

**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  
April 15, 2026  
12:00 p.m.**

Committee Members Present:

Daniel Castle  
Darby Fishkin  
Grant Loomis  
Kimberley A. Minkel  
Karen Utz

Committee Members Absent:

Thomas Baines (Chair)  
Jenna Kavanaugh  
Louis Petrucci  
Nolan Skipper

Officers Present:

Brandye Merriweather, President  
Rebecca Gandour, Executive Vice President  
Kevin J. Zanner, Secretary

Guests Present: James Bernard, BUDC Project Manager; Alex Biller, City of Buffalo Department of Public Works; Jamie Burney, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; Peter Dechert, Buffalo Construction Consultants; Alexis M. Florczak, Hurwitz Fine P.C.; Dan Knight, Gilbane Building Company; Brian Krygier, Director of IT, ECIDA; Angelo Rhodes II, Northland Project Manager; Jeff Sellers, Buffalo Construction Consultants; W. Morgan Smith, Interim Executive Director, Buffalo Place; and Roger Treichler Jr., Gilbane Building Company.

**Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 12:04 p.m. by Ms. Minkel, who served as Chair of the meeting. Mr. Zanner informed the Chair that a quorum of the Committee was present.

**1.0 Approval of Minutes of the March 18, 2026 Meeting** – The minutes of the March 18, 2026 meeting of the Downtown Committee were presented. Ms. Fishkin made a motion to approve the March 18, 2026 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Castle and unanimously carried (5-0-0).

**2.0 Buffalo’s Race for Place – Downtown Buffalo & Waterfront Infrastructure Improvements Amendment #1 to BUDC-BCC Agreement** – Ms. Merriweather presented her April 15, 2026 memorandum regarding the first amendment to the BUDC-Buffalo Construction Consultants (BCC) Agreement for project and cost management services. Mr. Dechert noted that BCC will prepare a report at the end of the project prioritization scope, which will set forth next steps to be taken for each project. In response to a question from Mr. Castle, Mr. Dechert and Ms. Merriweather discussed the scope of materials to be reviewed. Ms. Merriweather also clarified that ECIDA approval is not required in order to release funding from the Accelerator Fund to pay for this work. At the conclusion of the discussion, Ms. Utz made a motion to recommend that the BUDC Board of Directors: (i) approve the first amendment to the BUDC-BCC Agreement in an amount up to \$234,020 for the completion of the Project Prioritization Proposal in furtherance of the City Infrastructure Improvement Plans; and (ii) authorize the President or Executive Vice President to execute the first amendment to the BUDC-BCC Agreement and take such

other actions as may be necessary or appropriate to implement this authorization. The motion was seconded by Mr. Loomis and unanimously carried.

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

- a. Downtown Project & Cost Management Update: Ms. Merriweather reported that BUDC and BCC have signed the agreement for project and cost management services. Kickoff work will be advanced this month. The first project to be advanced will be the Erie Street Greenway, for which Empire State Development has provided \$10 million dollars in capital grant funding. Possible delivery models for this project are under review by BUDC, BCC, and the City of Buffalo.
- b. Downtown Temporary Intersection Project Update: Work continues to advance with project partners. Final designs for the three selected intersections are being refined and are progressing through the permitting process. Project installation dates for the three sites were reviewed and are set to take place in June 2026. Highland Planning has created a QR code to solicit volunteers to sign up for the installation work
- c. Waterfront Coordination Meetings: The next meeting will take place April 23, 2026 and will focus on transportation and construction around Marine Drive and Commercial Street.
- d. Queen City Pop-Up – Women's History Month Expo: The Women's History Month Expo, a partnership with the City of Buffalo and The Exchange at Beverly Gray, was held last month and was well attended.

**4.0 Queen City Hub Revisited – Project Update** – Ms. Merriweather presented an update regarding Queen City Hub Revisited. Work on this initiative continues. An advocacy strategy is being developed for the project, including a robust plan for infrastructure and needs assessment. Advocacy work is also taking place with state entities to determine how additional funding can be accelerated for public realm and office conversion projects. A dashboard is also being developed to identify vacant buildings and outline development tools and resources.

**5.0 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 poles were removed, and electric at the Park was moved underground. This will allow for sub-grading and the completion of Phase 1 construction. With respect to Phase 2A, the play equipment is being prepared to ship in the next month or so. With respect to Phase 2B, storm drainage work at the play garden continues, with footers and foundation work planned. Landscaping contractors have been remobilized, and seeding is taking place through June 15<sup>th</sup>. The notice to proceed for Phase 2C was issued on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**6.0 Partner Updates** – Mr. Smith reported that Peter Burakowski has been hired as the new Executive Director for Buffalo Place and will start April 27<sup>th</sup>. Summer planning is underway for Thursdays & Main and the Downtown Country Market. Construction for Cars Sharing Main Street continues to advance. Mr. Burney then provided an update regarding Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. BNMC's consultant team has prepared a summary of the physical plan update that will be circulated upon completion. A student open house is taking place on the Medical Campus this weekend. Start-up week events are taking place at UB this weekend. BNMC is applying for seasonal permits with the City to re-paint curb extensions and renovate the pocket park at 589 Ellicott Street.

**7.0 Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the Downtown Committee, upon motion made by Ms. Fishkin, seconded by Mr. Castle and unanimously carried (5-0-0), the April 15, 2026 meeting of the Downtown Committee was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



---

Kevin J. Zanner