



CITIZENS for REGIONAL TRANSIT NEWS

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P.O. Box 1186, Buffalo, NY 14231-1186
crtc@citizenstransit.org http://citizenstransit.org/

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October 2005

CRTC Says: No to the 2005 Transportation Bond Act

At the October 4 meeting of its Executive Board, the Citizens Regional Transit Corp. (CRTC) voted to recommend a “No” vote on the proposition titled “Rebuild and Renew New York Transportation Bond Act of 2005.”

This action was not taken lightly, especially in view of the support of the Bond Act offered by other groups whose views we respect. However, the CRTC must be consistent with our own stated positions concerning New York State transportation funding:

- * no funding for new highways in Western New York until planning for Metro Rail expansion is begun;
- * equitable funding for public transit in upstate New York..

This Bond Act of 2005 allocates only \$50 million to upstate public transportation systems, for clean energy hybrid buses. Only \$3.0 million is earmarked for intercity passenger rail projects. These paltry amounts are not sufficient for the needs of upstate and especially metropolitan Buffalo, which has been cited by the American Lung Association as having “dirtier air than New York City.” The twenty hybrid buses added to the NFTA fleet would be helpful, but not nearly as effective as an expanded Metro Rail to reduce the production of greenhouse gases in the region.

The Bond Act of 2005 seeks one billion, one hundred thirty million dollars from State taxpayers for upstate highways and bridges. Such inequity short-changes everyone who depends on public transit for daily living and thwarts positive planning for future expansion of public transit to meet the growing demand for public transit.

Furthermore, all voters should be mindful of the warning issued by Comptroller Hevesi (10-3-05, Business First), saying that half of the monies paid on current debt goes for interest alone. The CRTC recommends that voters reject additional debt at this time and demand greater fiscal discipline from our transportation planners.

(See Sept. 05 CRTNews for more on the Bond Act of 2005.)

CRTC Monthly Meeting

**Tuesday, October 18
7:30 PM**

“Airport Corridor-- Connecting Opportunity”

**The Executive Board of the
CRTC will offer a draft of the Airport
Corridor presentation to be made to the
meeting of Western New York State
legislators.**

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.”

Lessons from Hurricane Katrina: What A Major Disaster Can Teach Transportation Planners

by Todd Litman, Victoria Transport Policy Institute

Summary

This paper examines failures in Hurricane Katrina disaster response and their lessons for transportation policy and planning in other communities. It identifies various policy and planning strategies that can help create a more efficient, equitable and resilient transport system.

The evacuation plan functioned relatively well for motorists, but failed to serve people who depend on public transit. Transport planners can help prevent future disasters by demanding that emergency response plans devote at least as much attention to the evacuation and care of non-drivers as they do to motorists.

Non-drivers include many people with various physical, economic and social problems. Planners need to anticipate these people’s needs. This may require special community outreach and communications activities to build understanding and trust among planners and the people they serve.

From a transport planning perspective, the greatest mistake in New Orleans was the lack of a detailed action plan to dispatch buses for evacuating transit-dependent residents. Such a plan would include an inventory of all available buses and essential staff, and pre-established procedures to deploy buses when an evacuation order is announced.

It is important to understand why many people ignored evacuation orders. Many faced logistical or financial barriers obtaining transport out of the city. Many had nowhere to go and were fearful of emergency shelter conditions. Some stayed to protect their property or pets, or out of bravado. Addressing these objections would increase evacuation order response.

A variety of planning policies and programs can help create a more resilient transport system. These increase system diversity and integration, improve user information, prioritize use of infrastructure, and provide special services during emergencies. These can benefit everybody in a community, even people who currently rely on automobile transportation.

(full text at: <http://www.vtpi.org/katrina.pdf>)

Citizens Regional Transit Corporation

P.O. Box 1186
Buffalo, NY 14231-1186

return service requested

CALENDAR

Oct.12 9:30 AM
GBNRTC PCC meeting
NYS Thruway, 455 Cayuga Road.,
Cheektowaga

Oct. 18 7:30 PM CRTC monthly meeting 3330 Main St., Buffalo

Oct.18 7:00 PM
The Nichols School, Smart
Growth is Smart Business, “Creating
PlacesWhere We Like to Shop”
James Eppink, landscape architect

Nov. 15 7:00 p.m., The Nichols
School, “Transportation Strategies for
the 21st Century” – James Charlier,
transportation planner, Boulder, CO

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

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