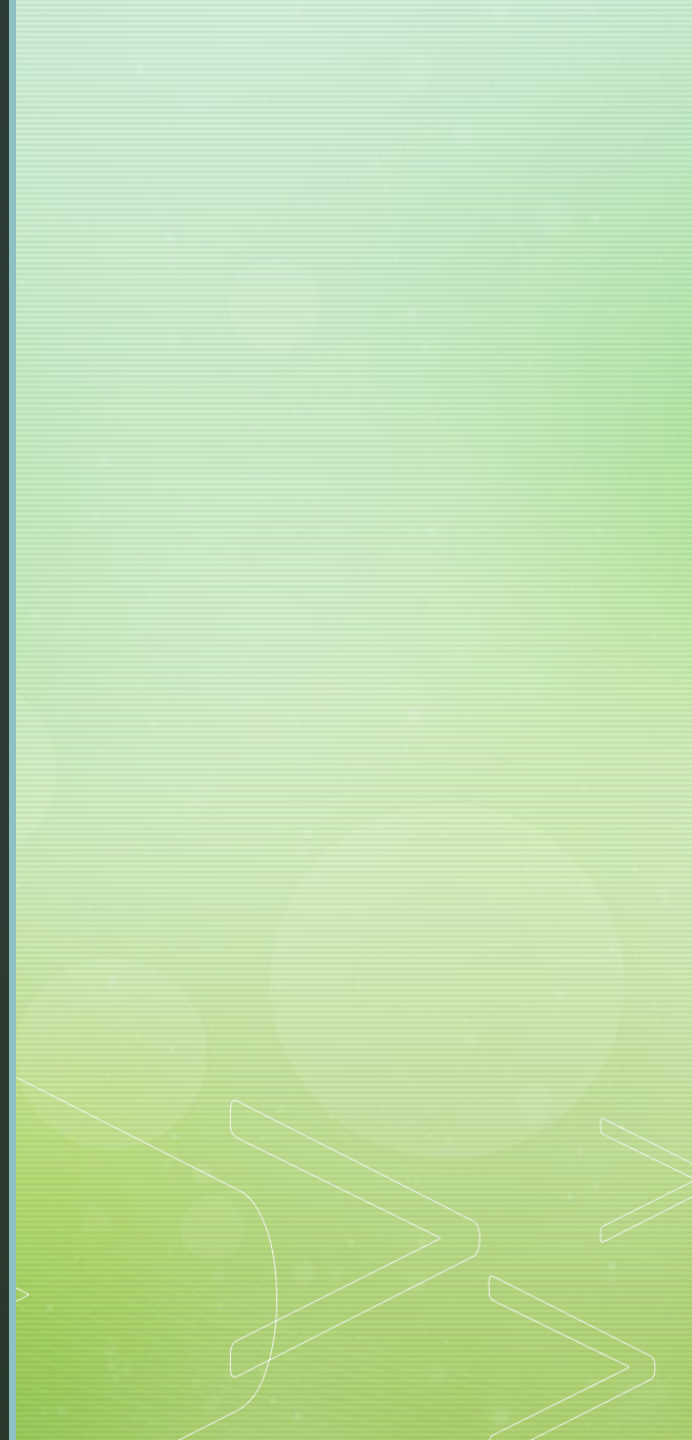


North Tonawanda



# Climate Smart Communities Task Force



# Agenda

- Background & Objectives
- Members
- 2021 Recap
- 2022 Goals
- Council Support



# Background

## Climate Smart Communities:

- NYS Program supporting local governments
  - Reduce GHG emissions
  - Adapt to the impacts of climate change
  - Thrive in a green economy
- 

# Background

## Benefits of Participating:

- Efficiency & conservation of natural resources = Cost Savings
- Clean energy = Improved air quality & Energy security
- Climate change adaptation strategies = Reduced flood risks
- Smart growth = Healthier, more walkable urban centers
- Free technical assistance & Access to grants = Funds for sustainability-related projects
- CSC Certification = Recognition for completed projects

# Participating WNY Communities

Amherst

Buffalo (bronze certification)

East Aurora

Erie County (silver certification)

Evans

Grand Island (bronze certification)

Lancaster

Lewiston

North Tonawanda

Porter

Royalton

Somerset

Springville


Williamsville



# Task Force Objectives

The North Tonawanda Climate Smart Communities Task Force empowers our city to address the impacts of climate change through education, community building, and measurable actions.

The Task Force may create subcommittees as necessary to research opportunities or collaborate with other groups.





# Task Force Members

Austin Tylec, Chair

Erin Robinson, Vice Chair

Brian Wudyka, Secretary

Jim Berry

Rob Depaolo

Frank Dibernardo

Deb Gondek

Tim Pieper

Emily Root

Michael Tuzzo

*ADVISORY: Jason Kulaszewski, Clean Energy Coordinator, University at Buffalo*



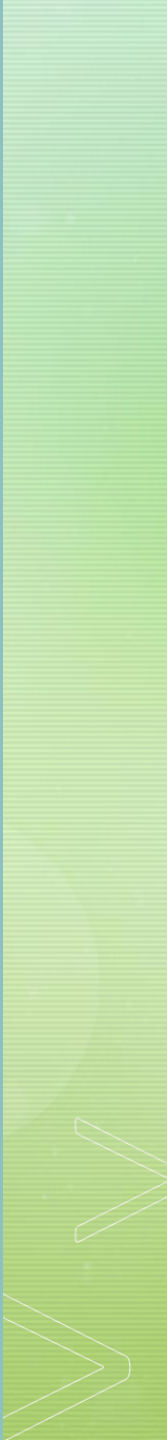




# Austin Tylec

Mayor  
City of North Tonawanda

NT Alderman at Large  
(2018-2021)

- Initiated the NT Climate Smart Task Force
  - Architectural Designer, CPL
  - Masters in Architecture, University at Buffalo
  - NT Resident for 29 years
- 






# Erin Robinson

Professor at  
Canisius College

Director of Environmental  
Studies

Chair, Department of  
Sociology, Criminal Justice,  
and Environmental Studies

- Involved in research collaborations focused on community mobilization, engagement, and empowerment in connection to environmental justice concerns of water, air, and soil pollution
  - Author of “*Community Mobilization for Environmental Problems: How a Grassroots Organization Forms and Works*”
  - Ph.D. in Sociology, University at Buffalo
  - Returned to NT in 2007
- 



# Brian Wudyka

Secretary of NT Climate  
Smart Task Force

(2021 – Present)


- Serves on Buffalo Pride Committee
- Conservations Studies Certificate,  
Niagara Orleans Boces
- Lifelong resident of North Tonawanda



# Jim Berry

Professor  
Department of Biological  
Sciences  
University at Buffalo

(1988 – present)

- Teaching Innovation Award for new course development and community outreach (2019)
  - Grant reviewer & panel member, National Science Foundation and USDA, peer reviewer for many science journals
  - RENEW: UB faculty working together to further interdisciplinary work in areas of energy, environment, water & sustainability
  - PH.D. in Genetics
  - NT resident for 25 years
- 



# Frank Dibernardo

NT Alderman

Served on NT Planning  
Commission for 3 years

Member of Oliver Street  
Merchants Association

- 25 year career at General Motors
- Worked on landfill free and green infrastructure initiatives at GM
- MBA & BS in Engineering
- Lifelong NT Resident



# Deb Gondek

Director of Sustainability  
at Rich Products Corp  
(2008 – 2017)

Director of Communication  
at Rich Products Corp  
(1999 – 2007)

- LEED Accredited Professional (O&M)  
(Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design)
- Founding member of WNY Sustainable  
Business Roundtable
- MBA, Canisius College
- NT resident for 37 years





# Emily Root

Director of Ecological  
Programs at Buffalo  
Niagara Waterkeeper

(2012 – Present)

- Plans and implements habitat / waterfront restoration projects throughout WNY
- Serves on NT Waterfront Committee & Board of NT Botanical Gardens
- Masters Degree in Environmental Management
- NT resident for 3 years





# Tim Pieper

US Department of State  
(2001-2019)

US Global Change Research  
Program / Subcommittee for  
Climate Change (1994-2000)

US Government Reviewer on  
IPCC Reports (1999-2000)

NASA Earth Science Program  
(1989-1994)

- Retired after 39 years Federal service
- Serves on NT Financial Advisor Committee
- Masters Degree in Management
- Returned to NT 2020





# Michael Tuzzo

Project Architect and  
Sustainability Director at  
Architectural Resources  
(2016 – present)

NT City Engineering Dept  
(2011-2015)

- Registered Architect (NYS)  
LEED Accredited Professional (BD+C)
- Co-Author of “*Climate Resilience Strategies for Buildings in NY State*”
- Master of Architecture and  
Master of Urban Planning,  
University at Buffalo
- NT resident for 30 years

## 2022

- Follow-up on initiatives in process
  - Energy audits
  - Alternative Fuel Infrastructure
- Prioritize new initiatives
  - Complete Streets Policy
  - Renewable Energy / Solar
  - Water Source Protection Program
- Apply for CSC certification at Bronze Level (April 2022)
- Plan for Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment
- Include Community Climate Action Plan in NT Master Plan Update

## 2021

- ✓ Task Force Established
- ✓ Membership
- ✓ Bylaws approved by NT Common Council
- ✓ Identified, researched & documented projects for CSC certification



# CSC Certification Framework

1. Build a climate-smart community
2. Inventory emissions, Set goals, Plan for climate action
3. Decrease energy use
4. Shift to renewable energy
5. Materials management
6. Implement climate-smart land use
7. Enhance community resilience to climate change
8. Support a green innovation economy
9. Inform & inspire the public
10. Engage in evolving process of climate action



## Council Support Needed

- Complete Streets Policy / Resolution (March 1)
- Collaboration on Solar Policy (March – May)
- Process / timing for updating NT Master Plan  
(include Community Climate Action Plan)



Thank You!

