



CRT News

Citizens for Regional Transit Next Public Meeting:

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**Wednesday, October 19, 2016, 5:30-7:00 pm
(Doors open at 5:00)
United Way, 742 Delaware Ave., Buffalo**

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**Options for a New Multimodal Transportation Station in Downtown
Buffalo**

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Featuring:

**Bruce Becker, National Association of Rail Passengers
Dan Leonard, Buffalo Niagara Partnership
Tom DeSantis, City of Niagara Falls Planning Department**

Introductory remarks by Mayor Paul Dyster, Niagara Falls

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Free and open to the public

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Buffalo-Niagara Needs to Make Long-term Investments in Public Transit

By CRT President Doug Funke

The critical need for comprehensive improvements to our public transportation system was made obvious by the recent rubber ducky traffic gridlock experienced at Canalside. This need was summarized in the recent CRT essay published in the Buffalo News Another Voice Column on September 20th.

In the essay, CRT commends the efforts of the NFTA to extend efficient transit (light rail or bus rapid transit) to the Amherst Campus and extend the light rail through the DL&W Terminal to the Cobblestone District. Improvements to transit along Niagara Street and the ongoing system-wide re-evaluation of routes and schedules are also laudable, as are the proactive efforts of Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster and Senior Planner Tom DeSantis to build a new multimodal transportation center in Niagara Falls.

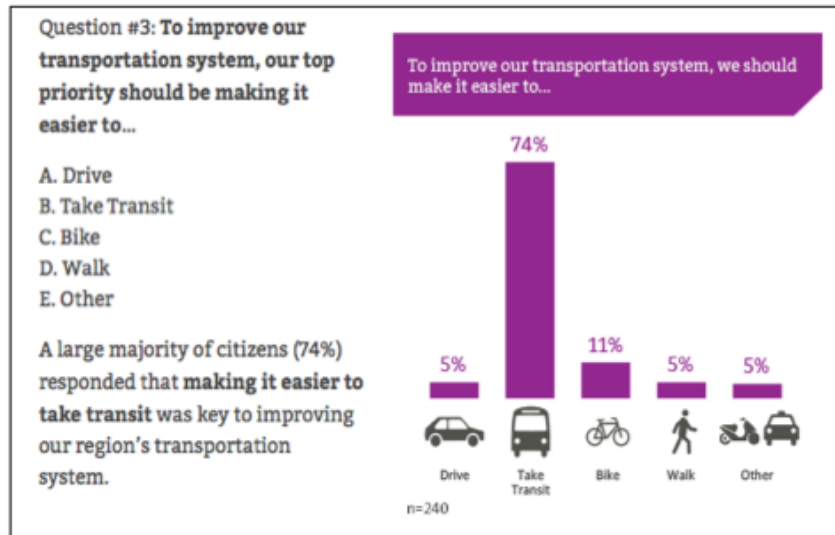
But these are first steps toward comprehensive, long-term improvements that are needed. The final goal is a 21st century high capacity transit network like those being developed in cities across the US; a transit network that takes advantage of our many publically owned rights-of-way and serves as a catalyst for economic growth across the region. Toward this goal CRT has initiated a petition calling for long-term investments in public transit. The petition specifically calls for:

1. Extensions of Metro Rail along the highest-demand corridors. Priority extensions are to Amherst Campus (in process), through the DL&W Terminal to the Cobblestone District (in process) and then to Larkinville, the airport, and a park & ride near Transit Road. The petition also calls for connecting to the Bills Stadium (New Era Field) and preserving existing rights-of-way for eventual expansion to the Southtowns and the Tonawandas.
2. Intermodal connectivity to air and inter-city rail. It's not enough to improve our public transportation system; we also need to integrate with the larger transportation infrastructure. This means connections with air and Amtrak, as well as intercity bus and bicycle and pedestrian travel modes.
3. Establishment of long-term sustainable transit funding. Permanent, reliable and sufficient funding streams are essential for achieving these goals and sustaining the operations and maintenance of the expanded transit services.

The petition has been signed by many important community organizations such as the Buffalo Urban League, the Campaign for Greater Buffalo, the Coalition for Economic Justice, GoBike Buffalo, the League of Women Voters, the Network of Religious Communities, Partnership for the Public Good, PUSH Buffalo, the Sierra Club, VOICE Buffalo, and many others. Also, a growing number of municipal leaders have signed the petition, as summarized in the figure. Here's a link to a complete list of signers: <http://citizenstransit.org/node/97>



The call for expanding our light rail and improving our public transportation network is not surprising. When the recent GBNRTC One-Region-Forward initiative asked people from across our two-county region where we need to invest to improve our transportation system, the focus was clearly investments that would make it easier to take public transit as shown below.



There is a growing consensus among Buffalo-Niagara leaders that we need to build a world-class, 21st century transit network. We call on all Buffalo-Niagara leaders to join and help lead the call for fundamental improvements in our public transportation system.



CRT at Work for Western New York

Our President, Doug Funke, **presented information about local transit issues** to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Rotary Club. He was interviewed on WBNY, the Buffalo State College radio station. We **staffed information tables** at the Volunteer Fair of the United Way Day of Caring, The Elmwood Festival of the Arts, and WNY Environmental Summit at Daemen College.



We **submitted comments** to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) on their new fare structure/policy; to the City of Buffalo Community Development Committee on traffic in downtown Buffalo; to the Niagara River Gorge/Robert Moses Parkway removal project on the importance of transit; and to Governor Cuomo on recently passed bills (1) establishing an advisory board to review upstate transit funding and make recommendations for its stabilization and improvement and (2) preventing local IDA's from exempting the 0.25% of the Mortgage Recording Tax that is allocated to regional transportation authorities like the NFTA. We **contributed to the editorial page of the Buffalo News**. Board members wrote letters about the removal of the skyway and the traffic problems in downtown Buffalo. CRT President Doug Funke wrote an essay on the need for a comprehensive transit system. We continued to work with the Partnership for the Public Good (PPG) on our vision for a **downtown Amtrak station** that would also serve as a multimodal transportation hub in the urban core. We met with Mayor Paul Dyster and City Planner Tom DeSantis to discuss their recent success in constructing a station in Niagara Falls. . We met with Congressman Brian Higgins' office to brief them on our vision. We met with Central Terminal developers to discuss our mutual interests. We appeared on the PPG radio program, The Pubic Good, WUFO 1080 AM, to discuss our plank.



We **attended meetings** of transportation agencies and community organizations, including NFTA, GBNRTC, Buffalo Place, WNY Environmental Alliance, Niagara River Greenway Commission, and Masten District stakeholders.



Citizens for Regional Transit (CRT) seeks to educate the public, public officials, their authorities and agencies in the Buffalo–Niagara region about the benefits of a comprehensive transportation system including an expanded Metro Rail.

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Please support our efforts with your dues and donations. Send your payment by [PayPal](#), or mail to Citizens for Regional Transit, 617 Main St., Suite #201, Buffalo, NY 14203.

Suggested donation levels:

Corporate: \$250.+ (name/logo will be on our website)

Group/organization: \$50.

Household: \$35.

Individual: \$25.

Student, senior, unemployed, etc.: \$5.

Calendar

May to October – Free tourist shuttle with multiple stops between Niagara Falls and Lewiston. For more information, see <http://www.discoverniagara.org> .

October 19 - CRT Quarterly Public Meeting, Buffalo Needs a Downtown Multimodal Train Station, 5:30 – 7:00 pm, United Way, 742 Delaware Ave.

Citizens for Regional Transit
617 Main Street, Suite #201
Buffalo, NY 14203

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