
CRT News

next CRT Quarterly Meeting
Wednesday,
January 16, 2013
12:00-1:00 pm

Here comes the Trolley!

Citizens for Regional Transit meets at:
237 Main Street at Seneca Street, Buffalo, NY

Follow signs, to the second floor Mezzanine conference room

CRT meetings are free and open to the public



...also includes the Annual Meeting and election of officers...

Capital Maintenance 101

At their September meeting, the NFTA Board of Commissioners haggled over whether to award a contract for repairing/replacing the elevator at Metro Rail's University station.

Their wrangling reminded us of an underlying problem: delayed capital maintenance for Metro Rail.

The NFTA used to have a long-range planning department. That group offered a 10-year capital maintenance plan (costing \$53 million) in 1993 which would have kept Metro Rail in good repair. By the time of the major transit study completed in 2000, the authority had spent only \$13 million for that purpose. Today, items on that 1993 list are still waiting for attention.

The maintenance workers at the NFTA are dedicated to their task. They often make do with limited funding in order to keep the system running and provide this vital service for riders. NFTA commissioners should listen to these workers and seek adequate funding so that the trains and the stations and the tunnel are in good repair.

Metro Rail carries over a million riders annually. They deserve good equipment and stations--clean, light, in good repair.

Basic maintenance, right?

CRT is on Facebook!

Friend us! and visit our website, citizenstransit.org



Pro-Transit Ballot Initiatives Continue Track Record of Success

Voters Value Public Transportation – Nearly 70 percent of Transit Measures Pass

...by Virginia Miller, apta.com

By a passage rate of nearly 70 percent (68.4%), voters across the country continued a track record of success for pro-transit measures as 13 of 19 local public transit-related ballot initiatives were approved yesterday. Adding yesterday's results to earlier transit measures this year, 46 out of 58 pro-transit measures have passed in 2012 at a rate of 79.3 percent. These numbers reflect a long-term trend -- since the year 2000, more than 70 percent of public transit ballot measures have successfully passed....

A half-cent sales tax for local and regional public transit was passed in Orange County, NC. This follows last year's successful half-cent sales tax measure for improved public transportation in Durham County, NC, by creating larger, regional public transportation services in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina, which includes Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill.

Voters in Arlington County, VA overwhelmingly voted by 80 percent to pass a nearly \$32 million bond that will support a number of public transit projects, including capital projects for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Not all successful transit-related initiatives involved raising new funds. There were three ballot initiatives to eliminate service and all three were turned down. By a rate of 70 percent, voters in Falmouth, ME voted against ending METRO services after December 31, 2013. Fifty-nine percent of voters in Spencer Township, OH voted against withdrawing from the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority. Additionally, 73 percent of voters in Walker, MI voted against a measure to end service by the Interurban Transit Partnership...

For a complete list of 2012 transportation state and local ballot initiatives, go to the CFTE web site at www.cfte.org.

Citizens for Regional Transit invites You...

Join us!

CRT mission is to improve bus transit and to expand rail transit for all of Western New York through citizen involvement and education.

Membership dues are fully tax-deductible!

corporate \$150.

household \$35.

individual \$25.

student \$5.

Membership payable by check or via PayPal.

Send check to:

Citizens Regional Transit

c/o John K. Howell, treasurer

289 Ashford Avenue

Tonawanda, NY 14150-8563





***CRT connects with CNU
(aka Congress for New Urbanism)***
by CRT Board

Chautauqua Institution was the beautiful setting for the October 12-14 retreat organized by the New York chapter of the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU). Pictured at right are the CRT delegates: Elizabeth Giles, Douglas Funke, Ed Deutschman, Joan Bozer, Gladys Gifford and Alvin J. Schuster.

President Gifford offered an impassioned plea to the CNU-- use your influence to push the Federal government to invest in public transit!

Numerous speakers described in detail the advantages of urban living in the 21st century, noting that neighborhoods should have clear connections and be walkable. Public transit is essential for such "new" urban living. CRT attendees were energized and encouraged to continue our advocacy for expanded Metro Rail.

New Yorkers were encouraged to help plan the next CNU national conference, to be held in Buffalo, in 2014.



Hurricane Sandy and public transit

compiled by G. Gifford

Hurricane Sandy, coupled with high tide and a strong cold front from the west, wreaked havoc on the transit systems of New Jersey, Long Island, Staten Island, and New York City.

An excellent article in New York Times, 11-8-12, detailed the hour-by-hour and day-to-day amazing effort by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to restore subway service.

Excerpt: It has been less than two weeks since the most devastating storm in the New York City subway system's 108-year history. Seven tunnels beneath the East River flooded. Entire platforms were submerged. Underground equipment, some of it decades old, was destroyed.

The damage was the worst that the system had ever seen. And yet, the subways have come back — quicker than almost anyone could have imagined."

Furthermore, voices usually critical of the MTA were amazed: "Some of what they're doing borders on the edge of magic," said Gene Russianoff, the staff lawyer for the Straphangers Campaign, a rider advocacy group that is frequently critical of the authority.

The fiscal impact of the storm is not yet fully understood. However, the daily impact on economic life for the whole region is becoming clear: public transit in metro NYC is its economic engine. As reported by Tri-State Transportation Campaign, the MTA estimated that every day the system was down they lost [\\$18 million](#) in revenue, while Governor Cuomo [estimated](#) that the downstate region alone lost \$6 billion in economic revenue as a result of the storm.

AARP Offers Transportation Solutions for Boomers – good for All

AARP’s Public Policy Institute has just released a new study, “Impact of Baby Boomers on U.S. Travel, 1969-2009.” See www.aarp.org/research/ppi/ One conclusion: promote transit-oriented development, to accommodate older people with limited ability to use cars.

A review of the report, by Renata Silberblatt, is available at Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

Excerpts follow:

The report offers policy recommendations focused on improving and maintaining mobility for this age group including:

- Coordination within the health care industry to reduce patients’ number of vehicle trips;

- Adopting individual “personal mobility planning” – planning for a time when owning and operating a personal vehicle is no longer an option; and

Promoting transit-oriented developments which connect public transportation and a mix of building uses. TOD “could enable older residents to remain in their communities, perhaps in smaller homes, and increase their access to transit and other community services.”

The study notes, “Just as boomers changed the country’s travel patterns over the past 40 years, they will influence the broad range of *senior transportation* strategies employed to address the travel needs of older adults today and tomorrow.”

Though AARP terms these and other recommendations “senior transportation strategies,” these strategies also benefit the broader populace. Housing developers are finding that TOD is attractive to a wide demographic beyond seniors.

Calendar

Nov. 29, 11 am

Partners for the Public Good votes on 2013 Agenda planks, 12th floor, 237 Main St., Buffalo

Dec. 5, 9:30 am

Planning & Coordinating Committee of GBNRTC, NYSDOT, 100 Seneca St., Bflo.

Dec. 14, 10 am

GBNRTC Policy Committee Sheraton Hotel, 7001 Buffalo Ave., Niagara Falls

Dec. 14, 10 am

Partners for the Public Good Roll out 2013 Agenda, PUSH, Grant St., Bflo.

Jan. 16, 12-1 pm

CRT Annual Meeting, 237 Main St., Buffalo