



# COMMUNITY E-BULLETIN



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[www.usaniagara.com](http://www.usaniagara.com)

Volume 1

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## New Projects Launched, Key Initiatives Move Forward

### Niagara University Looking at Downtown Niagara Falls

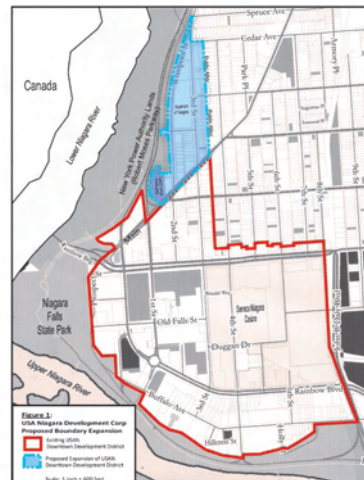


# NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

*Education That Makes a Difference*

[Niagara University](http://Niagara University) (NU) will conduct a Strategic Assessment to determine the possibility of NU's [College of Hospitality and Tourism Management](http://College of Hospitality and Tourism Management) establishing a permanent presence in downtown Niagara Falls. The College is a founding member of the Leading Hotel Schools of the World and is recognized globally within the industry, ranking in the top 20 hospitality and tourism programs in the country. Building upon the benefits of [Niagara County Community College](http://Niagara County Community College)'s soon-to-be-completed Niagara Falls Culinary Institute, an NU presence could potentially add hundreds of additional students to the downtown landscape. Well-trained graduates of these institutions will be members of the future hospitality workforce, as well as investors, entrepreneurs and hoteliers. The Strategic Assessment, to be funded with \$50,000 in USA Niagara funding, will examine current best practices in tourism, hospitality and hotel education internationally. It will include strategies for maximizing economic development impact, enhancing tourism development opportunities and strengthening the existing program at NU.

### USAN Board of Directors Approves Boundary Revision, 22 acres added



The USAN Board of Directors have approved expanded boundaries for the USAN Development District. The revised boundaries will now include nearly 22 acres north of Main Street, including the area surrounding the [Aquarium of Niagara](http://Aquarium of Niagara) and comprise a long-term vision under the City's Comprehensive Plan for a "cultural district." It will also improve USAN's ability to fulfill its mission to help grow a multifaceted destination as an integral component of local economic development and revitalization plans.

"Credit is due to our government stakeholders, specifically the work of Senators Grisanti and Maziarz and Assemblyman Ceretto," said ESD Regional President Sam Hoyt. "It is through their collaborative effort that this measure was approved, allowing USAN to better satisfy the economic development needs of Niagara Falls."

"We have much work ahead of us, but with an expanded geographic district and the inclusion of the Aquarium, I believe our efforts will be strengthened, leading to the success and prosperity of Niagara Falls," said [Senator Grisanti](http://Senator Grisanti).

*(Story continues on flip side)*

### About USA Niagara

USAN, a subsidiary of Empire State Development, is solely dedicated to the support and promotion of economic development initiatives in Niagara Falls by leveraging private investment and encouraging growth and renewal of the tourism industry in the City of Niagara Falls.

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For more news and information, visit [www.usaniagara.com](http://www.usaniagara.com), find USAN on Facebook or follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com).

## USAN Supports Launch of \$15 Million Hotel Redevelopment Project

USAN has approved a \$750,000 capital grant toward the \$15 million redevelopment of the former Fallside Hotel. In 2009, Merani Hospitality, Inc. acquired the vacant 135,000-square-foot hotel property, located at 401 Buffalo Avenue. Merani Hospitality's plans include an upscale rated hotel with a full service signature restaurant, banquet venue and 200 well-appointed, first-class guest rooms.

The project will help to fulfill the need for additional quality downtown lodging, contribute to the overall beautification and usability of the area, and create 55 new jobs. As previously announced, the project will also receive a \$2 million convertible loan from [Empire State Development's Upstate Regional Blueprint Fund](#). The project is expected to be completed by December 2013.

## USAN Board of Directors Approves Boundary Revision, cont.

"It's clear to me that the reconfiguring of the boundaries to include the Aquarium will ultimately benefit this important resource in our region," said [Assemblymen Ceretto](#).

"This expansion, which serves as a positive reflection on the progress USAN is making, will offer additional investors the development expertise and resources of USAN's staff," said [City of Niagara Falls Mayor Dyster](#).

"We feel the aquarium is an important part of both the visitor experience as well as a significant regional asset," said Aquarium of Niagara Executive Director Nancy Chapin. "The action taken today recognizes that fact and will provide greater opportunity to achieve our goals of renovation and expansion."

## T.G.I. Friday's Open for Business in former Old Falls Sports Bar & Grille



The former Old Falls Sports Bar & Grille is now a nationally known [T.G.I. Friday's](#) restaurant. USAN supported the \$750,000 renovation project with \$75,000 in funding from USAN's Grant Program. The project has created over 70 new jobs. A grand opening celebration was held in June and the restaurant is currently open for business.

*"We haven't seen the marketplace this development-friendly since we've been here," said Canadian Niagara Hotels Inc. Vice President Michael DiCenzo. "With our T.G.I. Friday's project, USA Niagara and the City listened to what we wanted to bring to the marketplace and they really walked us through the process."*

## Old Falls Street's Action Packed Summer, check out fall events online

Old Falls Street is fast becoming the leading outdoor entertaining district in Niagara Falls. In 2010 it capitalized on the tourism industry and hosted more than 300 events. In 2011, the area continues to grow as a destination with 400 total events, including the upcoming Oktoberfest (10/22) and Italian Feast Night (11/17). For more information on events and daily programming, visit [www.fallsstreet.com](http://www.fallsstreet.com). Upon USAN and the City's \$12 million revitalization of Old Falls Street in 2010, USAN entered into an agreement with the City for [Global Spectrum](#) to fully manage the maintenance and programming of activities and events on Old Falls Street.



## Transformational NCCC Culinary Project on Schedule, students downtown by fall 2012



USAN and the City are currently on schedule and on budget for their responsible segments of the Culinary Project, specifically Phase I (interior demolition/abatement of the former mall) and Phase II (Parking Ramp Rehab and Skylight repair). Interior demolition and asbestos abatement work, for which the City of Niagara Falls contracted with [Apollo Dismantling Services, LLC](#) has now fully cleared the area that will be reused as the Culinary Institute and is nearing completion of the razing of the entire structure's interior finishes and fixtures to create a "re-usable envelope" or "build-ready box." Phase II rehabilitation work is targeted to start in mid-September. The initial construction packages for Phase III work, which is being led by [Niagara County Community College](#) (NCCC), are also anticipated to begin in September. To learn more about the culinary program, call (716) 614-6222 or visit [www.niagaracc.suny.edu/academics/business/](http://www.niagaracc.suny.edu/academics/business/)

## Third Street Building Now Open

The Moore Building, located at 451 Third Street is now open for business. The 13,000-square-foot 1920s-era structure was vacant for nearly a decade. [ERDCO Development, LLC](#) has renovated the building's four commercial storefronts and eight residential units. USAN supported the project with \$155,000 in funding and the [N.F.C. Development Corp.](#) approved a \$200,000 grant toward the \$817,000 project. Interested tenants, please call (716) 628-5553.

## Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University

After a remodel and installation of new art, the [Castellani Art Museum](#) of Niagara University's satellite gallery in the [Conference Center Niagara Falls](#) is once again open. "Artists View The Falls: 300 Years of Niagara Falls Imagery" is the newest exhibit.

*E-Bulletin is intended to update readers on USAN's progress in redeveloping downtown Niagara Falls. The contents of this E-Bulletin should not be reproduced without the express written consent of USAN. For information, please e-mail [usaniagara@empire.state.ny.us](mailto:usaniagara@empire.state.ny.us).*