



## Congressman Higgins & Supervisor Holtz Head to Revitalizing Older Cities Capitol Hill Summit

### *Local Leaders Share WNY's Challenges With National Planning Group*

Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) and Town of Cheektowaga Supervisor Mary Holtz stopped at the Alexander Community Center, located in a Cheektowaga/Buffalo border neighborhood, before heading to Washington, DC for a Revitalizing Older Cities Task Force Capitol Hill Summit.

“Supervisor Holtz has been a leader in tackling the tough issues present in towns that border major cities” said Congressman Higgins. “I continue to be impressed by her efforts to reach beyond municipal lines to find cooperative solutions that benefit the town and region as a whole. We look forward to participating in this summit as a means to influence federal legislation and bring positive ideas and changes to Western New York.”

Supervisor Holtz said, “If we don’t handle the tough issues head-on they continue to grow, impacting economic opportunity and the quality of life for our residents. I am thankful for Congressman Higgins’ partnership and continued effort to work with us to find solutions and bring matters important to Cheektowaga to the national spotlight.”

Last August the Task Force held its first field hearing in Buffalo, New York. Supervisor Holtz, served as a panel speaker at the hearing providing testimony on the housing challenges facing first ring suburbs. This week Supervisor Holtz is taking her message to Capitol Hill as she participates in summit session discussions.

The Capitol Hill Summit will be held February 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Congressman Higgins, who serves as Co-Chair of the federal Task Force will provide a keynote address during the opening session. The two-day agenda will focus on issues related to transportation, housing, vacant property, brownfields, water infrastructure, economic and workforce development, green jobs and sustainable cities. Over 300 activists, community organizers, civic leaders and elected officials have registered for this first annual event organized by the Northeast-Midwest Institute in conjunction with the Brookings Institution, Smart Growth America and Policy Link.

“Western New York faces challenges similar to older communities across the nation,” said Congressman Higgins. “By coming together we can learn from each other’s success stories and work toward new policies that meet the circumstances unique to regions like ours.”

The “Revitalizing Older Cities Task Force,” dedicated to addressing the plight of this region’s older cities, was formed early last year by members of the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition. Congressman Higgins and Congressman Mike Turner (R-Ohio) were appointed to serve as Co-Chairs of the Older Cities Task Force by Chairman Jim Oberstar of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, who also Co-Chairs the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition. The Northeast-Midwest Coalition was established over 30 years ago because federal legislators from these regions recognized that their needs are similar and by working together they can have a greater impact on the issues specific to their unique constituency.