



CITIZENS for REGIONAL TRANSIT NEWS

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March 2006

Harbor Vision

The three panelists at the Buffalo Forum, March 3, all claimed Irish heritage and all affirmed that the glass is half-full.

Is this reason to cheer, or what?

The subject was the Buffalo waterfront.

The three Irish-Americans exuded confidence and optimism. The model they cited for the Buffalo project was Battery Park, in New York City. The first step for that project was to install necessary public infrastructure, which created the context for successful private development. In turn, that private development has occurred in distinct, completed phases over several years.

- * Larry Quinn, Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp., assured the group that Bass Pro will develop the Aud.
- * Michael Powers, attorney and liason between Bass Pro and Erie Canal Harbor Development, confirmed that historical features relating to the waterfront will be preserved and respected.
- * Brian Higgins, Congressman from the 27th District, declared that the waterfront will rejoin downtown Buffalo as one unified harbor and indicated that \$30 million is available for building access to the harbor.

Questioned by Joseph Radder, CRTC member, Quinn announced that various options for access to the waterfront will be made public by the end of March.

Moderated by David Stebbins, ECIDA, the event succeeded in its objective: four key players in the local development scene publically committed to doing the Buffalo waterfront project correctly: infrastructure first, including public access, then private development in defined stages over time.

Raise a half-full glass---
Cheers!

CRTC Monthly Meeting

**Tuesday, March 21
12:00 Noon**

“To the Buffalo Waterfront”

a proposal by

Joseph Radder

Joseph Radder, former chair of CRTC, will present his exciting new proposal for Metro Rail and Vintage Trolleys on the waterfront through a Power Point Presentation, developed by Seth Triggs.

Join us!

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.

Bicycle Community to hold Memorial Ride

www.BuffaloBikes.com/memorial

On Sunday March 12th a Memorial Bicycle Ride will be held in honor of Jadwiga Kurtyko, age 53, who was struck and killed by a motor vehicle this past Monday at 3:20 PM on South Ogden Street. Because she is the second cyclist killed this year in the city, Buffalo's bicycling community has decided to bring attention to these fatalities.

The facts: 26.4% of NYS households simply don't own a vehicle, and 40% of all New York residents don't possess a driver's license. These include the young, the elderly, those who cannot afford a vehicle, have a physical disability that prevents them from driving and those who have made it a lifestyle choice.

Bicyclists are legally permitted to operate on the streets and highways of New York State, and approximately 1.5 million bicycle trips and 20 million pedestrian trips are made everyday. However, bicyclists and pedestrians together make up a disproportionate share of collisions (10% of all reported), injuries (10.3% of all reported) and fatalities (27.3% of all reported).

Solutions are needed to begin to address these issues. Our streets need to be made more accessible for all modes of travel [to] accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and automobiles safely. Furthermore, education is an important component for not only automobile drivers but for cyclists and pedestrians as well. It is hopeful that these challenges will begin to be addressed by the formation of Buffalo's new bicycle and pedestrian advisory board.

Until these issues begin to be addressed, a Memorial Bicycle Ride will be held at noon the following Sunday after every fatality, beginning at the fatality site and traveling to Niagara Square for a moment of silence to bear witness to the tragedy and affirm our continued intention to ride the streets of Buffalo.

Unfortunately, Ms. Kurtyko is not likely to be the last cyclist to die on Buffalo's streets. A website and email list has been established so that interested citizens will know where and when we can pay our respects.

For more information and to join the email list please visit:
http://buffalobikes.com/mailman/listinfo/memorial_buffalobikes.com.

News articles concerning bicyclist fatalities may be sent to Memorial@buffalobikes.com.

In addition, the web page www.BuffaloBikes.com/memorial will be kept up-to-date on bicycle fatalities and will provide information for those wishing to pay their respects.

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Tampa FL: Streetcar is Undeniable Smash Hit!

tamparail.org/10/24/2005

(Local blogger David Pinero reviews streetcar system)

The Teco Line Streetcar system[Tampa] is an unquestionable hit with riders and multi-million dollar investores alike.

Ridership continues to exceed its best outset expectations which predicted that only 950 riders would ever board the streetcar on any given day for the entire year. But Tampa tourists and residents alike are more thirsty than that for clean urban rail choice and now that the thing is up and running, ridership has consistently well maintained itself above mark.

In 2002 ridership clicked in at more than 1,250 riders per day, and in 2004 and 2005 it was 1,115 and 1,114 riders per day respectively. And that's with the National Hockey League strike and two aggressive storm seasons that didn't cripple above-average turnout a single bit.

This popularity has no doubt been a key factor in the residential renaissance concurrently evolving in Channelside alongside the streetcar's main route. ...

It's been a great three years for the system and it continues to [operate] as an example to local polticians and skeptical residents as to the viability of general rail choice.

Citizens Regional Transit Corp.

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

Join us! Membership dues are fully tax-deductible:

- corporate \$100.00
- household 35.00
- individual 25.00
- student 5.00

send check to:

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

NYC Transit Ridership on the Rise

[2-24-06 tstc@tstc.org](mailto:2-24-06_tstc@tstc.org)

New York City Transit saw the highest subway ridership last year since 1953, despite a three day transit strike and a fare hike for weekly and monthly MetroCard users, according to an agency [MTA] release.

Total subway ridership was 1.45 billion, an increase of 23.1 million customers over 2004. Subway ridership averaged 4.7 million riders on weekdays. Annual bus ridership was down slightly during the year to 736.4 million, but weekend bus ridership reached the highest levels since 1975. Weekday bus ridership was also up by 0.6% over 2004. Overall subway and bus ridership reached the highest level since 1970, 2.2 billion.

1-18-06 apta.com

...CRTC will provide a display at the Street Synergy fair, "Urban Discovery 2006," March 18, 12:00-3:00 PM, at Highgate Heights Elementary School, 600 Highgate Avenue, Buffalo.

Urban Discovery is an event to promote and facilitate home ownership in the University District of Buffalo. Street Synergy showcases all aspects of urban community life in one location to encourage prospective homebuyers to buy homes in the University District and to encourage current residents who are renters to own their own home.

Since the University District includes easy access to public transit, the CRTC helps residents discover the financial link between affordable public transit and home ownership and refers participants to the Smart Commute mortgage discount offered through Fannie Mae.

...The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) has invited the CRTC to participate in the March 21 meeting of their Long Range Plan subcommittee. The current Long Range Plan of the GBNRTC extends through 2025, but needs to be modified in order to match the new plan offered by the NYSDOT which extends through 2030.

...Leaders of community groups will be invited by the CRTC, Daemen College Center for Sustainable Communities, and the Wellness Center of Buffalo to participate in a transportation forum, May 13, at Daemen College. The event will focus on how the local transportation system impacts the effectiveness of civic-minded groups, and then seek to engage participants in actions that will incorporate transportation awareness and coordination into their community work.

Even With Decline in Gas Prices in November, Strong Ridership Trend Continues As More Than 25 Agencies Report Double Digit Increases

With high gas prices in the third quarter of 2005, national transit ridership grew by 3.3 % from the same period in 2004, according to a report released by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) today [1-18-06].

At the same time that transit ridership was increasing during the 2005 third quarter, Americans parked their cars and vehicle miles of travel (VMT) decreased by 0.2%, according to the Federal Highway Administration statistics. Additionally, a recent survey of transit systems conducted by APTA indicates that this growing ridership trend continued in November, despite a drop in gas prices that month.

"The increased ridership results of the third quarter, combined with the November ridership increases, indicate that more and more Americans want other options besides the automobile," said APTA President William W. Millar. "Transit ridership was on the move in 2005 and I fully expect that it will continue to grow as more people discover the convenience and affordability of public transportation."

The 2005 third quarter report shows that all types of public transportation showed increases. Light rail showed the largest increase at 8.8%. Some cities and one state had larger light rail increases than the national average: Minneapolis (70.9%), Tampa (22.1%), Sacramento (18.2%), Los Angeles (15.9%), San Diego (15.1%), Houston (14.8%), and New Jersey (14.1%).

Commuter rail showed the second highest national ridership increase for the 2005 third quarter of 4.6%. Larger individual ridership increases were experienced in the following areas: Chesterton, IN (10.4%), Philadelphia (9.9%), Harrisburg (8.9%), San Carlos, CA (7.9%), New Jersey (6.7%), Los Angeles (5.7%). Heavy rail (subway) lines across the country averaged a 4.3% increase.

Some major increases in heavy rail ridership were experienced in the following localities: Cleveland (7.8%), Los Angeles (7.7%), Philadelphia (7.6%), Boston (7.3%), Washington (6.3%), Chicago (6.2%), Jersey City - Port Authority of NY/NJ (5.4%), and Staten Island (5.0%).

The NFTA shares in this good news: ridership and income from fares are rising consistently in WNY. Budgetary pressures come from rising prices for diesel fuel, but the demand for public transit indicates that this service is essential and must be even more efficient and effective.

Charlier's Smart Growth Principles

#9. Good transportation planning requires the direct, committed and continuing involvement of a broad cross section of empowered community members. This is expensive, time-consuming and difficult. However, it also is essential.

...www.charlier.org

Clarkson Week, March 20-23, 2006
University of Buffalo
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
presents:

ENVISIONING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES,
with LAWRENCE FRANK, visiting professor

**“Built Environment as Health Enabler or
Disabler?”**

free public lecture by Prof. Frank,
Wed., March 22, 5:30 PM
301 Crosby Hall, UB South Campus

Lawrence Frank, Ph.D. is Associate Professor and the Bombardier Chair in Sustainable Urban Transportation Systems in the School of Community and Regional Planning at the University of British Columbia. He specializes in the interaction between land use, travel behavior, air quality, and public health. He is the author of Health and Community Design: The Impacts of the Built Environment on Physical Activity (2003) and The Public Health Impacts of Sprawl (2004).

For more information, contact the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at 716-829-2133

Citizens Regional Transit Corporation

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return service requested

CALENDAR

Mar. 12 12:00 noon (p. 2)
Memorial bicycle ride, S. Ogden St.

Mar. 18 12:00-3:00 PM (P. 3)
Urban Discovery fair
600 Highgate Ave., Buffalo

Mar. 20 9:00 AM
NFTA Budget hearing (at NFTA)
181 Ellicott St., 6th floor, Bflo.

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

Mar. 21 12:00-2:00 PM
“Planning Healthy Communities”
Clarkson Week symposium
UB/Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
700 Ellicott Street, Buffalo

Mar. 22 5:30 PM
“Built Environment/Health”
Clarkson Week lecture
301 Crosby Hall, UB South Campus

April 5 9:30 AM
PCC meeting of GBNRTC
Buffalo Niagara Partnership
665 Main Street, Buffalo

May 13 9:00-1:00 PM
Just Transportation forum (p. 3)

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