



CRT News

A Quarterly Publication of Citizens for Regional Transit

Citizens for Regional Transit Next Public Meeting
East Side Development and Transit Access

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Thursday, October 17, 2019
5:30 - 7:00 p.m. (doors open at 5:00)

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Location: to be announced.

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Speakers: to be announced.

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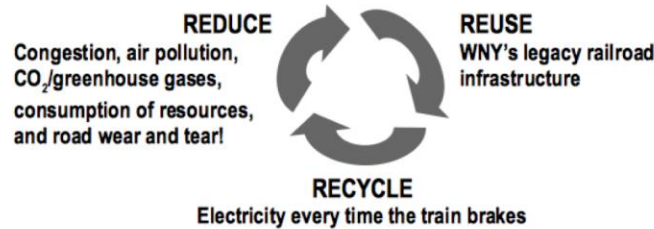
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



CRT Executive Board members Giles, Funke, Gifford, Gordon, and Magdol at monthly meeting, June 2019.



THE EASTSIDE – AIRPORT METRO RAIL EXTENSION



Why is Eastside - Airport a priority?

- Provides a **fast, one-seat ride** between downtown Buffalo and the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, aboveground on disused railway we already own.
- Links WNY's **highest demand destinations** (per One Region Forward public outreach¹) including Larkinville, Central Terminal, Walden Galleria, and the airport.
- **Extends from the southern end of the existing Main Street line**, connecting all the new destinations above with Canalside, sports venues, Central Business District, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Theater District (including Chippewa Street), Canisius College, and all UB campuses.
- **Highest development potential** corridor per NFTA 2010 study²; builds on \$726 million in Eastside investments³
- Efficiently **serves visitors, city and suburban commuters, cyclists, and those without cars** – a valuable green amenity for everyone. Also satisfies tourism and convention business demands.
- **Provides intermodal connectivity** between the airport and Amtrak (Exchange Street Station) with potential to connect to a future Amtrak / transportation hub at Central Terminal.
- **Park-&-Rides** collect commuters from Clarence, Cheektowaga, Depew, Lancaster, and others arriving by the I-90, relieving parking pressures downtown and on city neighborhood streets.

Why Rail and not just more buses?

- Runs on clean, renewable hydroelectricity from Niagara Falls. Brakes recover electricity, “recycling” power to propel trains.
- Builds on Buffalo's existing light rail investment (now valued at \$2 billion) while adaptively re-using our legacy railroad assets for 21st century needs.
- Offers shortest travel time between destinations, carrying more people with less energy and emissions than any other mode.

**Each train (4-cars)
carries 560 people**⁴



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Capacity of 8 buses⁵



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Can replace anywhere from 140 to 560 cars every 10 minutes (270 shown here)



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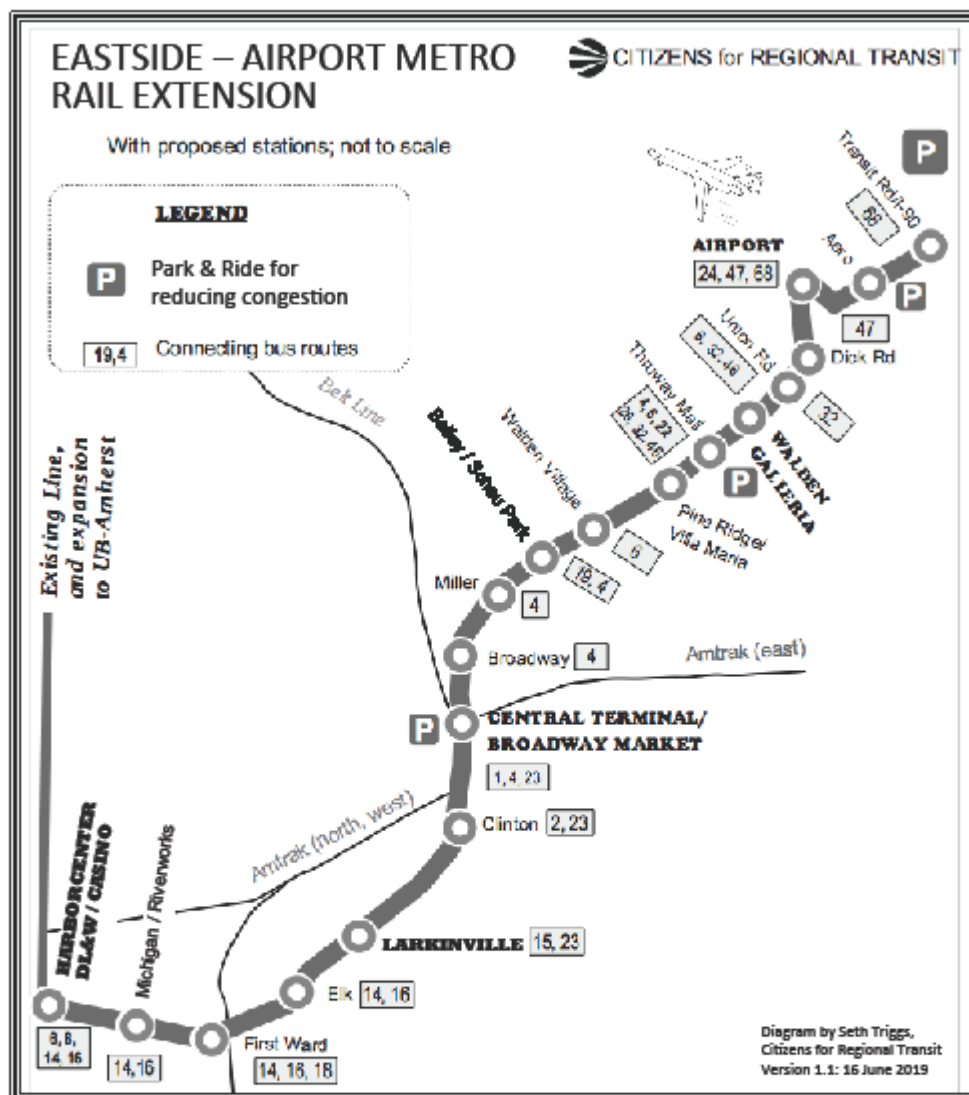
¹ One Region Forward Final Plan. 2015. http://bap-home.net/solarize/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2017/05/1RF_A-New-Way-To-Plan-For-Buffalo-Niagara_FinalPlan_reduced.pdf

² NFTA Erie County Transit Service Restructuring and Fare Study – Strategic Assessment. August, 2010.

³ Article, Business First, Fall 2018 Build WNY magazine)

⁴ RAILFAN GUIDES of the U.S.”> Todd's Railfan Guide to the Buffalo, NY NFTA Light Rail System (<http://www.railfanguides.us/ny/buffalo/lightrail/index.htm>)

⁵ Transit capacity and Quality of Service manual, 3rd Edition, 2013.

**Estimated Construction Costs***

| | Canalside to Larksville | Larksville to Central Terminal | Central Terminal to Galleria | Galleria to Airport | Airport to Transit Road | TOTAL |
|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------|
| Distance (miles) | 2 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 13 |
| Segment Cost | \$100M | \$100M | \$250M | \$100M | \$220M | |
| Cumulative Cost | \$100M | \$200M | \$450M | \$550M | \$770M | \$770M |

* Transit Technologies Worksheet, Reconnecting America, 2009.

[Light rail construction costs range from \$20M per mile to \$60M per mile (\$50M/M is used here)]



From New York Public Transit Association (NYPTA):
NY 2019 End of Session Update
Prepared by Bob Reid, Bob Zerrillo and Padraic Bambrick

Budget

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of NYPTA leadership, members, and staff, the New York State budget includes large increases in transit operating aid and the first new dedicated revenue source for upstate transit in many years. The budget also created the first in the nation congestion tolling program in Manhattan and additional dedicated revenue sources for MTA's 2020-2024 capital plan.

9.58% increase in STOA funding for upstate transit systems.

7.25% increase in STOA for downstate transit systems other than the MTA.

6% surcharge on auto rentals in upstate counties to fund the STOA increase, effective June 1, 2019.

\$84.5 m. in capital funding to non-MTA systems.

\$5.264 b. in operating aid to the MTA, a 5.8% increase.

\$11 m. to continue the Cross-Hudson bus service (Rockland-Westchester).

\$1.467 b. in state capital funding for the MTA, plus a \$100 m. loan to plan and construct congestion tolling infrastructure.

Implementation of a Congestion Tolling program in NYC and several other revenue sources to fund future MTA capital programs.

\$4 m. in DOH funding for rural transit systems impacted by the state's Medicaid changes.



From Reconnect Rochester:
What I've Learned About Going Car-Free (And Why I Plan to Continue)
by Calvin Eaton

If you've followed my journey over the last couple of years you probably know that I sold my car in June 2018 and became a car-free professional. There are so many reasons why going car-free was the best decision for me and I want to share a few things I've learned over the past year and why I plan to continue my car-free lifestyle.

Like every typical American teen I couldn't wait to get my drivers license so I could enter into grown up world of driving. Like most youth I had been indoctrinated to believe that getting my drivers license at the ripe old age of sixteen was the consummate mark of becoming an adult. American culture worships the car and the transition from child to pre-teen to adult is distinctly marked by getting a drivers license and soon after getting your first car. I admit that for me a drivers license (and by proxy a car) represented freedom, independence, and adulthood. At no point in my adolescence did I question this societal standard, ask why car ownership is idolized, or ask if youth in other cultures are cultivated to own a car at the stroke of sixteen like we are here in America.

After years of driving and adulting; last year I came to the strong conclusion that I honestly do not enjoy driving. In actuality, I hate driving. Driving for me is a sometimes necessity to get from point A to point B or take care of very specific tasks in life. Generally speaking, for me the process and responsibility of driving and more importantly being a responsible driver is stressful. After years of being car payment free and then bucking to societal pressure and getting a lease for a new Honda in 2016, last year I came to a dramatic conclusion that none of it was worth it. Not the maintenance, not the insurance payments, not the monthly car payments. I realized that I do not enjoy driving enough to own my own car and it was this realization that served as my primary reason to get sell my car and become car-free.

What I've Learned

Since then public transportation has become my primary means of mobility throughout the City. For me, public transportation works great. I live on a main bus line, work remotely and spend most of my time in the inner city going between the east and west parts of the City via Main Street. Most of my deviation from this daily norm is my travel to area colleges for co-working and meetings. For these times I use Lyft. In addition to these methods of mobility, I walk and sometimes bike. Walking and biking would be more part of my daily regimen if I did not have to deal with the ill and daily effects of living fibromyalgia and chronic pain which sometimes make walking and exercise difficult. Still since ditching my car I am happy to get in more daily steps and see more of the City. When the weather is clear walking is so beautiful and it has been a great way to place myself in spaces and places that I would never enter into if I commuted by car.

Read more: <https://reconnectrochester.org/2019/06/what-ive-learned-about-going-car-free/>



CRT at Work for Western NY: April - June 2019 **Compiled by Lynn Magdol, Newsletter Editor**

We held our April quarterly public meeting. The topic was alternative fuel sources for transit. Speakers discussed electricity and hydrogen as alternative fuels for buses, as well as the underutilization of the hydropower that we are entitled to in Western New York from the New York Power Authority.

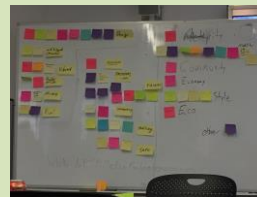
We worked with the Partnership for the Public Good. We continued to campaign for our [plank](#) with the PPG's 2019 Community Agenda. We met with Tim Callan, Chief of Staff of the Erie County Legislature's Democratic Caucus, to discuss the complexities of the budget and possible ways to increase support for transit from the County. Future meetings with other Erie County officials are anticipated.

We prepared public statements. We submitted comments to the GBNRTC regarding a pilot plan for Transit-Oriented Development, bus shelter replacements, and Utica Rail Station bus loop improvements. CRT VP Seth Triggs wrote a [letter](#) to the Buffalo News about East Side development and transit.

We attended transit-related community events. CRT was included in a conversation about [Isochronic Mountain](#), a public art project about transit access in Buffalo currently on view at Buffalo City Hall.



We attended an NFTA Station Design workshop, an open house about the Outer Harbor, the annual dinner of the Clean Air Coalition, the "Yes In My Backyard" information fair, a lecture about trolleys, a film about streetcars, a series on making Niagara Falls more livable, a visit to the DL&W Terminal, and a Transit-Oriented Development visioning workshop.



We attended meetings of transportation and community organizations, including Buffalo Place, Buffalo Transit Riders United, Erie County Climate Change Task Force, GBNRTC, NFTA, Niagara River Greenway Commission, and the WNY Environmental Alliance.

We said good bye and hello. Sadly, CRT Board member Eddy Company resigned from our Executive Board at the end of May. Fortunately, he has been replaced for the remainder of 2019 by [Aidan Ryan](#), who has the option of running for a continuing appointment in January 2020.



Another Way to Donate: Amazon Smile

When you shop online at Amazon, you can donate to CRT using a special log-in for Amazon Smile. Log in to www.smile.amazon.com and specify “Citizens Regional Transit Corporation” for your donations ***before selecting your purchases.***

Calendar

July 2 – CRT Executive Board monthly meeting, 12-1:30 p.m., PPG small conference room.

August 24-25 – Elmwood Festival of the Arts, CRT information table at Environmental Row.

October 17 - CRT Quarterly Public Meeting, 5:30-7:00 p.m., location TBA.

Citizens for Regional Transit (CRT) seeks to educate the region about the benefits of a comprehensive transportation system including an expanded Metro Rail.

www.citizenstransit.org

crtc@citizenstransit.org



Please support our efforts with your dues and donations. Send your payment by [PayPal](https://www.paypal.com), or mail to Citizens for Regional Transit, 617 Main St., Suite #201, Buffalo, NY 14203.

Suggested donation levels:

Corporate: \$250.+ (name/logo will be on our website)

Group/organization: \$50.

Household: \$35.

Individual: \$25.

Student, senior, unemployed, etc.: \$5.

CRT is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and all contributions are tax deductible.