



SUPPORT QUOTES

Brandye Merriweather, Vice President – Downtown Development, Buffalo Urban Development Corporation

This is a big deal for talent attraction and infrastructure development in the City of Buffalo, and I know that the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation is thrilled to play a role in the initiative. *Buffalo's Race for Place* is an outside-of-the-box strategy that really demonstrates the aggressive response that regions must undertake if they want to stay relevant in the global race for talent, while at the same time ensuring that equity and inclusivity are present. And the prioritization of *placemaking* is clearly an innovative and critical component of this approach.

Douglas Jemal, Founder & President, Douglas Development Corporation

In my brief and exciting tenure working within the City of Buffalo on development projects, our team has consistently found like-minded partners who share our enthusiasm for this region's long-term future. While it may seem unorthodox for a developer to pass-up potential tax savings on a project of this magnitude, we wholeheartedly believe that supporting the creation of *place* is critical to the viability of not only the Seneca One Douglas Development project effort, but also the sustainability of the City of Buffalo and its workforce as a whole.

Michele Trolli, Chief Technology and Operations Officer, M&T Bank

Within the wider reality of global innovation and transformation, the ability to attract next-gen talent is likely Buffalo Niagara's biggest economic development challenge. We must work together to grow, attract, develop, retain and engage world class talent within our tech, innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem. The *Race for Place* is about making downtown Buffalo a destination for talent—a vibrant, integrated, diverse *place* where people live, work and play, from the Medical Campus to Canalside. The Seneca One Douglas Development project will be an important addition to Buffalo's ecosystem—a *place* where teams from different companies and organizations come together to ideate and innovate, to exchange and explore, to grow our companies and grow our community.

Rebecca Gandour, Director of Development, City of Buffalo Office of Strategic Planning

Buffalo's Race for Place initiative is a strong follow-up to the Buffalo Building Reuse Project (BBRP) and subsequent housing study efforts, and it is also extremely timely given the region's launch of other complementary talent attraction economic development programs like Be in Buffalo. The BBRP started, in part, due to vacancy at Seneca One Tower. Now through several notable strategic partnerships with forward-thinking operators like Douglas Development and M&T Bank, the tower is being redeveloped into a Technology Hub in the heart of downtown Buffalo. In addition, the Accelerator Fund will help facilitate the type of coordinated infrastructure and public realm improvements that the BBRP identified as critical to our region's future.

Colleen Heidinger, President, 43North

In attracting more than 50 potential high growth companies to the region over the last several years, we've heard first-hand about the importance of infrastructure development activities that create critical mass and vibrancy within an urban setting. Current and future talent wants to live and work in very active settings, both inside and out. As we compete with other innovation hubs across North America to draw startups and entrepreneurs, Western New York's ability to fast-track improvements and build enhanced environments will be a critical component in our ability to stay competitive.

Jenna Kavanaugh, Chief Operations Officer, Invest Buffalo Niagara

For over 20 years, Invest Buffalo Niagara has focused on improving the economic standing of Western New York through business attraction, regional marketing, and a focus on talent recruitment. As a complement to our recently launched Be in Buffalo campaign, we feel that this new initiative by the City of Buffalo is yet another important strategy in equipping Buffalo Niagara with the tools and collaboration needed to compete for global talent.

Tony Spada, President and CEO, AAA Western and Central New York, Be in Buffalo Campaign Founding Investor, and Invest Buffalo Niagara Talent Attraction Subcommittee Co-Chair

There is no denying that talent is a critical differentiator in the modern global economy, as this creative class—whether homegrown or attracted—is driving innovation and growth across North America, and right here in Western New York. This new initiative by Mayor Brown, with its unique infrastructure investment, smart city, and public-private partnership components, demonstrates the type of region-wide collaboration necessary to transform Buffalo Niagara into a leading destination for talent.

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