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BUFFALO NEXT: JOBS

Buffalo Niagara's stuck job market in need of a boost

*Possible solutions:
More people in region,
fixing Canada relations*

The Buffalo Niagara job market remains stuck in the mud.

It's not growing. Hiring softened a bit during July – in tandem with a drop in hiring nationwide – and it continues

its pattern of strengthening one month and weakening the next, all leading back to the same place.

The region has roughly the same number of jobs that it had in May 2025, which means 14 months without any meaningful employment growth, according to the latest state Labor Department report on Thursday.

"It's been a roller coaster," said Timothy Glass, the Labor Department's regional economist in Buffalo. "It's been up and then down."

And like every roller coaster, it has been ending up back where it started.

Of course, the bright-side view is that the region isn't losing jobs. The pace of layoffs is subdued, despite some big job cut and shutdown announcements earlier this year.

But the country has been adding jobs over those same 14 months, and our lack of hiring hurts because it means we're missing out on the extra paychecks that are fueling consumer spending in other parts of the nation, creating a virtuous cycle where more jobs leads to more spending and eventually leads to more hiring.

Which begs the question: How does Buffalo Niagara break out of its hiring slump?

More people would help. It's still hard for businesses to fill the job openings that they have, let alone fill the thousands of additional positions that true prosperity would bring.

Companies are reluctant to expand in places where they don't think they can attract enough workers with the skills they need to do the job and a willingness to do it for the wages the company is offering to pay.

Our lower cost of living is a positive for the second part of that equation, but our shrinking population – which has started dropping slightly again after very modest, but encouraging, growth during the 2010s – is a big deterrent.

We simply need more people, and that's not happening naturally, especially in an area where the median age of

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Fine print doomed trade deal with U.S., Canada envoy says

JOSH WINGROVE
Bloomberg News

U.S.-Canada trade talks collapsed over a range of issues where the written text of a potential deal was at odds with what the Canadian side believed it had agreed to, Prime Minister Mark Carney's top U.S. envoy says.

Mark Wiseman, Canada's ambassador to the U.S., said in an interview Sunday that there was no one issue that led talks to collapse late Friday, a development that triggered new tariffs and a potentially escalating trade fight.

Wiseman likened the negotiations to a handshake deal

to buy a house – only for the prospective buyer to learn appliances weren't included, the furnace had no warranty and neither the garage nor yard is on the same property, and ultimately walk away.

"As we drilled down, what we discovered was that what our understanding of what had been agreed to was quite different from what was showing up in the documents," he said. "When that kind of happens once or twice, it's kind of understandable, but when it happens consistently, and every

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BUFFALO NEXT: DEVELOPMENT

A do-over for proposals at former Aud site sought



JOSHUA BESSEX, NEWS FILE PHOTO

Pennrose is constructing three new buildings with 251 apartments at the North Aud Block, with apartments aimed at various income levels to support a wide-ranging population.

*Former lawmaker Jacobs
points to informational changes*

Should New York rebid the proposed North Aud Block redevelopment?

That is a question downtown developer and former Rep. Chris Jacobs is asking, even as Pennrose LLC is poised to begin work on its \$225 million venture to construct a housing project at the former Memorial Auditorium site at Canalside.

The project has already been approved and funded, and state officials from Gov. Kathy Hochul to the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp. have repeatedly backed the mostly affordable housing venture. They have noted that the site has been vacant for more than a decade, and waiting would only leave a gaping hole for much longer.

And, they say, it is too late.

"The North Aud Block project is under construction," said Pamm Lent, a spokeswoman

for Empire State Development Corp.

But Jacobs, who insists he is not seeking the project for himself, says the project has changed so much that the state should seek new proposals for the site from developers who could assess projects on today's information.

"What irks me here is this a public project and there are procurement laws" that the state has to follow, he said. "This is not a private entity that can do whatever it wants. It's got to adhere to the laws that prevail."

Specifically, he says, the original requests for proposals referenced \$10 million in state support for new streets and infrastructure, as part of a development project that would build housing at the Canalside site, and then sought bids to get the work done.

But Pennrose is getting more than \$152.9 million in state funding – including both direct subsidies and tax credits – to finance a project that is now mostly workforce and affordable housing. And it is getting an unusual 30-year property tax break from the state that will likely save it millions of dollars more.

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Allen reflects on Oliver's loss: 'All we can do is love on him'

CLEVELAND – As soon as his head coach's news conference ended Saturday evening, Josh Allen stepped into an equipment room adjacent to the Buffalo Bills' locker room inside Huntington Bank Field and waited for a group of reporters.



LANCE LYSOWSKI

Allen did not play in the Bills' 31-7 victory over the Cleveland

Browns in a preseason game. The impromptu interview was his idea.

He was sad. He was angry. And he wanted to be the voice of his team. One of their own, defensive tackle Ed Oliver, suffered an unimaginable loss in late June when his 2-year-old son died in a drowning at his family's home in Houston.

"First off, I want to say thank you to the (reporters) who knew about it and allowed him to have his moment and his time," Allen

began. "It's very sad and how it came out makes me very, very sad and angry at the same time. Obviously, very unfortunate what happened and, as a teammate of his, and someone in this locker room, all we can do is love on him."

"There's nothing you can say to make the situation any better but except being there for him in whatever ways he needs and that's what we're going

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