M&T Bank Newsroom

M&T Bank Unveils ‘Meet Me Downtown’ Initiative to Build Momentum in the Heart of Buffalo

Fueled by local collaboration, new series aims to draw more people, boost small businesses and add vibrancy to Downtown

BUFFALO, N.Y., June 24, 2026 – M&T Bank (NYSE:MTB) today introduced the *Meet Me Downtown* initiative, a collaborative effort bringing together public, private and nonprofit partners to strengthen the vibrancy of Downtown Buffalo. Spearheaded by M&T Bank, *Meet Me Downtown* empowers local groups to create and expand community-focused events through grant funding, sponsorship support and strategic, hands-on assistance. This summer, the initiative will help mobilize six events beginning in July, featuring a variety of experiences.

M&T executives were joined by Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz, Buffalo Mayor Sean Ryan, Visit Buffalo President and CEO Patrick Kaler, Buffalo Place Executive Director Peter Burakowski and event organizers Thursday at Buffalo City Hall to announce the initiative.

“*Meet Me Downtown* is a call to action to engage, discover what’s happening across the city and bring others with you. By aligning partners and driving participation, we’re building momentum that increases foot traffic, supports small businesses and drives economic activity Downtown,” said Tracy Woodrow, M&T Bank chief administrative officer and Western New York regional president.

M&T Bank’s *Meet Me Downtown* builds on its Mission Main Street initiative, a successful 2025 pilot program that directed grant funding and assistance to events in Buffalo’s Main Street corridor. After evaluating last year’s learnings and initial momentum, M&T worked with more than 60 community partners to design a more robust program that reaches across the Downtown district and aims to engage more people.

This year’s *Meet Me Downtown* will feature six headline events:

- **"Home By 10” Block Parties – July 11 and Aug. 8, Chippewa Street:** Hosted by the Chippewa Alliance, these events will bring together eight venues for a nostalgic dance party featuring 1990s and 2000s music. Designed with parents and early risers in mind, the events offer adults a fun night out without late-night hours. Doors open at 6 p.m., with a 10 p.m. close. Tickets are $10 and available in advance for the July 11 and Aug. 8 events.

- **Street Soccer Cup & World Cup Watch Party – July 18, Chippewa Avenue:** A collaboration between Buffalo Pro Soccer and the Chippewa Alliance, this joint event features an all-day 5v5 soccer tournament for ages 10 and older, followed by a World Cup third-place match watch party. Teams can register for the Street Soccer Cup here.

- **Picklefest – Aug. 16, Buffalo RiverWorks:** Organized by The Mind Over Foundation, this all-things-pickle event returns with a one-day pickleball tournament, along with pickle-themed food, beverages and experiences from Buffalo’s favorite vendors. Participants can sign up for the pickleball tournament here.

- **The Main Block Party – Aug. 29, Fountain Plaza:** Led by Buffalo Fashion Runway, this free, all-ages celebration combines fashion, culture, music, food, small businesses and community. Following a successful inaugural year, the event returns with expanded vendors, entertainment, family-friendly activities and interactive experiences. RSVP and learn more here.

- **Circle the Square 2 – Sept. 26, Niagara Square:** GOBike Buffalo rounds out the 2026 lineup with a family-friendly relay to complete 150 laps around Niagara Square. Participants can ride bikes, scooters, rollerblades and more – as long as they are nonmotorized. Participants can register here.

“Summer is here and as people are looking for things to do and ways to get together, the *Meet Me Downtown* event series will have entertainment and events that will be fun for all, easy to attend and will make the summer months even more enjoyable. These will be opportunities to enjoy the Downtown atmosphere all over again while spending time with family and friends,” Erie County Executive Mark C. Poloncarz said. “Erie County is proud to stand with the team that brought this concept to life. This summer when people are wondering what to do for fun in Buffalo, they’ll just say, ‘*Meet Me Downtown!*’”

“Building a better Buffalo requires strong partnerships and a shared commitment to investing in our city,” Mayor Sean Ryan said. “Meet Me Downtown is the kind of innovative collaboration that we need to create a more vibrant downtown. This initiative will encourage residents and visitors to experience everything Buffalo has to offer beyond the traditional workday. I'm grateful to M&T Bank and all of the partners helping bring new energy and excitement to the heart of our city.”

“Downtown Buffalo is the front door to the Buffalo-Niagara region and often makes the first impression on visitors,” said Patrick

Kaler, President and CEO of Visit Buffalo. “Initiatives like *Meet Me Downtown* help create the kind of energy that makes people want to explore, stay longer and visit again. We’re proud to partner with M&T Bank and so many community organizations to showcase the experiences, businesses and people that make Downtown Buffalo such an important part of our tourism economy.”

"Strong Downtowns are built through partnerships, shared investment and a commitment to creating experiences that bring people together. *Meet Me Downtown* is an exciting example of what can be accomplished when the public, private and nonprofit sectors work toward a common goal," said Peter Burakowski, Executive Director of Buffalo Place Inc. "M&T Bank has long been a valued partner in Buffalo Place's efforts to activate and strengthen Downtown Buffalo, including its support of the 10th Anniversary season of Thursday & Main and the 44th Anniversary season of the Downtown Country Market. We are proud to join them and so many community organizations in expanding opportunities for residents, workers and visitors to discover all that Downtown has to offer while supporting the businesses, venues and institutions that contribute to its ongoing growth and vitality."

Meet Me Downtown is M&T Bank’s newest Downtown vibrancy initiative, adding to its longstanding commitment to the neighborhood that has been its headquarters for 170 years. M&T also sponsors the Thursday & Main Concert Series, Downtown Country Market, Third Thursdays at Explore & More – The Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Children’s Museum and is the presenting sponsor of the Buffalo Waterfront’s July 3 Sound & Sky on the Waterfront fireworks display.

Earlier this summer, M&T Bank directed grant funding – and M&T employees provided volunteer support – to the Buffalo Urban Development Corporation to help complete improvements at three key intersections. Together, these efforts boost local economic activity and contribute to a more dynamic Downtown.

About M&T Bank

M&T is a financial holding company headquartered in Buffalo, New York. M&T's principal banking subsidiary, M&T Bank, provides banking products and services with a branch and ATM network spanning the eastern U.S. from Maine to Virginia and Washington, D.C. Trust-related services are provided in select markets in the U.S. and abroad by M&T's Wilmington Trust-affiliated companies and by M&T Bank. For more information about M&T Bank, visit www.mtb.com.

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