



University at Buffalo

Graduate Planning Student Association

2009 Outstanding PSO Awards

Community Outreach

School and Program

This application is being submitted
on behalf of the Graduate Planning Student
Association at SUNY--University
At Buffalo (UB-GPSA).

The organization is led by twelve
dedicated members and represents
all Master of Urban and Regional
Planning students at University at Buffalo.



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Award Category—Community Outreach



Our goal for our new program, Buffalo Urban Planners (BuffaloUP), is to provide community outreach to neighborhoods in need as well as those that strive to make a difference in communities. We focus our efforts on creating a program that could not only enhance neighborhoods but also encourage youth to become active participants in their neighborhoods and communities. Nonetheless, community outreach is an integral part of UB GPSA, because as planners we know without participation from a variety of stakeholders there is no true sense of community.

Buffalo has been named one of the poorest cities in America but we think that by encouraging community involvement we can inspire the next generations to make changes to their both on the micro and macro scales and this spirit can lead to revitalization as well as an increased quality of life. This project demonstrates our commitment to community outreach and our goal of partnership.

Program Partners



-  University at Buffalo
- Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) 
-  Diversity and Neighborhood Redevelopment/Construction Management
- Neighborhood Stabilization Initiatives
- People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH Buffalo) 
- Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP)
- Hamlin Park Taxpayers Association 

Program Description---BuffaloUP



Community development often fails to involve local schools and the network of families they represent.

BUFFALO UP (Buffalo Urban Planners)-- UB Graduate Planning Student Association, in collaboration with LPCiminelli and Community Stakeholders, teaches BPS students the fundamentals of community planning using the neighborhood surrounding schools as a living laboratory. By teaching urban planning issues and tapping into neighborhood resources, this program incorporates skill building, civic engagement, community advocacy, and service learning for middle school students. The students are introduced to planning and design in the context of their own neighborhood and are engaged to discuss the implications of design and the role of their community.

BuffaloUP Program Objectives



- Provide opportunity to engage BPS students in a community planning project
- Encourage BPS students and parents to get involved in neighbor revitalization
- Present youth-inspired strategies to community stakeholders
- Increase BPS student awareness of careers in planning

The goal of the BuffaloUP program is to encourage students to get involved in neighborhood revitalization strategies, motivate collaboration between community leaders and their residents, and invite small scale action that can lay the groundwork for neighborhood improvement

2009 Program Timeline



July 2009 Program
Inception/ School
Board Approval

September 2009
Advertise to School
Children/Train BUP
Mentors

October 2009
BUP Program Begins
at Two Pilot Schools

December 2009
Final Plan
Presentations to
Stakeholders

Session Outline



- Session 1—Orientation/Planning Overview
- Session 2—Neighborhood Design
- Session 3—Walking Tour of Neighborhood
- Session 4—Charette/Plan Development Session
- Session 5—Plan Finalization
- Session 6—Plan Presentation to Community and Political Officials

Neighborhood Design

They learn about common features and services within a neighborhood and discuss what they like and don't like, as well as what their neighborhood assets are as well as the areas that may be lacking and create their own ideal neighborhoods



Walking Tour of Neighborhood

To illustrate to the students the history and development of a neighborhood through the lens of urban planning



store, houses, and school. mixed-use neighborhood



brick street



Boys and Girls Club



St. Francis deSales, built 1926

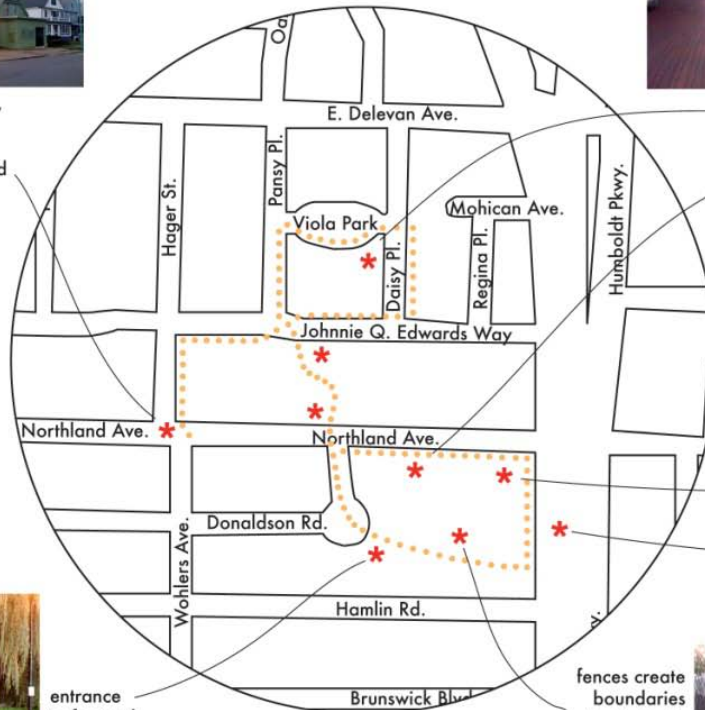
pedestrian overpass, being reconstructed



entrance to footpath paths like this enhance 'walkability' of neighborhood



fences create boundaries that indicate separation of public and private spaces



HAMLIN PARK SCHOOL WALKING TOUR.
BUFFALO UP. L.P. CIMINELLI

Plan Development

- Students choose their top three concerns
- Brainstorm solutions
- Identify strategies, policies, and agencies that assist
- Develop a vision for the school neighborhood
- Create a method to present plan



Final Presentation/Results



The program culminates in a community presentation of a service or project they would like to see implemented in their neighborhood. This presentation will be in front of numerous community stakeholders and local political leaders as well as the general public and families of the students involved.

Presentations by the Students include:

- Art Wall in nearby park to discourage graffiti on the surrounding area
- Community Garden as a learning laboratory for students and site to get fresh food for those who aren't near a grocery store
- Re-organizing the playground to make it usable by more diverse age groups
- Blue Light Camera Installation to discourage dangerous behavior
- Neighborhood Clean-Ups to show pride and community involvement

