

Seneca casino will add to Buffalo's future

By
Barry E. Snyder, Sr.

This week, the Seneca Nation of Indians made an historic announcement that signifies hope and opportunity for the Seneca people and for the City of Buffalo.

Joining together with Mayor Masiello, the Nation announced that it has acquired 9 acres of land in the City's Inner Harbor area with the intent to develop our third Western New York casino. By acquiring this land, we have taken the all-important first step in the process. Our message is clear – we want to come to Buffalo.

Developing a world-class casino operation takes teamwork and partnerships, just as with any significant project. The Seneca Nation has worked closely with the City's leadership, including the Mayor, business leaders and others, to bring our casino project to the brink of reality. We look forward to continuing that partnership as we move toward construction.

Partnerships go beyond government, however. As we develop a project for the Inner Harbor area, we will continue to become part of the fabric of the community.

For a casino operation to maximize its potential and, in turn, maximize its benefit to the community, we believe that there must be vibrant life around us. We are encouraged by the potential we see in the Inner Harbor area.

The synergy between a new casino, the HSBC Arena, the proposed Bass Pro project and surrounding amenities can create a dynamic

environment at the foot of Main Street and help breathe new life into downtown Buffalo.

Add to that equation proposed improvements and activities for the Inner Harbor and you can begin to visualize the foundation for any future development – people. By helping to create a critical mass of people moving about the Inner Harbor area, which a casino will undoubtedly do, and giving them a variety of destinations at which to spend their time, everyone who has made an investment in the area should reap benefits.

When you visualize people moving between a casino, the arena, and Bass Pro and people using the Metro Rail to travel between the Inner Harbor and the Theater and Entertainment districts, it is difficult not to get excited about all that the future holds.

The Seneca Nation wants to be a piece of that puzzle and an important part of the foundation for growth in downtown.

Western New York is our home. We want to build a better future for our region, for our people and for the people who live here.

In less than three years, the Seneca Nation has invested nearly \$500 million to create a new vibrant and successful industry in Western New York – one that is filled with new jobs and opportunity.

To date, our casino operations have created nearly 4,000 new jobs, put more than 1,200 skilled union laborers to work and delivered nearly \$100 million in new revenue to New York State and to the local community. We have also supported local companies, to the tune of more than \$61 million

last year alone, thereby supporting thousands of additional jobs in the local economy.

We are still growing, and we now want to build upon our success and deliver tangible economic benefits, including thousands of new jobs and millions of dollars in new revenue, to the City of Buffalo.

Our mission is clear, our vision is focused and the future is very bright indeed.

Barry E. Snyder, Sr. is President of the Seneca Nation of Indians