



CITIZENS for REGIONAL TRANSIT NEWS

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August/September, 2010

Transit is Hot, this summer!

Have you used Metro Rail during this hot, hot summer? Air-conditioned rail cars are the coolest transportation available, and whisks you to your destination in twenty minutes or less.

Transit is the place to be!

Transit supporters crowded the van tours of the proposed airport corridor offered in July by CRT. Participants included staff representing our elected leaders in Congress, NYS Senate, Erie County Legislature and Buffalo Mayor and City Council. We were honored to have the Cheektowaga Supervisor on board.

Also on board were representatives from the NYSDOT and the NFTA--including one NFTA Commissioner.

Community leaders from VOICE-Buffalo and the League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara were well represented.

A total of 47 participants made our four hot summer tours a great success!

Transit is the issue to support!

Our 6-2-mile Metro Rail is a great success, carrying thousands of daily riders to reach their destinations. When we add the airport extension, ridership will more than double without doubling costs of operations and maintenance. Success will build upon success.

However, more rails and rail cars will require more operators and maintenance workers. Congress must enact legislation that will allow Federal dollars to support operation and maintenance, as well as capital improvements. (see p.2)

Meanwhile, enjoy cool Metro Rail transit access to your hot summer destinations.

**Transit--the cool trip
for a hot summer!**

CRTC Monthly Meeting

**Wednesday, September 15
12:00-1:00 PM**

Buffalo Harbor Bridge: Design Update

a presentation by

**Stephen Ranalli, P.E.
Senior Project Manager
Erie Canal Harbor Development Corp. (ECHDC)**

Does our community need a bridge connecting downtown Buffalo with the Outer Harbor? Come see the Buffalo Harbor Bridge alternatives, presented by Stephen Ranalli, project manager.

As a Senior Project Manager since July 2008, Mr. Ranalli is charged with managing many of ECHDC's on-going projects, including the Buffalo Harbor Bridge, Commercial Slip Parking Garage and upcoming Buffalo Waterfront Brownfield Opportunity Assessment. Mr. Ranalli is also involved with the design of the Canal Side project and is ECHDC's liaison for Buffalo's Cars on Main Street project.

Join us!

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.

A plea to Congress: fair provisions in new Transportation Act!!

...excerpts from a letter to Senator Gillibrand, signed by Citizens for Regional Transit along with other transit advocates.
To see the complete letter, visit <http://www.citizenstransit.org/index.php?name=News&file=article&sid=98>

Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand
Russell Building, Suite 478
Washington D.C 20510

July 12, 2010
Dear Senator Gillibrand,

The New York State Transportation Equity Alliance (NYSTEA), which has over 70 member organizations statewide representing thousands of New Yorkers, is calling on you to be a champion for equity, civil rights, improved public health and access to good jobs by urging Chairwoman Boxer and your other colleagues on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee to adopt six key provisions in the reauthorization of the nation’s transportation bill.

The six key provisions are:

- * A significant increase in public transportation funding, with flexibility to use that funding for operations. NYSTEA supports federal transit operating flexibility that would allow all transit agencies the flexibility to use federal transit funds to assist with operating needs. Transit agencies across New York State are facing revenue shortfalls from the recession coupled with cuts in city and state contribution. Painful fare hikes and service cuts are hitting upstate and downstate New Yorkers alike.
- * A fix-it-first policy that prioritize state of good repair and maintenance of our transportation infrastructure. NYSTEA believes the new transportation bill must include a fix-it-first provision that prioritizes state of good repair and maintenance of our existing and aging infrastructure.....
- * A significant increase in active transportation funding. NYSTEA supports 10% set aside of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds for initiatives to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. In New York, more than 60% of adults are overweight and a third of New York’s children are obese or overweight. The built environment in communities across New York State has a significant impact on physical activity and obesity levels. We need to build more “walkable” neighborhoods that are safe and promote higher levels of physical activity....
- * A framework of accountability and integrated performance measures to guide transportation spending. NYSTEA supports accountability and performance policies tied to funding of transportation projects. Under current policy, there is little to no accountability for how federal transportation dollars are spent, the outcomes of those spending decisions or metrics that measure public benefit of our transportation investments....
- * Improve racial, gender, and income gaps in transportation hiring. NYSTEA supports legislation that requires 30% of work hours on transportation-related projects be reserved for locally hired low-income people, minorities, ex-offenders, and women. NYSTEA also calls on Congress to guarantee quality pre-apprenticeship training programs and recruitment. 1% of federal highway, transit and

_____ rail funds should be dedicated for the recruitment, training and retention of underrepresented workers in the construction workforce.

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	\$150.00
household	35.00
individual	25.00
student	5.00

send check to:
CITIZENS REGIONAL TRANSIT CORP.
c/o John K. Howell, treasurer
289 Ashford Avenue
Tonawanda, NY 14150-8563

* Protecting Civil Rights in Transportation Decision Making. NYSTEA asks Congress to establish a private right of action in the transportation re-authorization to enforce the disparate impact regulations adopted by the Department of Transportation (DOT). Communities like Harlem and Washington Heights are host to more diesel bus depots than any other neighborhoods in New York City and communities of color across the state are often disproportionately affected by dirty transportation facilities....

At this critical moment, we need your leadership in Senate EPW Committee to press forward with a transportation bill that will create a safer, cleaner, smarter and more equitable transportation system....
Not since the creation of the Interstate Highway System has there been a moment like this to invest strategically in our transportation future. Never has there been a more urgent need to act on behalf of our environment and communities who have suffered from imbalanced transportation decisions of the past.

We urge you to continue your leadership on climate change, health and environmental protection by advancing a transportation bill that will help set a course towards greater equity, mobility, a cleaner environment and a healthier New York – for our children and generations to come.

The Ten Principles for Urban Transport

Ed. comment: Given the recent changes in Erie Canal Harbor planning, let's take time to absorb the wisdom of Jan Gehl and Walter Hook. Download the booklet with the link below (thanks to George Grasser).

The 10 principles summarized:

- 1. Walk the walk:**
Create great pedestrian environments.
- 2. Powered by people:**
Create a great environment for bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles.
- 3. Get on the bus [or train]:**
Provide great, cost-effective public transport.
- 4. Cruise control:**
Provide access for clean passenger vehicles at safe speeds and in significantly reduced numbers.
- 5. Deliver the goods:**
Service the city in the cleanest and safest manner.
- 6. Mix it up:**
Mix people and activities, buildings and spaces.
- 7. Fill it in:**
Build dense, people and transit oriented urban districts that are desirable.
- 8. Get real: :**
Preserve and enhance the local, natural, cultural, social and historical assets.
- 9. Connect the blocks:**
Make walking trips more direct, interesting and productive with small-size, permeable buildings and blocks
- 10. Make it last:**
Build for the long term. Sustainable cities bridge generations. They are memorable, malleable, built from quality materials, and well maintained.

itdp.org/documents/2010-OurCitiesOurselves_Booklet.pdf

July Airport Tours: Success!

...CRT Board report

Citizens for Regional Transit offered three van tours of the proposed Airport Corridor extension of Metro Rail in July. Dubbed as "leadership tours," participants were drawn from elected officials and community leaders.

A total of 31 participants completed the tours, representing Sen. Gillibrand, Rep. Higgins, NYS Sen. Thompson, two Erie County legislators, Cheektowaga Supervisor, Buffalo City Council, Mayor Brown, Daemen College, NYSDOT, NFTA, VOICE-Buffalo.

Participants were asked to evaluate their experience. Most people who attended the tours were very satisfied. A number of riders sought improved printed and verbal information. They wanted to know more! When asked about their specific questions, riders indicated concerns about costs, time line, and effects on neighborhoods. They did learn things they hadn't known before. Notable among these were the actual routes, the fact that right of ways exist, and the feasibility of the project.

The popularity of these tours demonstrate that community leaders are ready to move forward on extending Metro Rail.

According to a 2009 study by the Economic Development Research Group, Inc., **for every 1 billion dollars of federal funds invested in public transit operations, 41,000 jobs are created (as compared to 24,000 jobs created with investment in capital projects or preventive maintenance).**

...as cited in transportationequity.org

More Transit = More Jobs

On Thursday, Sep. 2, 2010, on the eve of the Labor Day holiday weekend, the [Transportation Equity Network](#) (TEN) will release a groundbreaking report with a simple prescription for communities in need: **More Transit = More Jobs**.

Written by Dr. Todd Swanstrom of the Public Policy Research Center, who has worked with TEN on previous reports such as *The Road to Jobs* and *The Road to Good Jobs*,

More Transit = More Jobs will feature:

- Rankings of 24 U.S. metro areas by percentage of transit spending
- Numbers of jobs each metro area could create by shifting highway spending to transit
- Case-studies of the job-creation potential of planned transit projects in key cities
- Highlights of top 5 “transit champion” cities and bottom 5 transit spenders

To mark the report release, TEN member organizations and allies from organized labor across the country will hold simultaneous rallies at local unemployment offices around the country on **Thursday, Sep. 2**.

The rallies will highlight the power of transit spending as an engine of job creation and economic opportunity, as well as the larger impact on families and entire communities through access to opportunity.

To access the report, visit transportationequity.org

CALENDAR

Sept. 1 9:30 AM
GBNRTC PCC meeting
Buffalo City Hall

Sept. 2
More Transit=More Jobs
rallies across USA

Sept. 15 12:00 noon
“Buffalo Harbor Bridge”
CRTC Monthly Meeting
617 Main Street, Buffalo

Oct. 6 9:30 AM
GBNRTC PCC meeting
Thruway Authority

Oct. 18-21 Rail-Volution
Portland, Oregon

Citizens Regional Transit Corporation

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return service requested