



# CITIZENS for REGIONAL TRANSIT NEWS

published by Citizens Regional Transit Corporation  
P.O. Box 1186, Buffalo, NY 14231-1186  
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Volume #7 Issue #2

February 2006

## Vignettes on Metro Rail

Metro Rail is great for people-watching.

views from the train--

a woman knits, then takes a nap...  
several people read books, newspaper...  
young lovers hug in the doorway...  
harried man brings grocery bags home...  
a student intent on his textbook...  
a pious soul doing her prayers...

conductor calls out--  
"there's no eating, drinking, playing loud  
radio without headphones."

everybody is polite, despite close  
proximity, quiet, avoiding eye contact...

daughter cares for father...  
bicyclist fits bicycle into front space...  
a man manouvers on and off the train  
with his oxygen tank, fiercely  
independent...  
people converse, share, meet...

...a woman boards the train. at the very  
next station, another woman gets on and  
sits with the first, they talk and carry on,  
animatedly. they make these connections  
because they use the train...

"Not long ago, I saw a man I hadn't seen  
in years. He was exiting the train just as  
I was getting on it. I never would have  
seen him if I hadn't taken the train..."

There's an amazing diversity on the train,  
corresponding closely to the diversity in  
the urban population...young and old,  
majority and minority, women and men..

There's opportunity for community-  
building on the train, as well as the  
bus...regulars check on each other, chance  
conversations develop...

Metro Rail--it's the place to be!

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## CRTC Monthly Meeting

**Tuesday, February 21**

**12:00 Noon**

### "Transit Issues for Older Adults"

**Pamela Krawczyk,  
Erie County Department of Senior Services**

Pamela Krawczyk has been Commissioner of The Erie County Department of Senior Services since January, 2000. As Commissioner, she is responsible for the development of a comprehensive and coordinated plan of cost-effective services within the community to meet present and future needs of seniors and their caregivers. Pamela seeks opportunities to promote the strengths, health and wellness of older adults in ways that empower them to lead lives of independence, health and dignity.

**Join us!**

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**Citizens Regional Transit meets at:**

**3330 Main Street, corner NF Blvd., Buffalo**

University Presbyterian Church education wing  
Enter through the parking lot door, take elevator to "ML."

**CRTC meetings are free and open to the public.**

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# NYSDOT'S Draft 25-year Plan: Comment Period ends Feb. 24

[www.dot.state.ny.us](http://www.dot.state.ny.us)

New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Commissioner Thomas J. Madison, Jr. announced [12-30-05] the release of a draft, 25-year transportation master plan, a comprehensive overview of new policies and programs for managing the State's multi-modal transportation network by focusing on customer needs and investment strategies that benefit entire transportation corridors.

"New trade patterns, advancing technology and increased freight and passenger traffic are placing great demands on transportation systems across New York State and the nation," Commissioner Madison said. "This master plan, the result of extensive outreach to the public, system users and other transportation agencies, provides a common-sense approach for ensuring customer satisfaction with a seamless statewide transportation system encompassing highway, public transit, rail, air, sea, and pedestrian infrastructures."

The draft master plan, entitled "Transportation Strategies for a New Age: New York's Transportation Plan for 2030," is subject to a 45-day public comment period, which ends Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. The plan is available at the NYSDOT website at [www.dot.state.ny.us](http://www.dot.state.ny.us). To view it, please select "New York State Transportation Plan," located on the lower left of the NYSDOT home page.

Copies also may be obtained by visiting any of the 11 NYSDOT regional offices, any of New York's 13 metropolitan planning organizations, by writing to Master Plan, New York State Department of Transportation, 50 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12232, or by calling toll-free 1-888-336-PLAN (7526).

The plan is designed to foster the creation of a predictable, convenient, and customer-friendly transportation network. It will serve as the policy foundation for future funding programs and corridor-based investment strategies. The plan calls for transportation investments to be customer-driven, ensuring that they are consistent with public demand. Investments will be prioritized through the designation of major transportation corridors, including ones focusing on trade, intercity passengers, commuters, and tourism.

Transportation planning and investment strategies will be centered around five priorities that have been identified by stakeholders and the traveling public as their primary expectations from our multi-modal transportation network. These include improving system mobility and reliability, enhancing safety, improving environmental conditions, promoting economic sustainability, and increasing security.

Key recommendations within the Master Plan include:

- Instituting priority funding for measures, management strategies, and new technologies designed to relieve congestion and promote energy savings and cleaner air;
- Strengthening credentialing requirements and training for commercial and individual vehicle operators;
- Ensuring safety considerations are included in all transportation investments, with particular emphasis on bicyclists, pedestrians, and the State's elderly population;
- Promoting environmentally sensitive infrastructure investments, especially those that will directly improve the environment and aid in historic preservation efforts;
- Integrating statewide transportation planning efforts with other regional, local and private land use and transportation planning efforts to promote quality communities and ensure consistency and harmony; and
- Strengthening security at international border crossings, ports, waterways, and general aviation facilities.

The draft master plan was developed in conjunction with a wide range of public and private transportation stakeholders, including oral and written testimony delivered in 2004 at nine statewide meetings of the New York State Advisory Panel on Transportation Policy for 2025.

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## Citizens Regional Transit Corp.

aims to improve and expand bus and rail transit for all of WNY through citizen involvement and education.

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**CITIZENS REGIONAL TRANSIT CORP.**  
c/o Alvin J. Schuster, treasurer  
174 Capen Blvd., Amherst, NY 14226

## Historic Trolleys Find new Home in Cleveland

*1-12-06 Sun Newspapers, Cleveland*

Later this year, a collection of antique electric trolleys of the former Trolleyville USA, now called Lakeshore Electric Railway, will be moving downtown [Cleveland]. Lake Shore Electric [will] build a car barn at the end of the Waterfront Line near East 26th Street...

Once the new car barn is finished, the next stop for Lakeshore Electric is to build a lakefront trolley museum, to display the impact trolleys made on urban development in the first half of the 20th century. [The museum] will explain Cleveland's importance to the streetcar era, as many cars used nationwide were built here, said Steve Frye, a consultant to the museum.

Lakeshore Electric's initiative has intrigued city officials and downtown developers about the potential for making downtown more of a neighborhood. The museum's goal ultimately is to replace RTA's downtown circulator buses with streetcars....

"We already have the trolleys," said Frye. "The goal is to connect areas of development and encourage new development. In Dallas, they put in two miles of trolley line and saw \$300 million in new development along the tracks."

# “Cars Sharing Main Street”--Opportunity for TOD?

...CRTC Executive Board

The “Cars Sharing Main Street” project has been officially launched. The first public meeting, conducted by the City of Buffalo, Buffalo Place, and the NFTA was held Feb. 1st at the Market Arcade Film and Arts Center, Buffalo.

The CRTC Executive Board offers the following comments:

Cars Sharing Main Street is an opportunity to do downtown design right, as a transit-oriented development project.

CRTC agrees that certain features of Buffalo Place need to be changed: the sidewalks are too wide, and limited vehicular travel on the street would provide more flexible access to businesses.

CRTC agrees that the trackbed of Metro Rail requires extensive capital maintenance, and must not be delayed any longer.

However, CRTC objects strongly to the design alternative, “Share the Train Way,” that was presented on 2-1-06.

\* There is no need for cars and trains to share the same space, since the whole right-of-way for Main Street in downtown Buffalo is 99’ wide, with plenty room for sidewalks, bike paths, parking lanes, two lanes of traffic and Metro Rail’s two tracks. A model for this alternative already exists, in front of the Ellicott Square building.

\* Cars and trains sharing the same space presents significant safety hazards for all vehicles and pedestrians. Each mode should operate in their own space, separated by clear barriers.

\* Sharing the trackbed will impede the on-time operations of Metro Rail. Any changes made to Main Street must enhance the performance and maintenance of Metro Rail. The NFTA representative at the 2-1-06 meeting admitted that this proposal will interfere with Metro Rail operations.

In addition, CRTC offers several suggestions to improve the overall design of the project:

\* Traffic modeling should prohibit all left-hand turns from Main Street. Left-hand turns impede the flow of both train and vehicles, and the delay while idling creates excessive air pollution. Left-hand turns exacerbate safety issues.

\* Main Street should be designed with many traffic-calming features, to ensure that motor vehicles drive slowly, yield to pedestrians, and avoid creating hazards. Raised crosswalks for pedestrians and a rounded curve barrier between train ways and vehicular traffic are good examples of traffic calming applicable to Main Street. Traffic modeling should take into account the effect of ‘induced traffic’--additional traffic congestion generated simply by the opportunity to drive on Main Street.

\* The greatest safety hazard occurs at the portal, where Metro Rail descends into the tunnel. The rail bed should be grade-separated from vehicular roadway at that location.

\* As a matter for efficient use of Federal funds, the order of work should be reversed, i.e., do the section south of Broadway first and the Theater District last.

In summary, Metro Rail is an asset to Buffalo, bringing thousands of employees and visitors to the downtown area daily. Buffalo’s Metro Rail is the third most heavily used light rail system in the country. Therefore, improvements to Main Street must be oriented to pedestrians and transit users, not to automobiles, providing an enhanced infrastructure for everyone in WNY to use daily as they live, work and play in downtown Buffalo.

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Transit-oriented development (TOD) has not happened in any organized way in downtown Buffalo. Recently, elements of TOD are being included in the current development of the Allen Street station neighborhood in relationship to the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus.

TOD occurs when city planners adhere to guidelines which encourage development along the light rail line, clustered around the stations. Such planning recognizes that a healthy downtown commercial district can develop when businesses recognize the advantages of attracting the pedestrian traffic generated by Metro Rail to their doors.

TOD, such as employed in Charlotte, NC, employs zoning that encourages mixed-use and high-density residential development within a half-mile of each station.

Surveys done for the Cars Sharing Main Street show that a high proportion of downtown employees and visitors use Metro Rail regularly to access downtown. Therefore, TOD principles should be utilized to stimulate retail and residential opportunities so that transit users will have many reasons to spend time and money in downtown.

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**An Essential Public Meeting!  
Participate in Critical Planning for WNY!**

**Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2006, 9:30 AM  
Public Transportation Forum**

Topics to include: Long Range Plan 2030, potential projects

**Hyatt Regency, Buffalo**

followed by

**Policy Committee Meeting  
Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional  
Transportation Council**

**Be there!**

**Let your voice be heard!**

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**Citizens Regional Transit Corporation**

P.O. Box 1186

Buffalo, NY 14231-1186

*return service requested*

**CALENDAR**

Feb. 16 comments deadline  
“Cars Sharing Main Street”

**Feb. 21 12:00 noon  
CRTC Monthly Meeting  
3330 Main St., Buffalo  
Pat Krawczyk, Erie County  
Office of Aging: “Transit  
Issues for Older Adults”**

Feb. 24 9:30 AM  
Public Forum, followed by  
Policy Committee meeting of  
GBNRTC, Hyatt Regency, Buffalo

Feb. 24 comments deadline  
“Transportation Strategies for a New  
Age: New York’s Transportation Plan  
for 2030” (p. 2)

**Mar. 21 12:00 noon  
CRTC Monthly Meeting  
3330 Main St., Buffalo**

June 10 Save the Date!  
trip to Cleveland, National Railway  
Historical Society