



CRT News

A Quarterly Publication of Citizens for Regional Transit

Citizens for Regional Transit Next Public Meeting

Review of 2018

Looking Ahead to 2019

Funding Outlook after Mid-term Elections

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Thursday, January 17, 2019

5:30 - 7:00 p.m. (doors open at 5:00)

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Central Library, 1 Lafayette Square

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Presenters:

Doug Funke, CRT

**Hal Morse, Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation
Council**

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FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Elmwood Village Association Octoberfest Shuttle



Why Hydrogen-Electric Buses for Buffalo, New York
David Stout, CRT member, retired Environmental Analyst (NYSDEC)
and Solar Energy Capture Advocate

Fuel-cell transit buses refuel in less than 5 minutes (versus all electric battery buses) AND use carbon-free fuel, hydrogen gas, which can be produced from renewable sources (hydro, wind, and sun electric) or as a by-product of chlorine production for drinking water purification. Germany has several cities using hydrogen powered transit buses and leads in implementing the Hydrogen Economy.

In the US, a consortium of NREL Clean Cities Program, fuel-cell auto and bus manufacturers, compressed gas suppliers and makers, and major carbon fuel suppliers (Shell, BP) operate www.h2USA.org which have a planning system projecting fuel-cell transit in Buffalo, NY about 2027 (8). This will not provide the carbon reduction required to meet the “paradigm shift” required by the NCA4 (14) and IPCC (21) Reports released in the past 3 months.

Several organizations have evaluated the current situation and found that the 55% of fossil fuel energy used in the transportation and buildings heating and cooling are not being reduced at the rate needed to avoid the most significant effects of global warming which requires limits less than 1.5 degrees Centigrade or less by 2030 (11)(13). Some US politicians urge a “Green New Deal” that would fully transition the USA away from fossil-fuels within 10 years of 2018 (22). Buffalo can lead the way forming the “New York Hydrogen Coalition” (after www.massh2.org and www.h2USA.org) showing the “Empire State” as a leader today. CRT can play an important role in bringing the hydrogen economy and fossil-free choice to the Western NY area as part of a larger national change.

The key players in the proposed NY Hydrogen Coalition should encourage the installation of a Hydrogen Refueling Station at the UPS Service Center near the FORD plant in Hamburg, NY to serve that business, Buffalo transit buses, and the public and trucking using I90 via Milestrip Road. US government funding through NREL/USDOE Clean Cities Program should cover part of the station and transit vehicle cost. Bulk hydrogen gas providers (Air Liquide, Praxair, or similar) and an electrolyzer manufacturer (Proton/NEL, CT or similar) will be involved. Off-site users will pay for the gas they use like we do at fossil-fuel stations (1)(2). The Fuccillo Automotive Group and Toyota America (Mirai) could support the effort by making personal fuel cell vehicles available as they have in California.

Hydrogen storage systems have matured technology for safe storage in vehicles and refueling centers over the past 10 years due to taxpayer funding from USDOE. Adequate energy is available from the SUN and its influences on the planet’s surface to power all energy uses on the surface four times over. Thus, to save this planet’s ecosystem the world must change where we get our energy and the devices we use to make life as we know it currently. Implementation requires hydrogen refueling stations, hydrogen vehicles of every kind, and heat-pump heating and cooling systems run by electric for existing homes (many will need more insulation), and the abandonment of the fossil fuel era began with Henry Ford and Louis Sinclair. It will take about 10 years. WE MUST BEGIN this change NOW.

NOTE: For a list of references cited above and a longer bibliography, go to www.citizenstransit.org/news



CRT at Work for Western NY: October - December 2018

We held our quarterly public meeting. Speakers from Erie County and the NFTA joined CRT President Doug Funke in a program about transit and the environment. Doug introduced a new petition calling on Erie County to increase its portion of sales tax contributed to the NFTA.

We wrote letters. We presented oral and written comments to the NFTA at their public hearing on the budget for FYE 2020. We submitted public comments to the GBNRTC in support of funding to the NFTA for Metro Rail escalator replacements, elevator Improvements, tunnel liner replacements, and station exterior rehabilitation. We wrote to the NFTA expressing opposition to the proposed sale of naming rights for the Erie Canal Harbor Station to the Seneca Gaming Corporation.

We participated in stakeholder meetings about pedestrian safety and the Amherst Expansion project.

We staffed information tables at community events. These included World on Your Plate at Daemen College, an outreach event at the Matt Urban Center, and a public meeting of the Our Outer Harbor coalition.

We attended a national transit conference. CRT Board member Betsy Giles attended the annual Rail~Volution conference in Pittsburgh, where she gained much valuable information. Conference presentations can be found at <https://railvolution.org/>



We attended meetings of transportation and community organizations, including Buffalo Place, Buffalo Transit Riders United, GBNRTC, NFTA, Our Outer Harbor, Partnership for the Public Good, Sierra Club Buffalo Niagara, and VOICE Buffalo. CRT Board members met with Bill Vanecek, Director of Aviation at the NFTA, to discuss the future light rail extension to the Buffalo Niagara International Airport.

We attended training/work sessions about how to work effectively with the media and how to craft a proposal for the Partnership for the Public Good's Community Agenda. Our proposal was selected for the 2019 Community Agenda, to be presented at the rollout of the agenda in January.



We attended informational meetings about the future of the suburbs, the future of the region in general, the Outer Harbor, and the NFTA's Amherst Expansion project.

We developed a research data bank. CRT Board member Seth Triggs worked with student interns from Canisius College to establish a collection of research findings supporting our arguments to the public for transit and related topics.

KEEP US ON TRACK IN 2019

Happy New Year! 2018 was a great year for CRT; you can keep it going in 2019. Join or renew now via [PayPal](#) or mail the form shown below with a check to 617 Main St., Suite #201, Buffalo, NY 14203.

In 2018, CRT continued our efforts to promote public transit. Throughout the year, we have been busy with letters, opinion pieces, and interviews in local media; meetings with State and Federal government representatives, presentations to community groups; information tables at events; attendance at meetings of transportation agencies and community organizations; written and oral comments on regional transportation plans, and more.



We held public informational meetings on (1) bi-national rail connections between Buffalo-Niagara and Canada and (2) local efforts by Erie County and others to support the Paris Climate Accord by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, with transportation as a central focus. We attended Transit Awareness Day in Albany and met with WNY representatives. We piloted boxes for seating at select bus stops. We sent a CRT representative to Rail~Volution 2018 in Pittsburgh, Pa., who brought back many helpful and inspiring stories to encourage our work.



CRT relies on members for all ongoing expenses. We are entirely staffed by volunteers, so contributions go directly to promoting transit. Your membership fosters our continuing and expanded efforts.





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Citizens for Regional Transit
Membership Year- January 1 thru December 31, 2019

Name _____

E-mail _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Suggested donation levels - check one for amount sent:

- Corporate - name and logo will be shown on our website \$250. or more
- Group/organization \$50.
- Household \$35.
- Individual \$25.
- Student, senior, unemployed ... \$5.

**CRT is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
and all contributions are tax deductible.**

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Another Way to Donate: Amazon Smile

When you shop online at Amazon, you can donate to CRT using a special log-in for Amazon Smile. Log in to www.smile.amazon.com and specify “Citizens Regional Transit Corporation” for your donations, or use this direct [login](#) *before selecting your purchases*.

Calendar

- January 10 – CRT Executive Board monthly meeting, 12-1:30 p.m., [Central Library West Room.]
- January 17 - CRT Quarterly Public Meeting/Annual Business Meeting, 5:30-7:00 p.m., location TBA.
- February 25-26 - [Transit Awareness Day, Albany](#)

Citizens for Regional Transit (CRT) seeks to educate the region about the benefits of a comprehensive transportation system including an expanded Metro Rail.

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