

**Minutes of the Meeting  
of the  
Downtown Committee  
of  
Buffalo Urban Development Corporation**

**95 Perry Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Buffalo, New York 14203  
February 18, 2026  
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Thomas Baines (Chair)  
Daniel Castle  
Jenna Kavanaugh  
Nolan Skipper  
Karen Utz

Committee Members Absent:

Darby Fishkin  
Kimberley A. Minkel

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President  
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President  
Mollie Profic, Treasurer  
Atiqa Abidi, Assistant Treasurer

Guests Present: James Bernard, BUDC Project Manager; Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Dan Knight, Gilbane Building Company; Brian Krygier, Director of IT, ECIDA; Angelo Rhodes II, Northland Project Manager; and W. Morgan Smith, Interim Executive Director, Buffalo Place.

**Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order by Mr. Baines at 12:02 p.m. Ms. Florczak served as Secretary of the meeting and called the roll of the Committee. A quorum was determined to be present.

- 1.0 Approval of Minutes of the December 10, 2025 Meeting** – The minutes of the December 10, 2025 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Mr. Castle made a motion to approve the December 10, 2025 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kavanaugh and unanimously carried (5-0-0).
  
- 2.0 Ralph Wilson Park – General Update** – Mr. Knight provided an update regarding the Ralph Wilson Park construction project. With respect to Phases 1A and 1B, National Grid is completing cable pulling work from switchgears to transformers which will allow remaining portions of Phase 1 construction to be energized. Substantial completion has been achieved with respect to the pedestrian bridge and shoreline work. Phase 2A consisting of the playground equipment has been awarded. A safety audit regarding the equipment will be held in March. Phase 2B, consisting of the freighter work and drainage around the play garden, will begin in March. The GMP for Phase 2C will be presented to Common Council and is anticipated to be completed in 2027. In response to a question from Mr. Castle regarding the status of funding for Phase 2C construction, Mr. Bernard reported that, due to higher than anticipated construction bids for the work, BUDC has submitted an amendment request to the Wilson Foundation for approximately \$15.5 million in additional funding for Phase 2 construction. The Wilson Foundation recently approved this amendment request and BUDC is awaiting the formal letter amendment from the Wilson Foundation. Ms. Gandour added that it is anticipated that the amendment will be presented to

the BUDC Board of Directors at its February meeting. Additional funding from the City of Buffalo and Conservancy will also be included in the Phase 2C GMP package.

**3.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – General Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented the following updates regarding Buffalo’s Race for Place.

- a. Downtown Temporary Intersection Project Update: BUDC held a kickoff meeting with its consultant, MIG and representatives from the Office of Strategic Planning and Department of Public Works to discuss goals, timeline and final site selection. Three sites were selected as areas of focus for the temporary intersection redesign: Main Street and Commercial Street near the Explore & More Children’s Museum; Michigan Avenue between Broadway and Arsenal in the Michigan Street Heritage Corridor; and Roosevelt Plaza, where public realm activation is anticipated. The design charette will kick off March 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. Following this, permitting is anticipated to take place in the late winter and early spring, with installation targeted for completion by June 30<sup>th</sup> for all three sites.
- b. Queen City Pop-Up – Black History Month Black Business Expo: Planning is underway for the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Black History Month Black Business Expo, which will take place on February 26, 2026 at Oakk Haus and will feature vendors, food, and a broadcast from WUFO. BUDC has partnered with the City of Buffalo, The Exchange at Beverly Gray, That Brown Bag, and Buffalo Place for this year’s expo.
- c. Downtown and Waterfront Coordination Updates: Additional coordination meetings are anticipated to take place in March and April due to the intersection redesign project in the waterfront area.
- d. Downtown Project & Cost Management Update: Douglas Development has signed off on progress with Cars Sharing Main Street. This will allow BUDC and the City of Buffalo to execute the Memorandum of Understanding in connection with access and utilization of the Accelerator Fund for various projects in the City of Buffalo, and allow BUDC and Buffalo Construction Consultants to move forward with their agreement for project and cost management services for these projects. Ms. Merriweather thanked Mr. Skipper, Mr. Baines and Mayor Ryan’s administration for their help in advancing this project. The first project to be advanced will be the Erie Street Greenway, which Empire State Development has provided \$10 million dollars in capital grant funding to transform five underutilized park spaces in the project area.

**4.0 Queen City Hub Revisited – Project Update** – Ms. Merriweather and Mr. Smith presented an update regarding Queen City Hub Revisited. Work on this initiative continues. A toolkit is being developed and will be available to developers, which will assist in the selection of project sites. The advocacy strategy for Queen City Hub Revisited will be reviewed in coordination with the City of Buffalo.

**5.0 Partner Updates** – Mr. Smith reported that work on the Cars Sharing Main Street project is moving forward. The pedestrian bridge located between the former AM&A’s building and Main Place Mall is being removed. Work will begin on the west side of Main Street and Mohawk Street and continue down to Exchange or Church Street, before work on the east side of Main Street. The skating rink is currently closed and will re-open when permitted by colder weather. Summer planning is underway for Thursdays & Main and the Downtown Country Market, as well as activation for the World Cup.

**6.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Ms. Utz, seconded by Ms. Kavanaugh and unanimously carried, the February 18, 2026 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Alexis M. Florczak', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Alexis M. Florczak  
Secretary of the Meeting