



# CITIZENS for REGIONAL TRANSIT NEWS

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January-February, 2010

## Goodbye, 2009 & hello, 2010!

In 2009, the CRTC

\* earned a seat at the table of stakeholders for the NFTA transit study;

\* worked with the Town of Cheektowaga as a partner in planning for the possible Metro Rail extension to the Buffalo airport;

\* stymied proposed sale by the NFTA of the City Branch right-of-way;

\* advocated for public transit at public meetings concerning Cars on Main Street, Buffalo Harbor Bridge, Canal Side Project and in various articles in the Buffalo News and in Buffalo Rising.

In 2010, the CRTC will

\* support development of the WNYRHS heritage streetcar project, which expands on CRTC's Cobblestone District proposal;

\* promote planning for the airport corridor extension of Metro Rail, through actions at the GBNRTC;

\* work with UB planners to resolve transit modes for UB 2020.

In addition, the CRTC will take an active role to support the 2010 Agenda developed by TRAC (p.3).

In these times of fiscal strain and tight energy supplies, smart planning for the infrastructure of civic life begins with the basic skeleton on which our life together depends: urban public transportation.

Will the NFTA's current transit study provide real leadership in smart planning? Will the Congress provide the GBNRTC with some teeth to enforce smart planning?

Stay tuned, in 2010....

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## CRTC Monthly Meeting

**Wednesday, January 20  
12:00-1:00 PM**

## **Vision for South Buffalo: Heritage Discovery Center and Heritage Streetcar Line**

by

**Joseph Kocsis, President,  
Western New York Railway Historical Society (WNYRHS)**

Mr. Kocsis will make a brief presentation to the CRTC at the January meeting to discuss the plans developed by the WNYRHS for a major railroad museum and heritage streetcar line within the City of Buffalo.

The WNYRHS is nearing agreement to acquire the former Buffalo Color Corp. site located at South Park and Lee Street . This 35-acre site will become the permanent home of the long-planned WNYRHS Railroad Museum.

A portion of the site is bisected by the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western RR's City Branch which is currently owned by the NFTA. As part of the planned museum development, the WNYRHS is proposing a heritage streetcar line that will connect all the neighborhoods surrounding the Buffalo Color site ( the Old First Ward, the Valley and the Seneca-Babcock area) with downtown.

### Join us!

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## **Citizens for Regional Transit meets at:**

**617 Main Street, Market Arcade Building, Buffalo**

Meeting space is available courtesy Preservation Buffalo-Niagara.

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

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# Parking Expert, Donald Shoup, visits Buffalo as 2010 Clarkson Chair lecturer

## Western New York Railway

### Historical Society

The WNYRHS is a nearly 400-member non-profit historical organization dedicated to the preservation of Buffalo's rich railroading and industrial past.

Founded in 1980, the WNYRHS has preserved both the 1896 Lehigh Valley railroad depot in Williamsville and the 1911 H.H. Richardson-inspired Orchard Park Station complex. In addition to the depots, the WNYRHS has preserved nearly 50 pieces of historic railroad equipment destined for display at the proposed museum.

Activities of the WNYRHS include:

- \* chartered steam and diesel powered railroad excursions.
- \* a bi-yearly Railroadiana, Model Railroad and Toy Train Show and Sale, which is one of the largest in the Northeastern United States.

For more information,  
see: [wnyrhs.com](http://wnyrhs.com)

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## Dr. Donald Shoup

is Professor of Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Dr. Shoup has extensively studied parking as a key link between transportation and land use, with important consequences for cities, the economy, and the environment. His influential book, *The High Cost of Free Parking*, is leading a growing number of cities to charge fair market prices for curb parking, dedicate the resulting revenue to finance public services in the metered districts, and reduce or remove off-street parking requirements. His research on employer-paid parking led to passage of California's parking cash-out law and to changes in the Internal Revenue Code to encourage parking cash out.

Dr. Shoup is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners. He has been a visiting scholar at Cambridge University and the World Bank, and has served as Director of the Institute of Transportation Studies and Chair of the Department of Urban Planning at UCLA.

**Tuesday, January 26, 2010**

**5:30 PM – 7:00 PM**

Hohn Lecture Hall  
Research Studies Center,  
**Roswell Park Cancer Institute**  
Elm and Carlton Streets  
Buffalo, New York 14263

directions for Metro Rail riders:

exit Allen-Medical station, walk south to Carlton St.,  
east on Carlton two blocks (crossing Washington and Ellicott).

directions for drivers:

Main St. to Carlton. Kensington Expressway to Goodell St., right on Ellicott St.

Parking garage between Elm and Michigan with free validation.

Parking on Elm is free after 5 PM.

In *The High Cost of Free Parking*, Donald Shoup argues that many cities' parking policies distort transportation choices, debase urban design, damage the economy, and degrade the environment. He also proposes policies designed to undo the damage caused by a century of bad planning for parking. Some cities have already adopted these policies. Professor Shoup will discuss how parking reforms can reduce traffic congestion, air pollution, energy waste and greenhouse gas emissions while increasing the supply of housing and improving public services. He will also discuss strategies that Buffalo and other cities can use to make these reforms politically popular.

## Transportation Regional Advisory Coalition (TRAC) sets 2010 Agenda

The Transportation Regional Advisory Coalition (TRAC) was formed in 2008 in order to give voice to the transportation concerns of non-profit groups in Erie and Niagara counties.

TRAC focuses on planning conducted by the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC).

TRAC will release its 2010 Agenda at the February 3 committee meeting of the GBNRTC.

Highlights include:

- \* monitor progress on new Federal transportation act and coordinate action when needed
- \* continue support for high speed rail, with emphasis on eventual connection to Toronto
- \* monitor NFTA implementation of transit study
- \* monitor construction of international train station at Whirlpool-Rapids Bridge, Niagara Falls
- \* participate in discussions of Buffalo Harbor Bridge, questioning good use of scarce Federal funds
- \* move the airport corridor extension of Metro Rail from illustrative to actual status in the long-range plan of the GBNRTC.

## U.S. Transportation Secretary Announces \$280 Million for Streetcars

DOT Press release 12-9-09

### *First Funds for Administration's Livability Initiative Will Create Jobs*

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today [12-2-09] announced the availability of \$280 million for urban circulator projects such as streetcars, buses, and bus facilities to support communities, expand business opportunities and improve people's quality of life while also creating jobs.

The money represents the first batch of funding by the Obama Administration for its Livability Initiative, a joint venture of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

"This represents a significant effort to promote livable communities, improve the quality of life for more Americans and create more transportation choices that serve the needs of individual communities," **Secretary LaHood** said. "Fostering the concept of livability in transportation projects will stimulate America's neighborhoods to become safer, healthier and more vibrant."

A maximum amount of \$25 million per project will be made available from approximately \$130 million in unallocated discretionary New Starts/Small Starts Program funds. Eligible projects include streetcars and other urban circulator systems. Priority will be given to projects that connect destinations and foster the redevelopment of communities into walkable, mixed use, high-density environments.

A second pot of money totaling \$150 million in unallocated discretionary Bus and Bus Facility funds will be available for projects that will foster the preservation and enhancement of urban and rural communities by providing new mobility options which provide access to jobs, healthcare, and education, and/or contribute to the redevelopment of neighborhoods into pedestrian-friendly vibrant environments.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) plans to announce grants early in 2010.

*Ed. note: Has the GBNRTC or NFTA applied for these funds?*

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## ***Canal Side Project public hearing, Tuesday, Jan. 26, 6 PM, at Albright-Knox Art Gallery auditorium, Buffalo***

Public participation process continues for the Canal Side Project. The General Project Plan was adopted on 12-18-09, and shows that \$150 million of public funds are expected to be used, amounting to half of the total cost. Parking to cost over \$46 million; redesign streets \$6.1 million. See [www.eriecanalharbor.com](http://www.eriecanalharbor.com) for more information.

CRTC Monthly meeting February 17

presents:

# "Transit Reform in Erie County"

with

Robert Gower, NFTA Director of Planning

Wednesday, February 17,  
12:00-1:00 PM

617 Main Street,  
Downtown Buffalo

## CALENDAR

**Jan. 20 12:00 noon (p. 1)**  
**"Historic Streetcar Line"**  
**CRTC Monthly Meeting**  
**617 Main Street, Buffalo**

Jan. 26 5:30-7:00 PM  
"High Cost of Free Parking" (p.2)  
Roswell Institute, Buffalo

Jan. 26 6:00 PM  
Public hearing, Canal Side Project  
(p.3) Albright-Knox Art Gallery,  
Buffalo

Feb. 3 9:30 AM  
GBNRTC PCC meeting  
Buffalo City Hall

**Feb. 17 12:00 noon**  
**"Transit Reform Study"**  
**CRTC Monthly Meeting**  
**617 Main Street, Buffalo**

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**Citizens Regional Transit Corporation**

617 Main Street  
Buffalo, NY 14203

*return service requested*