

September 6, 2018

**Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council  
Transit-Oriented Development Study  
Final Open House Workshop  
Wednesday, August 29, 2017, 5:00 – 7:00 PM  
St. Joseph’s University Parish Community Room  
3269 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14214**

---

On August 29th, 2018, the final public meeting for the Transit-Oriented Development Study in the Buffalo-Niagara Region was held at St. Joseph’s University Parish Community Room from 5:00 – 7:00 PM. The Open House provided community members with the opportunity to review project information and display boards and to offer feedback. Staff from the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC), the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), WSP and Highland Planning were on hand. A full list of members of the public in attendance is available in Appendix A.

Hal Morse (GBNRTC) welcomed attendees and explained that the impetus for the study was to get ahead of development and create a guidebook for developers, governments and communities working together on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) along the existing NFTA Metro Rail line in Buffalo as well as the proposed extension through the Northtowns.

Fred Frank (WSP) then presented on the study’s background, the community engagement process, and next steps for the Metro Rail extension project. The presentation included a synopsis of the economic benefits and desirability and readiness of TOD in each of the four segments of the corridor, the characteristics that define TOD, lessons from peer communities and the proposed station area plans.

A full copy of the presentation is available in Appendix B. Following the presentation and prior to the open house portion of the meeting, several audience members asked questions and made comments which are summarized below by category:

**Cost and Funding**

- How much does this all cost?
  - \$1.2 billion is the current estimate.
- How much of that will be private development?

- There will be an estimated \$1.7 billion in private investment along the corridor, but the challenge will be capturing that value. There is always increased investment along transit corridors but that does not always translate into funding for transit improvements.
- State laws make value capture more difficult in New York State, correct?
  - Yes, that is true if we are attempting to use Tax Increment Financing. Joint Development is another option. For example, leasing air rights above stations. Capturing value from sites not owned by NFTA will be more difficult. The challenge in New York state is just the sheer number of taxing jurisdictions.
- Will legislative changes be sought? There are champions for the project in our state legislative delegation.
  - Yes, we will be pursuing legislative changes at the state level.

### **Metro Rail Extension Alignment and Timing**

- Where will the Eggertsville Station be located?
  - Two possibilities: tunnel under Bailey to around Eggert Road. Station would be near Grover Cleveland. In alternative scenario, the Metro Rail would emerge from University Station on Kenmore and travel to Niagara Falls Boulevard directly without a stop in Eggertsville.
- Would the alternative Kenmore-Niagara Falls Boulevard route be underground?
  - Yes, some of it would be and it could even be underground for the full length of Niagara Falls Boulevard, but this has not yet been determined.
- Will the extension be median running or curb running?
  - The Environmental Impact Assessment will help to determine that.
- Will the Kenmore-Niagara Falls Boulevard alignment travel under houses?
  - That has not yet been determined.
- I am glad to see that the Kenmore-Niagara Falls Boulevard option is still on the table, which I believe could serve as a link to University Plaza. I am concerned however that the RFP being issued for TOD is putting the cart before horse. The community may not want or be able to stomach development proposals. I believe we should issue RFPs station by station and with neighborhoods involved. The community should have some vision and say and once we have established that, developers can respond and implement those visions. Hopefully that will get developers and the neighborhoods on the same page.
- When will ground be broken on the Metro Rail extension?
  - It would likely be 10 years from now.
- What is sequence of construction?
  - We do not have those specifics yet as that will require some engineering work to be performed.

**Multi-Modal Connections**

- How will bus routes be affected by the Metro Rail extension?
  - Amherst routes would be redesigned to feed the rail system.
- Would this replace the UB Stampede?
  - Yes, that is the hope.
- Have shared mobility options been considered for these stations?
  - Yes. For example, the station area plan for LaSalle Station incorporates the bike path that currently runs near it. There is an opportunity there for a real mobility hub.
- Based on the station area plan for DL&W, it appears you are eliminating parking but adding in residential. How will that work?
  - There will have to be some arrangement with the Buffalo Sabres on replacing those parking spots. Parking spots could be shared or dedicated. A lot of this will be determined by the market.

Following these questions and comments, the meeting transitioned to an open house format in which attendees could view display boards of station area plans and other aspects of the project with members of the consultant team available to answer questions. Copies of display boards used in the open house portion of the meeting are available in Appendix B.

Copies of comments cards filled out by meeting attendees are available in Appendix C.

**Appendix A: Meeting Attendees and Contact Information**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Email or Phone</b>
Jennifer Michniewicz	<a href="mailto:jmichniewicz@cplteam.com">jmichniewicz@cplteam.com</a>
Joe and Diana	<a href="mailto:jaspeth@aol.com">jaspeth@aol.com</a>
Darren Cotton	<a href="mailto:dcotton@udcda.org">dcotton@udcda.org</a>
Maggie Winship	<a href="mailto:mwinship@amherst.ny.us">mwinship@amherst.ny.us</a>
Alan Obert	<a href="mailto:ako_nsog@hotmail.com">ako_nsog@hotmail.com</a>
Colin McCarville	<a href="mailto:Colin@kcb-architecture.com">Colin@kcb-architecture.com</a>
Bob	716-998-0886
Amy Weymouth	<a href="mailto:aweymouth@gbnrtc.org">aweymouth@gbnrtc.org</a>
Jim Jones	<a href="mailto:jjones@tonawanda.ny.us">jjones@tonawanda.ny.us</a>
Sean Flury	<a href="mailto:sflury@uniland.com">sflury@uniland.com</a>
Jim Jones	<a href="mailto:jjones@tonawanda.ny.us">jjones@tonawanda.ny.us</a>

Isabelle Fritz	<a href="mailto:idfritz@yahoo.com">idfritz@yahoo.com</a>
Angela Keppel	<a href="mailto:akeppel@buffaloplace.com">akeppel@buffaloplace.com</a>
Ken Swanekamp	<a href="mailto:kswaekamp@tonawada.ny.us">kswaekamp@tonawada.ny.us</a>
Adam Tabelski	<a href="mailto:atabelski@wendelcompanies.com">atabelski@wendelcompanies.com</a>
Ron Hayes	<a href="mailto:ron.hayes@dot.ny.gov">ron.hayes@dot.ny.gov</a>
Ann Brighton	<a href="mailto:annbright@mac.com">annbright@mac.com</a>
Simon Husted	<a href="mailto:shusted13@gmail.com">shusted13@gmail.com</a>

### Appendix B: Presentation and Display Boards

A copy of the presentation is available at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XXHDSB90qOr2DAVmZxV4ukkLk1ZCNiAR/view>

A copy of display boards is available at

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZDEYabyxTi9IDMouiyoyPoyWXdhiRItXo/view>

### Appendix C: Comment Cards

- Love the extension of Minnesota Ave as part of the LaSalle Station redevelopment. Include the iconic median as part of this extension? Please include the extension of the Rail Trail across Main Street in the vision for LaSalle. This will be a critical piece of alternative infrastructure to connect the East Side of Buffalo into a regional bike network.
- Thank you for your interesting presentation. Please take into consideration increased bus routes for better accessibility to these stations.
- I like the re-envision [sic] Boulevard Mall. I like extending Minn. Ave, but I do not like retaining the green mound south of LaSalle. We should Build [sic] infill. Or at least make green space usable. Like a southern trail extension.