

BUFFALO Commons

Proposal for Research

Created by the Partnership for the Public Good and Cornell in Buffalo, the **Buffalo Commons** seeks to make **Buffalo-Niagara-focused research** accessible to the community and to inspire collaborative efforts among researchers and practitioners that will expand that body of knowledge.

Through the research portal, community organizations can propose topics for research that would help them serve the public. Students and faculty can then choose from those topics and produce work to benefit the community. The Buffalo Commons will publish and archive the resulting research so that it is easily available. A description of your initiative will help researchers choose your topic.

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Name of your Organization Partnership for the Public Good

Brief Description of what your organization does/is and/or the community served

PPG is a community-based think tank doing research and advocacy on behalf of roughly 300 organizations in Buffalo-Niagara.

Brief description of the research needed

Post-industrial cities like Buffalo have thousands of vacant lots, many of them owned by the city. Typically these are eyesores with nothing but grass and weeds that must be mowed often and that collect trash and depress civic morale and property values. Philadelphia and other cities have had some success with "clean and green" strategies. What are low-cost, low-maintenance, sustainable strategies for vacant lots that can help reduce air and water pollution while also improving neighborhoods and creating jobs? Are there viable ground-cover options better than grass? What are best tree-planting strategies? Is it viable to plant food sources that would be freely available to nearby residents (i.e., fruits, berries)?

Potential Title of Proposed Research Project Greening Vacant Lots

Is there a specific date by which this research is needed? May 2020

How will this research be used to aid the community? We will share it with cities, non-profits, and for-profits that own vacant lots and use it to advocate for better policies and programs.

What (if any) other community groups are involved. We have worked closely with PUSH and other community partners on vacant lot options in the past.

What resources can you offer to aid the researcher (access to data, people to interview, etc.)

We have some past research and data and can connect with community organizations and city officials.