



CRT News

Citizens for Regional Transit Next Public Meeting:

Note Change of Date

*

**Wednesday, October 18, 2017, 5:30-7:00 pm
(Doors open at 5:00)**

*

United Way, 742 Delaware Ave., Buffalo

*

Transit, Lyft and Uber: a Shared Mobility System?

*

Speakers:

Rob Jones, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority

Dustin Earle, Lyft

Dan Leonard, Buffalo-Niagara Partnership

*

Free and open to the public

*



CRT at Elmwood Festival of the Arts, August 2017



President's Column: Transit and Ride Hailing
Doug Funke, CRT President

Can ride hailing services like Lyft and Uber combine with transit to improve regional mobility? Can this be done in ways that benefit the environment and the economy? We don't know yet, but we are beginning to see hints of the changes taking place as ride hailing services are being introduced.

What we know for sure is that the lines separating public transit and automobile-based travel are blurring and moving. Ride hailing services being offered by Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) like Lyft and Uber are filling a space that used to clearly separate automobile-based travel and public transit. The impacts are felt in geographic as well as economic terms.

A key distinction between ride hailing services and traditional transit is that ride hailing is more responsive to demand dynamics, but is less able to move large numbers of people efficiently, as summarized below. This means there are potential synergies between TNCs and traditional transit.

	Privately Owned Vehicles	TNCs	Transit
Schedule flexibility	Strong (responds to passenger schedule)	Strong (responds to passenger schedule)	Weak (fixed schedule keyed to high demand periods)
Geographic responsiveness	Strong (responds to traveler needs across dispersed areas)	Strong (responds to traveler needs across dispersed areas)	Weak (fixed routes where demand is highest)
Capacity	Low (small vehicles on sometimes congested roads)	Low (small vehicles on sometimes congested roads)	High (large vehicles, can operate on dedicated rights of way)
Environmental impact	High (each vehicle contributes pollution, creates congestion)	Moderate (can encourage car pooling, fewer cars manufactured)	Low (lowest pollution per passenger mile achievable)
Cost	High	Moderate (reduces need to own car)	Low (lowest cost per person)

The relative advantages of TNCs and traditional public transit bring potential for the two to work together in ways that complement and support each other, while reducing the need for private vehicle ownership and expense. The recent New York Public Transit Association (NYPTA) white paper (https://nytransit.org/images/NYPTA_TNC_issues_White_Paper.pdf) and a recent article by Cliff Henke (Metro Magazine, September 2015) have identified several areas where TNCs have worked with transit to improve mobility and transportation efficiency. For example, some TNCs have specifically targeted their services where traditional transit is weakest using dynamic crowd sourcing techniques to optimize affordable travel options. TNCs are also offering ride pooling and coordinating with traditional transit providers in some locations. These innovations and experiences will be described and discussed along with successful examples at our upcoming public meeting (see details on page 1).

The impact of emerging TNC services on the environment is still unclear. In theory, the availability of affordable demand-responsive travel options can reduce need for car ownership while reducing congestion and improving overall mobility. And better mobility with less congestion can provide economic benefits to the region. We hope so.



CRT at Work for Western New York

CRT President Doug Funke was **appointed to the new Transportation Committee of the Buffalo Common Council** and attended their first meeting. The committee will facilitate the coordination of transportation planning for all modes: transit, automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, ride hailing, intercity rail. We are pleased to have CRT represented and look forward to positive actions emerging from their work.

We continued to work with the Sierra Club Niagara Group on their **campaign for electric buses**. We helped with circulating petitions, staffing an information table, attending bus demonstrations, and meeting with NFTA staff.



We **met with the WNY Land Conservancy and Rep. Brian Higgins' office**, and sent a follow-up letter regarding the emerging plans for a trail and our concerns that future transit plans not be impeded by the use of existing land for nature trails.

We participated in **No-Car Day**, September 22, with Go Buffalo Niagara, helping to staff an information table at the Downtown Country Market and promoting their pledge to go car-free for a day.



We **appeared on television and in the newspaper**. CRT President Doug Funke was interviewed about the Amherst-Buffalo Extension and Board member Betsy Giles sent a letter to the Buffalo News about Amazon in Buffalo. We were interviewed by Rebecca Reilly for a future entry on her blog, Imaginomix.

We **attended meetings of transportation agencies and community organizations** including Buffalo Place, GBNRTC, NFTA, Niagara River Greenway Commission, WNY Environmental Alliance, PPG, and Buffalo Transit Riders United. We also attend Transit-Oriented Development meetings and a storytelling workshop.



**ANNOUNCING:
SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!!!
Join CRT Now and Get 1 1/4 Years for the Price of 1!
Join in person and get a free grocery tote!**

From now until the end of 2017, new memberships will extend to the end of 2018. You can join or renew your membership by mail or via PayPal. Suggested membership dues are:

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

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

As an added bonus, CRT will be giving free grocery totes to new and renewing members who join IN PERSON. Membership donations may be made in person at community events and at CRT public meetings.



CONTEST: WHERE IS THIS BUS STOP?



We recently discovered this beautiful bus shelter. Can you identify its location? Send your answer to crtc@citizenstransit.org to be entered in a drawing for a prize. If you know of other view-worthy transit stops and shelters, send them to us for future newsletter contests.

BUS CUBES IN ROCHESTER



This is a great idea! Send your suggestions for locations within the NFTA service area. We are looking into it!



Calendar

October 18 - CRT Quarterly Public Meeting – Transit, Lyft and Uber: a Shared Mobility System?
See details on page 1.

January 2018 – CRT Quarterly Public Meeting – Annual business meeting – details TBA.

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

www.citizenstransit.org

crtc@citizenstransit.org



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.

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