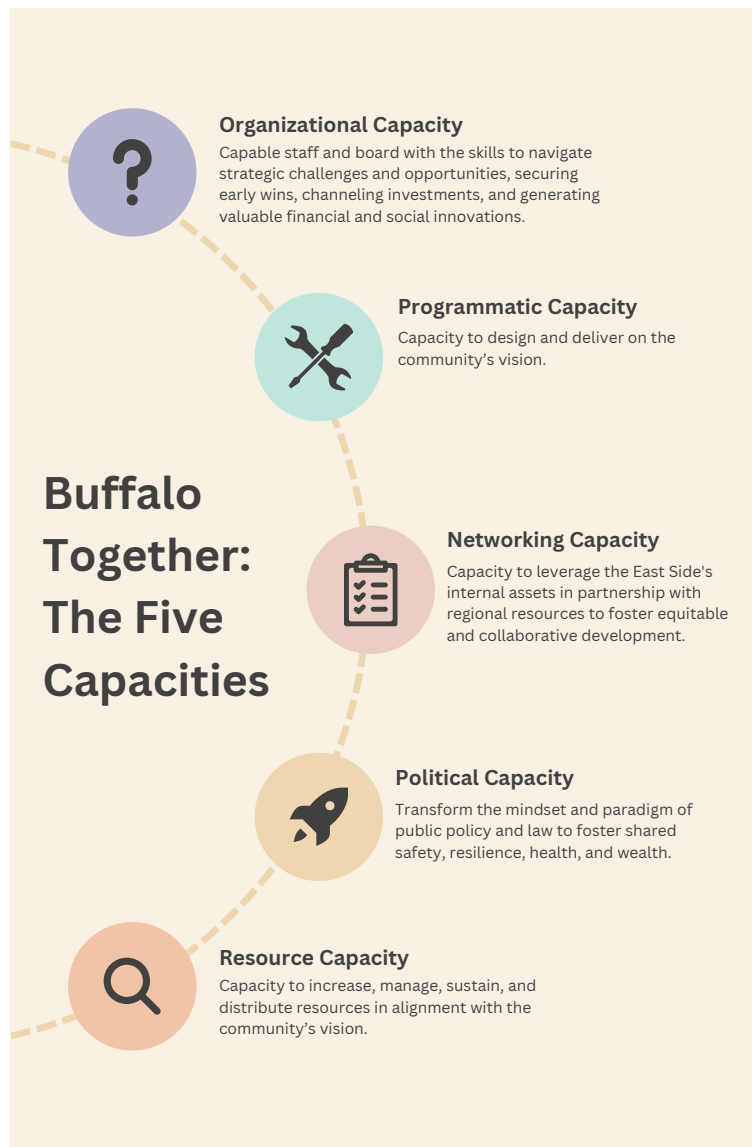
A first and regularly repeated step is to use restorative economics (building community wealth through community control of assets) and targeted universalism (providing higher levels of support to those in need while moving everyone to a common goal) to build faith in the possible. This step will disrupt the Buffalo Block – the too common lack of belief in the East Side's potential, which can generate unnecessary competition and undermining of one another's efforts. By utilizing the restorative economics framework and targeted universalist strategy, East Side residents will take responsibility for all steps toward meeting goals. These approaches replace policies that reinforce and extend racism with a better set of policies that generate increasing returns to safety, resilience, health, and wealth on the East Side and in the region.

Buffalo is not alone. Systemic racism can be perceived as a pandemic, and the work required to eradicate it requires every person to do deep, personal, reflective work to undo the “isms” that bind us in degenerative ways and co-create social bonds that support healthy evolution toward mutual prosperity.

The Buffalo Together HUB must increase its assets, drive and adjust to policy shifts, and support the continued evolution of the collective wisdom and power of the residents of the East Side. Investing in work requires the development of capacity for Buffalo Together to steward resources and organize the infrastructure for community leadership and regional connection.

The Buffalo Together HUB should engage existing initiatives and innovate together by working with the University of Buffalo and Dr. Henry Taylor, the John R. Oishei Foundation, and networks of boots-on-the-ground agents of change. Collaboratively, efforts on the East Side will have greater impact and contribute to accomplishing the shared vision created from community input of Buffalo Together. Cultural developments must also be considered as the Buffalo Together HUB innovates collaboratively with existing initiatives. This can include the Buffalo Together HUB investing support in the Michigan Street Cultural Corridor and the African American Cultural Center to catalyze a new Black arts and culture renaissance on the East Side by partnering with the arts initiative funded by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation and staffed by Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo’s Yuki Numata Resnick. Ms. Resnick and Naila Ansari, of Buffalo State College, are working with Black-led and community-based cultural organizations on capacity building.

An immediate opportunity for the Buffalo Together HUB is connecting with the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, which was awarded a \$5.2 million U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Grant through funding from the Federal Inflation Reduction Act. This partnership would increase the tree canopy for the East Side and reduce the heat island effect, which causes urban areas, especially areas with less green space, to experience higher temperatures than suburban and other outlying areas. This partnership would also reduce climate vulnerability for the East Side.



East Side residents and innovators must unite to build their capabilities and **anchor the Buffalo Together HUB infrastructure.** Specifically, this looks like engaging a committee made up of community stakeholders who serve as accountability partners to the outcomes for the East Side and can activate the partners with a role to play in achieving the shared vision. For example, engaging more East Side residents as formal stakeholders in the Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable. The Roundtable already incorporates targeted universalism in their strategies for achieving an expanded, inclusive economy. By activating

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

– Margaret J. Wheatley

feedback loops between the Roundtable and the Buffalo Together HUB, a dynamic process of co-creativity is shaped, which becomes key to operationalizing new norms in the region. The Buffalo Together HUB can facilitate unified change in public policies, processes, and patterns. By working with the Roundtable, which has considerable regional influence, the push for targeted universalist objectives is strengthened and framed for mutual benefit.

Empower Omaha is one example of a transformative community-led strategy that launched in North Omaha, Nebraska, in 2006 by the Black community. It now has more than 500 organizations involved from all races and cultures in the area and has leveraged its capacity to envision and enact a different future to secure \$300 million in investments to achieve its 2025 goals, which include:

- 5,000 connected to living-wage jobs and careers
- 2,000 annual jobs for youth and young adults
- 250 new or expanded businesses with employees
- 95% graduation rate/prepared for college and careers
- 2,500 new or improved housing units
- 80% safer and healthier community
- 2,500 or more families lifted out of poverty

The Empower Network of North Omaha updates community goals with broad input every year.

Recommendation 2

Establish a Long-Term Fundraising Strategy that Includes Creating an Interest-Bearing Investment for East Side Community Projects

The BTCRF Steering Committee engaged in conversations with The POISE Foundation in Pittsburgh and the Black Philanthropic Collective in Minneapolis. From these Black philanthropic dialogues, accompanied by ongoing conversations with funders in the region who have invested in its work, the Steering Committee has drawn some conclusions:

- People recognize the importance of Black-led philanthropy
- Until Black communities develop their philanthropic capacities, they are likely to remain significantly marginalized in terms of power and resources to distribute in the funding ecosystem of a region
- Getting organized can be productive for Black-led philanthropy
- Black-led philanthropy has to lead by a set of transformative values that heal relations in the community and the region simultaneously

The BTCRF secured investments from more than 100 national corporations and foundations and contributions from over 2,000 individuals to support a coordinated response, both immediate and long term to the May 14 massacre. The evolution of that organized commitment now requires the elevation of a Black philanthropic leadership base. It is the recommendation of Rainbow Research for the Buffalo Together Steering Committee to set aside a portion of the Buffalo Together Funds for a long-term, interest-bearing investment through a Black Community Health and Wellness Fund. The Fund would provide perpetual grant-making opportunities on the East Side as part of the function of the Buffalo Together HUB. The Buffalo Together HUB would create a Black Philanthropic Advisory Council to be responsible for soliciting, reviewing, and making grants to East Side not-for-profit organizations.

Buffalo Together will continue to learn from the Minnesota Black Collective Foundation and The POISE Foundation. The Minnesota Black Collective Foundation was formed against the backdrop of the 2020 uprising for racial justice, when the co-founders, rooted in community with influence in the sector of philanthropy, were called to harness the struggles and possibilities of the historic moment to move the sector beyond momentary sympathy and into accountability, solidarity, and transformation. It is the first Black Community Foundation in Minnesota designed to build a home for the genius of Black-led change.

The POISE Foundation has been serving the Black community for more than 40 years by making hundreds of grants to worthy organizations, providing thousands of scholarships to deserving Black students, and acting as a philanthropic leader and resource in Pittsburgh. POISE has grown from an initial capitalization of \$164K to a present value of more than \$11M. POISE has given back to the community more than \$15.5M in grants and scholarships to deserving organizations and families.

The Buffalo Together Steering Committee approved the initial release of \$600,000 total in two funding rounds – one before the end of 2024 to support the work of East Side nonprofits in alignment with the investment strategies' objectives. One example of an area of consideration based on the recommendations provided by Rainbow Research is a beautification project.

This project would include beautification of at least four consecutive blocks in a section of the East Side modeled after Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor (Michigan Street). This would be a joint effort with the staff and volunteers of Michigan Street to initiate a similar process in the Jefferson or Fillmore commercial corridor on the East Side. This might look like cleaning up vacant lots in each of the neighborhoods of the East Side or working with community gardeners and farmers to plant trees to replace all the ones that have been taken down.

Recommendation 3

Advocate for Policies, Practices, and Legislation That Ensure Development Without Displacement for East Side Residents

Often people think an investment strategy is just a financial investment. This investment strategy incorporates both financial and non-financial investments. Non-financial investments include social, experiential, intellectual, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual assets engaged in the community and region. Leveraging relationships and networks in the community is key to the effective utilization of financial investments so the benefits are broadly distributed and in alignment with community priorities.

Rainbow Research recommends Buffalo Together partner with the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, the Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable, and the John R. Oishei Foundation on policy change. The Community Foundation is an experienced policy advocate and has effected legislative change at multiple levels of government. Most recently, the Community Foundation led on policy change to identify and eliminate lead paint in homes by making sure that all rental housing units receive an inspection before occupancy. The Greater Buffalo Racial Equity Roundtable is a cross-sector, public-private collaborative made of 30 community systems change leaders working in partnership with more than 350 partners in coordinated ways to advance racial equity and achieve an expanded inclusive economy. The Roundtable has a Ten-Point Agenda to close specific racial equity gaps in Western New York. Their work is intentionally focused on changing systems by changing policies, practices, and procedures. They are committed to working together to bridge the existing gaps in racial equity so that more residents can live, work, and raise children who reach their highest potential. These are leaders who have a mechanism established to change policy.

In December 2023, the John R. Oishei Foundation narrowed its focus in order to broaden their impact. They are committed to addressing the root causes of racial inequity, working to change systems, and building financial prosperity for a racially just region. While the John R. Oishei Foundation is standing up their new framework, Buffalo Together understands that collaborating with the Foundation where efforts align will only move the East Side of Buffalo forward. Additionally, partnering with the John R. Oishei Foundation on policy change will position the East Side residents to own their development and destiny.

There are several tools Buffalo Together can utilize to establish development without displacement (see Appendix 3). One way recommended by Rainbow Research is freezing taxes for a certain time for legacy residents, then incrementally increasing over an extended period to allow people with lower incomes to be able to continue to live in an area where taxes may be escalating rapidly due to development and an influx of higher incomes. Zoning legislation that grandfathered in current residents, businesses, and residents with connections to the East Side of Buffalo with a reasonable tax rate is an avenue that could be explored to accomplish development without displacement.

The City and County of San Francisco created the Legacy Business Program and the Cultural Districts Program in 2022. The Cultural Districts Program is a place-making and place-keeping program that preserves, strengthens, and promotes cultural communities. The Legacy Business Initiative celebrates and supports the visibility, history, and sustainability of legacy businesses, which are small businesses that have been operational for 20 years or more. In the San Francisco case, these policy and finance mechanisms came late, long after the majority of Black individuals had been displaced. However, what they offer is a way to prevent a total erosion of the Black presence in the city and county. Los Angeles created a legacy business model similar to San Francisco. San Francisco has done more than most cities to utilize the cultural district model. It has ten cultural districts: Japanese, Latino, Transgender, LGBTQ, Chinese, African American, American Indian, Filipino, Pacific Islander, and Leather and LGBTQ (Buckley and French, 2023, p. 23).¹⁴

Another model for Buffalo Together to learn from is Rise East, which is designed to create a Black cultural zone in East Oakland. This zone includes about 30,000 people in a 40-by-40 block area, considerably smaller than the East Side of Buffalo. Oakland First pulled the community together around a common vision. Oakland Thrives (a public-private partnership) stepped in to manage a ten-year planning process that eventually secured a \$50 million pledge from Blue Meridian Partners to support the plan.¹⁵

Communities negatively impacted by structural racism that wish to see transformative change need a way to anchor that change. They need a way to change the patterns of governance – meaning policies, processes, and practices around how decisions get made that impact their quality of life. They need strategies that support households in building wealth and to collectively hold and build wealth for the community. All of these are core to this investment strategy. Furthermore, safety and resilience are key. The mobilization and coordination of community done by Rise East serves as a useful example for Buffalo Together.

14. <https://antidisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Keeping-Small-Businesses-in-Place-SBAN-case-studies-2023.pdf>

15. <https://www.riseeast.org/>

“Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: The potential for greatness lives within each of us.”

– Wilma Rudolph

Recommendation 4

There needs to be investment in different models to expand food access. This will increase healthy, fresh, affordable food access and choice on the East Side through models other than a traditional supermarket.

One opportunity for this change focuses on the Buffalo Together Community Steering Committee partnering with Buffalo Go Green.¹⁶ led by Allison DeHoney. Buffalo Go Green connects with families and individuals in their neighborhood to provide programming, training, and fresh produce to populations who have not been served well by the food system. In December 2023, they opened a new indoor food production facility. They also sell fruits and vegetables in farmers markets from June to October. A Buffalo Together partnership with Buffalo Go Green could look like providing additional financial support to grow the organization’s capacity, providing technical assistance, assisting with marketing and outreach, or being a connector and advocate at influencer tables to ensure Buffalo Go Green continues to be an asset to the community. What is clear to Buffalo Together, though, is that Buffalo Go Green is an asset that could create more access and choice to healthy food options for the East Side of Buffalo. The impact of growing the scale of this effort would contribute to a reduction in the high incidents of diabetes, hypertension, and obesity – all the health conditions that are prevalent in the Black community.

Over the years, community members of the East Side of Buffalo have expressed a desire to establish a food cooperative as a solution to food apartheid. Food co-ops have been a remedy in Black communities to injustice in the food system since 1889. According to *Smithsonian Magazine*,¹⁷ “The saga of People’s Grocery, a community-owned store that emerged as an alternative to Barrett’s in 1889, shows how entrenched the history of human-made food apartheid is... Co-owned by a group of Black residents in the neighborhood, it (The People’s Grocery) was a financially successful food cooperative held in high regard by the Black community. Thomas Moss, a friend of (Ida B.) Wells, was the store’s director. Black folks were building power by owning their labor, claiming space, and documenting the terrors of white supremacy in the ever-expanding Bluff City sprawl.”

In April 2024, members of the Buffalo Together Steering Committee had the opportunity to learn from the Food Co-Op Initiative (FCI) headquartered in Vermont, courtesy of a special invitation from the Western New York Foundation. Executive Director Faye Mack discussed different types and purposes of co-ops and provided information on FCI and its mission to build a more just food system, provide critical support as they organize, and open community-owned grocery stores. A few examples of food co-ops supported by FCI are Detroit People’s Co-op; the Merc Co+op in Kansas City, MS; Cabot Creamery Co-op; The North Flint Food Co-op; and Gem City Market in Dayton, OH. Buffalo Together, in collaboration with FCI and the Western New York Foundation, could develop an East Side food co-op and source much of its produce by connecting with Buffalo Go Green, as well as East Side gardens, gardeners, farms, and farmers. A food co-op, and cooperative economics as a broader approach, are recognized as ways to strengthen the community’s sense of well-being together on the journey of shaping prosperity – benefiting as co-creators of community change.

Developing a full-scale standard grocery store on the East Side can cost upward of \$20 million, which has resulted in grocery stores avoiding the community because of their business model. Because of this, the Buffalo Together Steering Committee members sought another option that would bring the East Side online with the rest of the nation as we venture into the space of artificial intelligence (AI). Incorporating AI in the vision of an East Side with access to healthy food options led the Buffalo Together Steering Committee to visit Nourish and Bloom in Atlanta, GA. Nourish and Bloom is the first Black-led AI food model in the world, started by a “food-preneur” couple as a solution to the failures of our current food system’s inability to adequately provide food options for all people. They developed a model that is similar in scope to a shipping container and placed on designated sites in communities for as little as \$400,000 per store. This model requires a warehouse to store supplies, so it is also advisable to consider developing two or three stores simultaneously to maximize the benefit of warehouse usage. Further investigation of this innovative food access option is needed.



“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the passionate actions of its members.”

– Coretta Scott King



Gen
Educate. Tech.
All over the map. Reale
Plans for our future
Born all over



Rainbow Research recommends Buffalo Together seek a partnership with Moog, Inc., or another innovative business and New York State Governor Kathy Hochul to pilot at least three AI containers on the East Side. This proposed solution to combatting food injustice on the East Side has multiple benefits, one of which is AI workforce training. Another benefit is the potential for the AI market to be owned by the community and requires intentional thinking that could include co-op opportunity for community member investment. One suggestion is to pilot one or two containers stocked strictly with produce from community gardens and/or local Black businesses curating healthy products to provide both healthy food and grown local business.

16. <https://buffalogogreen.org/about/>

17. Faron Levesque, *The MIT Press Reader* 5/23/2024

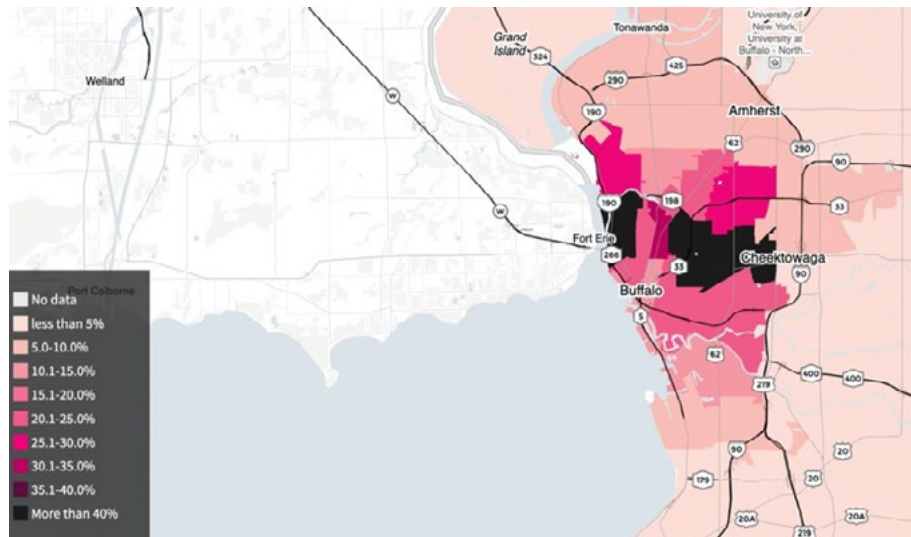
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-the-murder-of-a-black-grocery-store-owner-and-his-colleagues-galvanized-ida-b-wells-anti-lynching-crusade-180984350/>

Recommendation 5

Innovative Housing Strategy

Buffalo has among the oldest housing stock in the entire country. About 60% of Buffalo’s housing units were built before 1939, and 90% before 1980. Much of the housing stock is in substandard condition with collapsing ceilings, sewage backups, mold infestations, lack of heat in the winter, front doors that don’t lock, lead paint, asthma triggers, and more. A 2017 investigation found that Buffalo was a dangerous lead hotspot, with blood lead levels in children eight times higher than Flint, Michigan, in four zip codes, and twice or more as high in 17 Buffalo zip codes.

While a high proportion of homes on the East Side are in substandard condition, Zillow¹⁸ predicts that Buffalo will be the hottest housing market in the country in 2024, with Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio; Indianapolis, IN; and Providence, RI, rounding out the top five.



Zillow’s analysis is based on examining forecasted home value growth, recent housing market velocity, projected changes in the labor market, home construction activity, and the number of homeowner households. Norada Real Estate Investments (Santarelli, 2024) summarizes current Buffalo market dynamics:

- Median sale-to-list ratio: 1.079 (meaning most homes sold for above list price)
- Median sale price: \$223,333
- Median list price: \$196,442
- Percent of sales over list price: 75.4%
- Percent of sales under list price: 19.5%
- Home price increase in city over past year: 5.8%
- Days on market before pending status: 9 days

However, due to the impacts of structural racism, home values on the East Side are significantly lower than the norm across the region. While the median list price in Buffalo was \$223,333, it was only \$38,000 in Broadway-Filmore.

Homeownership wealth accounts for 63% of Black wealth in the United States, but homes in Black communities are worth less, and far more mortgages are denied in Black communities. The National Community Reinvestment Coalition conducted a study that found that the average redlined neighborhood got 3,000 fewer mortgages over the past four decades than neighborhoods deemed “best” by Home Ownership Loan Corporation mapmakers.¹⁹ There was a higher Black homeownership rate in 1900 than in 2020.²⁰ Part of the issue is that homes are being built in non-Black communities, and homes are being demolished but not built in racially segregated Black communities. The housing market is thoroughly racialized. We need a community real estate investment ecosystem that focuses attention on eradicating the historical legacy of redlining, continued disparities in lending patterns, and improving access to capital for home repair.

Development without displacement proves critical to our housing strategy. Shaw (2018) defined the most important factors to incorporate into such a strategy:

- Build more units of housing in all neighborhoods, with a significant portion of missing middle housing (duplexes and fourplexes) and end exclusionary zoning laws that have been designed to protect some communities from “those people”
- Link new housing to affordability, the way Seattle up-zoned with its HALA program worked, but the way Minneapolis and New York City up-zoned increased gentrification risk and displacement
- Use public land for affordable housing
- Enable nonprofits to purchase small sites
- Seek local and state funding for affordable housing
- Enact strong tenant protections
- Preserve rental housing
- Effectively enforce housing codes
- End exclusionary zoning
- Educate, get organized, and get political

Numerous efforts are underway to improve the housing stock on the East Side. NYS Senator Sean Ryan’s affordable housing strategy for Western New York has secured \$90 million in total, \$80 million for affordable homeownership strategies, and \$10 million for emergency rental assistance. Included in Ryan’s strategy is \$40M to improve conditions in upstate rental properties. While the amount that will flow to the East Side is not yet determined, quality affordable rental housing is critical to community health, wealth, and property values. The City of Buffalo’s affordable housing strategy includes increased landlord accountability and improved rental inspections.

Buffalo has more old housing stock than almost any other city in the country. With much of that housing in disrepair, the East Side could follow the example of Detroit’s 0% interest Home Repair Loan Program, which has upgraded more than 550 homes since 2015. Detroit also developed a home repair grant program, including a major investment to eradicate lead from 76 homes at an average cost of \$43,785 per unit.²¹

The Buffalo Together HUB should set aside funds to contribute to Affordable Housing Opportunities on the East Side of Buffalo. The Buffalo Together Steering Committee learned from best practice housing models from visiting Home HeadQuarters in Syracuse and met virtually with the Cleveland Housing Network. Both housing organizations have made great strides in providing affordable housing through homeownership, home improvements, and rent-to-own options. These models, which also incorporated environmental upgrades like solar panels, could benefit residents on the East Side of Buffalo through

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

– Margaret Mead

wealth generation, as well as reduce the burden of already stressed incomes by reducing utility costs with new climate and environmental innovations.

The Buffalo Together Steering Committee is currently in conversation with the Broadway-Fillmore Neighborhood Housing Services as they are planning to redevelop 100 vacant lots in the Central Terminal Triangle into affordable housing and other beneficial uses.

Buffalo Together will also continue to focus on affordable housing, homeownership, and home improvement opportunities. Improvement will include climate and solar models that offer ownership opportunities that could contribute to generational wealth. Buffalo Together is also interested in exploring housing co-op models, potentially as condo structures, to increase available units for community residents and democratically empower residents to make decisions about their housing. Buffalo Together’s strategy also locks in Black developers with a priority for those who participate in the East Side Avenues Initiative for entrepreneurial opportunities.

Buffalo’s affordable housing task force, through their engagement process, recognized that there is a significant gap between an expressed commitment to affordable housing and delivery. Residents requested full consideration of rent control and rent assistance, measures to reduce the risk of displacement due to rising prices, a more equitable housing court, more tenant empowerment, and landlord accountability. An important recommendation in the affordable housing strategy is completion of a vacancy study over the next year. Findings of the study will provide critical data, which may allow the Common Council to stabilize rents, and reduce evictions and gentrification.

Any affordable housing should take into consideration the climate crisis, which most negatively impacts the East Side. This crisis now can be addressed with resources invested by Bloomberg Philanthropies, which invested \$200 million in 20 cities across the country, including Buffalo. The United States Environmental Protection Agency is mobilizing Justice 40 funds to support efforts in Buffalo and other cities across the country, and the Biden Administration’s Inflation Reduction Act and infrastructure investments provide a greater supply of resources for climate resilience than any previous administration. As a connector, Buffalo Together can advocate for environmental efficiencies to be included in all homes on the East Side.

18. <https://www.zillow.com/research/2024-hottest-market-33566/>

19. NCRC: “Decades of Disinvestment: Historic Redlining and Mortgage Lending Since 1981.”

20. NCRC. 2024. <https://ncrc.org/decades-of-disinvestment/>

21. <https://poverty.umich.edu/files/2020/10/The-Status-of-Home-Repair-in-Detroit-October-2020.pdf>

Recommendation 6

Pilot Private Equity Strategy

The greatest wealth transfer in our lifetime is underway, with 73 million baby boomers retiring and transferring \$83 trillion in assets to their heirs or selling to prospective investors interested in purchasing these assets. **Buffalo Together should provide funding for a capacity-building pilot for East Side entrepreneurs interested in purchasing a business** and include an incentive of a low-interest business loan as part of a revolving loan fund. A partnership with the Exchange at Beverly Gray, the Jefferson Avenue Business Association, or Black Chamber of Commerce would align Buffalo Together with the expertise necessary to administer such an initiative successfully. For example, the Exchange Center at Beverly Gray offers a place to incubate and support emerging entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses. It partners with other business development entities to support the integration of a full-scale business development, expansion, and innovation ecosystem that benefits the East Side and the region. Additional partners could be The Buffalo Urban League, NAACP, Faith Leaders, the Jefferson Avenue Business Association, and the Black Chamber of Commerce. Buffalo Together and partners would co-invest with people in the community interested in owning and running an established business. Participants of this capacity-building initiative would learn what is necessary to run a business through a series of classes, and after successful completion, they would qualify for a low-interest business loan. A similar model to learn from and work closely with is the East Side Avenues Initiative, which has trained and funded Black developers with a stake in the East Side.

Additional research and consideration are necessary regarding the Buffalo Together HUB as a direct purchaser and owner of two to three private equity firms to generate revenue and a dividend for the residents, as well as create jobs in the East Side of Buffalo. This strategy also provides Buffalo Together with assets that could be leveraged. The Buffalo Together Steering Committee will continue to explore this option with Black Gravity, a consulting firm that conducts research and pilots initiatives to produce actionable insights that can be adopted and scaled, advise institutional leaders on inclusion and community wealth, and facilitate and deploy capital to mobilize the markets so they are inclusive by default.

Recommendation 7

Buffalo Together: Community Dividend

Buffalo Together should have the right to participate as a Limited Partner, investor, and/or beneficiary in all major projects happening in Buffalo, especially projects impacting the East Side. Returns from these investments should be put in a community dividend that, in turn, reinvests in Buffalo’s East Side according to an agreed-upon process by the community governing body. Examples of this strategy are

aligned with participation in Highmark Stadium and New York State Route 33. Participation in these types of projects sets a precedent that the economic security for communities is important to city, county, state, and business leaders in the region. Participation also signals that Buffalo Together is a serious player in the economic development of the city and region. Finally, the returns on capital projects will provide long-term economic benefit to the community and a sense of ownership because of the Fund's participation as an investor/owner.

Buffalo Together should have representation and/or active engagement with all major economic development commissions, associations, and committees (e.g., city/county/state Economic Development, Buffalo-Niagara Regional partnership, Developer Associations, etc.). Having standing participation in Buffalo investments will allow the East Side to be self-endowed, providing stable and consistent support for its social and business ecosystem.

Recommendation 8

Buffalo Community Land Trust

Buffalo Together needs to understand the current situation with the local land trust and determine whether they are a viable partner and how they might proceed collaboratively. If they are not a viable partner, then **Buffalo Together needs a land and property acquisition strategy that works closely with the city, county, developers, and those focused on climate-friendly buildouts.** As the whole region is now focused on climate resilience, it is important to design up-front workforce and business development and growth strategies so East Side residents are prepared to lead the climate resilient future of the region, rather than be victims of climate injustice.

Buffalo Together must also ensure that efforts to tackle long-term problems start from pre-existing collaboratives and initiatives on the East Side or other parts of the Greater Buffalo Region (as well as from Power Maps of the Steering Committee).

As land and housing open up on the East Side, buy what can be bought (look for any legislation or policies that support grandfathering existing residents and homeowners with a tax scale/incentive that increases slowly. Partnering with the Roundtable, the John R. Oishei Foundation, and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, use influence to establish policies and legislation.

Assets on the East Side must be effectively leveraged to shape a better future. How can the abundance of vacant lands be turned into an opportunity? The Permanent Development Fund in Alaska offers one example. Every legal resident of that state gets an annual dividend payment based on a portion of profits from oil and mineral revenue. On the East Side, the most abundant asset is the land. Buffalo Together should work with the City, which owns most vacant parcels, to acquire several plots of land and put it in a community real estate investment trust. All development that happens on that land could be designed to pay an annual dividend to residents. If a targeted universalist strategy is applied, existing residents who are most economically marginalized would see a larger benefit, compared to the highest-income residents on the East Side, who would receive a small dividend payment.

Recommendation 9

Impact Investing

Another opportunity is to partner with the John R. Oishei Foundation on an impact investment strategy. The John R. Oishei Foundation's new strategic plan represents a transformative shift in their philanthropic philosophy and practice. Recognizing that they and other funders have invested \$150 million or more over the previous generation into the East Side, without an integral focus on improving wealth and well-being. The Foundation could now commit to partner with Buffalo Together to organize local and

regional wisdom through a process that supports this investment strategy, as it evolves in accordance with increasing community wisdom and power. For the East Side to act in the short-term to generate a long-term pathway to legacy wealth creation, the community needs to develop its own impact investing capabilities. An Impact Investing Guidance Council can build the capacity of the East Side to wisely invest in its own future, and it transforms the way the East Side is linked to the rest of the regional economy, as partners, rather than the East Side being negatively impacted by a form of development that failed to honor all communities in the regional economy.

Buffalo Together will operate with an investment matrix that defines key investments that foster not only improvements, but also returns on investment in the areas of safety, resilience, health, and wealth with an intention to put into action investments that generate a ripple effect across the domains of education, healthcare, housing, workforce development, enterprise development, technological and social innovation, climate and environmental justice, community leadership development, and the fostering of collective wisdom and power in the community.

The Boston Ujima Project proposed a multi-faceted solution that entailed several key actions:

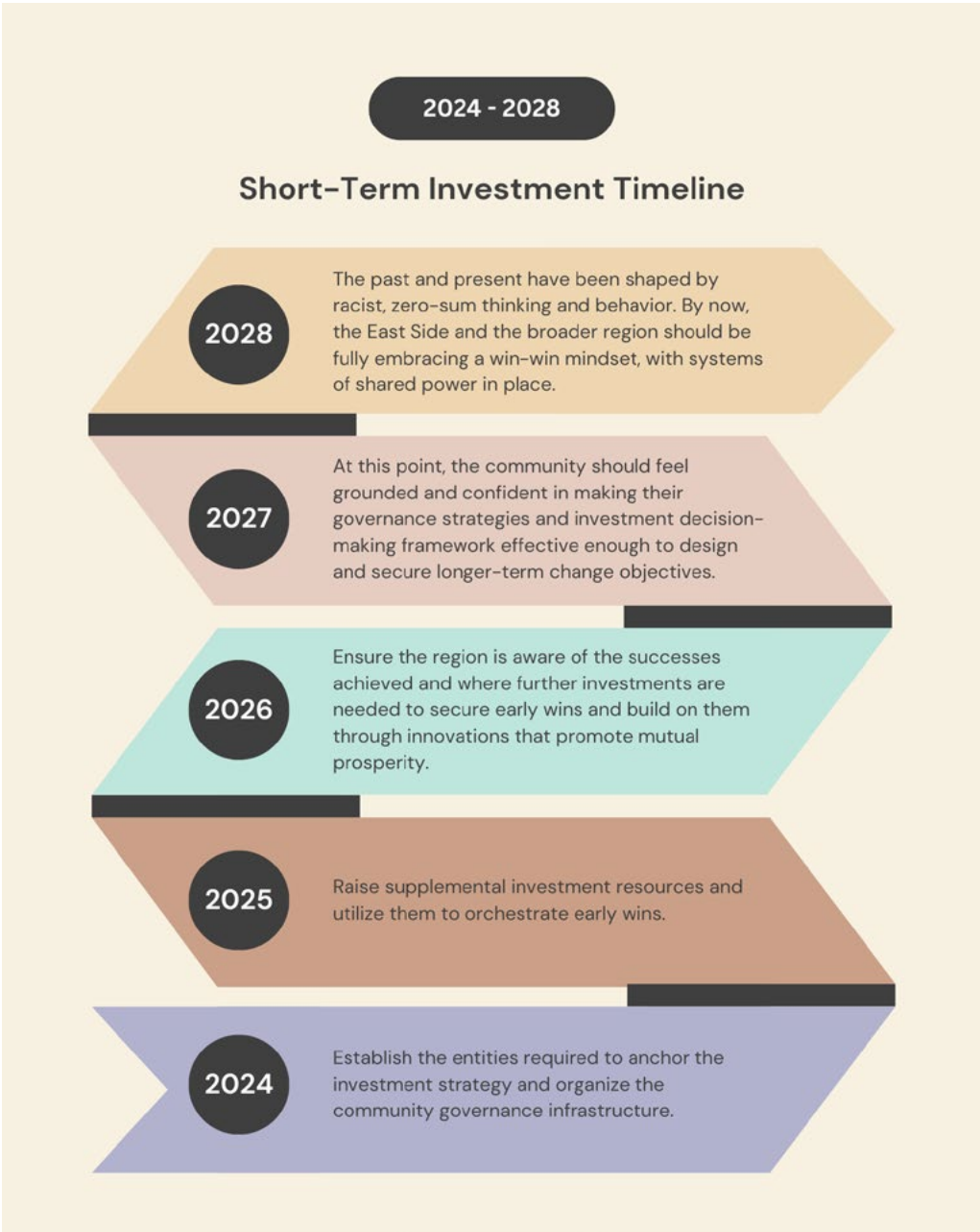
- **Capital Fund.** Pooling capital from community members, securing foundation grants and impact investments. This fund is aimed to drive participatory democratic allocation.
- **Partnerships and Collaborations.** The project cultivated partnerships with local grassroots organizations, wealth managers, impact investors, and national networks to broaden its reach and impact.



- **Community Capital Fund.** The Capital Fund is a principal component of the funding structure. It pools capital from Ujima members, which includes the membership fees they pay. Additionally, the fund receives contributions from foundation grants and Program-Related Investments (PRIs), which are impact investment financings. Local anchor institutions can also provide capital based on the success of popular campaigns. The Capital Fund provides a combination of no-interest loans and grants to businesses and initiatives that align with Ujima’s social impact goals. The specific terms and conditions of these financial products are determined through the participatory allocation process. The fund was created in 2018 and raises capital from community members, supporters, and foundations, and makes loans and equity investments in local businesses. In 2021, Ujima achieved its goal of raising \$4.5 million dollars of investment capital and has since invested around \$1 million across six businesses.

In closing, emergent strategies and investments that begin within the next six months emerge through investments made now that show results within the next five years. These investments made now need to leverage longer-term investments that secure the vision for the next 50–100 years. Remember that **success drives motivation and can change mindsets**. Support specific early wins identified in this strategy, such as beautification and establishing additional fresh food markets and food systems capacity. Investigate options for boosting the climate resilience of the East Side with an equitable homes and buildings decarbonization strategy.

A key to a successful investment strategy includes a large percentage of East Side residents who want to make a more fulfilling wage or have their family grow into different income brackets while gaining greater agency and choice. These options for growth within the context of eradicating the wide-reaching impacts of structural racism over generations are constant, leading-edge innovation led by people who have been marginalized within pre-existing innovation ecosystems.



Appendix 1: Buffalo Together Steering Committee Members

Committee Members	Role in Community
Dr. LaVonne Ansari, Co-chair	CEO of Community Health Center of Buffalo
Thomas Beauford, Jr., Co-chair	CEO of Buffalo Urban League
Trina Burruss	President and CEO of United Way of Buffalo and Erie County
M. DeAnna Eason	Executive Director of Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME), Inc.
Felicia R. Beard	Associate Vice President of Racial Equity Initiatives, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo
Dr. Marie A. Cannon	President and CEO, Community Action Organization of WNY
Zeneta B. Everhart	Buffalo City Council member and mother of child injured in massacre
Dr. Uzo Ihenko	Black Chamber of Commerce
Oluwole McFoy	General Manager, Buffalo Sewer Authority
James Morrell	Director of Public Transit for the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
Chiwuike Owunwanne	Corporate Responsibility Officer and Community Relations Officer, KeyBank
Garnell Whitfield	Retired, former Commissioner of the Buffalo Fire Department, and son of mother killed in massacre
Del Purdue-Grant	Space Sector Business Manager at Moog

Appendix 2: Rainbow Research Team

Personnel	
Dr. Samuel Leguizamon Grant	Project Lead, Executive Director of Rainbow Research
Dr. JaNay Queen Nazaire	Co-founder of Blk Grvty
Dr. Martha Eddy	Founder of Moving for Life and Co-founder of Moving On Center
Dr. Serie McDougal III	Co-founder of Afrometrics
Dr. Sureshi Jayawardene	Co-founder of Afrometrics
Rahel Tekle	Founder and Lead Consultant at RT Data Analytics
East Side Lived Experience Consultants	
Rahwa Ghirmatzion	Organizing and Design Advisor
Allison DeHoney	Food Systems Advisor
Brandi Barrett	Community Development Advisor
John Washington, Jr.	Housing Justice Advisor
Malik Stubbs	Youth Development Advisor
Rev. Denise Barr	Voice and Vision Advisor

Appendix 3: Investments and Cost Ranges for What Is Proposed in the Investment Compendium

Investment Domain	2024–2033 Description	Investment Range
Arts-Based Creative Economy and Culture	Ten-year cultural arts community of practice, and increased investments in creative place-keeping	\$5 to 10 million
Black-Led Organized Philanthropic Strategy	BTCRF coordinates a comprehensive philanthropic investment strategy with Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo, Oishei Foundation, and the network of funders that have invested in the BTCRF since its inception	Included in all #s listed in the range described
Business Development	Support existing investments in business development and innovation by linking them to all other investments incorporated in this strategy	\$5 to 16 million
BTCRF Leadership	Hire staff, coordinate communications and marketing, and organize community-regional partnerships	\$12 million
BTCRF Holding Company	Hold assets (land and property) for community benefit, and coordinate strategies to leverage assets to build household and community wealth generation. To facilitate community ownership infrastructure, applying Restorative Economics.	\$10 to 50 million
Community Governance Infrastructure	Community Forums, Community Planning Councils, Community Education and Organizing to be coordinated with an impact investment leadership hub, applying Restorative Economics	\$5 to 25 million
Climate & Environmental Justice Strategy	Assess and address the environmental justice overburden in each neighborhood of the East Side and implement a community-wide climate resilience strategy	\$10 to 30 million
Comprehensive Child Development Strategy	Invest in children of this generation and make investments in newborns on the East Side with a regional baby bonds strategy supported by crowdfunding and, eventually, city and county taxes	\$20 to 50 million
Education and Leadership Development Strategy	Work with schools and community centers to incorporate applied learning in culture, innovation, and community organization. Continually invest in leadership development and incorporate a leadership development community of practice focused on the East Side’s evolution.	\$1 to 15 million

continued on next page >>

Appendix 3: Investments and Cost Ranges for What Is Proposed in the Investment Compendium (continued)

Investment Domain	2024–2033 Description	Investment Range
Food System Organizing and Infrastructure	Transition from sole reliance on Tops or leaving community to get food by creating numerous access points for healthy local food and linking food system to economic development strategy	\$8 to 25 million
Health and Healing Infrastructure for Safety, Health, and Resilience	Organize to address the social determinants of health and foster healing from racial trauma within the community and healing justice as a regional strategy	\$1 to 8 million
Housing Development	Increase ownership, rehabilitate owned and rental properties, increase stability of renters, create pathways for renters to become homeowners	\$100 to 250 million
Impact Investing Guidance Council	Blk Grvty will facilitate a guidance council that supports all partners involved in this investment strategy in determining how to leverage each investment made for optimal benefit to the community	\$2 million over 5 years
Social Innovation	Engage public and private sector partners w/ community to drive social innovation by building local leadership to shape the evolution of regional innovation	\$2.5 to 14 million
Targeted Universalist Regional Policy Organizing	Create a policy framework for regional prosperity that promotes universal benefit with targeted strategies.	\$2 to 10 million
Workforce Development	Generate “community sector jobs” with living wages, taking care of community objectives, and expand access points to regional workforce development and innovation ecosystem	\$5 to 8 million
TOTAL		\$193.5 to 525 million

The investment compendium submitted in April 2024 included this investment matrix, proposing up to \$525 million of investments over the next five to ten years.

Appendix 4: Dictionary and Inventory of Tools for Development Without Displacement

This is a list with definitions of tools commonly used in development without displacement strategies across the United States. A space is provided at the beginning of each tool to mark whether or not a tool is already effectively being utilized to benefit the East Side, or if it is known to be used in other regions of the City of Buffalo or Erie County and may be effectively utilized on the East Side.

Each term is defined, with a link in endnotes to find more information on the use of a particular tool. The Buffalo Together Community Response Fund has committed to a development without displacement framework as core to its community investment and revitalization strategy.

Securing this form of development in a city that currently advocates for racial equity in hiring and leadership roles but has not yet made racial equity on the East Side a priority is necessary, but not expected to be easy.

Across the country, between 2000 and 2013, one study estimated that more than 110,000 Black individuals were displaced due to gentrification.ⁱ This is likely a significant undercount. Eviction lab has been quantifying the number of people displaced in more than 30 cities across the country since 2020. There have been over 1.6 million evictions in those cities over the past two years.ⁱⁱ At the root of displacement is economic precarity, which is highly racialized. Median net wealth of white households is \$188,000, compared to \$24,000 for Black individuals.ⁱⁱⁱ Several methodologies for anti-displacement (or development without displacement) have emerged in cities and regions across the country that experienced significant gentrification and determined that it was necessary to put mechanisms in place to support low-to-moderate-income households in sustaining their lives and livelihoods as members of the community.

Dr. Lisa Bates developed a methodology that has been used across the country and is often credited as being the inspiration for other models that have emerged.^{iv, v} The anti-displacement framework we apply for the East Side combines Dr. Bates' methodology with the Urban Displacement Project,^{vi, vii} developed by U C Berkeley,^{viii} and Dr. Heather Way's anti-displacement methodology developed for Texas.^{ix} Dr. Way's framework (2019, p. 3) provides six goals for an anti-displacement strategy that we believe to be resonant with the objectives of the Buffalo Together Community Response Fund.

1. Vulnerable renters in gentrifying neighborhoods are not displaced from their current homes and neighborhoods.
2. Vulnerable homeowners in gentrifying neighborhoods are not displaced from their current homes and neighborhoods.
3. Preserve existing affordable rental housing in gentrifying neighborhoods so that the units are safe, stable, and affordable for current residents.
4. City planning and land use decisions incorporate inclusive and equitable anti-displacement strategies, and low-income persons and communities of color are empowered to participate early and meaningfully in land use decisions that shape their homes, neighborhoods, and communities.
5. New affordable housing options are created to serve current and future vulnerable households in gentrifying neighborhoods.
6. Vulnerable residents can remain or return to their communities by accessing the affordable housing opportunities in their neighborhoods.

Who is most vulnerable to displacement & how are they leading anti-displacement efforts?

There are five primary indicators of vulnerability, and determining not only how to prevent their displacement but also to transform the options they come to possess as legacy wealth creators on the East Side is at the root of what we strive to create with the Buffalo Together Community Response Fund.

Vulnerability Indicators
Renters
Persons of color
Low-income households
Households headed by a person w/o a college degree
Families with children in poverty
Senior citizens living in poverty
People with bad credit

How do we counter displacement risk?

1. Put community voices at the center. Ensure vulnerable residents have a meaningful role to play in identifying needs, prioritizing use of resources, implementing strategies and monitoring progress.
2. Intervene early to acquire permanent control of land. Acquire as much land as possible for permanent use as affordable housing through mechanisms such as community land trusts, long-term affordability restrictions, and nonprofit and public ownership of land.
3. Dedicate substantial levels of city funding to anti-displacement efforts. Secure long-term, dedicated funding streams rather than relying on a city's general fund.
4. Anticipate and include strategies for addressing displacement in public revitalization initiatives and major infrastructure projects. In some neighborhoods, the shift from the need for revitalization to the need for anti-displacement can occur quickly.
5. Match anti-displacement strategies to neighborhood conditions and needs. Strategies to combat displacement should be grounded in community planning efforts with measurable goals and timelines for implementation.
6. Commit to the long haul with a diverse set of tools. Develop realistic expectations of what constitutes success and the time to achieve displacement mitigation goals.
7. Create local capacity for preserving affordable housing and identifying the biggest prevention risks.

How to use this tool

Each definition on the following pages includes a space at the beginning to note how relevant each tool is by each evaluator for the East Side. Put a 0 for not relevant, a 1 for somewhat relevant, a 2 for very relevant, and a 3 for a priority for the East Side. Every definition includes one or more links to endnotes with direct web links to more information about each concept.

Definitions and Assessment in Context of East Side

- ___ **Anti-racism Evaluation** – As a process, it means that Black, Brown, and other people of color are actively leading the creation and implementation of policies, programs, and practices that have an impact in their lives. It also means that white people are acknowledging and confronting racism and unconscious bias within themselves in addition to the sometimes-flawed existing regulations that shape the places we all live, work, learn, and gather.^x As an outcome, it means that a person’s racial identity does not determine their life opportunities and results, such as access to a safe home and amenity-rich neighborhoods.
- ___ **Asset-Based Community Economic Development** – Building on the skills of local residents, the power of local associations, and the supportive functions of local institutions, asset-based community development draws upon existing community strengths to build stronger, more sustainable communities for the future.^{xi}
- ___ **Brownfields Redevelopment** – A study completed for EPA in 2020 looked at the environmental benefits that accrue when brownfield sites are used for redevelopment. The study found that when housing and job growth is accommodated by redeveloping existing brownfields sites, the expansion of paved impervious surfaces and average vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita/per job are reduced as compared to accommodating the same amount of growth on previously undeveloped sites.^{xii}
- ___ **Code Enforcement** – Code enforcement is the prevention, detection, investigation, and enforcement of violations of statutes or ordinances regulating health, safety, and welfare; public works; business activities and consumer protection; building standards; land use; or municipal affairs.^{xiii}
- ___ **Complete Neighborhoods** – Neighborhoods that support the health and well-being of people of all ages, socioeconomic statuses, cultures, and abilities.
- ___ **Commercial Linkage Program** – Linkage fees can be assessed on all new non-residential development, including retail centers, industrial or manufacturing facilities, and other commercial projects. These facilities stimulate the creation of jobs but ordinarily do not include an affordable housing component for workers in low-wage jobs. The need to meet the demand for affordable housing created by new growth provides the legal justification for charging linkage fees, which are used to preserve or create affordable housing near the jobs that are created. The fee amount is typically based on the square footage of the building, with proceeds deposited in a housing trust fund for disbursement in accordance with local needs and priorities.^{xiv}
- ___ **Community Benefits Agreement** – A CBA is a legally enforceable contract between a coalition of community-based organizations and the developer of a proposed project. In exchange for the coalition’s public support of the project in the approval process, the developer agrees to contribute benefits to the local community if the project moves forward. In this way, the coalition has a hand in shaping the project while the developer builds community support and strengthens local partnerships. The result is a smoother approval process for the developer and a better project for the community.^{xv}

- **Community Business Incubator** – The role of the economic development incubator is to be a place where a baby business can be nurtured and looked after until it is ready to survive on its own. The incubator typically employs a trained manager who has business knowledge and experience that can be shared with the new business owners. In addition, this person needs to be a superb networker and accumulate an outstanding roster of professional experts who may be willing and able to help new businesses.^{xvi}

- **Community Development Financial Institution** – CDFIs can be banks, credit unions, loan funds, microloan funds, or venture capital providers. CDFIs are helping families finance their first homes, supporting community residents starting businesses, and investing in local health centers, schools, or community centers. CDFIs strive to foster economic opportunity and revitalize neighborhoods.^{xvii}

- **Community Impact Report** – A community impact report is a tool created by communities to assess how a development that has already happened is impacting the community.^{xviii}

- **Community Land Trust** – A community land trust (CLT) is a nonprofit corporation that holds land on behalf of a place-based community while serving as the long-term steward for affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces, and other community assets on behalf of a community.^{xix}

- **Community Land Trust Network** – A network or association of land trusts that supports new land trusts in formation, packages services to reduce costs across land trusts, supports land trusts in securing financing and building power collectively to increase community stabilization and reduce displacing speculation in real estate markets.^{xx}

- **Community Leadership Development Institute** – A community leadership development institute builds a curriculum relevant for a community seeking higher self-determination. The CLDI identifies and links existing leaders who know how to use diverse tools of community economic development and connects them with emerging leaders who want to learn how to wield these tools for community benefit.^{xxi}

- **Community Real Estate Investment Trust** – A real estate investment trust (REIT) combines the capital of many investors to acquire or provide financing for real estate. A REIT also permits real estate investors to obtain the benefits of a diversified portfolio. A CD REIT acquires debt and equity in projects that satisfy the definition of community development in the CRA regulation. Investments in CD REITs are carried as investments on the investing institution’s balance sheet in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).^{xxii, xxiii}

- **Community Resilience Strategies** – This includes policies that redesign communities and infrastructure to build in ways that reduce flood, extreme weather, and pollution risks, all of which can displace residents. Some community resilience strategies include expanding parks, green spaces, and tree canopy to reduce flooding and extreme heat risks; promoting community-owned solar power; expanding clean, rapid, public transit; designing bike- and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods to curb pollution; building infrastructure able to withstand extreme heat; implementing home energy efficiency improvements; and making energy efficiency investments through public-private partnerships.^{xxiv}

- **Community Solutions Incubator** – At the Community Solutions Incubator, emerging and young nonprofit entrepreneurs are able to pilot their ideas and create supporting structures alongside other social innovators in a well-resourced co-working space, receiving hands-on mentorship and guidance from some of the area’s most successful community leaders in a variety of fields and disciplines. The Community Solutions Incubator fosters a generative and innovative environment in which the next generation of community leaders and organizations will emerge, not only strengthening our local community but potentially producing replicable programs across the nation.^{xxv}

- **Commercial Stabilization** – Effective techniques employed by community-based organizations to preserve cultural organizations and longstanding commercial enterprises that define the historic character of communities.^{xxvi}
- **Comprehensive Community Development** – A holistic approach that uses deep and abiding citizen engagement to address a spectrum of interconnected needs. Residents and leaders envision a better future, create a definitive plan to accomplish that vision, and recruit local agencies, organizations, and institutions into a collaborative partnership that integrates programs and services to improve the quality of life within the community.^{xxvii}
- **Democratizing Data** – Data democratization is the ongoing process of enabling everybody in an organization, irrespective of their technical know-how, to work with data comfortably, to feel confident talking about it, and, as a result, make data-informed decisions and build customer experiences powered by data.^{xxviii}
- **Developer Exactions** – Development impact fees are required contributions by the private sector to cover the cost of additional public infrastructure and services. Typically, governments levy these fees as a one-time, up-front charge, and receipt of payment is a precondition for public approval to develop land. Developer exactions could assume any of the following forms:
- Dedication of land for public use, for example, a requirement that a project reserve a certain percentage of land in a new development for public space
 - Construction of public improvements, for example, a requirement that a developer construct a public road to connect the proposed development with the existing public road network
 - Funding, perhaps in the form of a negotiated amount and tied to a broader policy goal such as a contribution toward the cost of a new public day care or recreation center
 - Utility connection fees
- **Document Recording Fee** – The term recording fee refers to an expense charged by a government agency for registering or recording the purchase or sale of a piece of real estate. The transaction is recorded so it becomes a matter of public record. Recording fees are generally charged by the county where the transaction takes place since it maintains records of all property purchases and sales. The amount of the recording fee varies from county to county.^{xxix}
- **Economic Vulnerability Analysis** – Economic vulnerability is a key component of the displacement risk analysis. It identifies populations most at risk of displacement due to rising housing costs. Dr. Bates identified specific socioeconomic variables that represent a reduced ability to weather housing / rent increases and economic shock. The classification of economically vulnerable populations is based on four variables: renter households, people of color, those without a four-year college degree, and low-income households.^{xxx}
- **Environmental Impact Assessment^{xxx}** – Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool used to assess the significant effects of a project or development proposal on the environment. EIAs make sure that project decision-makers think about the likely effects on the environment at the earliest possible time and aim to avoid, reduce, or offset those effects. This ensures that proposals are understood properly before decisions are made.^{xxxii}
- **Equitable Development** – The long-term goal of equitable community work is not just to bring everyone up to the same level within a broken system, but to change the system itself. We target solutions on those who have been most harmed by these systems in order to change the systems themselves, so they work better for all.

- ___ **Eviction Protection Laws** – Just cause eviction policies can apply to all rental housing in a jurisdiction or to a subset of units, like those that are subject to rent regulation. Just cause eviction laws typically enumerate a list of conditions that are permitted to form the basis for an eviction. Evictions are, then, not permitted for any reason not listed. In some jurisdictions, even when a lease ends, tenants can only be evicted based on the enumerated criteria. In this situation, tenants are in effect provided with the right to renew their lease or to remain in their unit on a month-to-month tenancy, as long as one of the bases for eviction is not present. When these policies apply, a landlord must notify a tenant of the basis for the eviction and other procedural requirements often apply. Some jurisdictions impose penalties on landlords that fail to comply with just cause eviction procedures.^{xxxiii}
- ___ **Health Impact Assessment** – A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a practical approach used to judge the potential health effects of a policy, program, or project on a population, particularly on vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. Recommendations are produced for decision-makers and stakeholders, with the aim of maximizing the proposal's positive health effects and minimizing its negative health effects. The approach can be applied in diverse economic sectors and uses quantitative, qualitative, and participatory techniques. HIA provides a way to engage with members of the public affected by a particular proposal. It also helps decision-makers make choices about alternatives and improvements to prevent disease or injury and to actively promote health. It is based on the four interlinked values of democracy (promoting stakeholder participation), equity (considering the impact on the whole population), sustainable development, and the ethical use of evidence.^{xxxiv}
- ___ **Homeownership Programs** – Housing development strategies can be designed as tools of development without displacement. Easing housing stability for long-time homeowners by reducing taxes and fees, creating opportunities for renters to become homeowners, developing co-housing, land trusts, or cooperative housing strategies are among some of the many strategies.^{xxxv, xxxvi}
- ___ **Housing Levy** – The housing levy plays a particularly important role in providing for the low end of the income spectrum. A recent example of a levy-supported project is the 108-unit Mercy Othello Plaza, offering rents as low as \$450 per month, affordable to a household earning just \$18,000 per year.^{xxxvii}
- ___ **Housing Trust Fund** – The Housing Trust Fund (HTF) provides grants to states to produce and preserve affordable housing for extremely low- and very-low-income households. States and state-designated entities are eligible grantees for the HTF. HUD allocates HTF funds by formula annually. A state must use at least 80% of each annual grant for rental housing, up to 10% for homeownership, and up to 10% for the grantee's reasonable administrative and planning costs. HTF funds may be used for the production or preservation of affordable housing through the acquisition, new construction, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of non-luxury housing with suitable amenities. All HTF-assisted units will be required to have a minimum affordability period of 30 years.^{xxxviii}
- ___ **Inclusionary Zoning** – IZ policies dedicated to increasing affordable housing units by requiring or encouraging developers to include a specified share of below-market units as part of market-rate rental or homeowner developments.^{xxxix}
- ___ **Inclusive Development** – Inclusive development refers to policies that foster community growth by providing equal access and opportunity. Promising inclusive development policies include investing in high-quality training programs, local hire mandates, and project labor agreements.^{xl}
- ___ **Individual Development Accounts** – An individual development account (IDA) is a unique savings account designed to help lower-income customers reach financial independence. IDAs provide savers with regular interest payments plus matched contributions for each dollar they deposit. They also teach participants how to set savings goals while giving them a basic financial education that will help them build future wealth.^{xli}

- ___ **Infill Development** – Billed as an alternative to urban sprawl, infill development encourages the development of underused or vacant land in existing urban areas to increase density and place new development near existing resources and infrastructure.^{xlii} Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-utilized parcels within existing urban areas that are already largely developed. Most communities have significant vacant land within their city limits, which, for various reasons, has been passed over in the normal course of urbanization. Communities across the country are increasingly recognizing that the spread-out patterns of growth, which have shaped American communities for the past several decades, cannot be sustained. This combined with the reduced land supply has created new interest in infill development opportunities in central and suburban cities alike.^{xliii}
- ___ **Land Bank** – Land banks are public authorities or nonprofit organizations created to acquire, hold, manage, and sometimes redevelop property in order to return these properties to productive use to meet community goals, such as increasing affordable housing or stabilizing property values.^{xliv}
- ___ **Mixed-Income Neighborhood Trusts (MINTs)** – In 2019, Trust Neighborhoods built the Mixed-Income Neighborhood Trust (MINT) model. These MINTs are designed to protect residents in gentrifying neighborhoods from displacement and create community control over development. Each MINT acquires, renovates, and operates a scattered portfolio of rental units. It caps rent on the majority of its units while allowing a minority to float at future market rates. This creates a perpetual cross-subsidy for the rent-controlled units. The underlying idea is that, over time, market-rate rents will pay to keep pre-existing affordable housing affordable in perpetuity – all overseen by community governance.^{xlv, xlvi}
- ___ **Neighborhood Planning Process** – Unless and until neighborhoods build the skills to define how they want their community to be, and how to make that happen, they will be at the whim of external forces.^{xlvii}
- ___ **Create a Stronger, Equitable Strategy** – Community members have information city staff may not know, and listening to community perspectives, concerns, and recommendations can unearth issues and reveal strategies that better meet a city’s housing needs. Additionally, inclusive community engagement practices are key to ensuring you have an equitable planning process and outcomes.^{xlviii}
- ___ **Preservation of Unsubsidized Affordable Housing** – Displacement typically follows when owners sell NOAH properties to management companies, developers, or others who seek to refurbish the property and raise rents. State and local preservation strategies that center renters and current owners can effectively combat this cycle and preserve affordability. Grant and low-interest loan programs for energy efficiency and functional upgrades can preserve current ownership and keep the housing safe, healthy, and affordable for the renter.^{xlix}
- ___ **Preserve Cultural Landmarks**^{l, li, lii} – The East Side has an abundance of cultural assets. Some of these are currently being invested in. There are many others being ignored. Mapping all the cultural assets to protect is an important part of a comprehensive strategy that honors culture.^{liii, liv}
- ___ **Property Tax Relief** – In changing neighborhoods with rapidly rising property values, long-time homeowners, including those who own their home outright, may face displacement or tax foreclosure due to rising property tax bills. In the case of rental units, rising taxes can also lead landlords to raise rents, again potentially displacing older adults and other households with limited means. A tool used in a number of jurisdictions for mitigating these effects on those with limited incomes is the property tax “circuit breaker,” which caps the amount of property tax that homeowners have to pay as a share of their income, much like the electric circuit breaker, which provides protection against overloading an electrical system.^{lv}

- **Racial Equity Impact Assessment** – A racial equity impact assessment looks, comprehensively, at the possible positive and negative impacts of a proposed development. Using this method, a community can organize to incorporate community benefits agreements in a development they are willing to accept on certain terms. Using this tool, a community can also organize to block a project from happening.^{lvi, lvii}
- **Real Estate Transfer Taxes** – A real estate transfer tax, sometimes called a deed transfer tax, is a one-time tax or fee imposed by a state or local jurisdiction upon the transfer of real property. Usually, this is an “ad valorem” tax, meaning the cost is based on the price of the property transferred to the new owner.^{lviii, lix}
- **Rent Control** – States and local governments should enact rent control and rent stabilization policies that cap the amount by which landlords and management companies can increase the price of a residence each year. This protects residents from exorbitant rent increases that they are unable to afford. However, when considering rent control and stabilization policies, it is important to understand short-term and long-term effects. In the short term, it can protect tenants from displacement in a quickly gentrifying area by capping the rise in rent costs.^{lx, lxi}
- **Rental Assistance Demonstration Program** – The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program is a joint effort by public, nonprofit, and private organizations to rehabilitate and operate preserved sites. Updates include repairing leaky roofs, fixing or replacing broken appliances, removing toxic mold, and alleviating other hazardous and inefficient issues. During the rehabilitation process, any residents who are displaced as a result of the conversion retain a right to return as well as other protections afforded under the public housing authority.^{lxii}
- **Renter Protections** – State and local governments should bolster renter protections to shield tenants from discriminatory or harmful practices by landlords and management companies, support a tenant’s ability to negotiate with landlords, and restore equity and justice to the housing market. Just-cause eviction protections can limit the grounds on which a landlord can evict a tenant, typically to nonpayment of rent, intentional damaging of the unit, and other noncompliance with lease terms. These policies also create the legal procedures that a landlord must follow to evict a tenant. Meanwhile, tenant advocacy programs provide free information to tenants about their rights and responsibilities, referrals to legal service providers, and resources to organizations that provide housing support. These programs are critical to ensure tenants understand their rights and resources when dealing with a landlord, including discrimination protections, safety and code enforcement, denial of essential services, and illegal eviction prevention, each of which can lead to displacement.^{lxiii}
- **Replacement Ordinance – ONE FOR ONE REPLACEMENT** means a replacement structure of the same number of bedrooms (for commercial properties, the same estimated domestic sewage flows and type of operation) and the same square footage of habitable space as of the adoption date of this Ordinance or indicated on the most recently issued construction permit.^{lxiv}
- **Resident Ownership** – For neighborhood revitalization to be sustaining, residents must own the development process and the assets of all projects. It is through this broad experience of ownership that residents build the skills, networks, and leverage necessary to create and sustain broad community change.^{lxv}
- **Retaining Expiring Use Permits^{lxvi}** – Affordable housing development strategies, using low-income housing tax credits and other financing mechanisms, allows for developers to opt out of keeping units affordable after x number of years – often 20. Retaining expiring use permits keeps units affordable.^{lxvii}

- ___ **Right of Return Policy** – (Portland, OR, example). The city’s “Right to Return” policy is ground-breaking, allowing tenants, mainly minorities, to move back to communities that forced them out due to gentrification; the result is more and more cities, in the midst of a brutal housing crisis, reorganizing the way housing is allocated. The construction of homes is centered around affordability, in contrast with the recent trend of the for-profit housing market during the past several years; this has huge implications for how cities plan residential construction and affordable housing.^{lxviii, lxix}

- ___ **Targeted Economic Development** – For sub-regions of cities, like the East Side of Buffalo, targeted economic development strategies can organize people and mobilize resources to transform specific conditions and generate expanding ecologies of opportunity.^{lxx}

- ___ **Tax Increment Financing** – Tax increment financing (TIF) is a financial tool used by local governments to fund economic development. Though the basic concept of TIF is straightforward – to allow local governments to finance development projects with the revenue generated by the development – its implementation can differ in each state and city where it is used... By 2010, 49 states and the District of Columbia had authorized TIF (CDFA 2015). Today, it is characterized as the “most widely used local government program for financing economic development in the United States.^{lxxi} Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a tool cities use to capture and spend some of the tax revenue generated by new development and increases in the value of existing development before that revenue is put into the general fund.^{lxxii}

- ___ **Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Programs** – Diverse strategies that honor tenants as important contributors to community and provide a means for stabilization and also moving toward homeownership.^{lxxiii}

- ___ **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act** – TOPA bills promote the transfer of property ownership into the hands of tenants and affordable housing developers by enabling tenants to exercise a first right of purchase. The process is outlined in various TOPA bills: landlords are required to give notice to tenants, and then allow a specified amount of time for tenants to express interest, make an offer, and secure funding.^{lxxiv}

- ___ **Upzoning Policies** – Minnesota became the first U.S. city to upzone entirely in 2018, with its law preventing any neighborhoods from implementing exclusively zoning for single-family homes.^{lxxv}

- ___ **Vacant/Underutilized Land** – Buffalo has over 7,000 vacant parcels of land, more than 60% of them are on the East Side, and most are owned by the city.^{lxxvi, lxxvii, lxxviii, lxxix}

- ___ **Zoning Code** – Local governments are also increasingly recognizing that restrictive zoning and outdated land use regulations can suppress housing supply, drive up housing costs, and widen racial and economic disparities. Leveraging smart zoning reforms and easing building restrictions can unleash housing supply to help meet the needs of current and future residents.^{lxxx}

- i. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/localized-anti-displacement-policies/>
- ii. <https://evictionlab.org/eviction-tracking/>
- iii. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/localized-anti-displacement-policies/>
- iv. https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/Commission/Documents/2021-03_Item-5_HPS-Update_Staff-Report.pdf
- v. <https://www.portland.gov/bps/adap/documents/anti-displacement-action-plan-foundation-report/download>
- vi. <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/>
- vii. https://www.urbandisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/udp_replication_project_methodology_10.16.2020-converted.pdf
- viii. https://www.urbandisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/udp_replication_project_methodology_10.16.2020-converted.pdf
- ix. <https://sites.utexas.edu/gentrificationproject/texas-anti-displacement-toolkit/>
- x. Dr. Heather Way, 2019, pp. 9 – 10, same site as above link
- xi. <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>
- xii. <https://localhousingsolutions.org/housing-policy-library/brownfields/>
- xiii. <https://www.caceo.us/page/10>

- xiv. <https://localhousingsolutions.org/housing-policy-library/linkage-fees-affordable-housing-impact-fees/>
- xv. <https://allincities.org/toolkit/community-benefits-agreements>
- xvi. <https://www.useful-community-development.org/economic-development-incubator.html>
- xvii. https://www.cdfifund.gov/sites/cdfi/files/documents/cdfi_infographic_v08a.pdf
- xviii. https://issuu.com/clintmcmanus/docs/community_benefits_at_the_bnmc_repo
- xix. <https://cltweb.org/what-is-a-community-land-trust/>
- xx. <https://www.cacltnetwork.org/>
- xxi. <https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/bridges-aldi>
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“Imagining something may be the first step in making it happen, but it takes the real time and real efforts of real people to learn things, make things, turn thoughts into deeds or visions into inventions.”

– Fred Rogers