

CASE STUDY Niagara Street

Creating a green gateway along the Niagara River

Niagara Street is one of the city's major commercial corridors, a highly utilized public transit route, a growing target for private investment, a rising employment hub, and a gateway to downtown. The street runs parallel to the Niagara River, but is disconnected from the water in terms of access and views. The Niagara Street corridor is home to diverse communities, all of which contribute to the heritage and culture of the city. The street is also known as "Avenida San Juan," serving as the city's Hispanic Heritage Corridor between Porter Avenue and Georgia Street. As a signature corridor of Buffalo, Niagara Street is being transformed from a high-speed thoroughfare for automobiles into a scenic, waterfront boulevard that is safe and welcoming for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Community Partnerships

The Niagara Street project involved many partners, including Buffalo Sewer, the City of Buffalo Department of Public Works, Parks & Streets, and design and community engagement consultants. Extensive community engagement was a key focus of the project, grounding the street redesign in community values and educating stakeholders on potential green infrastructure elements. The process engaged more than 600 residents, business owners, and stakeholders, representing diverse voices and perspectives from along the corridor. Highlights included a door-to-door community survey made available in English, Spanish, Somali, Nepali, Burmese, and Karen; several interactive, hands-on, public workshops; and targeted stakeholder meetings with business owners, community groups, and block clubs from nearby neighborhoods.



Keeping the stormwater challenge in check with green infrastructure on Niagara Street

2.1 acres of impervious surfaces removed

46 bump outs

255 rain gardens planted

574 trees planted

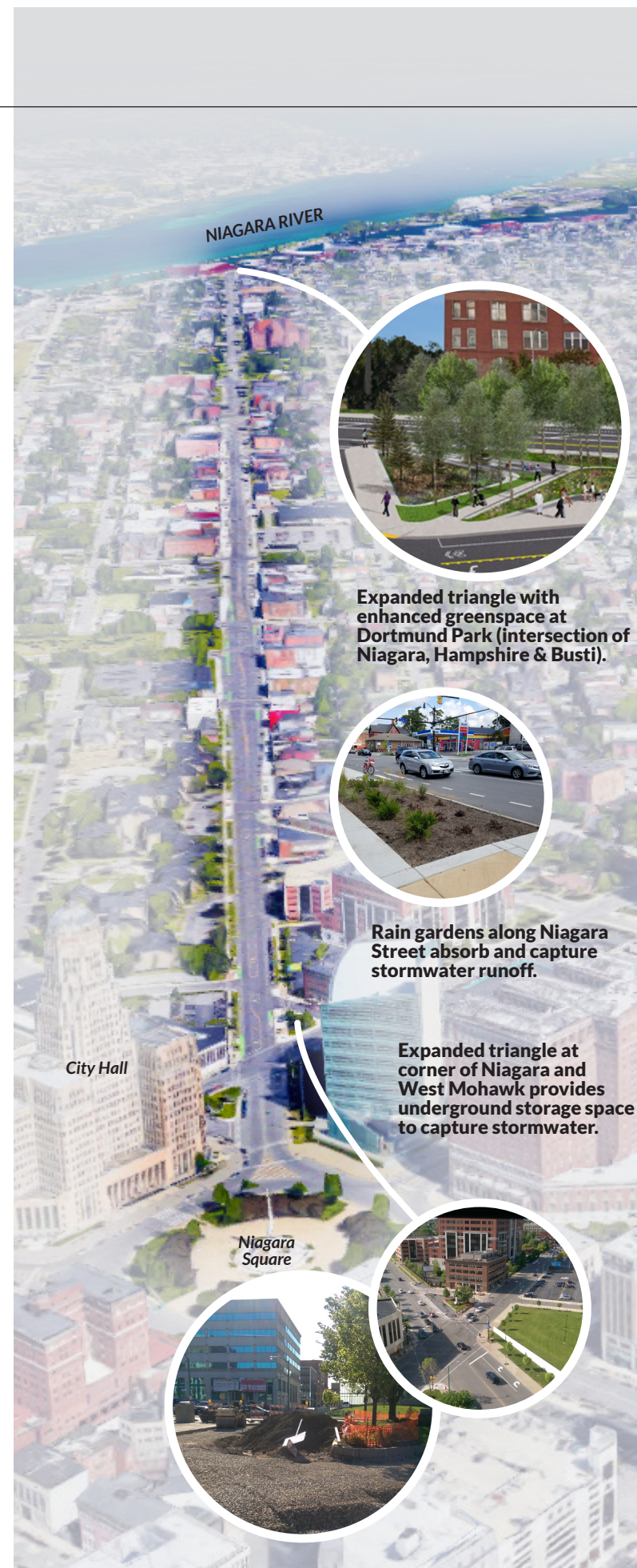


These investments on Niagara Street manage stormwater for 30.9 acres of the city.



612,934

gallons of runoff prevented from entering the sewer system in a typical rainfall event.



Green Infrastructure on Niagara Street

The Niagara Street reconstruction project is a multi-phased redesign of the street from Niagara Square in downtown up to Ontario Street in Riverside/Black Rock. The project stands out as the longest green street in the city. Through a combination of green infrastructure elements including bump outs, rain gardens, and impervious surface reduction, the project reduces the stormwater volumes flowing to Buffalo's combined sewer system where the overflow discharges directly to the Niagara River. The initial phases of the project focused on the lower portion of the street, from Niagara Square to Porter Avenue.



Reducing impervious pavement and installing trees and green spaces allows for water to be captured before it enters the street and sewer system. Curb bump outs and bike lanes make the street safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

