

INSIGHTS  
FROM  
PROVIDERS

CITY OF  
**Niagara  
Falls**

OCTOBER 2019



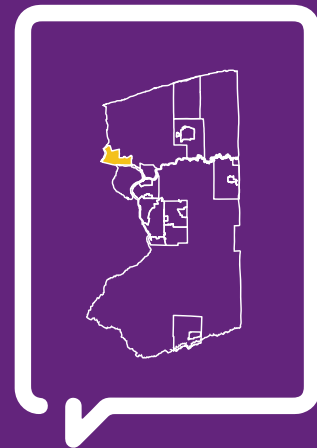
[W]e suffer from a lack of cohesion and silos.”



We are not compassionate. We aren't empathetic, and that drives mental health.



It's hard to believe people don't know [what services exist], but people truly don't know.



**Numbers  
in Need**

IN BUFFALO NIAGARA



A Mobile Safety Net Team initiative established by The John R. Oishei Foundation

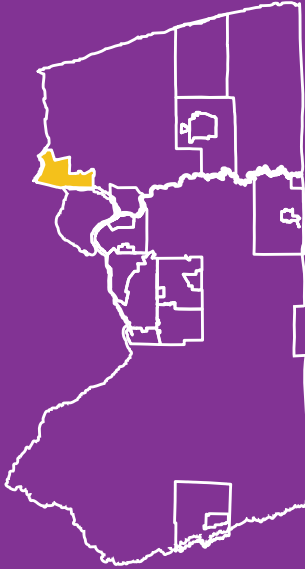


Prepared by



University at Buffalo  
Regional Institute  
School of Architecture and Planning

# City of Niagara Falls



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## About this Report

This report offers a snapshot of findings for the City of Niagara Falls, with new data on the community's population that lives in or near poverty. It includes the perspectives of human services providers, the landscape of providers, and strategies that could strengthen the safety-net for individuals and families.

Research in this report was led by the University at Buffalo Regional Institute in partnership with the Mobile Safety-Net Team. It was commissioned by The John R. Oishei Foundation. This work updates and expands upon a community report completed by the research team in 2014.

A Mobile Safety Net Team initiative established by The John R. Oishei Foundation



Prepared by  University at Buffalo Regional Institute School of Architecture and Planning

## Defining Need

Over 23,700 residents in the City of Niagara Falls live in or near poverty with incomes below 200% of the federal poverty line.

The federal poverty line (FPL) is \$12,490 for a household of one, \$16,910 for a two-person household, \$21,330 for a family of three and \$25,750, for a family of four. A single parent of two who works full time, year round at the minimum wage in NYS (\$11.10 per hour or \$23,088 a year) earns an income just above the FPL in 2019.

The FPL is adjusted annually by the federal government and varies by household size. It is often used to determine eligibility for programs that assist individuals and families with basic living expenses such as food, utilities, and rental housing. Households with incomes that exceed two hundred percent of the FPL (up to \$51,500 for a family of four) generally do not meet income guidelines for most programs.

## Federal Poverty Guidelines, 2019

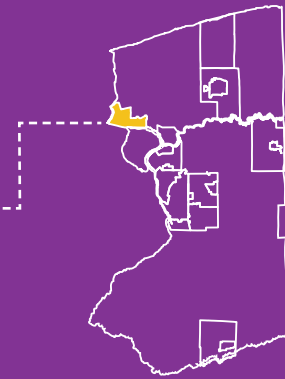
■ Federal Poverty Level ■ 200% of Federal Poverty Level



Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

## Reports for this Community

This report is part of a comprehensive suite of reports for the **City of Niagara Falls**, one of 12 representative communities in the Buffalo Niagara Region selected for assessment and investment as part of the Numbers in Need project.



Each of these reports for this community is available online at [NumbersinNeed.org](http://NumbersinNeed.org)



### Insights from Providers

This report, *Insights from Providers*, explores the perspectives of service providers in the community with respect to gaps in the landscape of services, barriers to reaching residents, promising developments, and strategies for strengthening the landscape of programs and services. A focus group with agency leaders informed the findings presented in this document. Agency and community leaders can use this report to shape programs and services that respond to identified gaps and barriers, while leveraging system strengths and promising developments.



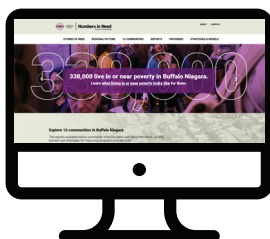
### Community Snapshot

*Community Snapshot* presents an overview of findings from the research in this community, with new data and information on the people living in or near poverty, their barriers to programs and services, the landscape of service providers, and strategies for strengthening the community so that all residents can thrive economically. This report draws from more detailed findings available on the Numbers in Need website, as well as from Insights from Residents and Insights from Providers. Agency and community leaders can use this report to understand key findings and identify topics for further exploring.



### Insights from Residents

*Insights from Residents* presents a more detailed look at the community's vulnerable populations, their needs, urgent concerns, and barriers to programs and services. A survey of residents and conversations with residents inform findings in this report. Agency and community leaders can use this document as they develop programs and services that respond to the needs of residents and remove barriers to jobs, programs and services faced by residents.



### Visit us online at [NumbersinNeed.org](http://NumbersinNeed.org)

*NumbersInNeed.org* is an online tool that leaders can use to understand economically vulnerable populations in the Buffalo Niagara Region, their urgent needs and concerns, barriers to services and factors that matter such as access to good paying jobs, educational attainment, and transportation options. The website features individual stories, community and regional indicators, interactive lists and maps of service providers, strategies for strengthening communities and models to consider.

# What Went Into This Report

## Building an Updated Landscape of Providers



The 2013 Baseline Community Report was the starting point.

### Baseline Community Reports

The community report completed for the City of Niagara Falls in December 2013 offered a starting point for analyzing the landscape of services.



## Information was updated through an Agency Questionnaire.

### Agency Questionnaire

Dozens of not-for-profit and governmental human service providers completed an agency questionnaire offering information on their programs and services.



This questionnaire asked providers to update information about their organization and the services/programs they offer.

### Find it here:

**Pg 5 of this report**  
*(The Landscape of Providers)*

**Numbers in Need Website**  
*(Provider Tool)*

## Gaining Insights from Providers



### We shared what we heard from residents and what the data said about the community.

Talking with agencies that provide programs and services to residents in the community highlighted challenges and barriers that preliminary data findings did not show. In some cases, providers turned our attention to new topics and areas of concern. In other cases, they offered additional insights on data and trends coming out of our outreach to residents and an analysis of detailed community data on poverty, housing costs, vehicle access, educational attainment, work, income and family factors that contribute to economic vulnerability.

### Participating Organizations

- Community Missions
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Homeless Alliance of WNY
- Isaiah 61 Project
- Mount St. Mary's Neighborhood Health Center
- Neighborhood Legal Services
- Niagara Community Action Program
- Niagara County Employment & Training/ Niagara's WorkSourceOne
- Niagara Falls Boys and Girls Club
- Niagara Falls Central School District
- Niagara Falls Housing Authority
- Niagara University
- Orleans-Niagara BOCES
- Pinnacle Community Services
- The Chapel

## Perspectives and Insights from Providers

The findings presented in this report synthesize **what we heard from providers**. Insights were captured from several providers who were interviewed, who shared additional perspectives and information on their programs, and successes in connecting with residents and challenges.

### Community Data



### Resident Surveys



### Resident Focus Groups



Preliminary findings from these activities were shared at provider focus group meetings and through provider interviews.

### Provider Focus Groups



*16 representatives of nonprofit human services participated in a focus group. The conversation gathered insights on additional areas of concern, barriers, successes and strategies for the future.*

### Provider Interviews



*Conversations with selected agency representatives offered new and additional information on human service challenges, barriers and promising developments in the community.*



### Strengths of the Landscape



### Additional Gaps/Needs Identified by Providers



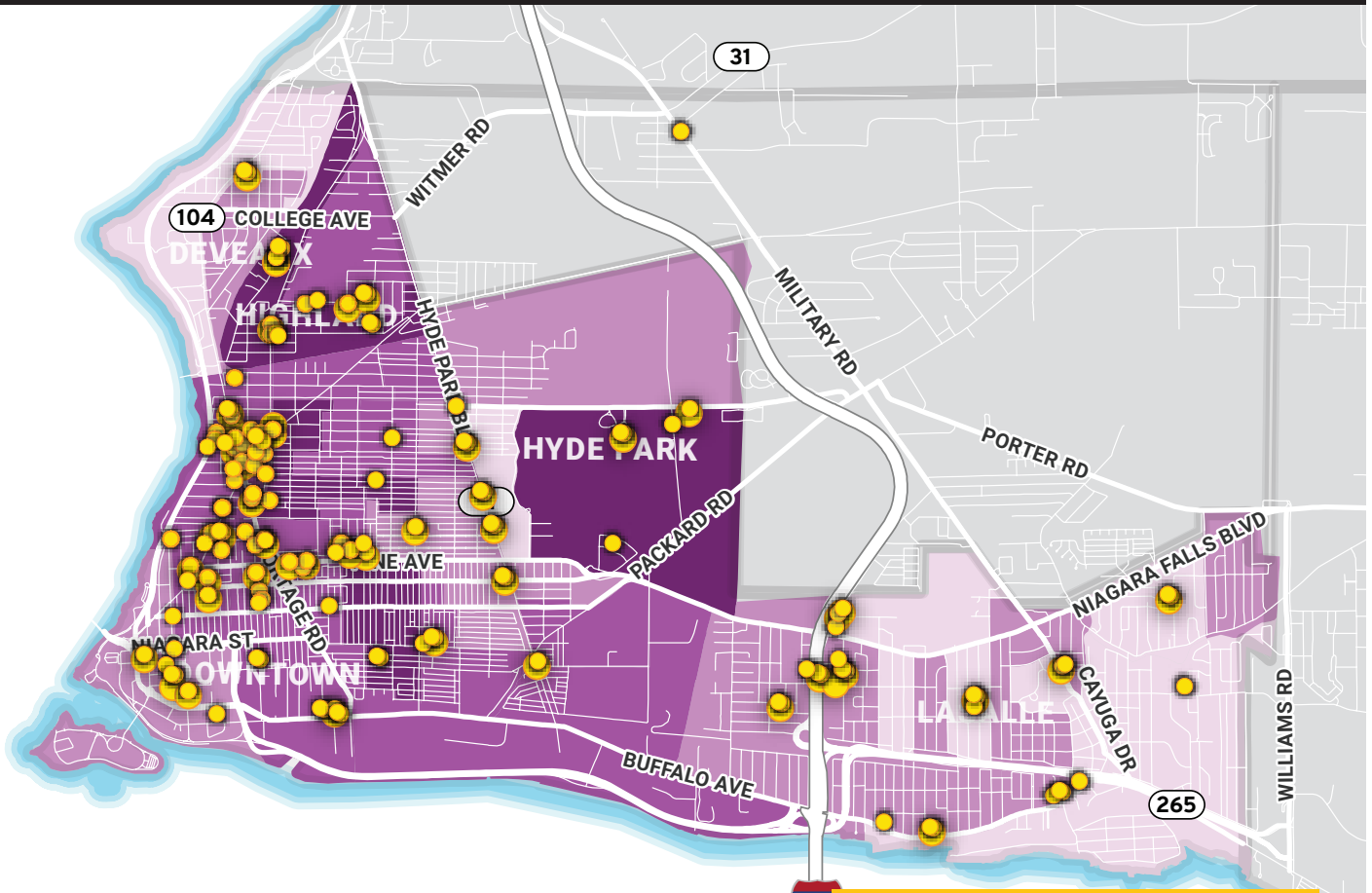
### Barriers Residents Face to Programs, Services and Jobs



### Promising Developments



### Models to Consider



Population In or Near Poverty, 2017

- 0%-25%
- 26%-50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-100%

● Providers

Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2013-2017.

**Types of services provided, by %**

- 54%** Information/Referral
- 49%** Education/Training
- 42%** Youth Programs
- 41%** Health/Wellness
- 35%** Mental Health/Addiction
- 33%** Food
- 25%** Financial Literacy
- 22%** Clothing
- 22%** Crime/Safety
- 15%** Housing/Utility
- 13%** Senior Programs
- 9%** Homeless Services
- 9%** Transportation
- 8%** Teen Parent Programs
- 6%** Veteran Services
- 4%** Legal

**The Landscape of Providers**

**114**

**SERVICE PROVIDERS**  
in the City of Niagara Falls



See more online

Visit [NumbersInNeed.org](http://NumbersInNeed.org) to view additional maps and the listing of service providers.





## Strengths of the Landscape

### Over 110 service providers are located in the community.

Exactly 114 community service providers are located in the City of Niagara Falls. This number reflects over 10% of all service providers in the study region's 12 communities. The large majority are small not-for-profit organizations with 30 employees at most. Even the smallest providers commonly offer services across multiple categories. The largest providers in this community are Niagara Falls City School District, Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center and Niagara County Department of Social Services.

### About half of all providers offer information, education, training, youth programs and health/wellness programs.

Dozens of providers in Niagara Falls offer residents education and training, information and referrals, after school programs and other activities for youth, and preventive health care and treatment. Providers participating in a focus group identified several of these service categories (all but health/wellness) as strengths of the landscape or areas where programs and services are most robust. Resident focus group participants identified education/training and health/wellness as programmatic strengths. More residents than not reported that information/referral was a need rather than a strength, pointing to opportunities, perhaps, for greater connection between providers and residents.

### The typical service provider has thousands of individuals who live in or near poverty within one mile of their location.

Most providers in this community are located in high-poverty neighborhoods. The typical provider has over 8,200 individuals within a one-mile radius of their location who live in or near poverty. These individuals and families commonly have numerous needs for programs and services from healthy food to job training and child care. Many experience barriers in accessing the help they need. Some lack a vehicle or awareness of services available in the community. Providers located along Pine Street, Michigan Avenue, Whitney Avenue, Tronolone Place and between 11th and 24th Streets are in the some of the deepest pockets of poverty in the city. Many of these providers have close to 11,000 or more individuals living in or near poverty within a 20 minute walk.

### Most providers are located within a 1/4 mile of a bus stop.

There are nearly 4,300 households in Niagara Falls without a car, and public transit is one way these residents get around, second only to walking, according to this study's survey of residents. Nearly 90% of providers in this community are located within 1/4 mile of a bus stop. While both providers and residents described transportation as a barrier to service, with buses running infrequently or not at all, the infrastructure exists to strengthen public transit in the neighborhoods where providers are located.

**There are at least four providers in every service category. Some categories such as Education/Training have up to 56 providers. "**

Source: UBRI analysis of provider locations and services, 2019

**There are 8,000+ individuals living in or near poverty within a one-mile radius of the majority of service providers in Niagara Falls.**

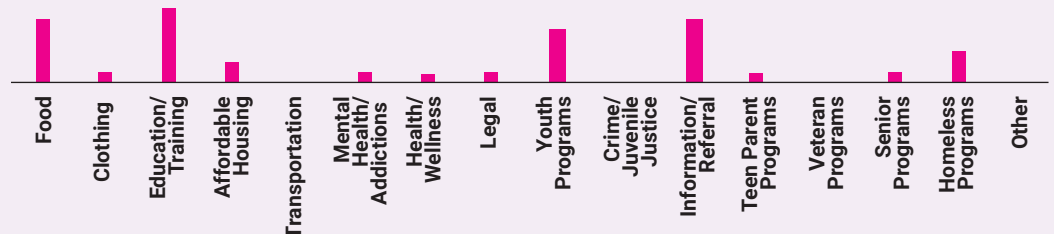
Source: UBRI analysis of provider locations in Niagara Falls relative to the people living in or near poverty, 2019

**Nearly 90% of service providers are located within 1/4 mile of a public transit stop.**

Source: Numbers in Need, analysis of provider locations and NFTA transit stops, 2019

### Top strengths identified by provider focus group

Providers were asked to identify the community's strongest programs and services. Education/Training, Food, Youth Programs and Information/Referral were most commonly marked.





## Additional Gaps/Needs Identified by Providers

### Compassionate service delivery is largely missing.

Providers were asked to identify gaps in the landscape of services and trends related to poverty they see among the individuals and families they work with. Providers responded by discussing the important role of compassion in human services delivery and described a lack of compassion as a “huge” gap. Compassion is missing not just in Niagara Falls but it is prevalent across the region and beyond. One provider described how data-driven service delivery contributes. The human element gets lost, with an overarching emphasis on data and numbers. Providers say that compassion has to be intentionally woven into service delivery. Individuals living in poverty have tangible needs for food, training, housing and more, but they also need the self-esteem and self-worth that service providers can help nurture in leveraging these resources for lasting life changes.

### Wait lists for early intervention services are so long that some children age out and become ineligible.

Providers mentioned Help Me Grow as a great initiative in the Niagara Falls community. Providers also said, though, that service capacity can't keep up with demand from all the children who get screened and referred for services. The wait list for services is 18 months long. The wait is so long that providers see children age out of the program and become ineligible for services under the program which is focused on 0-3 year olds. These children enter school already at a disadvantage, having never received services that promote healthy development and school readiness.

### Substance abuse is common and creates barriers to jobs and contributes to a variety of human services needs.

Providers talked about how substance abuse is a pressing concern in Niagara Falls and one that relates to other challenges residents face such as lack of employment, limited education and disability. One focus group member noted a study from 2010 identifying substance abuse as a top urgent concern in Niagara Falls that affects about one in five households. Other providers described how many employers in the city, especially public employers and those in the hospitality industry, regularly conduct drug tests of applicants and current employees. To get these jobs and maintain them, individuals must be free of drugs, including marijuana, which is legal across the border in Canada. **Providers say drug use ranks alongside transportation and childcare as the biggest barriers to employment for residents they work with.**

**“Niagara County is resource rich... there is a lot of stuff to solve problems in Niagara County... but if you can't get there, it's useless. Transportation weaves into everything.”**

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

**“A lot of these skilled jobs we are training for...if you are getting high, you are not getting the job.”**

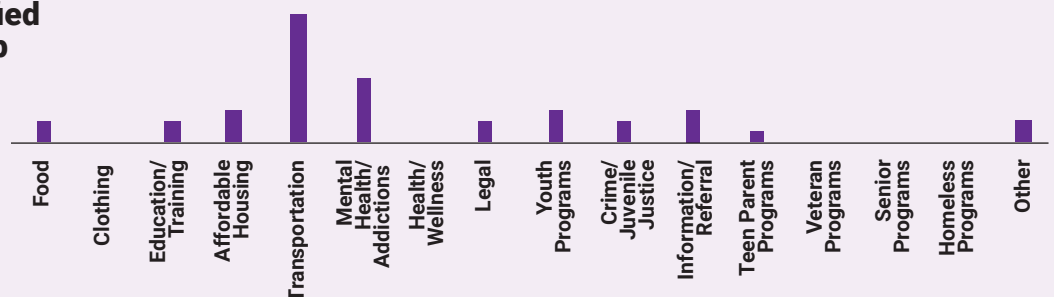
Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

**Hospitalizations related to substance abuse are 2-3 times the regional average for residents age 18+ living in Niagara Falls ZIP Codes 14301 and 14303.**

Source: Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment.

### Top gaps/needs identified by provider focus group

Providers were asked to identify where the community needs more and/or expanded programs and services. Transportation and Mental Health/Addictions were most commonly identified.





## Additional Gaps/Needs Identified by Providers, cont'd.

### **Affordable, flexible day care is limited and creates barriers to employment for parents of young children.**

The City of Niagara Falls is designated by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services as a "high child care need area," or a place where poverty is high and there is low availability of licensed or registered child care facilities. Focus group participants described how daycare in Niagara Falls is often inadequate from the perspective of its affordability and hours of operation. It's a barrier to employment, especially for employees who work afternoons, evenings, nights, or weekends. It's hard to find coverage outside of traditional work hours, even in a city like Niagara Falls where many top employers are in the tourism and hospitality industry. Providers said few if any large employers in the city offer day care at their work site. One provider described how they run a transitional housing program and how challenging daycare is to these residents many of whom work afternoons and nights.

### **There is not enough affordable, high quality rental housing. Absentee property owners contribute to this gap.**

Providers say when rental housing is available in Niagara Falls and it is affordable, it is often low quality. They say absentee owners are common in the city. These are investors who purchase houses at auction for rock bottom prices. These buyers do just enough work to make the place rentable. When the house gets run down, these owners abandon the house, having made little investment beyond the initial purchase.

### **Niagara Falls' affordable cost of living is attractive to individuals living in or near poverty and may contribute to the increasing demand for services.**

The number of individuals living in poverty increased 23% between 2011 and 2017, while the overall population in Niagara Falls declined. This represents an additional 2,486 individuals living in poverty, the largest increase across all 12 communities. Focus group participants described seeing more "transplants" among those they serve, or individuals moving into the City of Niagara Falls from other places across the region and state. They suggested that Niagara Falls is a more affordable place to live in the region, which could be attracting lower-income populations.

### **Providers lack cohesion that would enable them to combine forces and better serve residents.**

Although Niagara Falls has a community-wide human services coalition, many providers see additional opportunities to work together to advance shared priorities, jointly publicize programs and services, leverage each other's strengths and serve more residents with existing resources. **Providers say silos still exist, as individual missions are advanced and agencies fight over the same dollars.** Providers see more partnerships at the leadership level, among the directors sitting around the focus group table. But this isn't trickling down to support staff who are less inclined to connect with other agencies unless specifically told to do so. Providers see this as a missed opportunity to think and operate outside a box and serve more people in a more cost effective way.

### **Only 19 child care programs across Niagara County offer services during non-traditional hours.**

Source: NYS Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Child Care Demographics, 2017.

**Across Niagara County, there are 3,100+ children under age 6 living in poverty, but only 57 children per month, on average, receive subsidized child care.**

Source: NYS Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Child Care Demographics, 2017.

**"Sometimes we look for more resources and the resources are right here in the room."**

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019.





## Barriers Residents Face to Programs, Services and Jobs

### **Economic development and human services delivery are not closely enough aligned.**

As one provider put it, “ultimately people need jobs.” Providers can partner, bring people in, provide quality services, but they will work harder and harder unless there is an economic development opportunity for the individuals they serve. Providers see a need for a closer connection between what they do and regional economic development. Performance indicators show gains across Western New York in terms of jobs, firms, wages, and other economic development metrics since 2011. Yet as economic opportunity grows region wide, poverty is on the rise in Niagara Falls. Greater alignment between economic development and human services could lift more individuals and families out of poverty by spurring job creation in high-poverty areas, train individuals for jobs in growing industries, and increase coordination between employment and services such as transportation and childcare.

### **Some residents lack awareness of what services are available and how to access them.**

Providers say it’s not uncommon for them to encounter people who do not know what services in the community exist and where to go to get them. This lack of knowledge surprises some providers because they believe many providers make a great effort to get out in the community, attending fairs and sending staff to various events. One provider mentioned seeing organizations like Boys & Girls Club and People Inc. everywhere they go. But there still remains a genuine lack of knowledge among some of the 23,000+ residents who live in or near poverty, especially if they have never needed a service before. “It’s not in their realm,” as one provider said. **Also contributing is how some residents assume they don’t qualify without knowing all the facts. They don’t make any attempt to apply for a program or service because they believe they aren’t eligible or they may have been told in the past they are not eligible.**

### **Some residents are turned away from programs and services that would help them because they fall just above income eligibility criteria.**

Being turned away from programs and services was the #1 barrier survey respondents in Niagara Falls reported facing, along with difficulty traveling. Providers say they do see people who fall just above program income cutoffs. Eligibility for daycare funding is a common example. Food stamps is another. Sometimes people qualify and receive these services but become ineligible as their earnings increase.

### **Individuals desire to work but commonly face multiple barriers to employment.**

Transportation, daycare, drug use, prior arrests, past due child support (that can result in wage garnishment and a suspended driver’s license) are common barriers that residents face to employment. Others are simply not having the proper attire for an interview. One provider described coaching a resident against wearing a sweatshirt to an interview, only to realize this resident didn’t have anything more appropriate to wear. Another provider described how he warned the residents he works with to refrain from smoking marijuana for two weeks prior to an interview. Another described how a resident who works the evening shift at the casino would need to leave home as early as 3:30 pm to arrive at work by 6 pm if they depended on public transit. That individual would need to leave even earlier to drop off a child at daycare. Providers say that interview savvy is especially important in Niagara Falls where so many hotels that are hiring are owned by the same company. “They are all friends; they all communicate.” A resident can’t misrepresent themselves in one interview and expect to get an interview at another hotel; the other hotels will all know the story.

**“They [economic developers] run this way, and we [service providers] run that way. It’s too siloed for me.”**

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

**Being turned away due to income limits tied as the #1 barrier to services that surveyed residents say they face.**

Source: Numbers in Need, Resident Survey, 2019

**“As much as we are all out into the community...there are still people out of this 23,000 [in or near poverty], who have no clue what services they are eligible for and how to access them.”**

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019



## Barriers Residents Face to Programs, Services and Jobs, cont'd.

### **Residents do not understand how to start up their own business, nor do they consider it an option.**

Providers see growing opportunity for entrepreneurial individuals to start up their own business. Expanded entrepreneurial activity could lift up individuals, families, neighborhoods and the city. However, they don't see the entrepreneurial mindset in the city enough, even with growing opportunity, particularly along Main Street. Providers described entrepreneurship as not being understood by residents as a viable option. Many residents don't believe they can do it, and they don't understand the opportunity. One provider hopes this changes with new resources and opportunities in the city for budding entrepreneurs.

### **Public transit can do more to help support job access by low-income residents.**

Providers described transportation as being a significant barrier to work for households without a vehicle. Commutes by bus can be hours long, even for travel within the city to major employers such as Seneca Niagara Resort & Casino. While alternative modes of travel exist, taxis are expensive (about \$13 one-way, from some neighborhoods to the casino). More affordable, flexible services like Uber and Lyft require a credit or debit card that many low-income residents do not have. Many do not even have a bank account. One provider described how Niagara Rural Transit offers service, but its current focus is medical appointments and shopping. This service, which is run by Niagara County Department of Social Service, does not currently help residents get to work. However, this may change over coming months based on the work of a group that is tackling the transportation issue. The group includes representatives of Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Employment and Workforce Training, and Niagara County Economic Development. This group has surveyed Niagara County employers and had conversations with the NFTA (for more, see Promising Developments).

**“The entrepreneurial mindset doesn't exist here in the city.”**

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019

**Nearly 4,300 households in Niagara Falls lack a vehicle and rely on alternative ways of getting around.**

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2017 (5-year estimates)

**“NFTA is very interested in partnering in a way to strengthen both Rural Transit service and NFTA service.”**

Source: Numbers in Need, Conversation with community providers, 2019



## Promising Developments

### Programs and Partnerships

The **BOCES Workforce Training Center** now offers vocational training in the City of Niagara Falls for residents interested in careers in health care or the trades.

**Compassionate Niagara** reflects the interests of service providers across Niagara County in taking a more compassionate approach to service delivery. This movement was inspired by the keynote speaker at the 2018 Niagara County Poverty Conference and what providers learned about the Compassionate Cities movement. Workshops held in 2019 focus on what compassionate service delivery looks like in different human services sectors.

**Heart Love & Soul** is expanding its facility to include a **Daybreak Program**. It will offer homeless and disadvantaged individuals access to showers, laundry facilities, computers, and access to a variety of service providers. This new program is the only one of its kind in the region.

**Help Me Grow** ensures that young children and their parents are connected with the programs and services needed for healthy development and school readiness. The initiative offers child screening, referrals for early intervention services, and parenting information.

The **Homeless Alliance of WNY** notes that homelessness among veterans has been eliminated.

**Niagara County Coalition for Services to the Homeless** is a community-wide coalition of human services providers that meets monthly and offers providers an opportunity to convene, share information, collaborate and discuss how to tackle common challenges. This group is an asset that can be leveraged to increase conversations, partnerships, and synergies across the landscape of service providers.

A **Niagara Falls Bicycle Master Plan** envisions and outlines a plan for a bike-friendly city offering infrastructure, networks and priority projects that support biking as a safe and affordable option for traveling to and from neighborhoods, businesses, schools, attractions and other destinations. The plan is an initiative of GObike Niagara, which convenes the city, Empire State Development, and GObike Buffalo.

Through stronger partnerships, **Niagara Falls Boys & Girls Club** has expanded its program offerings. The agency now has an Angel Fund to help partners who would not otherwise qualify for assistance afford services.

**Niagara Falls Local Food Action Plan** offers a strategic plan for strengthening the food system and meeting resident food needs. The plan covers four priority areas: 1) Agriculture (farmers markets, urban agriculture, and community gardens), 2) Healthy Neighborhoods (civic engagement and access), 3) Education (schools and consumer education) and 4) Economic Development (workforce development, infrastructure and economic development). Input from hundreds of residents informed the plan, which was developed by The Healthy Food Healthy People Work Group.

Over 200,000 square feet of vacant buildings on 38 parcels in the **Niagara Falls Main Street Business District** were purchased in June 2019 and will be redeveloped, offering opportunity for new businesses and entrepreneurs.

Niagara County Department of Social Services, which runs **Niagara Rural Transit** recently partnered with Niagara Economic Development and Niagara County Employment and Training to conduct a survey of Niagara County businesses covering employment needs, timing of work shifts, and days of operation. The goal is to improve public transit beyond the current focus on medical appointments and shopping to connect people with jobs.

**Project Connect** is a one-stop event in Niagara Falls that convenes over 40 to 50 organizations in one location. Now in its fourth year, the event raises awareness among residents of what's available in their community and connects them with helpful programs and services such as training, jobs, medical, mental health, housing, legal, veterans services, and more.

**TReC** offers incubator space for entrepreneurs and startup businesses in a space on Niagara Street. TreC is an initiative of Niagara University and will be operated by the Niagara Global Tourism Institute to spur creation of businesses that support growth and competitiveness of the tourism industry.

**WorkSourceOne** currently creates and annually updates an agency referral guide for its staff members. This could potentially be expanded to include additional agencies to bolster information delivery and awareness.

## Models to Consider



Good things are happening in this community and beyond that are transforming the way human services are delivered. The models on this page offer two examples - one from this community, another from a region outside Buffalo Niagara - of the ways community providers are tackling challenges in innovative ways that respond to the needs of the community.

The Numbers in Need website - [NumbersInNeed.org](http://NumbersInNeed.org) - contains additional models to consider and strategies for tackling the concerns and barriers experienced by providers in the City of Niagara Falls. These are intended to inspire solution building and spur conversation as community leaders and agency representatives consider how they might partner with each other and tailor existing programming to break down walls that keep individuals and families in poverty.



### Transportation

## RTA Connect On-Demand

This service supplements the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority's (RTA's) transit system with free or discounted door-to-door service in parts of the region where fixed-route service is non-existent or limited. Rides can be booked in advance through the agency's customer service, or on-demand through the Lyft app. Throughout the Miami Valley region it serves, zones are designated for use of this service. Within those zones, users can book a free trip that either starts or ends at a RTA-fixed route service transfer point. For door-to-door trips not starting or ending at a transfer point, but still within a zone, rides are \$2 (RTA's standard ride fare). These services are available during early mornings, weekends, and late night as well, providing affordable transportation options for riders needing transportation in areas, or at times, where transit service is limited or non-existent.

[i-riderta.org/rta-connect/on-demand](http://i-riderta.org/rta-connect/on-demand)

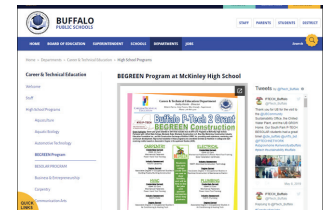


### Workforce Development

## BEGREEN P-TECH

The P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School) Program is a collaborative educational model that has been implemented in many regions across the nation with the goal of getting more young students interested in good paying, entry-level jobs in high growth fields in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). In Buffalo, McKinley High School's Buffalo Employment Green and Renewable Energy Education Network (BEGREEN) P-TECH program prepares students for jobs in green construction with a focus on carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and HVAC. Through BEGREEN, students earn a high school diploma along with a no-cost, two-year college degree in occupational studies from Alfred State by taking college-level courses. Students can also explore green careers through company tours, mentors, paid internships, and other hands-on experiences. In past years, students toured places like KeyBank Center and National Grid's control center to learn first-hand from industry professionals about their job responsibilities and corporate sustainability. The program was funded through a seven-year NYS P-Tech grant that began in 2014.

[buffaloschools.org/Page/84607](http://buffaloschools.org/Page/84607)



# Data Sources & Notes

Most information in this report comes from conversations with agency providers. Data and information from additional sources outside of these conversations are listed below, unless otherwise notes within this report.

## Defining Need, Page 2

Federal Poverty Level: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, HHS Poverty Guidelines for 2019.

Minimum Wage: New York State Department of Labor, Minimum Wage (effective 12/31/18).

## Landscape of Providers, Page 5

Information submitted by agency providers through a provider questionnaire updated a listing of providers developed for the 2013 community report for Niagara Falls. Providers provided information on program and service locations, agency location, geographic scope and more.

Tax records available through the IRS and National Center for Charitable Statistics were used to identify new not-for-profits with locations in the community since 2013.

## Strengths of the System, Page 5-6

Top Strengths and Top Gaps/Needs

Agency focus group participants ranked the strongest programs in the community as well as the programs where the greatest need existed. Each provider had three dots for placing next to the strongest programs and three dots for identifying where need was greatest across 16 categories of programs and services. Dots could be used to identify up to three strengths and weaknesses or several dots could be allocated to fewer categories. Highest ranking categories are those that generated the largest number of dots.

## Additional Needs/Gaps, Page 7-8

Hospitalizations related to substance abuse: Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment for Charitable Hospitals and 2016-2018 Community Service Plan, 2016, p. 14.

Child Care: NYS Office of Children and Family Services, New York State Child Care Demographics, 2017. See Niagara County, Page 2 for Regulated Child Care Programs that Offer Care during Non-traditional Hours, as of March 2017. These 19 child care providers represent 14% of all regulated child care programs in Niagara County. See Niagara County, Page 8 for a map of High Child Care Need Areas in Niagara County. In high need areas, at least 25% of families have incomes below 200% of the FPL and there is a ratio of at least 3 children under age 5 for every regulated child care slot. See Niagara County, page 3, for the number of children in Niagara County receiving subsidized care.

Children Under 6 Y Years in Poverty: US Census, American Community Survey, 2017 (5-year estimates).

Population Poverty Trends in Niagara Falls: US Census, American Community Survey, 2011 and 2017 (5-year estimates).

Population in Niagara Falls: US Census, American Community Survey, 2011 and 2017 (5-year estimates).

## Barriers Residents Face, Pages 9-10

Economic Development Trends: Western New York Regional Economic Development Council, A Strategy for Prosperity: 2018 Progress Report. See indicators on pages 10-17.

Resident Barriers: Insights from Residents, City of Niagara Falls, October 2019. p. 7.

Households without a vehicle: US Census, American Community Survey, 2017 (5 year estimates). Exactly 4,296 households in Niagara lack a vehicle.

## Promising Developments, Pages 9-10

DeLuca, Michele, New BOCES Workforce Training Center's Up and Tuning in NIAGARA GAZETTE, July 23, 2018.

Healthy Food Healthy People Work Group, Niagara Falls Local Food Action Plan, October 18, 2019. The plan is available for download at <https://www.healthiarniagarafalls.org/our-work/healthy-food-healthy-people>

GObike Niagara, Niagara Falls Bike Master Plan, Retrieved on September 3, 2019 at <https://gobikebuffalo.org/our-work/niagara-falls-bike-master-plan/>

Prohaska, Thomas, Blue Cardinal Capital to seek tenants for Main Street buildings in Niagara Falls, THE BUFFALO NEWS, August 5, 2019.

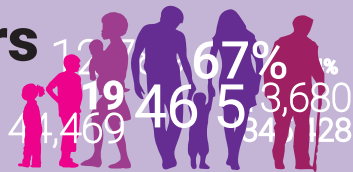
# INSIGHTS FROM PROVIDERS

## City of Niagara Falls

OCTOBER 2019

### Numbers in Need

IN BUFFALO NIAGARA



A Mobile Safety Net Team initiative established by The John R. Oishei Foundation

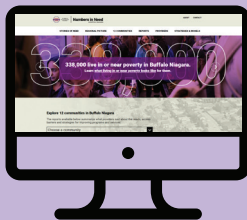


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