

Housing

In Niagara Falls, about 20% of homes stand vacant, and only 56% of Niagara Falls residents are homeowners. The Levesque Institute, in partnership with a number of city and community organizations, are committed to decrease the number of vacant homes in Niagara Falls and increase home ownership to build the tax base and support current and new development throughout the city. Currently, Niagara University is leading the South End Housing Initiative (SEHI) consisting of 26 community partners and residents.

Neighborhood Revitalization: Niagara Falls South End Housing Initiative



The goal of the South End Housing Initiative (SEHI) is to revitalize and expand housing from Fourth Street to Portage Road with the surrounding perimeter from Niagara Street to Pine Avenue. The revitalization of this corridor of homes will encourage economic development on the outlying areas of the neighborhoods. By refurbishing existing homes and looking at new housing units, the neighborhood gains “curb appeal” to possible investors to expand mixed use development throughout the South End of the city.

In the 2017-2018 year, the first two phases of the initial plan were completed: South End Business District Clean-Up (Freshman Day of Service) and Rock the Block.

Freshman Day of Service



On April 21, 2018 Niagara University freshmen assisted with general clean-up of the business district including Third Street, Main Street and Pine Avenue. The goal of this initial phase of the South End Housing Initiative was to expose Niagara University students to the South End of the City, as well as make an impact on the South End Business District.

111
bags of garbage
collected in
Business District
Clean-Up

Rock the Block

Phase II of the South End Housing Initiative aimed to remove blight from the residential neighborhoods in the South End extending from Fourth to Seventh Street and Main to Niagara Streets. This event, called Rock the Block, brought together **204 volunteers** from various organizations to assist with minor home repairs, painting, landscaping, general clean-up and more.



City Owned Property

Rock the Block's Economic Impact Value exceeded the project cost by **\$74,100**



City Owned Property



Overall Project Cost- \$11,000
Volunteer IMPACT- \$82,400
 204 volunteers @ 4 hours

Expenses

- ▶ Materials and Supplies
- ▶ Equipment
- ▶ T-Shirts

Total: \$11,000

Donations

- ▶ NF Conference Center
- ▶ NFR Development
- ▶ Wegmans
- ▶ Tim Hortons
- ▶ Costanzo's Bakery Inc.
- ▶ Chudy Paper Company
- ▶ Carolyn's House
- ▶ Vincentian Community

Total: \$9,900

SEHI Cost Comparison

Paint brushes, rollers, trays, scrapers, wire brushes



Spent	\$798.00
Retail Costs	\$3,293.14

In the News...

St. Mary's Manor on Sixth Street has been sold to Metropolis Properties Management who is planning to put in a 200 room hotel catering to the international marketplace. This could be the catalyst needed to entice developers interest to pursue new businesses and housing in the South End. These are the same developers who purchased the old AM&A's building in Buffalo and are planning a 300 room hotel there.



Resident Owned Property

The South End Housing Initiative is made up of **30 partners** from various organizations throughout Niagara County.

- City of Niagara Falls
- Downtown Niagara Falls Business Association, Inc.
- Element Development
- Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative
- Habitat for Humanity
- Home Depot
- Isaiah 61
- Leadership Niagara
- M&T Bank
- Mobile Safety Net Team
- National Grid
- New York Power Authority
- Niagara Community Action Program, Inc.
- Niagara Falls Block Club Council
- Niagara Falls City Schools
- Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center
- Niagara Falls National Heritage Area
- Niagara Falls Neighborhood Housing Services
- Niagara Global Tourism Institute
- Niagara Street Area Business & Professional Association
- Niagara University
- Niagara USA Chamber
- Orleans/Niagara BOCES
- Pine Avenue Redevelopment Project
- South End Residents
- The Service Collaborative of WNY
- TM Montante Development
- United Way of Greater Niagara
- Verizon Wireless
- YWCA of the Niagara Frontier

ROCK THE BLOCK'S IMPACT WAS:

204 Volunteers joined together to Rock the Block

35 Homes were repaired, painted, landscaped and more!
This includes 23 residential and 12 city owned

76 Vacant lots were mowed in partnership with the City of Niagara Falls

10 Alleys had debris removed, landscaping done and garages painted

4 City corners were landscaped and perennials were planted

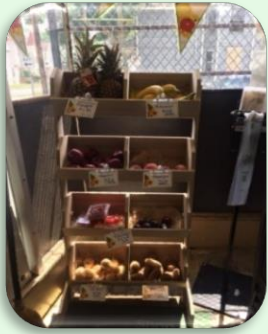
levesqueinstitute.niagara.edu/programs/housing/revitalization/



Resident Owned Property



Partner Projects in the South End



- **National Grid:** National Grid provided free LED lightbulbs to residents during “Light Up Your Neighborhood”.
- **Niagara Falls City School District:** The students in the Early College Smart Scholars volunteered their time during Rock the Block. A continued partnership is being explored having the students to continue to in the South End.
- **Home Depot:** Home Depot has provided **two** Veteran’s with repairs to their homes.
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension:** Thanks to a partnership with CCE, Michael’s Market on the corner of Sixth Street and Ferry Avenue is now selling fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **The Service Collaborative of WNY:** The Levesque Institute is collaborating with TSCWNY for the 9/11 Day of Service. The Institute has identified Veteran owned homes in the target area in need of minor repairs, which will be done in September 2018.

992
LED
lightbulbs
distributed

Summer in Your Neighborhood

To raise awareness of the new produce at Michael’s Market, the Levesque Institute hosted a “Summer in the Neighborhood” event. This event, geared toward local youth, included a *Gregory, the Terrible Eater* Author’s Chair and fun early childhood activities surrounding healthy food and healthy eating. The Cornell Cooperative Veggie Van was also on site selling fresh produce to the residents in the area.



Summer Volunteers



Throughout the summer of 2018, volunteers assisted with various tasks in the South End. Volunteers from Youthworks, Young Life and Young Neighbors in Action provided over **900 hours** of service to the South End.

Volunteers assisted with finishing work that was not completed at Rock the Block; general landscaping/clean-up of alleys in the target area; preparing Michael’s Market for the fresh fruits and vegetables; and painting city-owned houses to remove blight. The volunteer efforts concluded with the Young Life group doing clean-up and landscaping the medians on Niagara Street (which attracted **7,410** Facebook hits) in the heaty of the tourism district.

\$22,500
Economic Impact
Value of
Volunteers



Learn more about our Housing Initiatives:
levesqueinstitute.niagara.edu/programs/housing/
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