



# Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park

**LOCATION:** Buffalo, NY

**SIZE:** 250 acres

**FEATURES:** Large Parcel, waterfront, rail service, proximity to Canada

**OWNER:** Buffalo Urban Development Corporation and various companies

**CURRENT USE:** Mixed-use (offices and light industrial)

**PAST USE:** "Pig iron" production facility

**CONTAMINANTS:** PCBs, VOCs, lead, petroleum, PAHs

**TOTAL ACTUAL COST:** \$9.5 million for environmental assessment and remediation

## TIMELINE

1900s Buffalo Union Steel Corporation owns the property

1915 Hanna Furnace Corporation buys the site

1982 Hanna Furnace closes

1983 Property becomes a scrap yard

1986 Property is abandoned

2001 City of Buffalo acquires property

2003 Buffalo Urban Development Corporation acquires property

## HISTORY

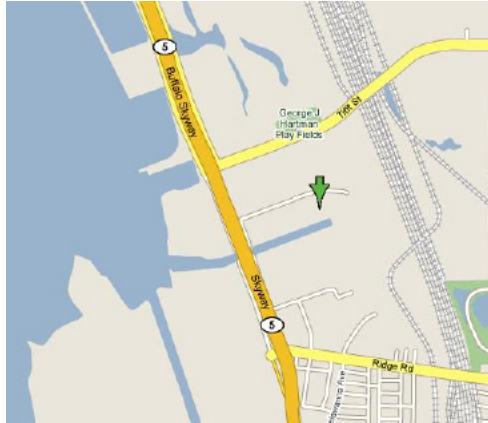
The site initially produced pig iron for the Buffalo Union Steel Corporation in the early 1900s. But Hanna Furnace Corporation eventually bought the property in 1915. For the early 20th century, the city of Buffalo was known as a steel powerhouse. But when the St. Lawrence Seaway was completed, Buffalo lost its reputation as a hub for steel manufacturing. The Hanna Steel Plant closed in 1982 and it turned into a scrap yard for the following years. The property was abandoned in 1986 and it was left vacant for the following several years. The City of Buffalo acquired the property in 2001.

## TOPOGRAPHY

The site is located in the Erie County of New York. Interstate 190 is just a mile away while NYS Route 5 is a quarter of a mile away. There is a rail service directly east of the property and Lake Erie is to the west. Buffalo Niagara International Airport is ten miles away. The Peace Bridge, which links the City of Buffalo to Ontario is one mile away. There is also a large canal that bisects the site.



Photo courtesy of <http://zwwb.50megs.com/images/hana.jpg>



Picture courtesy of Google Maps

## MARKET CONDITIONS

The strengths of the Buffalo area consist of navigable waterways, active rail corridors and a developed infrastructure of roads. The old site of the Hanna Steel Plant is also close to Canada and adjacent to the country's third busiest rail corridor.

The City of Buffalo has established certain incentives to make the property more appealing to private entities. There is the New York State Empire Zone Program, which allows companies that purchase land on the site to operate on an almost tax-free basis for up to ten years. The New York State Brownfield Tax Credit gives businesses tax credits of up to 22% of the total

remediation and redevelopment cost.

## SITE ASSEMBLY AND CONTROL

The Buffalo Union Steel Corporation owned the property during the early 20th century. Hannah Furnace Corporation eventually became the owner when the company purchased the site in 1915. The City of Buffalo acquired the site through a bankruptcy process in 2001. The Buffalo Urban Development Corporation gained control of the property in 2003. While several businesses have already purchased parts of the property, the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation is still trying to sell the remaining parcels of land that remain.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

The property was contaminated with PCBs, VOCs, lead, petroleum and PAHs. Because the only exposure pathway to the chemicals was through direct contact, clean-up via pathway elimination was fairly straight forward. The clean-up activities involved remediating a petroleum spill, regarding the site's fill material by covering it with soil and then seeding the soil. Asphalt and concrete were installed over the other contaminated sections of the property.

## SOCIAL/COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The South Buffalo Redevelopment plan, launched in the late 1990s, was a planning process involving a public outreach initiative that included local residents, business and neighborhood leaders in discussions about the future of South Buffalo in general and the former Hanna Furnace specifically. The community of South Buffalo regularly participated in meetings for the redevelopment of the site. In addition, Lackawanna City served as a first responder to problems that were encountered at the site.

## PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

There were 15 pre-existing buildings on the property, which measured a total of 40000 square feet, that had to be demolished. Aside from the buildings, there was no other infrastructure existing at the site. The infrastructure around the site, which consisted of roadways, water and sewer lines, a power grid, and telecommunications, was generally adequate.

## COSTS & ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The Buffalo Urban Development Corporation provided \$1.5 million for the site preparation and investigation. The \$2 million cost of demolition of the pre-existing structures on the site was financed Buffalo City Bond Funds. The remediation of the site, which cost \$6 million, was funded by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Both the State and Local Government paid for the infrastructure improvements. Private investments have also contributed \$35 million to the redevelopment of the property.

## CURRENT STATUS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The site of the old Hanna Steel Plant is now home to the Buffalo Lakeside Commerce Park. The 3 businesses, occupying 100 acres of space and operating at the site, (CertainTeed, Cobey Inc. and Sonwil Distribution) have created more than 400 new jobs. Currently, several companies are making offers for the remaining parcels of land. Majority of the infrastructure at the site has been completed and it is projected that the whole redevelopment will be done by 2012



Photo courtesy of Buffalo Urban Development Corporation

Completed by Ronald Papa, Summer '08

## SOURCES

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