

7 bridges in eastern Niagara labeled 'poor' in TRIP Report

TRANSPORTATION: TRIP report lists heavily traveled Robinson, Bear Ridge spans among those in need of rehab.

FRONT PAGE

By Connor Hoffman connor.hoffman@lockportjournal.com



US&J FILE ART The now-closed North Adam Street canal lift bridge is one of seven bridges in eastern Niagara County whose "poor" or structurally deficient condition is cited in a new report by TRIP.

A recent report finds that several bridges in Niagara County are in poor condition and require some structural repairs.

The report, titled "Preserving Buffalo-Niagara Bridges: The condition and funding needs of the Buffalo-Niagara Falls Aging Bridging System" was put out by TRIP, a national transportation research non-profit group. The report, which used information from the 2018 Federal Highway Administration Bridge Inventory, found that 8% (91 of 1,164) locally and state maintained bridges in the Buffalo-Niagara Falls area were rated by the federal agency as poor / structurally deficient.

In eastern Niagara County, two bridges are mentioned that are the list of the 25 most heavily traveled bridges in poor condition: the Robinson Road bridge over the Erie Canal and the Bear Ridge Road bridge over Tonawanda Creek Road. The two bridges reportedly experience combined average daily traffic of 13,650 vehicles.

The report also labels as in poor condition: the North Adam Street bridge in the city of Lockport, the Route 425 bridge over 12 Mile Creek in Wilson, the Newfane Wilson-Burt Road bridge over Hopkins Creek, the Slayton Settlement Road bridge over the Erie Canal in Gasport and the Griswold Street bridge over a tributary of Mud Creek in Wolcottville. The North Adam Street bridge has been closed for several years.

According to the TRIP report, the Federal Highway Administration estimates it would cost \$3.6 billion to rehabilitate all poor / structurally deficient bridges in New York state.

"New York's bridges are a critical component of the state's transportation system, providing connections for personal mobility, economic growth and quality of life," said Will Wilkins, TRIP's executive director. "Without increased and reliable transportation funding, numerous projects to improve and preserve aging bridges in the Buffalo-Niagara Falls area and statewide will not move forward, hampering New York's ability to efficiently and safely move people and goods."

PLAYER OF THE WEEK: Newfane griddier was top athlete. **PAGE 1B**

Police board nearing decision on new chief

LOCKPORT: Preisch tenders his quit notice; board convening Thursday to weigh merits of 3 in-house applicants.

BY CONNOR HOFFMAN
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It appears Lockport Police Department will soon have a new chief, with interim chief Steven Preisch having officially submitted his two-weeks notice on Tuesday and the police board set to meet on Thursday to discuss recent candidate interviews.

Police Commissioner Rick Abbott said the board interviewed three candidates over an approximately four-hour period Monday and plans to meet Thursday to discuss the interviews and attempt to pick a new chief. Abbott noted there is currently no front runner for the post. The candidates are Det. Capt. Anthony Palumbo, Det. Lt. Todd Chenevix and Patrol Capt. Douglas Haak II.

"They all were three very good interviews," Abbott said. "I hope we make a decision. We haven't had any discussion in regards to it as of Tuesday."

Abbott said the board is working on finalizing a benefits package for the new chief, and that the candidates were not informed what the benefits package will entail.

He believes the board will be able to meet the goal of hiring a new chief by the end of the month, noting that by hiring from within LTD the city does not have to wait for a candidate to give two weeks' notice to their current employer.

Preisch said he formally submitted his two-week notice to Mayor Michelle Roman on Tuesday as his pension waiver from the state will expire at the end of the month.

"I want to thank you for the incredible opportunity of being Chief of the Lockport Police Department," Preisch said.

SEE CHIEF, PAGE 5A

N STRIKE

UAW picketers say temporary worker designation, health care are at issue in negotiations with GM

BY TIM FENSTER
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Production at General Motors' Lockport and Tonawanda plants ground to a halt Monday as more than 2,600 workers went on strike following the company's failure to forge a new contract with United Auto Workers leadership.

The entire hourly workforce at both plants — 1,293 in Lockport and 1,306 at Tonawanda — took part in the strike, joining nearly 50,000 GM workers across the country who are refusing to work. The strike has shut down 33 manufacturing plants in nine states, as well as 22 parts distribution warehouses.

Only a few hundred salaried employees at both local plants remained on the job Monday.

The strike began at 12 a.m. Monday after UAW and GM failed to reach a deal on a new four-year contract; the previous contract expired at midnight Sept. 16.

INSIDE
 ■ Strike won't be prolonged, report predicts.
PAGE 5A



JAMES HESS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
 GM employees walk the picket line outside the Lockport plant on Tuesday.

Davison Road vote slated

DEVELOPMENT: Council decision on moratorium expected today.

BY TIM FENSTER
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The Common Council is scheduled to vote this evening on a moratorium that would halt development of 360 Davison Road for six months while the city reviews the property's zoning classification.

The moratorium would delay Cazenovia Recovery System's proposal to develop the property into a 44-bed residential treatment facility for women and 60 low-income apartment units, half of which would go to individuals who have undergone substance abuse treatment.

At a public hearing last month, nearly a dozen Cazenovia officers and supporters urged the council to reject the moratorium, saying the opposition illustrates the stigma surrounding addiction treatment.

"Similar to the challenges of recovery facilities that provide substance use disorder treatment and support also face the challenges of stigma, discrimination, and fear," Cazenovia spokesman Ed Colchon said previously. "The Davison Road property provides an ideal location for substance use disorder treatment, services, and housing, along with housing available to the community at large."

But an equal number of neighborhood residents spoke in favor of the moratorium.

SEE VOTE, PAGE 5A

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SEE BRIDGE, PAGE 5A



USA FILE ART
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