

*Appendix D*

*Public and Agency Comments*

## Appendix D

### Comments on City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project\*

#### Environmental Assessment

Comments From:	Source	Recommended Alternative	Main Points	ERM Response
Comments from Organizations				
Citizens Regional Transit Corp. (55 members)	letter	Enhance Ped Mall	Believes expansion of LRRT will increase number of pedestrians downtown	Expanding LRRT may result in more workers using LR, but would directly affect the number of pedestrians downtown
Buffalo Niagara Partnership (3,500 members)	letter	Shared Trackbed	Returning traffic will improve visibility and accessibility/create a critical mass of people	No response necessary
New Millennium Group of Western New York (500 members)	email	Shared Trackbed	Provides their Long Term Vision for Main Street, supports LRRT, and opening all streets to two way traffic	No response necessary
Theater District Association (65 members)	letter	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Buffalo Place (240 property owners)	letter	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Comments from Elected Officials				
State Assemblyman Richard Smith	letter	No action	Recommends improving rear facades on Washington and Pearl Streets	Agree this would be valuable, but would not revitalize Main Street
State Assemblyman Sam Hoyt	letter	Outside Trackbed, Selected Blocks or Shared Trackbed	Supports returning traffic to Main Street, concerned about cost	No response necessary

<b>Comments From:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Recommended Alternative</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>ERM Response</b>
Comments from Individuals				
Nathan C. Neuman U. of Buffalo student	Letter, public hearing, website	Selected Blocks	Allow traffic only on blocks w/o transit stations	This would only allow traffic on 3 interrupted blocks
Lynda Stephens City resident	faxed memo	No Action	Believes benefits of returning traffic to Main Street are overstated.	Provides little data to support her position
Andrew R. Graham downtown resident	Letter and public hearing	Shared Trackbed	Would like to add diagonal parking	Tech Committee determined it was unsafe
Marydel Bochnowich	comment sheet	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Would prefer no on-street parking	Tech Committee believes that on-street parking is important component of plan
Deborah C. Sawyer	comment sheet	No-action	Believes buildings along Main Street are too large to revive retail.	Agree in part, but her position basically leaves the alternatives of demolishing buildings or leaving them vacant
William J. Magavern, II	comment sheet	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Supports return of traffic along entire length of Main Street	No response necessary
Matt Balling	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	This alternative works well in Toronto	No response necessary
Charles L. Gurney	comment sheet	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Supports change	No response necessary
Harold L. Cohen Dean Emeritus SUNY – Buffalo and downtown resident	comment sheet and letter	None indicated	Thinks that converting other streets to two-way traffic has solved some of the problems Recommends additional study on sidewalk vaults, emergency access, and new traffic study	Vaults and emergency access have been studied. Traffic study took into consideration recent conversion of streets to two-way

<b>Comments From:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Recommended Alternative</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>ERM Response</b>
John Szlzepaniec	comment sheet and public hearing	Shared Trackbed with closures	Recommends closing portions of Main Street 10-4 April-Sept. for pedestrians	Possible, but probably difficult to implement and enforce
Bill Martin	e-mail	No action	Recommends extending LRRT	No response necessary
Joe Lipa Franklin St. business owner	comment sheet	No-action	Recommends opening all cross streets to two-way traffic	Will not provide sufficient access or visibility to business to revitalize downtown
Gladys Gifford, CRTC member	Letter and public hearing	Enhance Ped Mall	Add bike lanes outside trackbed to this alternative	Continuous bike lanes outside trackbed would require relocation of existing transit stations.
Yuri Hreshchyshyn	comment sheet	Outside Trackbed	Recommends constructing an enclosed ped walkway above the LRRT trackbed	Creative solution but would add considerably to project cost
John Centurione	fax	Shared Trackbed	Makes most sense	No response necessary
Sheri and Greg Rehwoldt downtown residents	letter	Enhance Ped Mall or No-action	Traffic will result in more accidents, trash, noise, and crime	Should be no more than a typical street
Father Art Smith St. Thomas Aquinas Church	Letter and public hearing	Outside Trackbed, Selected Blocks or Shared Trackbed	Recommends incremental improvements to see if they work first	Recommend project be phased – would achieve same purpose as incremental improvements
Darran Simpson	post card	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Likes Toronto – will attract businesses to located on Main Street	No response necessary
Mr. Zakrzewski, CRTC member	Public hearing	Enhance Ped Mall	Ped mall not cause of problems on Main Street	We believe ped mall did contribute to problems
Chris ? LRRT system user	Public hearing	Enhance Ped Mall or No Action	Need to spend money to maintain and enhance LRRT system	No response required
Stuart ?, property landlord	Public Hearing	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Downtown is dead and needs to be revitalized, traffic will help a lot	No response necessary

<b>Comments From:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Recommended Alternative</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>ERM Response</b>
Dennis Galucki, GBNRTC Bike Committee	Public Hearing	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Status quo doesn't work. No action alternative the best for bikes.	Under the no-action alternative bikes would not be allowed on Main Street.
Richard Coby, Comm. For Better Buffalo	Public Hearing	None indicated	Do not lose parking existing parking spaces in 700 block	Will maintain on-street parking
Mike Niman Buffalo State College instructor	Public hearing	Enhance Ped Mall or No Action	Ithaca has a successful ped mall	College town with many students near ped mall
Jack Maloney downtown worker	Public hearing	Enhance Ped Mall or No Action	Need to have more housing downtown	Agree, but we believe that will not be sufficient to revitalize Main Street
? Downtown resident	Public hearing	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Traffic flow is terrible downtown – put cars back on Main Street	No response necessary
? GBNRTC bike committee	Public Hearing	None indicated	Dangerous to put bicycles on trackbed	It is done in other cities successfully
Alex Schmidt	Public Hearing	Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed	Need more people downtown – cars will help	No response necessary
Robert Peterson Buffalo resident	Public Hearing	None indicated	How will we measure success of project	Success will be measured in terms of new jobs, decreased vacancy rates, assessed values, ped volumes on Main Street, etc.
William Andrietti	website	Enhance Ped Mall or No Action	Likes not having traffic on Main Street	No response necessary
Katja Kliemann	website	Enhance Ped Mall or No Action	Keep the mall as is	No response necessary
Rob Handel	website	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Phil Mogavaro	website	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Robert Mink	websitet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary

<b>Comments From:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Recommended Alternative</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>ERM Response</b>
Mmmgood802	website	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Rodolfo L. Villacorta, MD	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Doug Bean Eric Maver & Assoc.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Chris Pinto Behringer Diamonds, Inc.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	Clean up Main St. and Washington St.	No response necessary
Diane Jones EB Green's Steakhouse	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Stephen P. Fitzmanrice Marine Buffalo Associates	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	Want to insure safety if vehicular traffic is allowed under HSBC Building	No response necessary
David C. Schopp Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Mary Clare Keenan Keenan Law Firm	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Thomas Zenger Downtown Graphics	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Kasemave Babel EB Green's Steakhouse	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Michelle M. Malone Condo Owner	e-mail	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Harold Kopp EMI Building	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	Need to return traffic and parking to Main Street to attract retail	No response necessary
Wolfgang Wildder Hyatt Regency Buffalo	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	Support vehicular traffic on Main Street	No response necessary

<b>Comments From:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Recommended Alternative</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>ERM Response</b>
Ken Neufeld Studio Arena	email	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Keirsten Snell Buffalo Niagara Partnership	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Chuck Kushner Tent City	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Carl Paladino Ellicott Dev. Co.	fax	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Paul Werthman, P.E. Benchmark Engineering	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Mark Rodgers, Attorney Rodgers & Coppola	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	Without vehicle traffic, downtown has deteriorated.	No response necessary
Maureen L. Norris City Fashion/Kirat Inc.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Peter C. Ronca RACO	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		No response necessary
Robert L. Miller Miller Gesko & Co.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Paul Marzello D.F. Williamson Co. Inc.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Joseph M. Ramanella Dogwoods & More	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Richard Vallone Hippodrome Billiard Academy	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		

<b>Comments From:</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Recommended Alternative</b>	<b>Main Points</b>	<b>ERM Response</b>
Naseem Malik Royal Photo Lab, Inc. and Sizes for All, Inc.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Joan M. Millek Definitely Buffan	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed	Also need enhanced Pedestrian Mall	
Michelle M. Malone Resident	email	Shared Trackbed		
Donald A. Accessi Atty. at Law	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Len Amato Zesto's Food Court	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Irving Korn Seneca Industrial Center	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Melvyn Horwitz Horwitz & DiMatteo	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Keith Birzon Sid Birzon, Inc.	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		
Laura Perry	comment sheet	Shared Trackbed		

\* Copies of these comments in their entirety are available at the offices of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority.



January 2, 2002



CALVANESO'S  
COSMOPOLITAN GRILLE  
5185 TRANSIT ROAD @ MAPLE  
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CITY GRILL  
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BUFFALO, NY 14202  
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YA YA BAYOU BREWHOUSE  
617 MAIN STREET @ THEATRE PLACE  
BUFFALO, NY 14203  
tel: 716.854.YAYA | fax: 716.854.9295

BACCHUS  
56 WEST CHIPPEWA STREET  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716.854.WINE (9463)

EXQUISITE CATERING  
@ DELAWARE PARK CASINO  
716.883.5932

I am writing to you with the intention of gaining your support and building consensus for the return of cars to Main Street, which would increase accessibility and visibility to our storefronts. I believe this project is the single most important step towards the revitalization of our downtown as a strong vibrant core for Western New York.

Recently, I attended a presentation by Buffalo Place that addressed the return of vehicular traffic to Main Street and provided information on the four alternatives that are available. **Alternative #4** suggests two-way traffic on Main Street with vehicles sharing the existing track-bed with Light Rail Rapid Transit (LRRT) cars. This alternative appears to be the least disruptive to our businesses with the greatest effect on downtown revitalization and has been officially endorsed by Buffalo Place, Inc., and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership. To review the entire analysis and the four alternatives visit [www.ci.buffalo.ny.us](http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us) and click on "Vehicular Traffic to Main Street".

As a business owner of two restaurants on Main Street, I have seen too many revitalization efforts on Main Street stagnate, because consensus was not reached. **Consensus and action are imperative; your response is vital. Public comment period has been extended to January 10<sup>th</sup>. Please respond with immediacy.**

We are the owners and operators of buildings and businesses on Main Street, and our opinion matters. **Please show your support by checking next your preferred alternative...please consider the benefits I have outlined for Alternative #4.** Space is provided for a position statement to communicate further concerns. Feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Steve Calvaneso  
Cell #: (716) 912-1500  
[stevecalvaneso@aol.com](mailto:stevecalvaneso@aol.com)

MAIN OFFICE

600 MAIN STREET  
SUITE 804  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716-912-1500  
fax: 716-856-5685

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761  
**OR**  
Email your comments to mainst.buffalo@erm.com

**Please check one of the following alternatives:**

- Alt. #1 Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall
- Alt. #2 Two-way traffic separate from LRRT
- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT  
trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

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Name: DIANE JONES, Assistant Manager

Business: EB Green's Steakhouse

Address: 2 Fountain Plaza  
BFLO NY 14202

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Additional Comments:**

As operators and owners of One HSBC Center, we will consider the safety of the occupants of our building as a priority over vehicular traffic under our building. That aside, we endorse Alt. #4

**Name:**

STEPHEN P. FITZMAURICE

**Business:**

MARINE BUFFALO ASSOCIATES, L.P.

**Address:**

ONE HSBC CENTER  
SUITE 2800

BUFFALO, NY 14203-2897

**Email:** STEVE@ONEHSBC.COM

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trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:**

David C. Schopp

**Business:**

The Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo, Inc.

**Address:**

237 Main Street - Suite 1602

Buffalo, NY 14203

**Email:**

dschopp@legalaidbuffalo.org

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trackedbed**

**Additional Comments:**

*I am behind you completely!!  
Let me know if I can assist you  
in your efforts.*

**Name:**

*The Keenan Law Firm  
By: Mary Clare Keenan*

**Business:**

*The Keenan Law Firm & Homeworth Settlement  
Services, Inc.*

**Address:**

*268 Main Street, Suite 302  
Buffalo, NY 14202*

**Email:**

*hkl@pce.net*

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trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:** *Rodolfo L. Villacorta, M.D.* #1301  
*600 Main Street* 852-3653  
*Buffalo, NY 14202*

**Business:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

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trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:**

David Keton

**Business:**

ERIC Mower + Assoc

**Address:**

50 Frontiers Plaza  
Buffalo

**Email:**

dkean@eric-mower.com

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**Additional Comments:**

A CLEANER, NEATER MAIN ST. AND WASHINGTON ST. WOULD GO A LONG WAY TO PROVIDING A BETTER VISUAL FOR PEOPLE COMING TO DOWN TOWN. ALSO GROOM THE GREEN AREAS. MANY DAYS THESE AREAS ARE A DISGRACE.

**Name:**

CHRIS PINTO

**Business:**

P.E. BEHRINGER DIAMONDS, INC.

**Address:**

331 BRISBANE BLVD.

**Email:**



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**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:**

THOMAS ZENGER

**Business:**

DOWNTOWN GRAPHICS

**Address:**

715 MAIN ST.

**Email:**

TZENGER@ZENGER.COM

U L T I M A T E R E S T A U R A N T S , I N C .

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Additional Comments:

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Name:

*Rosemare Sobel*

Business:

*E.B. Green Steakhouse*

Address:

*Fountain Plaza  
Buff NY 14220*

Email:

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CAIVANESCO'S  
COSMOPOLITAN GRILLE  
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fax: 716-856-5685

**From:** <Mmmgood802@aol.com>  
**To:** <mainst.buffalo@erm.com>  
**Date:** 1/7/03 10:50PM  
**Subject:** Multi-Modal Main Street Access

January 8, 2003

Dear Sir or Madam:

As a condo owner living and working downtown, I would like to express my opinion regarding Main Street Access. I am strongly in favor of Alternative #4.

I attended the public forum held in October at Buffalo Library. I listened to all the alternatives being presented. After giving this issue much thought, I feel it is imperative that we reopen Main Street to vehicular traffic; with continued use of the LRRT system.

After just three years of condo ownership, I have seen much growth in the Main & Chippewa area. I truly enjoy the several new restaurants and night clubs (Bacchus, YaYa Bayou Brewhouse, and The Sphere Entertainment Complex).

Reopening vehicular traffic can only be a "win-win" for all City of Buffalo residents, but especially for those who work and live so close to Main Street.

I can only image how many more people would also enjoy the new establishments if only they could drive down Main Street and see the revitalization I've seen for themselves.

Sincerely,  
Michelle M. Malone  
600 Main Street  
Buffalo, NY 14202

**CC:** <STVECALVANESO@aol.com>

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ **(716) 852-2761**

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**Additional Comments:**

*If we want retail to come back  
you better have two way traffic  
also need to bring back parking on Main  
for the retail store front like 15 min or  
20 min parking for retail customers I have 3 store front  
I cannot rent for retail because of Capital Franchise*

Name: Harold Kopp

Business: EMI BIDG

Address: 700 Main St  
Buffalo NY 14202 8472546

Email: Haroldemi@aol.com

—  
CALVANESO'S  
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U L T I M A T E R E S T A U R A N T S . I N C .

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**Additional Comments:**

I fully support the return of vehicular traffic to Main St.

**Name:** WOLFGANG WILDOER

**Business:** HYATT REGENCY BUFFALO

**Address:** TWO FOUNTAIN PLAZA  
BUFFALO NY 14202

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_



**CALVANISOS  
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**MAIN OFFICE**

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BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716-912-1500  
fax: 716-856-5685

**From:** Ken Neufeld <kneufeld@studioarena.com>  
**To:** "stevecalvaneso@aol.com" <stevecalvaneso@aol.com>  
**Date:** 1/6/03 11:01AM  
**Subject:** Traffic on Main Street

I got your paper on the change in Traffic and am responding both as the Executive Director of Studio Arena and the President-Elect of the Theatre District Association. TDA has come out for Option 4, and Studio Arena supports this option as well.

I hope that we can count on your - or your designate- for participation at TDA meetings. The Annual General Meeting is this Wednesday at 4:00pm at Studio Arena. Meetings are generally on the second wednesday of the month at noon at buffalo place offices.

Ken

Ken Neufeld  
Executive Director  
Studio Arena Theatre  
716-856-8025 ext 1720  
[www.studioarena.org](http://www.studioarena.org)

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**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:**

Keirsten Snell - Regional Dev. Mgr.

**Business:**

Buffalo Niagara Partnership

**Address:**

465 Main St.  
Buffalo NY

**Email:**

Ksnell@thepartnership.org

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CITY GRILL  
268 MAIN STREET @ SWAN  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716.856.2651 | fax: 716.852.4889

YA YA BAYOU BREWHOUSE  
617 MAIN STREET @ THEATRE PLACE  
BUFFALO, NY 14203  
tel: 716.854.YAYA | fax: 716.854.9295

BACCHUS  
56 WEST CHIPPEWA STREET  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716.854.WINE (9463)

EXQUISITE CATERING  
@ DELAWARE PARK CASINO  
716.883.5932

MAIN OFFICE

600 MAIN STREET  
SUITE 804  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716-912-1500  
fax: 716-856-5685

U L T I M A T E R E S T A U R A N T S , I N C .

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ **(716) 852-2761**

**OR**

Email your comments to mainst.buffalo@erm.com



**Please check one of the following alternatives:**

- Alt. #1 Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall
- Alt. #2 Two-way traffic separate from LRRT
- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:** CHUCK KUSHNER

**Business:** TENT CITY

**Address:** 674 MAIN ST.  
BUFFALO, NY. 14202

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

CAUVANESO'S  
COSMOPOLITAN GRILLE  
5185 TRANSIT ROAD @ MAPLE  
WILLIAMSVILLE, NY 14221  
tel: 716-633-6683 | fax: 716-633-2700

CITY GRILL  
268 MAIN STREET @ SWAN  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716-856-2651 | fax: 716-852-4889

YA YA BAYOU BREWHOUSE  
517 MAIN STREET @ THEATRE PLACE  
BUFFALO, NY 14203  
tel: 716-854-YAYA | fax: 716-854-9295

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SUITE 804  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716-912-1500  
fax: 716-856-5685



U L T I M A T E R E S T A U R A N T S . I N C .

City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access and Revitalization Project



Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761

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- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed

Additional Comments:

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Name: PAUL WERTHMAN, P.E.

Business: BENCHMARK ENGINEERING

Address: 50 FOUNTAIN PLAZA, SUITE 1350  
BUFFALO, NY 14202

Email: pwerthman@benchmarkees.com

CALVANESO'S  
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268 MAIN STREET @ SWAN  
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YAYA BAYOU BREW HOUSE  
617 MAIN STREET @ THEATRE PLACE  
BUFFALO, NY 14203  
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716-883-5932

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SUITE 304  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716-912-1500  
fax: 716-856-5685

U L T I M A T E R E S T A U R A N T S . I N C .

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- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed

Additional Comments:

AJAP

Name:

CALE MACADINO

Business:

ELLCOTT DEVELOPMENT CO.

Address:

310 ELLCOTT SQUARE  
BUFFALO, NY 14203

Email:



CALVANESOS  
COSMOPOLITAN GRILLE  
585 TRANSIT ROAD @ MAPLE  
WILLAMSVILLE, NY 14221  
tel: 716-633-6683 | fax: 716-633-2700

CITY GRILL  
268 MAIN STREET @ SWAN  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716.836.2651 | fax: 716.852.4889

YA YA BAYOU BREW HOUSE  
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BUFFALO, NY 14203  
tel: 716.854.YAYA | fax: 716.854.y295

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fax: 716-856-5685

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ **(716) 852-2761**

OR

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- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

Since Main St was closed to motor vehicle traffic Buffalo's downtown core has deteriorated rapidly.

**Name:**

MARK RODGERS ATTY

**Business:**

Rodgers & Coppola

**Address:**

2020 Liberty Bldg ; 420 Main St  
Buffalo NY 14202

852 4110

**Email:** MRODGERS

@ RC Lawyers.com

FROM :

PHONE NO. : 7168367685

P01

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ **(716) 852-2761**

**OR**

Email your comments to mainst.buffalo@erm.com

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- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

*I have worked in retail in downtown for almost 15 years. It is very discouraging what has happened over the years and feel it is in our best interest to resolve the current situation.*

**Name:**

*Lawrence L. Harris / Pajul Singh*

**Business:**

*City Fashion / Perat Inc.*

**Address:**

*390 Main Street  
Main St. Mall Bflo. NY 14202*

**Email:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761

OR

Email your comments to mainst.buffalo@erm.com

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- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT  
trackbed

**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:** Peter C Ronca

**Business:** RACO.

**Address:** 350 Main Street.  
Buffalo, NY 14202.

**Email:** Peter@racogroup.net.

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761

OR

Email your comments to [mainst.buffalo@erm.com](mailto:mainst.buffalo@erm.com)

**Please check one of the following alternatives:**

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- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed**

**Additional Comments:**

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**Name:** SONIA F. BADAWY

**Business:** SUE'S N.Y. DELI/JUICERY

**Address:** 622 MAIN ST  
BRLO N.Y. 14202

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

01/14/08 05.12 FAX BUFFALO NIA PARTNERSHIP

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ **(716) 852-2761**

**OR**

Email your comments to mainst.buffalo@erm.com

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- Alt. #2 Two-way traffic separate from LRRT
- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed

**Additional Comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Name:**

Richard Valente

**Business:**

Hippodrome Ballroom Academy

**Address:**

654 MAIN ST  
Buff 14202

**Email:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761

OR

Email your comments to [mainst.buffalo@erm.com](mailto:mainst.buffalo@erm.com)

**Please check one of the following alternatives:**

- Alt. #1 Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall
- Alt. #2 Two-way traffic separate from LRRT
- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT  
trackedbed**

**Additional Comments:**

*this main St. has to  
Be open for two way Traffic.  
this is MUST.*

**Name:**

*NASEEM MALIK*

**Business:**

*⊗ ROYAL PHOTO LAB inc +  
⊗ SIZES FOR ALL inc*

**Address:**

*472 and 474 Main St.  
BUFFALO, N.Y. 14202*

**Email:**



**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Kelrsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761

OR

Email your comments to [mainst.buffalo@erm.com](mailto:mainst.buffalo@erm.com)

Please check one of the following alternatives:

- Alt. #1 Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall
- Alt. #2 Two-way traffic separate from LRRT
- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT  
trackbed

*also needs to be done*

**Additional Comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Name:**

JOAN M. MILLER

**Business:**

DEFINITELY BUFFALO

**Address:**

MAIN PLACE MALL LEVEL I  
BUFFALO NY 14202

**Email:**

Joanmiller60@aol.com

NYSDOT-REGION 5	
FEB 22 2006	
REGIONAL DIRECTOR	
RD	REG. TRAN MGR
	ASSISTANT TO RD
	CLAIMS
	PUBLIC INFO OFF
	SAFETY & HEALTH
	SECRETARY
ED	CONSTRUCTION
	DESIGN
	REAL ESTATE
OD	OPERATIONS
	PROGRAM
	FLEET
ASD	ADMINISTRATION
	INFORMATION SERV
PED	ST&W TRAN STRAT
DD	RESOURCE MGR

266 Hartwell Road  
 Buffalo, New York 14216  
 February 22, 2006

RECEIVED  
 2006 FEB 22 AM 10:32  
 DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
 REGION 5

Allan Taylor  
 Regional Director  
 NYSDOT Region 5  
 125 Main Street  
 Buffalo, New York 14203

Re: Buffalo, NY Cars Sharing Program, I.A. No. NY-03-0428, NYSDOT P.I.N. 5822.12

Region	
RECEIVED	
FEB 22 2006	
Gottlieb	_____
O'Connor	_____
Buffamonte	_____
Kahl	_____
Falgout	_____
Nixon	_____
Rolling	_____
Rutkowski	_____
Sepanski	_____
Smith	_____
Tay	_____
Swanson	_____
Kepler	_____
	_____
	_____

Dear Mr. Taylor:

I strongly urge implementation of a full environmental impact study for the proposed project Sharing the Trackbed Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project. I have attached my comments which were submitted to sponsor, MPO, and consultants during the public comment periods in February 2006 and December 2002. Other attachments support my statements. It seems to me that a process of effective public involvement has not occurred in development of the proposed project. In addition, I dispute the City of Buffalo February 3, 2003 SEQR Neg. Dec. which was done while important issues were unresolved.

Although stakeholder groups have enjoyed more involvement, "citizens" have not been adequately engaged in development of the project, nor have their concerns been appropriately addressed. A public meeting was held on December 5, 2001, a conceptual design workshop with breakout session recorders on January 28, 2002, and another public meeting on November 12, 2002. Alternatives outlined in the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment were presented at the November 12, 2002 meeting but no preferred alternative was recommended. Neither in the Draft EA nor at the November meeting did consultants respond to several important concerns raised during the January design workshop including plans to dismantle the award winning pedestrian/transit mall streetscape, designed by Toronto firm Moriyama and Teshima. On February 1, 2006, a public meeting, actually a "walk-through", was held to elicit comments on streetscape and station design for the Shared Trackbed Plan.

Public concerns submitted following the November 2002 meeting were ignored and/or misrepresented in a public comment summary table which was attached to the January 2003 Final Environmental Assessment. The Final EA is essentially the same document as the October 2002 Draft EA except for inclusion of a Preferred Alternative - Sharing the Trackbed. (Refer to my February 2006 comments for specifics.) After release of the January 2003 Final EA, I obtained from the City of Buffalo copies of public comments including letters, comment sheets, email messages, and a business survey, also the comment summary table prepared by the consultants and attached to the January 2003 Final EA. These items are enclosed. I was told by the City representative who copied the materials for me that the January 2003 Final EA did not include copies of the public comments submitted following the November 2002 meeting, only a summary table. None are attached to either the January 2003 Final EA or the CD version of the

August 2005 Final Draft EA. The latter was received from the MPO, Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council.

Some of the issues which seem to require further study include: safety issues for bicycle riders, pedestrians and vehicles, payback of federal dollars related to demolition of federally-funded pedestrian/transit mall features, destruction of the award winning streetscape designed to minimize wind effects without creating wind tunnels, impact of project on sidewalk vaults, disruption during construction, impact on project of nearby Ellicott Street Project, and omission of a designated bike path.

Hopefully through a full environmental impact study more appropriate alternatives will emerge that will result in a greatly improved plan for Buffalo's Downtown Main Street. Thank you for considering my comments as you review this project. Please respond to my letter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynda Stephens". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lynda Stephens

Enc.

**COMMENT SHEET**  
**"CARS SHARING MAIN STREET "**  
MAIN STREET MULTI-MODAL ACCESS AND REVITALIZATION PROJECT  
NYSDOT P.I.N 5822.12  
FTA No. NY-03-0428

PLEASE PLACE COMPLETED COMMENT SHEETS IN THE BOX AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE MEETING TONIGHT OR SEND TO THE ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE BEFORE FEBRUARY 16, 2006.

NAME: Lynda Stephens

ADDRESS 266 Hartwell Road

CITY Buffalo, NY ZIP 14216

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS February 15, 2006

This project needs an environmental impact study. Efforts to fastrack the process for developm<sup>o</sup>nt of a project for returning vehicles to Main Street has resulted in a seriously flawed preferred alternative.

More specific comments are included in two attached documents which detail with specific references some of the problems and issues related to the proposed project. My comments address both process and product. There are six pages in total including this Comment Sheet form.

Implementation of an EIS will facilitate emergence of a better project, one that will make Buffalo and the region proud. Good luck as you continue this effort.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE FOLD AS INDICATED ON THE BACK, TAPE AND MAIL OR FAX TO 716-656-1987



Vehicles on Main Street Shared Trackbed Project Comments  
Lynda Stephens, 266 Hartwell Road, Buffalo, NY 14216  
February 15, 2006

Introduction/Need for EIS - I do not believe that any Vehicles on Main Street project should be implemented until an Environmental Impact Study is completed. This process should include widely publicized public hearings. My review of the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment, the January 2003 Final Environmental Assessment, and the August 2005 Final Draft Environmental Assessment for City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project suggests that an Environmental Impact Study is required. I wish to have included with these comments my December 12, 2002 comments on the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment.

1. Process problems - The project was initiated with a SEQR action that did not include adequate scoping. Although the 2002 Draft EA states on page 1-10 that a public hearing will be advertised and held, no such hearing was ever implemented. The January 2003 Final EA deletes references to "public hearing". Instead the January 2003 Final EA page 1-10 mentions a Public Information Meeting which was held on November 12, 2002. In spite of various environmental issues unresolved at the time, the City of Buffalo signed a SEQR Negative Declaration on February 3, 2003.

2. Inappropriate labeling - The consultants continuously mislabel the current mall "pedestrian mall" when in fact it has always been a "pedestrian transit mall" which includes an above ground light rail train. No explanation is given.

3. Data outdated and/or inadequate - Data used to support returning vehicles to Main Street is generally old and seriously outdated; for example, at place employment-2000, living downtown-2000, building usage-2001, property values-2002, DESMAN study of off-street parking spaces-2000. The data presented to demonstrate promise of economic development as a result of returning cars to Main Street is more of a nature of "by saying it makes it so", than by genuine relationships. Downtown Buffalo is changing in many positive ways that are not reflected in the old data.

4. No public hearing - In the January 2003 Final EA, p. 1-10, section "Information Issues Workshop" the numbers of people who received mail or email invitations to the December 5, 2001 workshop has been changed from 3,000 noted in the October 2002 Draft EA to 4,000. The authors also have added here three more groups of participants including the City's Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (GNPA). At that time the GNPA was in its formative stages and had not evolved to a stage that allowed a meaningful interface. (I have been involved with the GNPA since its inception.)

5. Citizen input ignored - The January 2003 Final EA does not respond to citizen input. The January 2003 Final EA is materially the same as the October 2002 Draft EA with the exception of the reference to a public hearing and the inflated public notification numbers. The Appendix B Public Meeting (November 12, 2002) Comments summary chart, some citizen comments are mischaracterized. Although not the only instance, my comments were misrepresented. I submitted three pages with references listed on page three. I submitted via fax and via email. I have a copy of citizen comments, received from City of Buffalo in 2003 upon my request. Only pages one and three of my comments were included. However, the fax mark on my page three clearly shows "p. 3", so all pages were received. My page two contained references to errors in the 2002 Draft EA narrative regarding Denver population in vicinity of the Denver pedestrian mall. The Draft EA Appendix A comparison chart indicated pop. 16,000 for Denver in mall vicinity, but the narrative said 116,000. The Final EA and the Final Draft EA both have the 16,000 changed to 116,000. I think someone read my page two.

6. SHPO - As of August 2005, SHPO had not responded with comments on the EA. Could it be that the plan threatens the Urban Cultural Park/Theater District?

7. Federal payback - The EA's do not discuss payback of federal dollars which will be required when federally funded features of the original ped/transit mall are removed, especially stations and streetscape features.

8. Safety – The Preferred Alternative Sharing the Trackbed is the least safe of the considered action alternatives. Refer to Table 3-26 Modal Conflict Points. The Preferred Alternative presents bicycle safety issues that have not been adequately addressed. The width of shared bike/car lanes was 11.5-12 ft. instead of preferred 14 ft., the authors make remarks that “skilled” bike riders can handle this (Aug. 2005 Final Draft EA, p. 3-47).

Other safety concerns not resolved include train rails becoming more slippery during cold weather. Buffalo has many days of cold weather. Bicycle wheels can get caught in rail grooves. Access of emergency vehicles will be impeded since they use trackbed now and there is minimal interruption with trains. Also HSBC Building would have vehicular traffic flowing under their building.

9. Disruption due to construction – The Aug. 2005 Final Draft EA downplays the disruption issue. In addition to disruption on each block, think “phased project” as in suggested annual increments: ten blocks x ten years = extended disruption. Also many businesses have deliveries made by trucks using Main Street. The delivery system disrupted on Main Street, combined with two-way streets on Washington and proposed for Pearl Street, presents real concerns for efficient deliveries to businesses.

10. Unplanned traffic delays - The model WATSim does not consider accidents and car breakdowns. However, these incidents can produce major delays which interfere with train schedules and can cause gridlock. This issue has not been adequately addressed. Refer to August 2005 Final Draft EA page 3-40.

#### 11. August 2005 Final Draft EA 3.11 Cumulative Effects

This section seems so poorly developed, it demands an EIS. For example, re: Buffalo Intermodal Transportation Center, the proposed project was an opportunity to introduce and focus on a new mode of transportation, bicycles. Instead of planning a designated bike path, the plan calls for parallel parking along Main Street which effectively eliminates that opportunity. The omission of a designated bike path diminishes the efforts of Buffalo's intermodal transportation efforts. Another major development mentioned in this section is the Ellicott Street Project. Development of a two-way Ellicott Street two blocks east of Main Street as a major north/south axis and the impact on the returning vehicles to Main Street project has not been studied. Also the only cultural reference is to historic buildings. No mention is made of cultural organizations, such as CEPA, Squeaky Wheel and Arts Council whose facilities and offices front on Main Street. Access to these cultural organizations will be impacted by construction and should be addressed.

12. Endangered species - The peregrine falcon resides in downtown Buffalo. During construction, creatures that are food for the falcons may be affected. Instead of consultation with experts, the Aug. 2005 Final Draft EA just states there would be no impact or minimal impact.

13. Appendix B – The August 2005 Final Draft EA adds seventeen new names with Shared Trackbed as recommended alternative; compare with January 2003 Final EA.

To: Commissioner Joseph Giambra, Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Room 502, City Hall, Buffalo, NY 14202  
Fax: (716) 851-5825 – 3 pages  
E-mailed comments to [mainst.buffalo@erm.com](mailto:mainst.buffalo@erm.com)

From: Lynda Stephens  
Date: December 12, 2002  
Subject: Comments on City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002

I am a long time resident of the City of Buffalo and my small business is located in the Allentown neighborhood. Since 1989, I have been an independent consultant, working on numerous project teams with engineers, architects and a certified planner. My primary consulting activities relate to preparation of grant applications. My project involvement has also included preparation of environmental materials in compliance with NYS SEQR and with NEPA (HUD guidelines) for rural municipal clients (outside of Erie County). I have never been a consultant to the City of Buffalo or any of the identified project organizations. I have been a member of the American Planning Association (APA) Western New York Section for over ten years and for the past two years, also a national APA member.

I have reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) October 2002, and other materials referenced in that report as well as pertinent newspaper articles. A reference list is attached at the end of my comments. Note that the 1998 version of the GBNRTC sponsored Feasibility Study mentioned in the DEA was not available; however, the March 2000 Final Report was reviewed. Please consider the concerns listed below and include a response to the concerns with subsequent reviews. Overall, the evidence does not support implementation of a large, multi-million dollar infrastructure project at this time.

Environmental Review Process – Most environmental reviews are conducted after one proposed alternative has been identified through an appropriate planning process. It is not clear why a formal environmental review process was selected to substitute for a planning process. The drawback of the current approach is that public officials and agencies are technically on record in favor of action before rather than after the collection of relevant data and public review of evidence and information. The effect of the approach adopted here is to gather momentum and support for action that may not be advisable and indeed may not be supported by data or evidence. This approach is also confusing to the general public who are not familiar with SEQR and NEPA. The lead agency for this project has not been clearly identified. The scheduling of comment period over the holiday season is unfortunate.

Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002 (DEA):

- There is no clear reference to a separate engineering study to define the four alternatives offered. The Feasibility Study did not study the Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall Alternative or the No Action Alternative.
  
- The No Action Alternative has not been adequately evaluated. It is referred to as “baseline” for environmental study. See related concern immediately following.

- No assessment has been made regarding modification of the Moriyama & Teshima signature streetscape of the pedestrian transit mall. Some features have already been removed. A citizen request was made for such an investigation at the January 28, 2002 conceptual design workshop. Participants in one of the focus groups supported a further look in order to avoid the destruction of possible notable architecture. (Note that the Buffalo design, by this Toronto firm, garnered two design awards for their Buffalo project, which is included on the firm’s website. In 1987, this same firm began work selected in a competition to guide The Niagara Parks Commission-Ontario in development of a 20-year plan and a 5-year action plan for a 35 mile stretch along the Niagara River. That project was to protect the historical and natural sites of the Niagara Parks while promoting economic renewal through tourism. The planning area included Niagara Falls, Ontario.)
- The DEA does not address issues of federal payback for structural changes to the pedestrian transit mall which was built using vast federal funds. Contrast this omission to the inclusion of this concern in the Feasibility Study March 2000, conducted by Erdman Anthony.
- The DEA does not address how the City’s extensive sidewalk vaults will be impacted by the various alternatives. This issue was extensively addressed in the Feasibility Study.
- In the Needs section, page 1-6, the DEA cites surveys noting “poor access” and “perceived safety concerns” as the most negative aspects of need for proposed action. However, this is contradicted in the “Cars Sharing Main Street Staff Analysis August 2001”, page 9 Provide Vehicular Access to Adjacent Land Uses-“Downtown Buffalo is extremely convenient and accessible, but perception...” There are probably ways to mediate public perception on accessibility just as public perceptions on pedestrian safety downtown have changed for the better as noted in the Downtown Buffalo Strategic Planning Update. Local real estate person, Sheldon Berlow of Berlow Real Estate which does about 75 percent of brokered retail site selection and leasing in Western New York, is on record stating that none of the retailers his firm approached has made negative comments about no cars on Main Street or about more parking (March 10, 2002 Buffalo News article). Mr. Berlow states that people and people hours are key. Perhaps Buffalo Place could plan more events.
- The Feasibility Study cites safety concerns for their studied alternatives, which are related to some of the DEA proposed alternatives. Safety issues have not been adequately explored in the DEA. Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 present dramatically increased Modal Conflict Points over the current situation and Alternative 1. Alternative 4 Share Trackbed increases the risk factors more than threefold and is the least safe alternative.
- The DEA has omitted data, distorted data, and repeated data errors to support action alternatives. Examples include the section Research on Other Communities Experience, pages 1-6 – 1-7 where data for Denver pedestrian mall figures are listed as 116,000 employees within two blocks of mall and 30,000 residents within a five minute walk. DEA Appendix A spreadsheet indicates 16,000 employees and that the 30,000 residents are “within walking distance”. Note that this Denver information on the spreadsheet has remained unchanged since presented in January 2002 with workshop materials. The error of 116,000 instead of 16,000 was prominently presented in January 28, 2002 workshop



narrative materials and was used to persuade participants that Buffalo was not like cities with successful malls, e.g. Denver. Another example, regarding pedestrian counts: statements on page 3-34 noting declining numbers of pedestrians at points along the mall do not match the years or numbers displayed on Figure 3-5 on page 3-35 which shows an increase at 12 of 17 sites in 2000 compared with 1999.

- There is no effort to aggregate positive data regarding the current downtown situation. (The pedestrian transit mall may have yet a chance for successful contribution to downtown rebirth.) For example, in 1991 Class A vacancy rate was 20.3%, compared with January 1999 which improved to 11.9% (p. 6 in Staff Analysis). Also, since 1998 when CBD at-place employment was 46,698, the picture has improved to 50,046 in 2000, a 7% increase in two years. Also, Buffalo News article by Brian Meyer, March 12, 2002, reported new Census shows downtown population increased to 3,200 from 2,600 in last decade, a 23% increase with new residential units planned and under construction. On Table 3-1 on page 3-7, the % change 1999-2000 for building usage/square feet on main street showed a net gain of 8%, with only retail declining slightly. Restaurant and office space gained. (Be advised that the remaining women's clothing specialty stores on Delaware Avenue, i.e. Tegler's, Par Avion, Joseph's, Evelyn's, Papagallo's, all closed during the period after the pedestrian mall was completed, yet cars remain on Delaware.)
- DEA predictions of economic improvements are generally speculative and use questionable assumptions. Most predictions are not based on good data.

#### Reference List:

1. City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002
2. Cars Sharing Main Street Staff Analysis August 2001
3. Final Report Feasibility Study for Accommodating Motor Vehicles within the Pedestrian Mall on Main Street City of Buffalo Erie County, New York March 2000, prepared by Erdman Anthony; prepared for Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation
4. Buffalo News March 10, 2002 article "Should we return cars to Main Street?"
5. Buffalo News March 12, 2002 article "Study under way on expanding housing downtown"
6. Art Voice December 13, 2001 article "Bringing Traffic Back to Main Street"
7. Website for Moriyama & Teshima Architects – <http://www.mtarch.com>
8. Return of Cars to Main Street Conceptual Design Workshop-January 28, 2002
9. Downtown Buffalo 2002! News – Special/April 2002

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**From :** Bill Banas <bill@banasclan.com>  
**To :** Lynda Stephens <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
**CC :** Pat McNichol <pat\_mcnichol@lycos.com>, Jeremy Toth <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>, Nathan Neuman <ncneuman@yahoo.com>  
**Subject :** Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
**Date :** Tue, 08 Apr 2003 17:44:42 -0400

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Lynda,

We appreciate your interest and share your concerns about public input in the downtown Main Street project. I have included the full text of the NMG Transportation Action Group position statement below (which was submitted to the project team and then to Buffalo Place when it was discovered that the comments never made it into the record). Please contact me or Pat McNichol (whom I've copied with this message) if you'd like to discuss this further.

- Bill

Bill Banas  
 Chair, Transportation Action Group  
 The New Millennium Group of WNY, Inc.  
 www.nmgonline.org  
 bill@banasclan.com  
 (716) 854-9283

*Not accurately portrayed on table & not considered.*

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- MSN 8 Internet Soft
- News
- Send Money
- Shop AT&T Wireles
- Shopping
- Sports by ESPN
- Travel
- Women

The New Millennium Group of Western New York, Inc. (NMG) fully supports an open and fair public process and would like to thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project. We applaud the efforts of city of Buffalo, Buffalo Place, NFTA, and the State of New York on attempting to create a vibrant downtown.

LONG TERM VISION

Our long-term vision of Main Street downtown is one that is full of people and vitality, as it once was. Our vision includes ideas that are not new, but takes many of the attributes of Buffalo's Main Street past and applies them to our goals today.

Our long-term vision includes an uninterrupted facade of mixed-use buildings that include apartments, condos, retail and office space. It consists of wide sidewalks to allow for outdoor cafes and to give sense of easy passage for the pedestrian. Our vision comprises of orderly rows of trees, possibly double rows on each side of Main. Pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture, would be plentiful to give people places to congregate and socialize. Public spaces would be meticulously planned and integrated to provide occasional focal points and a sense of place. The sidewalks would be illuminated mainly by storefronts and augmented with softer, focused light from lampposts built on a smaller, human-sized scale. Of course the MetroRail would be there to provide a means of easy transportation to, from, and within downtown.

All streets would again intersect Main Street and be two-way. Reconnecting Genesee Street to itself would restore Joseph Ellicott's radial street

pattern. Eagle Street and Elm Street would again cross Main Street to recreate Shelton Square, an important focal point and gathering place for people.

#### METRORAIL

We fully support keeping MetroRail on Main Street. All four of the alternatives do so. It is important to note that MetroRail is just one ingredient needed for a successful Main Street. It is unfair to blame MetroRail (or the pedestrian mall) for the demise of Main, especially given the fact that no policy of the last 20 years has supported MetroRail. In fact, most policy decisions have undermined MetroRail, such as the creation of thousands of new parking spaces, failure to enforce the transit overlay code, a nonexistent downtown housing policy, and other "hidden" subsidies that create suburban sprawl. Even so, MetroRail still ranks as one of the best public transit systems in the nation, with the third highest passenger per mile ridership among other light rail systems (between 25 and 30 thousand passengers per day). MetroRail is the envy of Mayors of other cities throughout the U.S. and is fundamental (but not sufficient) to a vibrant Main Street. Indeed, given its success, we should be planning to complete and expand MetroRail (as virtually all cities in the U.S. with light rail are currently doing or planning to do).

We believe restoring auto traffic to Main will not necessarily lead to a revitalized street. With Main Street being the exception, all streets downtown have auto traffic, yet their condition is the same or worse than that of Main Street. Indeed, when observing other downtowns and Main Streets across the state and nation, the argument can be made that MetroRail may have saved Main Street from further demise.

#### WHAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH NOW

We can not accomplish everything overnight. However, this does not inhibit us from eventually reaching the long-term goal of a thriving Main Street. By having a long term "blueprint" in place, we can accomplish the vision in phases.

The first phase should include opening up the cross-streets and making them two-way. Currently, Main Street feels like a long canyon. By opening up the cross streets, it will create shorter blocks and help Main Street "breathe."

We praise the city of Buffalo for the recent conversion of Huron, Ellicott, Franklin, and Washington streets to two-way traffic. Goodell, Tupper, Mohawk, Swan, and Seneca streets should also be converted to two-way. One-way streets create a "rat maze" for people traveling into and within downtown, which makes for difficult navigation. Two-way streets "calm traffic" and provide better access and mobility.

If necessary, we would approve of opening Main Street to automobile traffic, similar to Alternative #4, "Two-Way Traffic sharing LRRT." Streets in Downtown Toronto provide one excellent example of how a shared roadway can benefit all who use it. (Indeed, there are countless other good examples of the "shared roadbed" across the U.S., Europe, and the rest of the world.) When trolleys used to travel up and down Buffalo streets, automobiles and carriages shared the road with them.

We oppose any plan that reduces the sidewalk width. An exception would be made for parking lanes. In our opinion, Alternative #2, "Two-Way Traffic Separate from LRRT," is unacceptable.

We would like to share the following specific suggestions for Alternative #4. It should be noted that implementation of these types of details will either "make or break" the effectiveness of this project.

\* Visual cues, such as bollards, should be used to protect pedestrians and distinguish between the different modes of travel.

\* Orderly rows (as opposed to random patches or pockets) of trees should be planted, without exception. According to city code Chapter 467 (D), a commercial establishment does not have the right to prevent trees from being planted in front of their storefront. Orderly rows of trees create a sense of place, calm traffic, clean the air, and beautify the street. Trees should be planted in large tree pits with protective grating. The verge, which is the area between the curb and sidewalk, could be either grass or pea gravel. If a hard surface is

deemed necessary, then permeable brick should be used, not concrete. This will ensure good root health and significantly increase the chances of large, mature trees developing. Also, double rows of trees should be considered on blocks without a parking lane.

\* Use of granite or brick pavers should be considered for the parking lanes and crosswalks. These building materials are aesthetically pleasing, have a traffic calming effect, and have longer life cycle (and lower cost) when compared to asphalt.

\* Main Street needs to be "aerated" so that it can "breathe" again. Where applicable, alleys should be restored or enhanced. Alleys help to service buildings, create better access, and shorten blocks.

\* Illumination should be provided by standards of appropriate (human) scale & character. Frequent, shorter, low-intensity lamps are preferable to fewer, taller, high-intensity lamps. The light from the standards should be focused downward onto the sidewalk where it is most useful, and to minimize light pollution and glare.

\* Recently, R/UDAT has identified the block between Goodell and Tupper streets as having the most potential for downtown housing. Allowing for more on-street parking will help alleviate the demand to demolish existing buildings to create off-street parking. Main Street's large road width allows for both a planted median and angled parking on this block (with two-way traffic). Angled parking can provide up to 40% more on-street parking.

Ultimately, the long-term vitality of downtown does not depend on whether cars are allowed on Main Street. To create a 24-hour downtown, you need to have residents living and working there.

We feel the first transportation step to a healthy Main Street should be finishing the conversion of all streets to two-way traffic (including all cross-streets). If it is deemed necessary by the community to open Main Street to automobiles, then it must be done using Alternative #4, including all the proper details, and giving the pedestrian the highest priority.

Bill Banas  
Chairman, Transportation Action Group

Patrick McNichol  
Co-Chairman, Transportation Action Group

The New Millennium Group of WNY, Inc.  
(716) 854-9283

~~~~~

> From: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
> Date: Mon, 07 Apr 2003 12:14:02 -0400  
> To: bill@banasclan.com  
> Subject: Fwd: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
>  
>  
>  
> Please excuse the extra mess. to reach you regarding NMG position on this  
> topic. Hope to hear from you. Lynda Stephens  
>  
>  
>  
>> From: "Jeremy Toth and Nava Fader" <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>  
>> To: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
>> Subject: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
>> Date: Sun, 6 Apr 2003 18:37:31 -0400  
>>  
>> bill@banasclan.com  
>>  
>> ----- Original Message -----  
>> From: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
>> To: <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>  
>> Sent: Sunday, April 06, 2003 11:39 AM  
>> Subject: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo

>>  
>>  
>>> Thanks for your response. Bill's message was undeliverable. Can you  
>> give  
>>> me his correct e-mail address?  
>>> Thanks  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>  
>>>> From: "Jeremy Toth and Nava Fader" <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>  
>>>> To: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>, <bill@banisclan.com>  
>>>> Subject: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
>>>> Date: Fri, 4 Apr 2003 20:51:56 -0500  
>>>>  
>>>> Bill is better able to answer this as Transportation Action Group  
>>>> Chair.  
>>>>  
>>>> ----- Original Message -----  
>>>> From: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
>>>> To: <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>; <bill@banisclan.com>  
>>>> Sent: Thursday, April 03, 2003 1:07 PM  
>>>> Subject: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
>>>>  
>>>>> Dear Mr. Toth and Mr. Banis,  
>>>>> Hello, I am a person with concerns about the City's plan to return  
>>>>> cars  
>>>>> to  
>>>>> Main St. and change the streetscape. I submitted comments to the  
>>>>> City  
>>>>> and  
>>>>> their consultant, ERM by the deadline last Dec. 12. In the Final  
>>>>> Environmental Assessment only the consultant's display of the  
>>>>> submitted  
>>>>> public comments was attached. (The City staff person said he had  
>>>>> advised  
>>>>> the consultant to attach comments in full which is the usual  
>>>>> procedure.)  
>>>>> When I visited the City's Public Works Dept. to view the actual  
>>>>> submissions,  
>>>>> some were missing and mine was missing a critical middle page. The  
>>>>> New  
>>>>> Millennium Group of WNY e-mail was missing, although a student  
>>>>> member, Nathan  
>>>>> Neuman, response was included among the originals. It seemed to me  
>>>>> that  
>>>>> Mr.  
>>>>> Neuman's remarks were probably not the "official" NMG version.  
>>>>> My comments were grossly mischaracterized. I wonder if yours were.  
>>>>> I  
>>>>> have  
>>>>> copied the consultant's distillation of your comments. I would be  
>>>>> most  
>>>>> interested in reading your comments in complete form. I can e-mail  
>>>>> mine  
>>>>> to  
>>>>> you if you like.  
>>>>> ERM characterization of NMG of WNY comments:  
>>>>> "Provides their Long Term Vision for Main Street, supports LRRT, and  
>>>>> opening  
>>>>> all streets to two way traffic"  
>>>>> I look forward to hearing from you.  
>>>>> Lynda Stephens  
>>>>>  
>>>>>  
>>>>> Add photos to your messages with MSN 8. Get 2 months FREE\*.  
>>>>> <http://join.msn.com/?page=features/featuredemail>  
>>>>>  
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>>> MSN 8 helps eliminate e-mail viruses. Get 2 months FREE\*.  
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> Help STOP SPAM with the new MSN 8 and get 2 months FREE\*  
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**COMMENT SHEET**  
**"CARS SHARING MAIN STREET"**  
**MAIN STREET MULTI-MODAL ACCESS AND REVITALIZATION PROJECT**  
**NYSDOT P.I.N 5822.12**  
**FTA No. NY-03-0428**

PLEASE PLACE COMPLETED COMMENT SHEETS IN THE BOX AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE MEETING TONIGHT OR SEND TO THE ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE BEFORE AUGUST 18, 2006.

NAME: Lynda Stephens

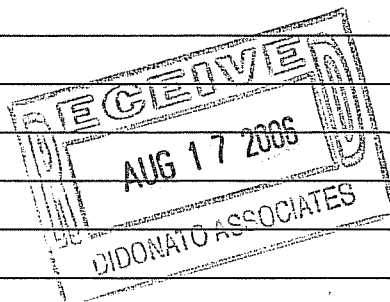
ADDRESS 266 Hartwell Road

CITY Buffalo, NY ZIP 14216

EMAIL Please contact me via regular mail.

COMMENTS Comments dated August 17, 2006 are attached, three  
pages. Sixty-one pages of supporting material  
is also attached including a one-page list of  
the attachments.

All materials submitted August 17, 2006.



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Comments on "Cars Sharing Main Street" – Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project NYSDOT P.I.N. 5822.12 FTA No. NY-03-0428  
August 17, 2006  
Lynda Stephens, 266 Hartwell Road, Buffalo, NY 14216

Why do we find ourselves facing the Shared Trackbed project moving forward through design stages when the NEPA Environmental Assessment is not completed, the State Office of Historic Preservation has not been heard from, and no NYS SEQR EIS has been done? Substantial public monies have been expended for consultants to continue design of the Shared Trackbed Alternate.

#### PROCESS:

From the beginning, this project has been notable for lack of adherence to public input protocols; refer to attached pages Federal Highway Administration Q&A, Questions 2 and 3. Indicators discussed in Question 3 suggest that the public be involved at all stages of decision making. There were no open public meetings until after the NYS SEQR environmental process had begun. This project has been driven by Buffalo Place. It is not clear why this organization, which is funded by the City to sponsor downtown events and interface with downtown businesses, has taken the lead in promoting a major capital project. Buffalo Place involved some stakeholders during information gathering in 2001. Then Buffalo Place staff obtained approval of the Mayor of Buffalo for the City to be the lead agency for SEQR, beginning the environmental process prior to open public meetings.

Following the December 12, 2002 deadline for comments on the October 2002 Environmental Assessment, the January 2003 Environmental Assessment was released. The January 2003 EA included a preferred alternative, Sharing the Trackbed, referred to in the May 2006 EA as "Shared Trackbed". No public meetings were held to present the preferred alternative and on February 3, 2003, the lead agency representative, Public Works Commissioner Joseph Giambra, signed the NYS State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Full Environmental Assessment Form with determination of significance: Negative Declaration. The May 2006 Environmental Assessment changes the reference for the October 2002 report from "Draft EA" to "Draft SEQRA EIS"; see p. 1-11. Please be aware that the state's EIS process has not been followed. There have been no public hearings announced or held for this project.

There have been three public meetings (meetings defined as people in the same room with discussion that is heard by all present) and then several what I call "walk-throughs". These "walk-throughs" are advertised as public meetings, but are not "public meetings" as is commonly understood. Walk-throughs, where people move through a room to see design boards and can talk with various consultants, are not true "public meetings". The walk-through strategy is designed to limit the public's access to the comments and concerns of other people, thereby limiting opportunities to become informed by various questions/criticisms and responses. The public has had very limited access to other citizens' comments/concerns. It appears that the drivers of this project want to prevent the public from understanding the various alternatives and examining the assumptions regarding project purpose and objectives. The January 2003 EA only included a consultant matrix to summarize remarks that included some misrepresentations; copies of citizen comments were not attached to the EA. How many other people, besides me, went to City Hall to the Department of Public Works to obtain copies of other citizens' comments and then learned about the misrepresentations? My February 22, 2006 letter included



in attachment section many citizens' comments on the October 2002 Draft EA so that officials could see the misrepresentation for themselves.

My August 17, 2006 comments are accompanied by copies of my February 22, 2006 letter sent to Letitia Thompson, FTA Region 2 Administrator and to Allan Taylor, NYSDOT Region 5 Director. Attached to these letters and included again with these comments are my statements from December 12, 2002 and February 16, 2006, with thirty-nine pages of documentation backing up my concerns and complaints. A total of sixty-one (61) pages are attached. Twenty-one (21) pages of other citizens' comments in response to the October 2002 Draft EA are included to demonstrate that substantial concerns articulated by citizens have been ignored. The January 2003 Environmental Assessment is basically the same document as the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment. My concerns from December 2002 and February 2006 remain concerns, mostly unaddressed by the design team.

#### PROMOTION:

From the beginning the project drivers, Buffalo Place and consultants, have referred to the Main Street mall as the "Pedestrian Mall". This is factually incorrect and a stunning example of a "straw man" strategy which has included disparaging the "pedestrian mall". The UMTA 1982 project name is "Main Street Rapid Transit Mall"; refer to attached May 2006 Table 3-2 of downtown districts and properties listed or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The Toronto architect firm, designers the mall streetscape, called the mall the "Main Street Transit Mall, Buffalo, New York". The Moriyama & Teshima Architects webpage which documents this is attached. The straw man strategy misrepresents the existing mall to the public, many who were too young to have experienced the development of this huge transit mall project or did not live in Buffalo at the time. My point: there is already a train on Main Street along with delivery vehicles, police and emergency vehicles. There are also vehicles crossing Main Street at several downtown streets. For a couple years, Buffalo Place even had a Main Street mini-bus service for downtown workers who parked several blocks away from Main Street. (This service, in direct competition with the NFTA operated MetroRail, has been discontinued due to budget constraints.)

The consultants persist in referring to Shared Trackbed as the "preferred alternative". In fact, the Shared Trackbed project is moving forward. At this point, Shared Trackbed is factually not an alternative, it is a project under development.

#### CONCERNS:

My concerns remain the same as those I have already articulated: safety issues for bicycle riders, pedestrians and vehicles; payback of federal dollars related to demolition of federally-funded pedestrian/transit mall features; destruction of the award winning streetscape, including stations, designed to minimize wind effects without creating wind tunnels; impact of project on sidewalk vaults; disruption during construction; impact of project on nearby Ellicott Street Project; and omission of a designated bike path.

In addition, I believe that Main Street should not be turned into a parking lot. We already have an enormous amount of land in downtown Buffalo devoted to parking. Refer to attached map distributed by The New Millennium Group. Please note that the designers of the mall streetscape are superstars. Their award winning Buffalo streetscape has been allowed to deteriorate. Moriyama and Teshima's accomplishments include the Ontario Science Museum, the 1987

Niagara Parks 20 Year Plan and 5 Year Action Plan, and the South Shore Redevelopment in Miami Beach, Florida. Also note that the mall is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; refer to May 2006 EA Table 3-2 attached.

Also duly noted is the SUNY Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning 3-D animated model of the Shared Trackbed Alternative which I viewed on August 8, 2006. That presentation incorporated consultant data. SUNYAB graduate students developed the animation model. The model presents relatively few pedestrians walking the mall. Wasn't the point to bring more people onto Main Street? People, not parked or moving cars, drive demand for retail. In my December 12, 2002 comments, I noted remarks of commercial real estate expert Sheldon Berlow. He presented the "No" (to Should We Return Cars to Main Street?) opinion in an article in the Buffalo News Viewpoints March 10, 2002. That article is attached to these comments. Documentation previously submitted and included again: samples of a downtown business survey done by a local restaurant owner. His cover letter and ballot basically tell the participant how to vote; that strategy is known as "stacking the deck". Buffalo Place and the consultants have relied heavily on responses to this flawed survey as they push the Shared Trackbed project forward.

Another concern: consultants do not identify the supporters of Shared Trackbed who are "lenders supporting local retailers" mentioned in paragraph "Provide Vehicle Access to Adjacent Land Uses" on page 1-4 May 2006 EA. Lenders, i.e. financial institutions, are unnamed. A review of section 6.0 References does not indicate lenders. However, on the "Cars Sharing Main Street" brochure, distributed at the August 8, 2006 walk-through, I noticed that the Project Advisory Committee included a representative of M&T Bank who is also on the board of Buffalo Place.

One of the stated purposes of the developing project is to stimulate economic development. Please note that during the past four years very substantial development has occurred in downtown and nearby neighborhoods. I doubt that the Shared Trackbed project has had anything to do with this ongoing development. In fact, the disruption of construction will discourage new businesses from establishing themselves on Main Street over the next several years and the dust, etc. will be unpleasant for those who now live downtown. Some of the new Main Street residential units are rental apartments, not owner occupied condos. Those tenants may leave.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

Given the huge process flaws, misrepresentation to the public of the existing conditions, and lack of proper public involvement, I recommend a "Time Out" and rethinking of the project. Citizen input, previously ignored, should be considered. We need a better product. I recommend re-opening project planning to mediate identified process flaws. The design work for the Shared Trackbed project should be halted, stopping the flow of public monies to this ill-advised project.

Through inquiry, not in published reports, I have learned that the existing transit system needs substantial repairs; money is tight. Capital needs to accomplish these repairs should be addressed with Congressional and state representatives. With the two control boards, Buffalo and Erie County, local monies for extensive repairs will probably be impossible to obtain.

Lynda Stephens - Comments on "Cars Sharing Main Street"- August 17, 2006

ATTACHMENTS – sixty-one pages

- Federal Highway Administration environmental public involvement Q&A #2 and #3  
Full Environmental Assessment Form – Neg. Dec., signed by Joseph Giambra 2/3/03  
May 2006 EA page 1-11; shows new language substituting Draft SEQRA EIS (dated October 2002) for Draft EA  
May 2006 EA page 3-25, Table 3-2. Potential Impacts to NRHP Listed and Eligible Properties; shows name of mall: Main Street Rapid Transit Mall (UMTA 1982).  
Cars Sharing Main Street brochure – side showing Project Schedule and Project Advisory Committee  
Map – Downtown Buffalo Parking Lots & Ramps  
Buffalo News article excerpt – March 10, 2002; shows No response to question: Should we Return cars to Main Street? by Sheldon Berlow.  
Letter dated February 22, 2006 by Lynda Stephens to Letitia Thompson, FTA Region 2 and Allan Taylor, NYSDOT Region 5 Director  
Enclosures with February 22, 2006 letters:  
Comment Sheet "Cars Sharing Main Street" cover sheet – dated February 15, 2006  
Lynda Stephens February 15, 2006 Vehicles on Main Street Shared Trackbed Project Comments, two pages  
Lynda Stephens December 12, 2002 Comments on City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002; 3 pp.  
October 2002 Draft EA p. 1-10 and January 2003 Final EA p. 1-10 – Shows change of 3,000 stakeholders notified to 4,000. (2 pp.)  
October 2002 Draft EA and January 2003 Final EA table showing mall comparisons with Denver number of office workers within two blocks 16,000 changed to 116,000  
Denver facts Winter 2002-2003 from Denver website – Downtown (2001) Employment-113,000  
Moriyama & Teshima Architects – two webpages showing list of projects including Main Street Transit Mall, Buffalo, New York and awards for Buffalo project – printed 12/9/02  
January 2003 Final EA Appendix B – Comments matrix summary – five pages included so reader can compare matrix summary with attached original comments submitted.  
Copies of comments submitted for comment period ending December 12, 2002 that portray concerns and suggestions of persons, some not addressed or inadequately addressed; not all comment sheets available are included. Comments included from:  
Joel L.-Rue Franklin, Marydel Bochnowich, Deborah Sawyer, John Maloney, Nathan Neuman, William Martin, Sheri and Greg Rehwoldt, Assembly Members-Sam Hoyt and Richard Smith, Gladys Gifford, Harold Cohen-former Chair of SUNYAB Dept. of Architecture & Planning, Father Art Smith, Yuri Hreshckyshyn.  
Buffalo Niagara Partnership staff note dated January 27, 2003 with copies of survey results (Deadline for comments on October 2002 Draft EA was December 12, 2002, then extended to January 10, 2003.)  
Ultimate Restaurants Inc. cover letter dated January 2, 2002 stating that comment period extended, etc. and sample survey response form – demonstrates "stacking the deck".  
The New Millennium Group-correspondence with Lynda Stephens – Initiated by Stephens because the City Dept. of Public Works file did not include a statement from this Group although they were listed as Group on the January 2003 Final EA Appendix Comments matrix.

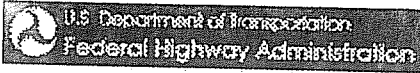
[FHWA Home](#) | [Feedback](#)**Environment**[FHWA](#) > [HEP](#) > [Environment](#) > [Public](#) > [Legislation](#) > [Q&A](#)**[2] What are some of the key considerations in planning for effective public involvement?**

An effective public involvement process provides for an open exchange of information and ideas between the public and transportation decisionmakers. The overall objective of an area's public involvement process is that it be proactive, provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement (23CFR450.212(a) and 450.316(b)(1)). It also provides mechanisms for the agency or agencies to solicit public comments and ideas, identify circumstances and impacts which may not have been known or anticipated by public agencies, and, by doing so, to build support among the public who are stakeholders in transportation investments which impact their communities.

Six useful key elements in planning for effective public involvement are: (1) Clearly-defined purpose and objectives for initiating a public dialogue on transportation plans, programs, and projects, (2) Identification of specifically who the affected public and other stakeholder groups are with respect to the plan(s), program(s), and project(s) under development, (3) Identification of techniques for engaging the public in the process, (4) Notification procedures which effectively target affected groups, (5) Education and assistance techniques which result in an accurate and full public understanding of the transportation problem, potential solutions, and obstacles and opportunities within various solutions to the problem, and, (6) Follow through by public agencies demonstrating that decisionmakers seriously considered public input.

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Environment

FHWA > HEP > Environment > Public > Legislation > Q&A

[3] What are the indicators of an effective public involvement process?

A good indicator of an effective public involvement process is a well informed public which feels it has opportunities to contribute input into transportation decisionmaking processes through a broad array of involvement opportunities at all stages of decisionmaking. In contrast, an ineffective process is one that relies on one or two public meetings or hearings to obtain input immediately prior to decisionmaking on developed draft plans and programs. Public meetings that are well attended, frequent news coverage on transportation issues, public forums where a broad representation of diverse interests is in attendance, and plans, TIPs, MIS alternatives, and project designs which reflect an understanding and consideration of public input are all indicators that the public involvement process is effective.

FHWA Home | HEP Home | Feedback



United States Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration

Letitia Thompson, Reg. Adm.

FTA  
Region 5 (ny, nj, us Virgin Is)

One Bowling Green  
Room 429

ny, ny 10004-1415

Tel (212) 668-2170

847-3238

ny's DOT Region 5  
125 main St  
Bflo 14203

Allan Taylor  
Reg Dir

617.20  
Appendix A  
State Environmental Quality Review  
FULL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

**Purpose:** The full EAF is designed to help applicants and agencies determine, in an orderly manner, whether a project or action may be significant. The question of whether an action may be significant is not always easy to answer. Frequently, there are aspects of a project that are subjective or unmeasurable. It is also understood that those who determine significance may have little or no formal knowledge of the environment or may not be technically expert in environmental analysis. In addition, many who have knowledge in one particular area may not be aware of the broader concerns affecting the question of significance.

The full EAF is intended to provide a method whereby applicants and agencies can be assured that the determination process has been orderly, comprehensive in nature, yet flexible enough to allow introduction of information to fit a project or action.

**Full EAF Components:** The full EAF is comprised of three parts:

- Part 1:** Provides objective data and information about a given project and its site. By identifying basic project data, it assists a reviewer in the analysis that takes place in Parts 2 and 3.
- Part 2:** Focuses on identifying the range of possible impacts that may occur from a project or action. It provides guidance as to whether an impact is likely to be considered small to moderate or whether it is a potentially-large impact. The form also identifies whether an impact can be mitigated or reduced.
- Part 3:** If any impact in Part 2 is identified as potentially-large, then Part 3 is used to evaluate whether or not the impact is actually important.

---

**THIS AREA FOR LEAD AGENCY USE ONLY**

**DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE – Type 1 and Unlisted Actions**

Identify the Portions of EAF completed for this project:

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Upon review of the information recorded on this EAF (Parts 1 and 2 and 3 if appropriate), and any other supporting information, and considering both the magnitude and importance of each impact, it is reasonably determined by the lead agency that:

- A. The project will not result in any large and important impact(s) and, therefore, is one which will not have a significant impact on the environment, therefore a **negative declaration will be prepared.**
- B. Although the project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect for this Unlisted Action because the mitigation measures described in PART 3 have been required, therefore a **CONDITIONED negative declaration will be prepared.\***
- C. The project may result in one or more large and important impacts that may have a significant impact on the environment, therefore a **positive declaration will be prepared.**

\*A Conditioned Negative Declaration is only valid for Unlisted Actions

Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project

---

Name of Action

City of Buffalo

---

Name of Lead Agency

Joseph Giambra

Commissioner of Public Works

---

Print or Type Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency

---

Title of Responsible Officer

  
Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency

---

Signature of Preparer (If different from responsible officer)

website

4/3/03

---

Date

- *Public Information Meeting* – the Project Sponsors held a public information meeting on the Draft SEORA EIS (dated October 2002) at the City of Buffalo’s downtown library at Lafayette Square on November 12, 2002. The meeting was advertised in the local papers and referenced on both the City of Buffalo and Buffalo Place’s websites. In addition, all participants in the earlier two project workshops were notified of the hearing by mail. Buffalo Place also notified over 2,000 property, tenant, and neighborhood advocates by mail or email of the meeting. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting, which was covered by the Buffalo News and videotaped and played on local television. The agenda for the public meeting included a presentation on the purpose and need for the project and a summary of the evaluation of each alternative. The public was invited to ask questions or provide either written or oral comments. The public record officially remained open for 30 days until December 12, 2002. The Advisory Committee in making their recommendation on a Preferred Alternative considered all comments received by January 10, 2003. Over 40 comments were received either verbally at the public meeting, by letter or FAX to the City of Buffalo; or via email in the project website. A summary of these comments is included in Appendix B.

- *Agency Informational Briefings* - the Project Sponsors held informational briefings regarding the proposed project on November 14 and 15, 2002 with the City of Buffalo Common Council; the Buffalo Place Board and various committee members; Buffalo’s congressional and State delegation representatives; the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council Policy Committee; the Buffalo Development Council, and the Buffalo-Niagara Partnership transportation committee.

Subsequently, the concept of restoring traffic to Main Street has been incorporated into the Buffalo Comprehensive Plan (City of Buffalo, 2003).

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## Archaeological Resources

The extensive disturbance associated with the construction of downtown buildings, as well as the construction of the LRRT system in the 1980s, has largely destroyed any potential for locating intact prehistoric resources, and the probability of discovering intact prehistoric resources is very low. Therefore, none of the four action alternatives would have any adverse effect on archaeological resources.

## Historical Resources

None of the alternatives would directly affect any buildings listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register (see Section 3.4 regarding building displacement). Table 3-2 describes the potential impacts to eligible and listed properties in the Main Street Project Area. The potential indirect effect of each alternative on historic resources is further evaluated below.

Table 3-2. Potential Impacts to NRHP Listed and Eligible Properties

| Address                 | Property Name                                                      | NRHP Status | Impact    |                 | Mitigation    |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
|                         |                                                                    |             | Direct    | Indirect        |               |
|                         | Main Street Rapid Transit Mall (UMTA-1982)                         | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 385 Main Street         | Former AM&A's Building                                             | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 403 Main Street         | Brisbane Building (Kleinhans)                                      | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 424 Main Street         | Liberty Building                                                   | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
|                         | Main-Genesee Hotel/Buffalo Savings Bank Office Complex (UDAG-1980) | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 500-518 Main Street     | L.L. Berger Department Store                                       | Listed      | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| Main Street "500 Block" | Facade Renovation Project (CDBG-1983)                              | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 543-553 Main Street     | Goldome Bank                                                       | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 545 Main Street         | Buffalo Savings Bank                                               | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 617 Main Street         | Market Arcade Building                                             | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
| 646 Main Street         | Shea's Buffalo Theater                                             | Listed      | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
|                         | Joseph Ellicott Downtown Historic District                         | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |
|                         | Theater Historic District                                          | Eligible    | No Impact | Positive Impact | None Required |

Source: NFTA, 2006.

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Justification: Landscaping, seating, street furnishings, power outlets, removal of obsolete or conflicting features, new transparent screening for the portal, medians from the portal to Goodell Street and wind screening elements in localized problem areas.



Fountain Plaza Looking North

### PROJECT DESIGN TEAM

DiDonato Associates has formed a Design Team which includes URS Corporation, Foit-Albert Associates, and Mathews Nielsen Landscape Architecture. All of these companies are either located on or near Main Street or have recent experience on a Main Street project.

### PROJECT COSTS

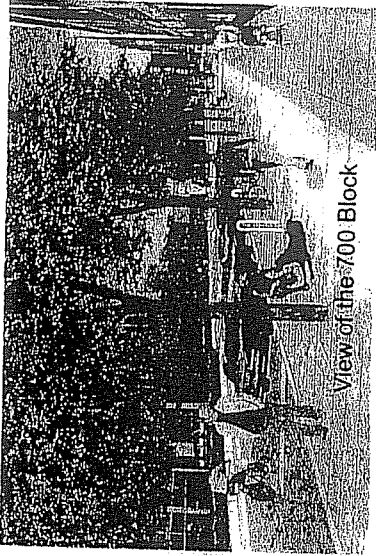
The design and construction cost for the project is estimated to be \$ 61 million in 2007 dollars.

### PROJECT SCHEDULE

The following is a time line and the key milestones of the project:

- January 2006 Scope Summary Memorandum for the project completed
- February 2006 First Public Information Meeting
- Spring 2006 Preliminary Design Document Submission
- Summer 2006 Public Information Meeting for Design Concepts
- Fall 2006 Finalize Design Concepts & Issues for Design Documents. Preliminary Design to be completed
- Fall 2006 Start Final Design of 1<sup>st</sup> construction phase

Goal for Construction start



View of the 700 Block

### PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An Advisory Committee of Main Street representatives has been assembled by the Mayor to work with the project designers on an ongoing basis.

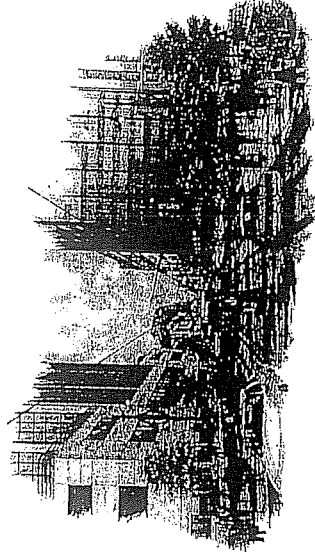
Meetings have been held by the Advisory Committee and Design Team members to organize the design work and refine the scope of the project.

The following is a list of the Advisory Committee members:

| Name                | Representing                                   |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Keith Belanger      | M & T Bank, Buffalo Place Inc.                 |
| Steven Carmina      | Carmina & Wood Architects                      |
| Stephen Fitzmaurice | Seneca Realty LLC, Buffalo Place Inc.          |
| Donna M. Gonser     | Lumsden & McCormick, LLP, Working for Downtown |
| Danielle Jacobs     | Ellicott Development Corporation               |
| William Jones       | City View Properties, Main St. Resident        |
| Bonnie Lockwood     | Rep. Brian Higgins                             |
| Sheila Lopez        | Main St. Resident                              |
| Mary Martino        | NFTA Board of Directors, Buffalo Place Inc     |
| Paul Murphy         | Buffalo Convention Ctr                         |
| Neal Radlice        | Theater District Association                   |
| Chuck Rosenow       | Erie Canal Harbor Corp                         |
| Sue Sweet           | Main Seneca Corporation                        |
| Timothy Wanamaker   | City Office of Strategic Planning              |

# CAKES SHAKING MAIN STREET

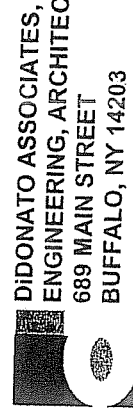
NYS DOT PIN 5822.12  
FTA No. NY-03-0428



### PROJECT SPONSORS



### PROJECT DESIGN TEAM



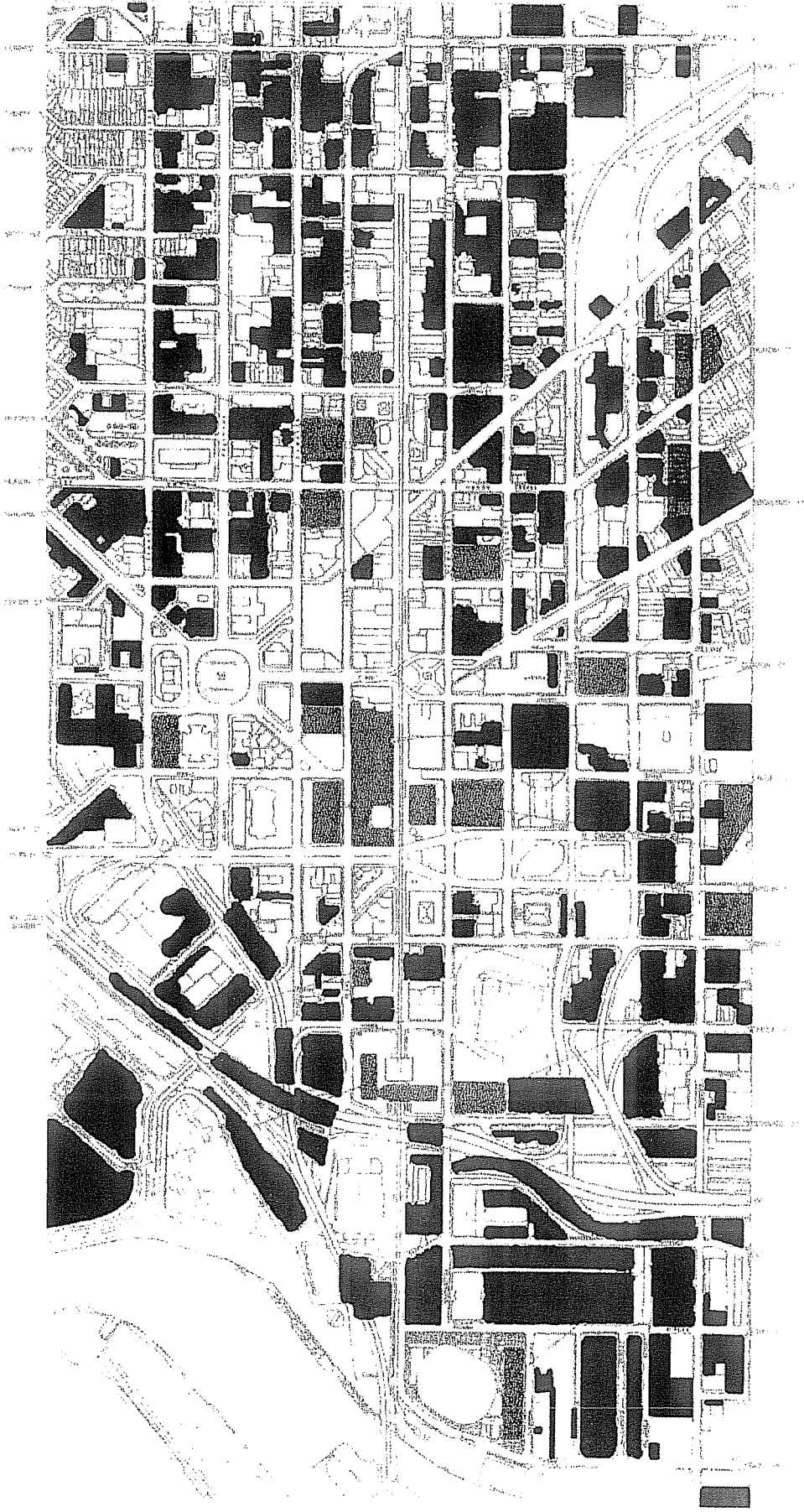
**DIDONATO ASSOCIATES,**  
**ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE, P.C.**  
689 MAIN STREET  
BUFFALO, NY 14203

### IN CONJUNCTION WITH

URS CORPORATION  
FOIT-ALBERT ASSOCIATES

MATHEWS NIELSEN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

# Downtown Buffalo Parking Lots & Ramps



Surface Lots

Parking Ramps

# No...

By **SHELDON BERLOW**

*Special to The News*

When Buffalo's rapid transit line was built, the Main Street pedestrian mall was created to help downtown's already threatened office and retail core avoid further decline. Did it accomplish that? No. Why not? The destruction of downtowns in midsize U.S. cities, including Buffalo, was already too firmly in place.

The decades-old national and regional suburbanization policies of subsidized road building and shopping mall development, along with easy residential subdivision building, were already pulling thousands of people and businesses out of downtowns, and were just too powerful to stop.

This decline was exacerbated in Buffalo by a lack of commitment to significant turnaround projects by the private and public sectors and the failure to extend the rail line to northern and southern suburbs.

Yet many people still blame the pedestrian mall for the demise of downtown, and believe that returning traffic to Main Street will restore the area to its former health. Vehicle traffic is not the magic answer. Restoring the beauty of the mall, along with a program to provide plentiful rental and condo housing, is far more likely to bring life back to the city's core.

**Vehicle traffic is not the magic answer. Restoring the beauty of the mall, along with a program to provide plentiful rental and condo housing, is far more likely to bring life back to the city's core.**

If the mall has failed to live up to its promise, much of its failure derives from poorly thought-out public policy.

For example, parking that was originally envisioned to be constructed under Lafayette Square along with the creation of the pedestrian mall was never built. Instead, good buildings that could have been converted to uses to strengthen downtown were destroyed to create more surface parking lots, contributing to a pervasive sense of ugliness that created a negative impression for those who ventured there.

Our firm, Berlow Real Estate, which does about 75 percent of brokered retail site selection and leasing in Western New York, and which has brought retailers downtown in the past, continues to try to bring more retailers to the downtown area. But their consistent response is that there are not enough "people hours" downtown to support a store. None of the retailers we approached commented negatively on the pedestrian mall concept, or made comments such as, "if there were cars on Main Street" or "if there was more parking."

The issue was clearly "people hours" — more people to shop beyond the lunch hour. Retailers are looking for more people living downtown and more people using downtown more hours of the day. The Buffalo Niagara Partnership tried a retail campaign a couple of years ago, and brought no new retailers downtown.

# Should we return cars to Main Street?

# No: Pedestrian mall needs to be updated and beautified

*Continued from Page H1*

Despite all of these setbacks, we still have a unique, visible, fare-free pedestrian mall that is in a manageable one-street, six-block configuration. Almost all cross-streets allow cars to go through, providing easy visibility into the mall. Almost all merchants now have access to their stores from either Washington or Pearl streets in addition to Main Street. There is easily accessible parking surrounding the entire length of the mall.

However, the pedestrian mall itself, while managed reasonably well, looks dated. Some parts have deteriorated and have become dirty. Several operations fronting Main Street have turned these frontages into back doors, and many storefronts have been converted to nonretail use. All of this has created

a negative, unattractive, anti-growth overall look.

Will returning vehicles to Main Street correct any of these problems and be a catalyst for revitalization? Certainly not. To destroy the current asset, albeit flawed, for a few added parking spaces will not spur a revival, but will exacerbate the situation and destroy whatever positive ambience does still exist.

Should we do anything? Yes! We must do something. First, recognize the mall as an asset, flawed but with great potential to be a wonderful people space, free from the threat of traffic and pollution, a space where people can meet, relax, easily walk from place to place or hop a train for free and go and to end.

Improve this space! Instead of spending millions of dollars to remove this asset, spend a fraction of that to

improve its value and effectiveness. Beautify it, update it and, most important, enlist the merchants' cooperation in accomplishing this goal.

For example, get the Hyatt to turn its Main Street entrance into an inviting second front door instead of its back-alley, back-door look. Prohibit garbage from being put out during the day on the very nice Theodore Roosevelt Plaza. Encourage restaurants and shops to extend their presence onto the sidewalks on nice days.

Add varied food carts and more people-attracting activities. Keep the mall clean, well lit and with visible security. Don't allow construction or delivery vehicles on the mall. Remove snow immediately. Schedule more destination events to attract people.

Will this turn downtown around by itself? No. But it will help by showing community commitment.

The real answer is people, people, people! Then the retailers will follow, more people will come and then more retailers will come. Even while the mall is being updated and beautified, there must be a massive program, including public subsidies, to create good housing to persuade people to live downtown. This would be money much better spent, and longer lasting, than destroying the mall and tearing down more recyclable buildings for more dirty, hostile parking lots.

Wake up Buffalo. Let's use what we have and build the future on it.

**SHELDON BERLOW** is senior director of Berlow Real Estate, a Buffalo-based commercial and industrial real estate brokerage firm. His office is downtown, he has been active in many downtown-related activities and he lives in Buffalo.

266 Hartwell Road  
Buffalo, New York 14216  
February 22, 2006

Letitia Thompson  
Regional Administrator  
FTA Region 2  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, New York 10004-1415

Re: Buffalo, NY Cars Sharing Main Street FTA No. NY-03-0428, NYSDOT P.I.N. 5822.12

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I strongly urge implementation of a full environmental impact study for the proposed project Sharing the Trackbed Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project. I have attached my comments which were submitted to sponsor, MPO, and consultants during the public comment periods in February 2006 and December 2002. Other attachments support my statements. It seems to me that a process of effective public involvement has not occurred in development of the proposed project. In addition, I dispute the City of Buffalo February 3, 2003 SEQR Neg. Dec. which was done while important issues were unresolved.

Although stakeholder groups have enjoyed more involvement, "citizens" have not been adequately engaged in development of the project, nor have their concerns been appropriately addressed. A public meeting was held on December 5, 2001, a conceptual design workshop with breakout session recorders on January 28, 2002, and another public meeting on November 12, 2002. Alternatives outlined in the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment were presented at the November 12, 2002 meeting but no preferred alternative was recommended. Neither in the Draft EA nor at the November meeting did consultants respond to several important concerns raised during the January design workshop including plans to dismantle the award winning pedestrian/transit mall streetscape, designed by Toronto firm Moriyama and Teshima. On February 1, 2006, a public meeting, actually a "walk-through", was held to elicit comments on streetscape and station design for the Shared Trackbed Plan.

Public concerns submitted following the November 2002 meeting were ignored and/or misrepresented in a public comment summary table which was attached to the January 2003 Final Environmental Assessment. The Final EA is essentially the same document as the October 2002 Draft EA except for inclusion of a Preferred Alternative - Sharing the Trackbed. (Refer to my February 2006 comments for specifics.) After release of the January 2003 Final EA, I obtained from the City of Buffalo copies of public comments including letters, comment sheets, email messages, and a business survey, also the comment summary table prepared by the consultants and attached to the January 2003 Final EA. These items are enclosed. I was told by the City representative who copied the materials for me that the January 2003 Final EA did not include copies of the public comments submitted following the November 2002 meeting, only a

summary table. None are attached to either the January 2003 Final EA or the CD version of the August 2005 Final Draft EA. The latter was received from the MPO, Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council.

Some of the issues which seem to require further study include: safety issues for bicycle riders, pedestrians and vehicles, payback of federal dollars related to demolition of federally-funded pedestrian/transit mall features, destruction of the award winning streetscape designed to minimize wind effects without creating wind tunnels, impact of project on sidewalk vaults, disruption during construction, impact of project of nearby Ellicott Street Project, and omission of a designated bike path.

Hopefully through a full environmental impact study more appropriate alternatives will emerge that will result in a greatly improved plan for Buffalo's Downtown Main Street. Thank you for considering my comments as you review this project. Please respond to my letter.

Yours truly,



Lynda Stephens

Enc.

266 Hartwell Road  
Buffalo, New York 14216  
February 22, 2006

Allan Taylor  
Regional Director  
NYSDOT Region 5  
125 Main Street  
Buffalo, New York 14203

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Hopefully through a full environmental impact study more appropriate alternatives will emerge that will result in a greatly improved plan for Buffalo's Downtown Main Street. Thank you for considering my comments as you review this project. Please respond to my letter.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynda Stephens". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lynda Stephens

Enc.

**COMMENT SHEET**  
**"CARS SHARING MAIN STREET "**  
**MAIN STREET MULTI-MODAL ACCESS AND REVITALIZATION PROJECT**  
NYS DOT P.I.N 5822.12  
FTA No. NY-03-0428

PLEASE PLACE COMPLETED COMMENT SHEETS IN THE BOX AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE MEETING TONIGHT OR SEND TO THE ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE BEFORE FEBRUARY 16, 2006.

NAME: Lynda Stephens

ADDRESS 266 Hartwell Road

CITY Buffalo, NY ZIP 14216

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS February 15, 2006

This project needs an environmental impact study. Efforts to fastrack the process for development of a project for returning vehicles to Main Street has resulted in a seriously flawed preferred alternative.

More specific comments are included in two attached documents which detail with specific references some of the problems and issues related to the proposed project. My comments address both process and product. There are six pages in total including this Comment Sheet form.

Implementation of an EIS will facilitate emergence of a better project, one that will make Buffalo and the region proud. Good luck as you continue this effort.

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PLEASE FOLD AS INDICATED ON THE BACK, TAPE AND MAIL OR FAX TO 716-656-1987





Vehicles on Main Street Shared Trackbed Project Comments  
Lynda Stephens, 266 Hartwell Road, Buffalo, NY 14216  
February 15, 2006

Introduction/Need for EIS - I do not believe that any Vehicles on Main Street project should be implemented until an Environmental Impact Study is completed. This process should include widely publicized public hearings. My review of the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment, the January 2003 Final Environmental Assessment, and the August 2005 Final Draft Environmental Assessment for City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project suggests that an Environmental Impact Study is required. I wish to have included with these comments my December 12, 2002 comments on the October 2002 Draft Environmental Assessment.

1. Process problems - The project was initiated with a SEQR action that did not include adequate scoping. Although the 2002 Draft EA states on page 1-10 that a public hearing will be advertised and held, no such hearing was ever implemented. The January 2003 Final EA deletes references to "public hearing". Instead the January 2003 Final EA page 1-10 mentions a Public Information Meeting which was held on November 12, 2002. In spite of various environmental issues unresolved at the time, the City of Buffalo signed a SEQR Negative Declaration on February 3, 2003.
2. Inappropriate labeling - The consultants continuously mislabel the current mall "pedestrian mall" when in fact it has always been a "pedestrian transit mall" which includes an above ground light rail train. No explanation is given.
3. Data outdated and/or inadequate - Data used to support returning vehicles to Main Street is generally old and seriously outdated; for example, at place employment-2000, living downtown-2000, building usage-2001, property values-2002, DESMAN study of off-street parking spaces-2000. The data presented to demonstrate promise of economic development as a result of returning cars to Main Street is more of a nature of "by saying it makes it so", than by genuine relationships. Downtown Buffalo is changing in many positive ways that are not reflected in the old data.
4. No public hearing - In the January 2003 Final EA, p. 1-10, section "Information Issues Workshop" the numbers of people who received mail or email invitations to the December 5, 2001 workshop has been changed from 3,000 noted in the October 2002 Draft EA to 4,000. The authors also have added here three more groups of participants including the City's Good Neighbors Planning Alliance (GNPA). At that time the GNPA was in its formative stages and had not evolved to a stage that allowed a meaningful interface. (I have been involved with the GNPA since its inception.)
5. Citizen input ignored - The January 2003 Final EA does not respond to citizen input. The January 2003 Final EA is materially the same as the October 2002 Draft EA with the exception of the reference to a public hearing and the inflated public notification numbers. The Appendix B Public Meeting (November 12, 2002) Comments summary chart, some citizen comments are mischaracterized. Although not the only instance, my comments were misrepresented. I submitted three pages with references listed on page three. I submitted via fax and via email. I have a copy of citizen comments, received from City of Buffalo in 2003 upon my request. Only pages one and three of my comments were included. However, the fax mark on my page three clearly shows "p. 3", so all pages were received. My page two contained references to errors in the 2002 Draft EA narrative regarding Denver population in vicinity of the Denver pedestrian mall. The Draft EA Appendix A comparison chart indicated pop. 16,000 for Denver in mall vicinity, but the narrative said 116,000. The Final EA and the Final Draft EA both have the 16,000 changed to 116,000. I think someone read my page two.

6. SHPO - As of August 2005, SHPO had not responded with comments on the EA. Could it be that the plan threatens the Urban Cultural Park/Theater District?

7. Federal payback - The EA's do not discuss payback of federal dollars which will be required when federally funded features of the original ped/transit mall are removed, especially stations and streetscape features.

8. Safety - The Preferred Alternative Sharing the Trackbed is the least safe of the considered action alternatives. Refer to Table 3-26 Modal Conflict Points. The Preferred Alternative presents bicycle safety issues that have not been adequately addressed. The width of shared bike/car lanes was 11.5-12 ft. instead of preferred 14 ft., the authors make remarks that "skilled" bike riders can handle this (Aug. 2005 Final Draft EA, p. 3-47).

Other safety concerns not resolved include train rails becoming more slippery during cold weather. Buffalo has many days of cold weather. Bicycle wheels can get caught in rail grooves. Access of emergency vehicles will be impeded since they use trackbed now and there is minimal interruption with trains. Also HSBC Building would have vehicular traffic flowing under their building.

9. Disruption due to construction - The Aug. 2005 Final Draft EA downplays the disruption issue. In addition to disruption on each block, think "phased project" as in suggested annual increments: ten blocks x ten years = extended disruption. Also many businesses have deliveries made by trucks using Main Street. The delivery system disrupted on Main Street, combined with two-way streets on Washington and proposed for Pearl Street, presents real concerns for efficient deliveries to businesses.

10. Unplanned traffic delays - The model WATSim does not consider accidents and car breakdowns. However, these incidents can produce major delays which interfere with train schedules and can cause gridlock. This issue has not been adequately addressed. Refer to August 2005 Final Draft EA page 3-40.

#### 11. August 2005 Final Draft EA 3.11 Cumulative Effects

This section seems so poorly developed, it demands an EIS. For example, re: Buffalo Intermodal Transportation Center, the proposed project was an opportunity to introduce and focus on a new mode of transportation, bicycles. Instead of planning a designated bike path, the plan calls for parallel parking along Main Street which effectively eliminates that opportunity. The omission of a designated bike path diminishes the efforts of Buffalo's intermodal transportation efforts. Another major development mentioned in this section is the Ellicott Street Project. Development of a two-way Ellicott Street two blocks east of Main Street as a major north/south axis and the impact on the returning vehicles to Main Street project has not been studied. Also the only cultural reference is to historic buildings. No mention is made of cultural organizations, such as CEPA, Squeaky Wheel and Arts Council whose facilities and offices front on Main Street. Access to these cultural organizations will be impacted by construction and should be addressed.

12. Endangered species - The peregrine falcon resides in downtown Buffalo. During construction, creatures that are food for the falcons may be affected. Instead of consultation with experts, the Aug. 2005 Final Draft EA just states there would be no impact or minimal impact.

13. Appendix B - The August 2005 Final Draft EA adds seventeen new names with Shared Trackbed as recommended alternative; compare with January 2003 Final EA.

To: Commissioner Joseph Giambra, Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets, Room 502, City Hall, Buffalo, NY 14202  
Fax: (716) 851-5825 – 3 pages  
E-mailed comments to [mainst.buffalo@erm.com](mailto:mainst.buffalo@erm.com)

From: Lynda Stephens

Date: December 12, 2002

Subject: Comments on City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002

I am a long time resident of the City of Buffalo and my small business is located in the Allentown neighborhood. Since 1989, I have been an independent consultant, working on numerous project teams with engineers, architects and a certified planner. My primary consulting activities relate to preparation of grant applications. My project involvement has also included preparation of environmental materials in compliance with NYS SEQRA and with NEPA (HUD guidelines) for rural municipal clients (outside of Erie County). I have never been a consultant to the City of Buffalo or any of the identified project organizations. I have been a member of the American Planning Association (APA) Western New York Section for over ten years and for the past two years, also a national APA member.

I have reviewed the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) October 2002, and other materials referenced in that report as well as pertinent newspaper articles. A reference list is attached at the end of my comments. Note that the 1998 version of the GBNRTC sponsored Feasibility Study mentioned in the DEA was not available; however, the March 2000 Final Report was reviewed. Please consider the concerns listed below and include a response to the concerns with subsequent reviews. Overall, the evidence does not support implementation of a large, multi-million dollar infrastructure project at this time.

Environmental Review Process – Most environmental reviews are conducted after one proposed alternative has been identified through an appropriate planning process. It is not clear why a formal environmental review process was selected to substitute for a planning process. The drawback of the current approach is that public officials and agencies are technically on record in favor of action before rather than after the collection of relevant data and public review of evidence and information. The effect of the approach adopted here is to gather momentum and support for action that may not be advisable and indeed may not be supported by data or evidence. This approach is also confusing to the general public who are not familiar with SEQRA and NEPA. The lead agency for this project has not been clearly identified. The scheduling of comment period over the holiday season is unfortunate.

Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002 (DEA):

- There is no clear reference to a separate engineering study to define the four alternatives offered. The Feasibility Study did not study the Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall Alternative or the No Action Alternative.
- The No Action Alternative has not been adequately evaluated. It is referred to as “baseline” for environmental study. See related concern immediately following.

- No assessment has been made regarding modification of the Moriyama & Teshima signature streetscape of the pedestrian transit mall. Some features have already been removed. A citizen request was made for such an investigation at the January 28, 2002 conceptual design workshop. Participants in one of the focus groups supported a further look in order to avoid the destruction of possible notable architecture. (Note that the Buffalo design, by this Toronto firm, garnered two design awards for their Buffalo project, which is included on the firm's website. In 1987, this same firm began work selected in a competition to guide The Niagara Parks Commission-Ontario in development of a 20-year plan and a 5-year action plan for a 35 mile stretch along the Niagara River. That project was to protect the historical and natural sites of the Niagara Parks while promoting economic renewal through tourism. The planning area included Niagara Falls, Ontario.)
- The DEA does not address issues of federal payback for structural changes to the pedestrian transit mall which was built using vast federal funds. Contrast this omission to the inclusion of this concern in the Feasibility Study March 2000, conducted by Erdman Anthony.
- The DEA does not address how the City's extensive sidewalk vaults will be impacted by the various alternatives. This issue was extensively addressed in the Feasibility Study.
- In the Needs section, page 1-6, the DEA cites surveys noting "poor access" and "perceived safety concerns" as the most negative aspects of need for proposed action. However, this is contradicted in the "Cars Sharing Main Street Staff Analysis August 2001", page 9 Provide Vehicular Access to Adjacent Land Uses-"Downtown Buffalo is extremely convenient and accessible, but perception..." There are probably ways to mediate public perception on accessibility just as public perceptions on pedestrian safety downtown have changed for the better as noted in the Downtown Buffalo Strategic Planning Update. Local real estate person, Sheldon Berlow of Berlow Real Estate which does about 75 percent of brokered retail site selection and leasing in Western New York, is on record stating that none of the retailers his firm approached has made negative comments about no cars on Main Street or about more parking (March 10, 2002 Buffalo News article). Mr. Berlow states that people and people hours are key. Perhaps Buffalo Place could plan more events.
- The Feasibility Study cites safety concerns for their studied alternatives, which are related to some of the DEA proposed alternatives. Safety issues have not been adequately explored in the DEA. Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 present dramatically increased Modal Conflict Points over the current situation and Alternative 1. Alternative 4 Share Trackbed increases the risk factors more than threefold and is the least safe alternative.
- The DEA has omitted data, distorted data, and repeated data errors to support action alternatives. Examples include the section Research on Other Communities Experience, pages 1-6 – 1-7 where data for Denver pedestrian mall figures are listed as 116,000 employees within two blocks of mall and 30,000 residents within a five minute walk. DEA Appendix A spreadsheet indicates 16,000 employees and that the 30,000 residents are "within walking distance". Note that this Denver information on the spreadsheet has remained unchanged since presented in January 2002 with workshop materials. The error of 116,000 instead of 16,000 was prominently presented in January 28, 2002 workshop

narrative materials and was used to persuade participants that Buffalo was not like cities with successful malls, e.g. Denver. Another example, regarding pedestrian counts: statements on page 3-34 noting declining numbers of pedestrians at points along the mall do not match the years or numbers displayed on Figure 3-5 on page 3-35 which shows an increase at 12 of 17 sites in 2000 compared with 1999.

- There is no effort to aggregate positive data regarding the current downtown situation. (The pedestrian transit mall may have yet a chance for successful contribution to downtown rebirth.) For example, in 1991 Class A vacancy rate was 20.3%, compared with January 1999 which improved to 11.9% (p. 6 in Staff Analysis). Also, since 1998 when CBD at-place employment was 46,698, the picture has improved to 50,046 in 2000, a 7% increase in two years. Also, Buffalo News article by Brian Meyer, March 12, 2002, reported new Census shows downtown population increased to 3,200 from 2,600 in last decade, a 23% increase with new residential units planned and under construction. On Table 3-1 on page 3-7, the % change 1999-2000 for building usage/square feet on main street showed a net gain of 8%, with only retail declining slightly. Restaurant and office space gained. (Be advised that the remaining women's clothing specialty stores on Delaware Avenue, i.e. Tegler's, Par Avion, Joseph's, Evelyn's, Papagallo's, all closed during the period after the pedestrian mall was completed, yet cars remain on Delaware.)
- DEA predictions of economic improvements are generally speculative and use questionable assumptions. Most predictions are not based on good data.

#### Reference List:

1. City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project Draft Environmental Assessment October 2002
2. Cars Sharing Main Street Staff Analysis August 2001
3. Final Report Feasibility Study for Accommodating Motor Vehicles within the Pedestrian Mall on Main Street City of Buffalo Erie County, New York March 2000, prepared by Erdman Anthony; prepared for Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation
4. Buffalo News March 10, 2002 article "Should we return cars to Main Street?"
5. Buffalo News March 12, 2002 article "Study under way on expanding housing downtown"
6. Art Voice December 13, 2001 article "Bringing Traffic Back to Main Street"
7. Website for Moriyama & Teshima Architects – <http://www.mtarch.com>
8. Return of Cars to Main Street Conceptual Design Workshop-January 28, 2002
9. Downtown Buffalo 2002! News – Special/April 2002

## Oct. 2002 Draft EA

attended these informational meetings, where the attendees were informed about the Main Street revitalization process, invited to submit issues of concern, and given the opportunity to provide their opinions on the development of alternative design ideas.

- *Information/Issues Workshop* – a public workshop was held at the Market Arcade Film and Arts Center on Main Street in Buffalo on December 5, 2001 to provide background information on the purpose and need for the study and to identify issues and concerns that would need to be addressed as part of the environmental assessment. This Workshop was advertised in The Buffalo News, Business First (Buffalo's Business Journal), the Buffalo Rocket, Metro Community News, and several additional neighborhood newspapers. Approximately 3,000 stakeholders also received mail and/or email invitations to the workshop, using various existing email lists (property owners, downtown tenants, downtown interest groups, participants in the City Downtown Strategic Plan, the disabled community, local professional groups including Planners Architects and Engineers and a public transit interest group). Approximately 120 people attended the workshop. Drawings illustrating the four action alternatives were available for public review. The workshop was also videotaped and played on local television for approximately one month.
- *Newspaper Article* – following the Information/Issues Workshop, ArtVoice, a local weekly newspaper in the Buffalo area, ran a cover story on the workshop and other community's experiences with pedestrian malls.
- *Conceptual Design Workshop* – a second public workshop was held at the Erie Community College in downtown Buffalo on January 28, 2002 to help develop conceptual designs for the four project alternatives that were developed based on public comment at the first workshop. This workshop was also advertised in several newspapers, all participants from the first workshop received invitations in the mail, and approximately 2,000 other interested persons received notice of the workshop via mail and email. Approximately 130 people attended the workshop. This workshop was also videotaped and featured on the local government television station for approximately one month.
- *Public Hearing* – the Project Sponsors plan to hold a public hearing on this Draft EA at a date and location that is yet to be determined. The hearing will be advertised in the local papers in accordance with the requirements of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and referenced on both the City of Buffalo and Buffalo Place's websites. In addition, all participants in the earlier two project workshops will be notified of the hearing by mail. The agenda for the Public Hearing will include a presentation on the purpose and need for the project and a summary of the evaluation of each alternative. The public will be invited to ask questions or provide either written or oral comments. The public record will remain open for at least two weeks after the Public Hearing.

A Final EA will be prepared after the public hearing that will specifically address all comments received on the Draft EA and select a preferred alternative.

Jan. 2003 Final EA

people attended these informational meetings, where the attendees were informed about the Main Street revitalization process, invited to submit issues of concern, and given the opportunity to provide their opinions on the development of alternative design ideas.

*Information/Issues Workshop* – a public workshop was held at the Market Arcade Film and Arts Center on Main Street in Buffalo on December 5, 2001 to provide background information on the purpose and need for the study and to identify issues and concerns that would need to be addressed as part of the environmental assessment. This Workshop was advertised in The Buffalo News, Business First (Buffalo's Business Journal), the Buffalo Rocket, Metro Community News, and several additional neighborhood newspapers. Over 4,000 people also received mail and/or email invitations to the workshop, using various existing email lists (property owners, downtown tenants, community-based organizations, downtown interest groups, participants in the City Downtown Strategic Plan, the City's Good Neighbors Planning Alliance, the disabled community, local professional groups including planners, architects, and engineers, the lan-users on the City's Intranet System, and a public transit interest group). Approximately 120 people attended the workshop. Drawings illustrating the four action alternatives were available for public review. The workshop was also videotaped and played on local television for approximately one month.

*Newspaper Article* – following the Information/Issues Workshop, ArtVoice, a local weekly newspaper in the Buffalo area, ran a cover story on the workshop and other community's experiences with pedestrian malls.

*Conceptual Design Workshop* – a second public workshop was held at the Erie Community College in downtown Buffalo on January 28, 2002 to help develop conceptual designs for the four project alternatives that were developed based on public comment at the first workshop. This workshop was also advertised in several newspapers, all participants from the first workshop received invitations in the mail, and approximately 2,000 other interested persons received notice of the workshop via mail and email. Approximately 130 people attended the workshop. This workshop was also videotaped and featured on the local government television station for approximately one month.

*Public Information Meeting* – the Project Sponsors held a public information meeting on the Draft EA at the City of Buffalo's downtown library at Lafayette Square on November 12, 2002. The meeting was advertised in the local papers and referenced on both the City of Buffalo and Buffalo Place's websites. In addition, all participants in the earlier two project workshops were notified of the hearing by mail. Buffalo Place also notified over 2,000 property, tenant, and neighborhood advocates by mail or email of the meeting. Approximately 100 people attended the meeting, which was covered by the Buffalo News and videotaped and played on local television. The agenda for the public meeting included a presentation on the purpose and need for the project and a summary of the evaluation of each alternative. The public was invited to ask questions or provide either written or oral comments. The public record

| City                  | State | Name                  | Population * | Yr. Built | Transit        | Length    | Reopened          | Reference                 | Design | Comments                                                                          |
|-----------------------|-------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Boulder               | CO    | Pearl St.             | 95,000       | 1977      |                | 4 blocks  | closed to traffic | TLCNET/NYT/<br>SCT/DRA    |        | very successful - relies on govt. offices & universities                          |
| Burlington            | VT    | Church St.            | 39,000       | 1981      |                | 4 blocks  | closed to traffic | TLCNET/NYT/<br>MS         |        |                                                                                   |
| Cape May              | NJ    |                       | 4,000        |           |                | 4 blocks  | closed to traffic | NYT/MS                    |        | successful because of tourists - MS                                               |
| Charlottesville       | VA    |                       | 45,000       | 1976      | no             | 8 blocks  | closed to traffic | TLCNET/HR/<br>MS/SCT      |        | moderately successful, UVA within 1 mile                                          |
| Denver                | CO    | 16th St Mall          | 554,000      | 1982      | electric buses | 13 blocks | closed to traffic | HR/MS/SCT/P<br>I          |        | highest rents at mall/16,000 office workers within 2 blocks & tourists            |
| Ithaca                | NY    | Ithaca Commons        | 29,000       | 1975      | no             | 3 blocks  | closed to traffic | TLCNET/MS/<br>HP/SCT/DM   |        | HP case study, 95% occupancy                                                      |
| Madison               | WI    | State Street          | 208,000      | 1970's    | buses          | 6 blocks  | closed to traffic | AV/PI                     |        |                                                                                   |
| Minneapolis           | MN    | Nicollet Mall         | 383,000      | 1967      | buses          | 14 blocks | closed to traffic | TLCNET/HR/A<br>PA/ SCT/PI |        | 160,000 workers within 2 blocks; 30,000 residents within walking distance of mall |
| <b>STRONGHOLD, NY</b> |       |                       |              |           |                |           |                   |                           |        |                                                                                   |
| Buffalo               | NY    | Main Street           | 293,000      | 1986      | LRRT           | 10 blocks | proposed          |                           |        | allowing cars is being discussed                                                  |
| Evansville            | IN    |                       | 122,000      | 1971      | trolley        | 7 blocks  | proposed          | SCT/DRA                   |        | Occupancy very low, few thriving businesses                                       |
| Fresno                | CA    | Fulton Mall           | 428,000      | 1964      | no             | 6 blocks  | proposed          | HR/ APA/ PB               |        | HR case study, Plan proposed to reopen mall to 2-way traffic                      |
| Honolulu              | HI    | Fort St. Mall         | 372,000      | 1969      | no             | 6 blocks  | no                | HA/HR/PI                  |        | HR case study, Hawaii Pacific University Campus nearby                            |
| Miami Beach           | FL    | Lincoln Road          | 362,000      | 1959      | trams          |           | no                | HP/ APA/ PI               | 2-way  |                                                                                   |
| Raleigh               | NC    | Fayetteville St. Mall | 376,000      | 1976      | no             | 4 blocks  | proposed          | NYT/ APA/ PV/<br>PI       |        | has had limited success, "not commercially viable" - PI                           |
| St. Louis             | MO    | North 14th St. Mall   | 348,000      | 1980's    | no             | 2 blocks  | proposed          | St. Louis web/PI          |        | "Project totally backfired - all retail stores are gone" - PI                     |

\* U.S. Census of Population, 2000. Population figures in bold are plus or minus 100,000 people of Buffalo's population.

**Sources**

- EMU Eastern Michigan University, Downtown Pedestrian Malls, <http://www.emich.edu/public/geo/557book/d210.pedmall.html>
- MS National Main Street Program - An Information Brief on Downtown Pedestrian Malls, April 1998.
- HP Hyatt Paloma, Inc., Survey of Other Cities with Pedestrian Mills for City of Poughkeepsie, December 1989.
- SCT Shopping Centers Today, Cities Walking Away From Pedestrian Malls, December 1989.
- APA American Planning Association, Planning Magazine, From Street to Mall and Back, by Larry Houstoun, June 1990.
- NYT New York Times, When Shoppers Walk Away from Pedestrian Malls, November 5, 1996.
- Gov. Office Press release from Governor Pataki's office, September 15, 2000.
- ULI Urban Land Institute, State Street Reviving the Heartbeat of the Loop, February 1996; and from Locklaister Pedestrian Mall to Lively Streetscape, November 1992.
- HA Honolulu Advertiser, Kalakaua Pedestrian mall as a bad idea, June 2, 1999.
- PPS Project for Public Spaces, Oak Park, IL, <http://www.pps.org>
- HR Harvey Rubenstein, Pedestrian Malls, Streetscapes, and Urban Spaces, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1992.
- AV ArtVoice, Bringing Traffic Back To Main Street, by Geoff Kelly, December 13, 2001
- PV Personal Visit by ERM
- PI Phone interview by ERM
- DRA Downtown Raleigh Alliance survey
- SM Salisbury, MD survey
- FB Fresno Bee, April 11, 2002
- DM Downtown Montreal Commercial Development Association, March 2002

Oct 2002 Draft EA





# DENVER *facts*

Winter - 2002-2003

## DENVER:

|                                                                  |                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| DATE FOUNDED:                                                    | 1858                       |
| DATE INCORPORATED:                                               | 1861                       |
| GOVERNMENT:                                                      | Mayor / Council            |
| LAND AREA: (square miles)                                        | 154.63                     |
| (acres)                                                          | 98,963                     |
| LATITUDE:                                                        | 39° 43' N                  |
| LONGITUDE:                                                       | -104° 58' W                |
| ELEVATION: (feet above sea level)                                | 5,280                      |
| LOWEST POINT: (feet above sea level)                             | 5,140                      |
| HIGHEST POINT: (feet above sea level)                            | 5,672                      |
| RIVERS:                                                          | South Platte, Cherry Creek |
| AVERAGE ANNUAL RAINFALL: (inches)                                | 15.4                       |
| AVERAGE ANNUAL SNOWFALL: (inches)                                | 55.4                       |
| AVERAGE FEBRUARY TEMPERATURE:                                    | 33° F                      |
| AVERAGE AUGUST TEMPERATURE:                                      | 72° F                      |
| AVERAGE GROWING SEASON: (days)                                   | 165                        |
| AVERAGE SUNSHINE: (days)                                         | 300+                       |
| <b>MUNICIPAL PARKS AND RECREATION:</b>                           |                            |
| PARK AREA: (acres)                                               | 5,100                      |
| PARKS:                                                           | 301                        |
| GOLF COURSES (public and private):                               | 15                         |
| PARKWAYS: (miles)                                                | 100                        |
| RECREATION CENTERS:                                              | 29                         |
| SWIMMING POOLS:                                                  | 19                         |
| HIKE-BIKEWAYS: (miles)                                           | 135                        |
| MOUNTAIN PARKS: (acres)                                          | 13,600                     |
| PLAYING FIELDS:                                                  | 325                        |
| TENNIS COURTS:                                                   | (77 Lighted) 143           |
| <b>ATTENDANCE AT DENVER CULTURAL FACILITIES VISITORS (2001):</b> |                            |
| ART MUSEUM:                                                      | 555,639                    |
| BOTANIC GARDENS:                                                 | 440,445                    |
| MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE:                                    | 1,670,456                  |
| DENVER ZOO:                                                      | 1,723,234                  |
| <b>DENVER PUBLIC LIBRARIES (2001):</b>                           |                            |
| CIRCULATION:                                                     | 12,486,851                 |
| <b>UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES:</b>                                |                            |
|                                                                  | 14                         |

## DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (2001):

|                                                       |                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| HIGH SCHOOLS:                                         | 10                                        |
| MIDDLE SCHOOLS:                                       | 18                                        |
| ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS:                                   | 87                                        |
| <b>SHOPPING CENTERS:</b>                              | 58                                        |
| <b>RESTAURANTS:</b>                                   | 700+                                      |
| <b>CONVENTION FACILITIES (2001):</b>                  |                                           |
| CONVENTIONS:                                          | 45                                        |
| DELEGATE ATTENDANCE:                                  | 190,063                                   |
| COLORADO CONVENTION CENTER: (exhibit square feet)     | 300,000                                   |
| <b>SEATING CAPACITY:</b>                              |                                           |
| INVESCO FIELD AT MILE HIGH:                           | 76,125                                    |
| PEPSI CENTER:                                         | 17,600 - 20,000                           |
| COORS FIELD:                                          | 50,200                                    |
| RED ROCKS AMPHITHEATER:                               | 9,450                                     |
| DENVER COLISEUM:                                      | 11,500                                    |
| DENVER PERFORMING ARTS COMPLEX: (PLEX)                | 9,075                                     |
| AUDITORIUM THEATER:                                   | 2,065                                     |
| BOETTCHER CONCERT HALL:                               | 2,634                                     |
| STOCK SHOW COMPLEX:                                   | 10,177                                    |
| <b>DENVER EMPLOYMENT (2000):</b>                      |                                           |
| JOBS IN DENVER:                                       | 468,392                                   |
| PERCENT OF METRO AREA:                                | 33.3%                                     |
| LARGEST EMPLOYMENT SECTORS:                           | Services, Government, Retail              |
| MAJOR INDUSTRIES:                                     | Communications, Utilities, Transportation |
| UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (2002):                             | 4.5%                                      |
| <b>DOWNTOWN (2001):</b>                               |                                           |
| EMPLOYMENT:                                           | 113,000                                   |
| TOTAL FLOORSPACE: (square feet)                       | 45,000,000                                |
| OFFICE: (square feet)                                 | 25,000,000                                |
| RETAIL: (square feet)                                 | 2,800,000                                 |
| HOTEL ROOMS:                                          | 5,329                                     |
| <b>ASSESSED VALUATION (2001):</b>                     | \$7,885,465,670                           |
| <b>HISTORIC LANDMARK DESIGNATIONS (JANUARY 2003):</b> |                                           |
| DISTRICTS:                                            | 42                                        |
| STRUCTURES:                                           | 305                                       |
| <b>REGISTERED NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS (2001):</b>  | 204                                       |

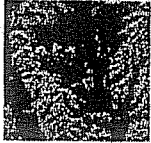
# Planning and Urban Design



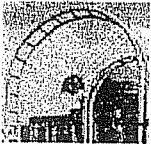
Niagara Parks: A 100-Year Vision



Meewasin Valley Project



Medstar, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



Main Street Transit Mall, Buffalo, New York



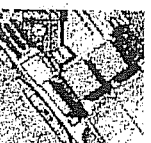
Toronto Transit Commission Leslie Station



South Shore Redevelopment, Miami Beach, Florida



Ramsey Lake



Thunder Bay Waterfront Study



Scarborough City Centre Planning Studies

| Schools | University | Corporate Learning | Libraries | Arts |  
| Planning and Urban Design | Government | Commercial and Office | Entertainment and Leisure |

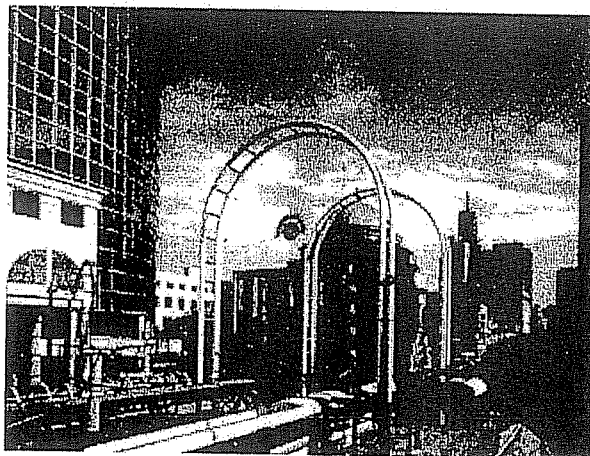
| Firm | People | Services | Client Quotes | Current | Gallery | News | Case Studies | History |  
| Address | Staff | Site Map |



|                               |                 |                 |                |              |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Moriyama & Tashima Architects |                 |                 |                |              |
| <b>Intro</b>                  | <b>Projects</b> | <b>In Depth</b> | <b>Contact</b> | <b>Index</b> |

## Main Street Transit Mall, Buffalo, New York

The Main Street Mall is a light-rail transit line and pedestrian precinct along Main Street in downtown Buffalo, New York. A comfortable, safe, nearly continuous urban system for pedestrian, bus, and transit interchanges, it spans the Central Business and Theatre Districts connecting transit stations and bus stops with public activity areas, waiting areas, plazas, parks, sidewalks, paths, and landmarks. Entertainment activities (shopping, theatre, exhibitions, even the transit experience itself) along the transit corridor encourage the private-sector development needed to sustain increased transit usage.



Our mandate was the design and physical implementation of the Mall, the healing of Main Street, and the start-up of the transit system. We consulted with over 600 people before arriving at a preferred design alternative for the Mall. Since construction of the Mall began, the transformation of Main Street into an activity-generating mall has been the catalyst for broad continuing programs to revitalize downtown Buffalo.

### Awards

- Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Regional Citation
- Association of Consulting Engineers of Canada Award of Excellence for Soft Engineering

### Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Site

| [Planning](#) | [Niagara Parks](#) | [Meewasin Valley](#) | [Medstar](#) | [Main Street Transit Mall](#) | [TTC Leslie Station](#) |  
 | [South Shore Redevelopment](#) | [Ramsey Lake](#) | [Thunder Bay Waterfront](#) | [Scarborough City Centre](#) |

| [Firm](#) | [People](#) | [Services](#) | [Client Quotes](#) | [Current](#) | [Gallery](#) | [News](#) | [Case Studies](#) | [History](#) |  
 | [Address](#) | [Staff](#) | [Site Map](#) |



# Appendix B

## Comments on City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project\*

### Environmental Assessment

| Comments From:                                         | Source | Recommended Alternative                              | Main Points                                                                                                | ERM Response                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Comments from Organizations</b>                     |        |                                                      |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                  |
| Citizens Regional Transit Corp. (55 members)           | letter | Enhance Ped Mall                                     | Believes expansion of LRRT will increase number of pedestrians downtown                                    | Expanding LRRT may result in more workers using LR, but would directly affect the number of pedestrians downtown |
| Buffalo Niagara Partnership (3,500 members)            | letter | Shared Trackbed                                      | Returning traffic will improve visibility and accessibility/create a critical mass of people               | No response necessary                                                                                            |
| New Millennium Group of Western New York (500 members) | email  | Shared Trackbed                                      | Provides their Long Term Vision for Main Street, supports LRRT, and opening all streets to two way traffic | No response necessary                                                                                            |
| Theater District Association (65 members)              | letter | Shared Trackbed                                      | <i>Partnership/Calderon on Main</i>                                                                        | No response necessary                                                                                            |
| Buffalo Place (240 property owners)                    | letter | Shared Trackbed                                      | <i>pedestrian on Main</i>                                                                                  | No response necessary                                                                                            |
| <b>Comments from Elected Officials</b>                 |        |                                                      |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                  |
| State Assemblyman Richard Smith                        | letter | No action                                            | Recommends improving rear facades on Washington and Pearl Streets                                          | Agree this would be valuable, but would not revitalize Main Street                                               |
| State Assemblyman Sam Hoyt                             | letter | Outside Trackbed, Selected Blocks or Shared Trackbed | Supports returning traffic to Main Street, concerned about cost<br><i>cost of Main Street</i>              | No response necessary                                                                                            |

| Comments/From:                                                      | Source                          | Recommended Alternative             | Main Points                                                                                                                                                                        | Comments/Response                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Comments from Individuals                                           |                                 |                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                 |
| Nathan C. Neuman<br>U. of Buffalo student                           | Letter, public hearing, website | Selected Blocks                     | Allow traffic only on blocks w/o transit stations                                                                                                                                  | This would only allow traffic on 3 interrupted blocks                                                                           |
| Lynda Stephens<br>City resident                                     | faxed memo                      | No Action                           | Believes benefits of returning traffic to Main Street are overstated.                                                                                                              | Provides little data to support her position                                                                                    |
| Andrew R. Graham<br>downtown resident                               | Letter and public hearing       | Shared Trackbed                     | Would like to add diagonal parking                                                                                                                                                 | Tech Committee determined it was unsafe                                                                                         |
| Marydel Bochnowich                                                  | comment sheet                   | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed | Would prefer no on-street parking                                                                                                                                                  | Tech Committee believes that on-street parking is important component of plan                                                   |
| Deborah C. Sawyer                                                   | comment sheet                   | No-action                           | Believes buildings along Main Street are too large to revive retail.                                                                                                               | Agree in part, but her position basically leaves the alternatives of demolishing buildings or leaving them vacant               |
| William J. Magavern, II                                             | comment sheet                   | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed | Supports return of traffic along entire length of Main Street                                                                                                                      | No response necessary                                                                                                           |
| Matt Balling                                                        | comment sheet                   | Shared Trackbed                     | This alternative works well in Toronto                                                                                                                                             | No response necessary                                                                                                           |
| Charles L. Gurney                                                   | comment sheet                   | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed | Supports change                                                                                                                                                                    | No response necessary                                                                                                           |
| Harold L. Cohen<br>Dean Emeritus SUNY Buffalo and downtown resident | comment sheet and letter        | None indicated                      | Thinks that converting other streets to two-way traffic has solved some of the problems<br>Recommends additional study on sidewalk vaults, emergency access, and new traffic study | Vaults and emergency access have been studied.<br>Traffic study took into consideration recent conversion of streets to two-way |

|                                               | Alternative                      | Alternative                                          | Alternative                                                                          | Alternative                                                                                   | Alternative | Alternative | Alternative | Alternative | LRRV Response |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| John Szlezpaniec                              | comment sheet and public hearing | Shared Trackbed with closures                        | Recommends closing portions of Main Street 10-4 April-Sept. for pedestrians          | Possible, but probably difficult to implement and enforce                                     |             |             |             |             |               |
| Bill Martin                                   | e-mail                           | No action                                            | Recommends extending LRRT                                                            | No response necessary                                                                         |             |             |             |             |               |
| Joe Lipka<br>Franklin St. business owner      | comment sheet                    | No-action                                            | Recommends opening all cross streets to two-way traffic <i>openness of city plan</i> | Will not provide sufficient access or visibility to business to revitalize downtown           |             |             |             |             |               |
| Gladys Gifford,<br>CRTC member                | Letter and public hearing        | Enhance Ped Mall                                     | Add bike lanes outside trackbed to this alternative                                  | Continuous bike lanes outside trackbed would require relocation of existing transit stations. |             |             |             |             |               |
| Yuri Hreshchyshyn                             | comment sheet                    | Outside Trackbed                                     | Recommends constructing an enclosed ped walkway above the LRRT trackbed              | Creative solution but would add considerably to project cost                                  |             |             |             |             |               |
| John Centurione                               | fax                              | Shared Trackbed                                      | Makes most sense                                                                     | No response necessary                                                                         |             |             |             |             |               |
| Sheri and Greg Rehwoldt<br>downtown residents | letter                           | Enhance Ped Mall or No-action                        | Traffic will result in more accidents, trash, noise, and crime                       | Should be no more than a typical street                                                       |             |             |             |             |               |
| Father Art Smith<br>St. Thomas Aquinas Church | Letter and public hearing        | Outside Trackbed, Selected Blocks or Shared Trackbed | Recommends incremental improvements to see if they work first                        | Recommend project be phased - would achieve same purpose as incremental improvements          |             |             |             |             |               |
| Darran Simpson                                | post card                        | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed                  | Likes Toronto - will attract businesses to located on Main Street                    | No response necessary                                                                         |             |             |             |             |               |
| Mr. Zakrzewski,<br>CRTC member                | Public hearing                   | Enhance Ped Mall                                     | Ped mall not cause of problems on Main Street                                        | We believe ped mall did contribute to problems                                                |             |             |             |             |               |
| Chris ?<br>LRRT system user                   | Public hearing                   | Enhance Ped Mall or No Action                        | Need to spend money to maintain and enhance LRRT system                              | No response required                                                                          |             |             |             |             |               |
| Stuart ?<br>property landlord                 | Public Hearing                   | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed                  | Downtown is dead and needs to be revitalized, traffic will help a lot                | No response necessary                                                                         |             |             |             |             |               |

| Comments From:                               | Source         | Recommended Alternative             | Main Points                                                      | Agency Response                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Dennis Galucki, GENRTC Bike Committee        | Public Hearing | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed | Status quo doesn't work                                          | No response necessary                                                                                                     |
| Richard Coby, Comm. For Better Buffalo       | Public Hearing | None indicated                      | Do not lose parking existing parking spaces in 700 block         | Will maintain on-street parking                                                                                           |
| Mike Nimman Buffalo State College instructor | Public hearing | Enhance Ped Mall or No Action       | Ithaca has a successful ped mall                                 | College town with many students near ped mall                                                                             |
| Jack Maloney downtown worker                 | Public hearing | Enhance Ped Mall or No Action       | Need to have more housing downtown                               | Agree, but we believe that will not be sufficient to revitalize Main Street                                               |
| ? Downtown resident                          | Public hearing | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed | Traffic flow is terrible downtown – put cars back on Main Street | No response necessary                                                                                                     |
| ? GENRTC bike committee                      | Public Hearing | None indicated                      | Dangerous to put bicycles on trackbed                            | It is done in other cities successfully                                                                                   |
| Alex Schmidt                                 | Public Hearing | Outside Trackbed or Shared Trackbed | Need more people downtown – cars will help                       | No response necessary                                                                                                     |
| Robert Peterson Buffalo resident             | Public Hearing | None indicated                      | How will we measure success of project                           | Success will be measured in terms of new jobs, decreased vacancy rates, assessed values, ped volumes on Main Street, etc. |
| William Andrietti                            | website        | Enhance Ped Mall or No Action       | Likes not having traffic on Main Street                          | No response necessary                                                                                                     |
| Katja Klieemann                              | website        | Enhance Ped Mall or No Action       | Keep the mall as is                                              | No response necessary                                                                                                     |
| Rodolfo L. Villacorta, MD                    | comment sheet  | Shared Trackbed                     |                                                                  | No response necessary                                                                                                     |
| Doug Bean Eric Maver & Assoc.                | comment sheet  | Shared Trackbed                     |                                                                  | No response necessary                                                                                                     |



| Comments From:                                      | Source        | Recommended Alternative | Main Points                                                               | ERM Response          |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chris Pinto<br>Behringer Diamonds, Inc.             | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         | Clean up Main St. and Washington St.                                      | No response necessary |
| Diane Jones<br>EB Green's Steakhouse                | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Stephen P. Fitzmanrice<br>Marine Buffalo Associates | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         | Want to insure safety if vehicular traffic is allowed under HSBC Building | No response necessary |
| David C. Schopp<br>Legal Aid Bureau of Buffalo      | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Mary Clare Keenan<br>Keenan Law Firm                | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Thomas Zenger<br>Downtown Graphics                  | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Kasemave Babel<br>EB Green's Steakhouse             | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Michelle M. Malone<br>Condo Owner                   | email         | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Harold Kopp<br>EMI Building                         | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         | Need to return traffic and parking to Main Street to attract retail       | No response necessary |
| Wolfgang Wildder<br>Hyatt Regency Buffalo           | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         | Support vehicular traffic on Main Street                                  | No response necessary |
| Ken Neufeld<br>Studio Arena                         | email         | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Keirsten Snell<br>Buffalo Niagara Partnership       | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |
| Chuck Kushner<br>Tent City                          | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                                           | No response necessary |

| Comments From:                               | Source        | Recommended Alternative | Main Points                                         | ERM Response          |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Carl Paladino<br>Ellicott Dev. Co.           | fax           | Shared Trackbed         |                                                     | No response necessary |
| Paul Werthman, P.E.<br>Benchmark Engineering | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                     | No response necessary |
| Mark Rodgers, Attorney<br>Rodgers & Coppola  | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         | Without vehicle traffic, downtown has deteriorated. | No response necessary |
| Maureen L. Norris<br>City Fashion/Kirat Inc. | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                     | No response necessary |
| Peter C. Ronca<br>RACO                       | comment sheet | Shared Trackbed         |                                                     | No response necessary |

\* Copies of these comments in their entirety are available at the offices of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority.

*Stations should be (7 w) Partnership survey sheet*

*Nicholas P. 344 support return vehicles*

COMMENT SHEET

MAIN ST. MULTI-MODAL ACCESS & REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Please submit comments before December 12, 2002 to:

Joseph N. Giambra, Commissioner  
Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
FAX: (716)851-5825

Or Email at:

Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

NAME: JOEL LIPPS (RUE FRANKLIN RESTAURANT)

ADDRESS: 341 FRANKLIN ST.

CITY: BUFFALO, NY

ZIP: 14202

COMMENTS: RETURNING TRAFFIC TO MAIN ST. WILL NOT BRING BACK  
RETAIL BUSINESSES. RETAIL WAS HURTING AND LEAVING BEFORE THE PEDESTRIAN  
MALL / TRANSIT WAS BUILT. EVEN TODAY, MAIN PLACE MALL HAS VERY LITTLE  
RETAIL. ~~THE~~ PARKING IS AVAILABLE UNDERNEATH AND IT'S ATTACHED TO TWO  
LARGE OFFICE BUILDINGS!). IT SEEMS TO ME THAT NOT ENOUGH  
ATTENTION HAS BEEN PAID TO PEARL & WASHINGTON STREETS INsofar AS  
CREATING EASIER ACCESS TO MAIN STREET. ALSO, ALL CROSS STREETS  
SHOULD BE OPEN ALLOWING TWO WAY TRAFFIC BETWEEN THE EAST &  
WEST SIDES OF MAIN STREET.

ISN'T THE IDEA OF "MAIN ST. AMERICA" A THING OF THE PAST?  
ISN'T THAT WHY THE PEDESTRIAN MALL WAS CREATED IN THE FIRST PLACE?

WHAT DO THE ORIGINAL PLANNERS OF THE MALL THINK ABOUT  
THE IDEA OF RETURNING CARS? IS IT WORTH THE EXPENSE?  
MY GUESS IS NO.

NAME: JOEL LIMPS (RUE FRANKLIN RESTAURANT)

ADDRESS: 341 FRANKLIN ST.

CITY: BUFFALO, NY

ZIP: 14202

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## COMMENT SHEET

## MAIN ST MULTI-MODAL ACCESS &amp; REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Please submit comments before December 17, 2002 to:

Joseph N. Clambro, Commissioner  
 Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets  
 Room 502, City Hall  
 Buffalo, New York 14202  
 FAX: (716) 851-5825

Or Email at:

[Mainst@buffalo.gov](mailto:Mainst@buffalo.gov)

NAME: MARYDEL BOCHNOWICZ

ADDRESS: 125 DOLPHANN DR

CITY: TONAWANDA NY ZIP: 14150-4628

COMMENTS: I am all for opening main street to traffic - no parking - as long as the subway remains. Why do we re-invent the wheel. In the 50's we had a streetcar and traffic and it was a great co-existence. I work downtown and I do have an interest and concern with plans.

Thank you

Marydel 823 @ aol.com

*Sawyer*

COMMENT SHEET

MAIN ST. MULTI-MODAL ACCESS & REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Please submit comments before December 12, 2002 to:

Joseph N. Giambra, Commissioner  
Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
FAX: (716)851-5825

Or Email at:

Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

NAME: DEBORAH C. SAWYER

ADDRESS: 712 MAIN ST.

CITY: BUFFALO ZIP: 14202

COMMENTS: BRINGING CARS BACK TO MAIN ST. WILL NOT REVITALIZE RETAIL. WE JUST LOST THE FEEL RITE HEALTH FOOD STORE AT THE MALL - WHAT'S NEXT? WHEN I CAME TO BFLO. 10+ YEARS AGO, THERE WERE PLENTY OF STORES, INCLUDING A CASUAL CORNER, AT MAIN PLACE MALL. NOW THERE'S NOTHING BUT A FEW DISCOUNT STORES. TO REVITALIZE RETAIL, IT NEEDS TO BE PROFITABLE. RETAIL SUCCESS IS MEASURED BY DOLLARS-PER-SQUARE-FOOT. MOST OF THE EMPTY STORES ALONG MAIN ST. AND AT THE MALL ARE TOO LARGE FOR THE MARKET HERE. UNTIL YOU ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF RETAIL PROFITABILITY, YOU WON'T REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN BUFFALO. CARS ON MAIN ST. WILL JUST DRIVE ON

Ghasemi, Seyed

**From:** Giambra, Joe  
**Sent:** Sunday, December 08, 2002 3:26 PM  
**To:** Ghasemi, Seyed  
**Subject:** FW: EA - traffic on Main St.

-----Original Message-----

From: Debra L. Chernoff [mailto:dchernoff@buffaloplace.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2002 3:21 PM  
To: 'Mary Martino e-mail'; 'Commissioner Joe Giambra'; 'Larry Rubin e-mail'; 'Mike Schmand'; 'EA Email Comment Mailbox'  
Cc: 'john\_j\_maloney@fanniemae.com'  
Subject: FW: EA - traffic on Main St.

John J. Maloney provided the following comment regarding the Multi-Modal Main Street Access and Revitalization Project, and requested that it be forwarded to you. I've also included the ERM email address so this will be included in their collection of comments for the final EA.

-----Original Message-----

From: John J Maloney [SMTP:john\_j\_maloney@fanniemae.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, December 03, 2002 2:05 PM  
To: dchernoff@buffaloplace.com  
Subject: EA - traffic on Main St.

Dear Committee:

I would like to offer official comments on the Environmental Assessment on the question of returning traffic to Main St. I am writing solely as a downtown office worker and professional urban planner and not in any capacity as an employee of my company, Fannie Mae.

I would strongly urge you to approve the alternative calling for the enhancement of the current pedestrian/transit mall. Returning traffic to Main St. under any of those alternatives is a mistake. Current retailing, property value and other indicators of downtown vitality have nothing to do with traffic on Main St. I urge your decision for enhancing the mall based on several inaccuracies in the current study that imply that lack of traffic is a problem that needs to be rectified. There are the following mistaken suppositions in the report

1. Decreases in retailing, occupancy rates and property values are a result of the lack of traffic. THIS IS A MISTAKE. Through my work I am involved with all of the major and midsize cities in upstate NY. They all have the same problems with lack of retail downtown, falling occupancy rates and values (generally). It is due to loss of economic power and population (generally and in the downtown core in particular). During the session in the library, the consultant mentioned that Syracuse retail is somewhat more vital and that they have traffic on all their downtown streets. It was implied that traffic on their streets helped. This is not the case. Why better numbers in Syracuse and not Rochester? Syracuse is the one major city that has had a slight increase in jobs in their metro area and in the city. That, plus an almost 100% occupancy rate in their downtown/Armory Square/Franklin Square neighborhoods and the proximity of the Carousel Center Mall to their downtown all contribute to this; not because they have traffic on their Main St. Once a critical mass of people is living

in and near downtown, the retail will follow. Be patient. With 600 households in the nearby Homeownership Zone, buildings just beginning to be rehabbed in downtown, Bioinformatics development about to take off and the nearby West Side neighborhood, things will begin to turn around.

N.B. I think if you look back at the environmental work done for the trolley project you will see that the cessation of traffic and institution of trolley service and a pedestrian mall were expected to serve as catalysts for Main St. revitalization!

2. Anecdotal and other evidence that retail suffers due to lack of access in front of downtown stores/restaurants. **THIS IS A MISTAKE.** There is more than anecdotal evidence that if there is a compelling reason to find a store/restaurant that this is not an impediment. Witness Shea's/theater events,, Chippewa and other successful activities on Main St. Money you will eventually seek would be better spent on enhancing the mall and the rear side for accessing **SOME** of the buildings on Pearl and Washington St.

3. Limited parking and/or traffic on Main St. would significantly enhance retailing. Give me a break! **THIS IS A MISTAKE.** A small number of cars going by and the ability to park only 6-8 in certain blocks is not the linchpin that will turn Main St. healthier! It is **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GENERALLY** and **DOWNTOWN HOUSING IN PARTICULAR** that are the answer. These "bring the traffic back" alternatives will cost significantly more money than mall enhancement, with little empirical data to support such a cost. Money that becomes available in the future would be better spent on supporting housing and economic opportunities in or near the central core (i.e. parking for housing rehabs, actual investment in the housing project or its streetside physical improvements within the Buffalo Place foot print etc..

Finally earlier in my career, I co-authored three Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), that were noted by HUD as models of how these full blown assessments should be done. Although the process purports to be objective and staff try to maintain that objectivity, there is always an inbred bias, i.e. we wouldn't be considering a change if their wasn't a bias toward the need for change. Buffalo Place does an **EXCELLENT** job with its marketing, maintenance and research work. However, when success is also tied to how vital the retail sector and downtown neighborhood is, there is a propensity by consultants and staff to come up with strategies to do **SOMETHING** - usually more dramatic than less so as to make a change. In this case make a less dramatic change by obtaining any monies to enhance the mall, help with rear access issues in some blocks and to aid downtown development projects.

The mall enhancement alternative is preferred for the following reasons

1. Enhancing the current mall will make it a more livable place for the slowly growing downtown neighborhood and an even better event venue for the many wonderful Buffalo Place events and festivals.

2. Reduced traffic will enhance the mall generally. Less need to be on guard for those Coach and other vehicles.

3. Once a critical mass is reached and there is a downtown neighborhood with new retail serving them, plus the daily office "residents", you will have a **ONE OF A KIND** unique neighborhood - not only convenient downtown, but with its own free rail transit, farmers market, concerts etc. etc., buffered and complemented by beautiful enhancements to the mall.

Finally, since the study avoids or cannot address full cost alternatives at this time, I can only...



funds available for immediate implementation. Rather, the study will be used as background data/template to "apply" for future pots of State and Federal money. That makes it especially important to make the right decision for the City and mall's future. Don't be blinded to have something more visible done just to try and show accomplishment of some sort. Rather, work on housing and economic development that fosters your goal for genuine retail vitality downtown.

Thank you for your consideration. Ms. Chernoff, I would ask that Ms. Gioia, Comm. Giambra, Comm. Ruben, Mr Schmand and the others at the hearing be sent a copy of this via e-mail at your convenience. Could you copy me on that? Thank you.

Sincerely,

John J. Maloney  
Fannie Mae - Western and Central NY Partnership Office  
Suite 1370 - Key Center  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Nathan C. Neuman  
68 Shoreham Parkway  
Buffalo, New York 14216-2203  
Home: (716) 875-4906  
Cell: (716) 578-4653  
Email: [ncneuman@yahoo.com](mailto:ncneuman@yahoo.com)

Joseph N. Giambra  
Commissioner, Department of Public Works  
502 City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202

Mr. Giambra:

While the debate continues concerning the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project I feel that it would be in the best interest of all parties involved to enact a compromise that would allow for the partial return of vehicular traffic to Main Street while maintaining part of the existing pedestrian mall. This would fulfill, to at least some extent, the economic impacts that vehicular traffic, would have if returned, while maintaining the social benefits of an accessible pedestrian environment. Although initially similar, my proposal differs from the current 'traffic on selected blocks' alternative. My recommendation consists of the following:

-The current pedestrian mall will see traffic restored only on those blocks that do not have LRRT stations. This would allow a sufficient right of way for all three modes of transportation (pedestrians, trains, autos). Auto lanes would be accompanied by curbside parking in select areas.

-The blocks that currently have LRRT stations would continue to prohibit auto traffic (except by special permit) and would be enhanced with pedestrian oriented development (i.e. trees, benches, etc.). This would maintain the comfortable pedestrian friendly environment that currently exists.

-All of the streets that are cut of by the pedestrian mall would again be connected (Mohawk and Eagle in the short-term and Erie and Genesee in the long-term). This would enhance access and visual perception of Main Street.

-The relocation of Seneca Street LRRT Station to the south side of Seneca Street, in front of the HSBC Center. This would open up the block between Seneca and

Swan Streets to traffic to accompany the street-front retail that does and could exist there. The relocated station would not affect traffic patterns because auto traffic is prohibited on the road that runs between Seneca and Exchange Streets (underneath the HSBC center).

-The current rail bed would be modified to allow Metro Bus traffic and Metro Bus traffic only. This would encourage the diversion of Metro Bus routes/traffic off surrounding streets and back onto Main Street bringing an increase in the amount of people to the transit stops along the street, thus emphasizing the term 'transit mall'. Since they are utilizing the rail bed, Metro Busses would travel in the sections that are both closed and open to auto traffic.

-The 700-block of Main Street will be restored to two-way traffic with curb-side parking on each side accompanied by a center median.

Regardless of what proposal is eventually selected there must be an emphasis that vehicular traffic belongs on Main Street only for business relating to the establishments on Main Street as opposed to emphasizing Main Street as a major transportation artery. This would be encouraged by allowing traffic on every other block, although it doesn't have to be strictly on every other block, blending two blocks at a time would still serve the purpose.

I ask you to please review and evaluate the feasibility of my recommendations. I am not looking for compensation or attention, if all you give is your consideration that would be admirable. Thank you for taking the time to read my recommendations, it is greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Nathan C. Neuman  
-UB School of Planning  
-New Millennium Group

**Subject: DELIVERY FAILURE: User www.Mainst.buffalo  
(www.Mainst.buffalo@erm.com) not listed in public Name & Address Book**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Nov 2002 13:49:17 -0500

**From:** Postmaster@erm.com

**Reply-To:** dolybil@localnet.com

**Organization:** home

**To:** Bill Martin <dolybil@localnet.com>

Your message

Subject: Revitalization of Main St.

was not delivered to:

www.Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

because:

User www.Mainst.buffalo (www.Mainst.buffalo@erm.com) not listed in public Name & A

Reporting-MTA: dns;mercury.erm.com

Final-Recipient: rfc822;www.Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

Action: failed

Status: 5.1.1

Diagnostic-Code: X-Notes; User www.Mainst.buffalo (www.Mainst.buffalo@erm.com) not l

**Subject: Revitalization of Main St.**

**Date:** Tue, 05 Nov 2002 13:49:17 -0500

**From:** Bill Martin <dolybil@localnet.com>

**Organization:** home

**To:** www.Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

Rather than open Main St. to traffic , extend mainline rapid transit to at least two or three more directions to beyond city limits and build Park & Ride lots at the ends patrolled by Erie County Sheriff's Patrols. Do not build anymore parking ramps or lots downtown and close some of the present ones. In their place build shopping plazas , residential housingand business office buildings ,thereby creating jobs both during and after and help cut smog and other pollutants in our enviroment. To help pay for this pry some of the money that the NFTA is sitting on as the T does stand for transportation.

William Martin  
59 Allegany St.  
Buffalo 14220

*Is this another example of our city government at work ? ? ? Maybe we should appoint another committee !!!*

*h... ..*

JP

December 4, 2002

Joseph N. Giambra  
Public Works Commissioner  
Room 502  
City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mr. Giambra:

I am writing in regards to the article that appeared in the Buffalo News about the proposed changes to Main Street's pedestrian mall.

I live in the City Center condominiums, which is located just off the corner of Chippewa and Main Streets. I want you to know how much we enjoy living on the mall – especially as it doesn't have car and bus traffic. It's quiet, clean, and no one has to worry about getting hit by a moving vehicle.

I'm surprised that those attending the hearing assume that few use the mall. During business hours, it is very much used – at least in my block of it. As I work from home, I daily see employees from area businesses walking the strip, on their way to lunching at T.G.I.F. or the Bijou. And every single night people make their way to the Market Arcade to catch the latest movie, to attend a theater performance, or to dine at the Ya Ya Brewhouse. As the rails load and unload at the mall stations every 15 minutes, there is a steady flow of visitors to the area.

Please don't allow cars and buses to share the track bed with the light rail trains. And please don't add parking spaces – if you do so, the Chippewa bar-hoppers will completely erode the peaceful atmosphere we Main Street home-owners cherish. There would be more accidents, trash, noise and crime.

Thank you.



Sheri and Greg Rehwoldt  
600 Main Street  
Unit 704  
Buffalo, NY 14202  
716/602-1052



THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

SAM HOYT  
Assemblymember 144th District

Room 627  
Legislative Office Building  
Albany, New York 12248  
(518) 455-4886  
FAX (518) 455-4890  
hoys@assembly.state.ny.us

General Donovan State Office Building  
125 Main Street  
Buffalo, New York 14203  
(716) 852-2795  
FAX (716) 852-2799

CHAIRMAN  
Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

CO-CHAIR  
Task Force on High Speed Rail

COMMITTEES  
Transportation  
Energy  
Governmental Operations  
Tourism, Arts & Sports Development  
Children and Families

MEMBER  
Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

December 2, 2002

Joseph Giambra  
Commissioner, Department of Public Works  
Buffalo City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Commissioner Giambra:

As per the information provided at the November 12<sup>th</sup> public hearing regarding the proposal to re-introduce cars to the pedestrian mall section of Main Street, I wish to confirm my support for this initiative.

As you may recall, I secured the funding for the first study to get this project underway. Although I have not reached a conclusion as to which of the three proposals I favor (excluding the option to enhance the pedestrian mall), I believe that there is value in returning cars to Main Street. However, I am concerned about the extremely high cost associated with each of the proposals, and believe that we must undertake an in-depth cost benefit analysis before we proceed with any of the three proposals.

As always, please feel free to call me if you have any questions regarding this matter. I look forward to our continued collaboration on this and many other important initiatives.

Sincerely

SAM HOYT  
MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY

SH:sjmk



THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

RICHARD SMITH  
Assemblyman 146th District

92  
COMMITTEES  
Agriculture  
Environmental Conservation  
Local Governments  
Small Business  
Transportation  
CHAIRMAN  
Subcommittee on Wildlife Management

November 22, 2002

Mr. Joseph N. Giambra  
Commissioner  
Dept. of Public Works  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Commissioner Giambra,

Thank you for hosting the informational meeting on the possibilities of opening Main Street to traffic.

Briefly, I am opposed to having any traffic outside of the Transit and emergency vehicles on the section of Main street that has rapid transit.

The City and other agencies have done an excellent job improving this section of Main Street and making it pedestrian friendly which I feel should not be altered. I would support a review of using the existing back yard infrastructure to carry vehicular traffic with an emphasis on improving the facades on the current rear sides of the existing structures. This would be cost effective and would allow all types of transportation modes to access the Theater District and adjacent business operations.

If you would like to discuss this option further please feel free to contact my office at your earliest convenience. I look forward to hearing from you in the near term.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Smith  
ASSEMBLY MEMBER

RAS:ljc

174 Capen Boulevard  
Amherst, NY 14226  
November 21, 2002

Joseph N. Giambra, Commissioner  
Department of Public Works  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mr. Giambra:

Please enter the following statement into the public record, concerning the proposed "City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project."

Please consider two major concerns I have, regarding this project.

A. At the public hearing on November 21, 2002, I listened carefully to the consultant and to all fifteen speakers from the public. The bicyclist, Joe Kelly, caught my attention, since I also enjoy bicycling in the city and understand the danger when a bicycle attempts to cross railroad tracks. The consultant persuaded me that sidewalks can be too wide, with no comfortable "pedestrian congestion."

Therefore, I propose the following alteration to the project:

Install paved bicycle-only lanes on either side of the existing light rail tracks.

Such bicycle lanes can be as narrow as four feet wide. Their width can be carved out from the too-wide sidewalks, as presently configured. The existing curbs can be maintained; an additional curb would be installed between the bicycle lane and the sidewalk.

This suggestion would be most practical for Alternative One, but could be adapted in the other alternatives. It would solve safety problems for bicyclists, while improving "pedestrian congestion."

B. I took Ms. Chernoff's suggestion, and studied the "Draft Environmental Assessment" in the library. Concerning left-hand turns, I was alarmed to see the sentence, on 2-4, "therefore, this turning movement would only be allowed under any of the alternatives..." Is this an error?

More to the point, the Assessment failed to answer my questions posed at the hearing, concerning the cost of the project. The chart of estimated costs, on 3-58, raises more questions than it answers. There is no indication on that page of where the monies are to be found. What portion is expected to come from Federal, NYS, local revenues? When will detailed o&m figures be available? Who will bear the additional o&m costs?

The taxpayers have a right to clear and complete accounting for the use of scarce tax revenues. This Assessment fails to provide enough information for taxpayers to be able to make an informed assessment of their own, as to the validity of this project. This project will not have my support until these financial questions are answered fully.

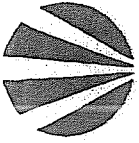
Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Gladys Gifford

cc: Dennis Galuki, GBNRTC Bike-Ped  
Laura McDade, LWVBN President





42

E. Edward Deutschman, *Chairman*  
Richard A. Olday, *Vice Chairman*  
Gregory P. Stein, *Secretary*  
Alvin J. Schuster, *Treasurer*  
Gladys Gifford, *Executive Director*

CITIZENS REGIONAL TRANSIT CORPORATION P O Box 1186 / Buffalo, New York 14231-1186 / 716-634-2412 / crtc@juno.com  
November 21, 2002

Joseph N. Giambra, Commissioner  
Department of Public Works  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mr. Giambra:

Please enter the following statement into the public record, concerning the proposed "City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project." The Citizens Regional Transit Corporation (CRTC) adopted this statement at its regular monthly meeting, March 19, 2002, as follows:

CRTC endorses Alternative One, "Retain and Enhance the existing Pedestrian Mall." This alternative keeps cars off Main Street, while encouraging enhancement of the existing pedestrian mall, making the rail stations more wind and weatherproof, addressing security issues (especially increasing lighting levels), and providing pedestrian amenities.

Rationale:

CRTC's vision is to expand Metro Rail. When implemented, the numbers of pedestrians passing through downtown Buffalo will double or triple, making the downtown area irresistible to businesses and developers. We feel that the enhancement of the pedestrian mall is the best alternative, in preparation for the future expansion of Metro Rail.

CRTC opposes the re-introduction of cars since the potential for auto interference with rail schedules is a major concern. Safety and traffic flow for the light rail line would be compromised. Further, the problems of handicapped access to the trains will be exacerbated with increased auto traffic.

CRTC has serious objections to the other three alternatives as well. All of them are more expensive to engineer and to build than is Alternative One. For downtown Buffalo, we recommend that monies be spent to refurbish and improve existing assets, in an effort to enhance the area.

CRTC finds that the increased auto exhaust pollution at the street level would seriously degrade both the environment of the pedestrian mall and of the whole downtown. We are concerned with the potential health problems which reintroduction of car traffic would bring to the people who plan to live in new and refurbished residential areas of downtown Buffalo.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Gladys Gifford, CRTC Executive

TO: Buffalo Place + other participants in replanning the  
Downtown Pedestrian Mall  
FROM: Prof HAROLD L. COHEN

as a past member of the planning of the pedestrian mall - (representing the mayor's office) I strongly suggest you check the following:

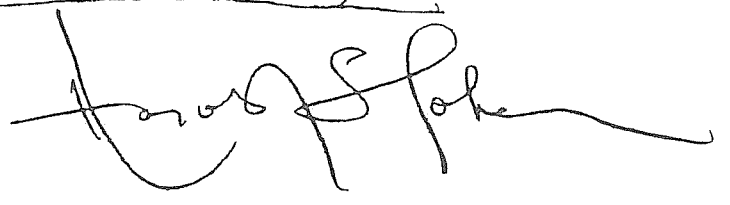
① Before we could start the rail system, we had to reinforce with heavy steel girders, all the deteriorating beams that held up the sidewalks in front of each building on main. They were reinforced to hold up under fire + police trucks - not additional transit traffic.

② special consideration was given to make sure fuel access was available to between 1-3 fire dept vehicles, on each or either side

③ Have you evaluated the need for vehicular traffic in light of the changes made + ~~those~~ those in process, making the main street <sup>new</sup> to accommodate increased housing - not dept stores - a commercial <sup>strip</sup> ~~strip~~

④ Have you reevaluated the traffic, since many streets have now been made 2 ways - making for new traffic patterns downtown.

Harold L. Cohen, <sup>not on map</sup>  
Chair of the original  
Committee that  
over viewed the  
Pedestrian Mall Design.



P.S. Sorry I had to leave by 5:45 and also I had no surface to write on. Hopefully you can read my written comments - I was reached by phone at 5:15

To: Buffalo Place and other Participants  
From: Prof. Harold L. Cohen

As a past member of the planning of the pedestrian mall (representing the Mayor's Office) I strongly suggest you check the following:

- 1) Before we could start the rail system we to reinforce with heavy steel girders, all the deteriorating beams that help up the sidewalks in front of each building of Main Street. They were reinforced to hold up under fire and police trucks - not additional continuous traffic.
- 2) Special consideration was given to make sure full access was available to between 1 - 3 fire department vehicles on either side.
- 3) Have you evaluated the need for vehicular traffic in light of the changing mode and those in process? I.E. making Main Street now to accommodate increased housing not department stores or commercial enterprises.
- 4) Have you reevaluated the traffic since many streets have now become two ways, making for new traffic patterns downtown?

I can be reached at 847-8690. I live at 600 Main Street, Buffalo NY

*Handwritten signature*

COMMENT SHEET

MAIN ST. MULTI-MODAL ACCESS & REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Please submit comments before December 12, 2002 to:

Joseph N. Giambra, Commissioner  
Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
FAX: (716)851-5825

Or Email at:

Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

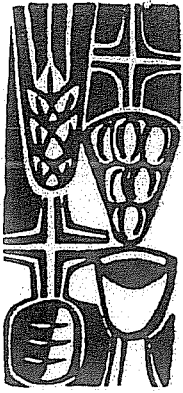
NAME: HAROLD L. COHEN

ADDRESS: 600 MAIN ST.

CITY: BUFFALO, NY ZIP: 14202

COMMENTS: Has a study been done  
since the city created 2 way streets  
re the downtown activity? It should  
have changed some of the problems  
associated with trying to get around  
the downtown & theater districts.

*Handwritten signature*  
Dean Emanuel - S. devlop Arch + Plan  
SUN/AB



# St. Thomas Aquinas Church

450 Abbott Road Buffalo, New York 14220-1796 Phone 716-822-1250

FOUNDED 1920

December 12, 2002

Mr. Joseph Giambra, Commissioner  
Department of Public Works  
Room 502  
65 Niagara Square  
Buffalo, NY 14202

Dear Mr. Giambra:

I don't know how much impact, if any, a letter like this has on your office and your decision-making process regarding the Main Street Multi-Modal Access Project, but I felt compelled to write to you after the public information meeting that took place in the Buffalo Public Library on November 12th.

Given the current condition of city politics, and the economy being what it is, we have to be so careful in making decisions and changes that affect the entire Western New York area.

For many reasons, including those I mentioned above, we continually lose our young work force to other cities with so much more vision and with so much more development than we have been able to see here in the City of Buffalo.

I have several points that I would like to make as you bring closure to the transportation project.

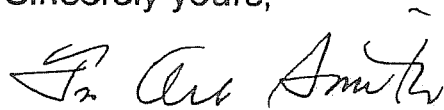
- We cannot forget the importance of extending our transportation system to the suburbs. There's no reason why we should not be thinking "big" about connecting to Ellicottville, for example, and Amherst and beyond.
- It doesn't make sense to develop the proposed section of Main Street if there is no business there or parking available. Even if business is there, to have no parking available makes no sense.

- Wouldn't it make more sense to develop housing on streets parallel to Main Street to have some life in the city? And then to develop the transit system?
- If you choose to go with an alternative suggested, it seems to me a combination of all of them would make the most sense. Keep the pedestrian areas and develop them; and, allow for cars and other shared traffic as well as parking.
- Finally, why not test the waters. Try changing traffic patterns in small increments that are not so costly and then go with what works best.

We cannot afford to do a major transportation project all at once at such huge cost if we don't look at the bigger picture and really hit at the heart of our city's real problems: government, the economy, people leaving, lack of collaboration with the county, obstructionism, etc. One small fix of the current transportation system is not going to make that big a difference unless some of the other points I make are taken into consideration.

I wish you well on the project and hope that whatever happens will bring more life and vitality to the City.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Art Smith". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Father Art Smith, Pastor

cc: Mayor Masiello, Mary Martino

COMMENT SHEET

MAIN ST. MULTI-MODAL ACCESS & REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Please submit comments before December 12, 2002 to:

Joseph N. Giambra, Commissioner  
Dept. of Public Works, Parks & Streets  
Room 502, City Hall  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
FAX: (716)851-5825

Or Email at:

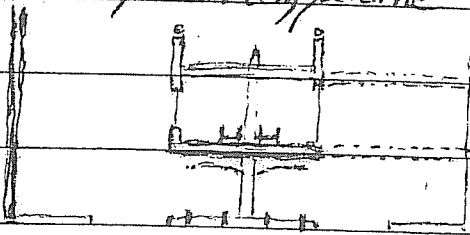
Mainst.buffalo@erm.com

NAME: Yuri Hreschukyskyun 893 7222 x 225

ADDRESS: 4 Pomery St.

CITY: Buffalo NY ZIP: 14210 2216

COMMENTS: I am in favor of restoring traffic on the entire length of Main St. not on the LRRT alignment AND also enhancement of the pedestrian mall in a manner not previously considered: Place an enclosed pedestrian walkway directly above the LRRT through its entire length with stairs/escalators down to each LRRT station and frequent connections across to Main St. buildings at the second story or Mezzanine level. Pedestrian conveyers can expedite movement. A third floor outdoor sidewalk or bikeway is also possible.



January 27, 2003

BUFFALO NIAGARA  
PARTNERSHIP

Sayed,

As promised, here are copies of the survey results from Main Street businesses, tenants & building owners. Thank you!

Keirsten Snell



January 2, 2002

I am writing to you with the intention of gaining your support and building consensus for the return of cars to Main Street, which would increase accessibility and visibility to our storefronts. I believe this project is the single most important step towards the revitalization of our downtown as a strong vibrant core for Western New York.



Recently, I attended a presentation by Buffalo Place that addressed the return of vehicular traffic to Main Street and provided information on the four alternatives that are available. **Alternative #4** suggests two-way traffic on Main Street with vehicles sharing the existing track-bed with Light Rail Rapid Transit (LRRT) cars. This alternative appears to be the least disruptive to our businesses with the greatest effect on downtown revitalization and has been officially endorsed by Buffalo Place, Inc., and the Buffalo Niagara Partnership. To review the entire analysis and the four alternatives visit [www.ci.buffalo.ny.us](http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us) and click on "Vehicular Traffic to Main Street".

As a business owner of two restaurants on Main Street, I have seen too many revitalization efforts on Main Street stagnate, because consensus was not reached. **Consensus and action are imperative; your response is vital. Public comment period has been extended to January 10<sup>th</sup>. Please respond with immediacy.**

We are the owners and operators of buildings and businesses on Main Street, and our opinion matters. **Please show your support by checking next your preferred alternative...please consider the benefits I have outlined for Alternative #4.** Space is provided for a position statement to communicate further concerns. Feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Steve Calvaneso  
Cell #: (716) 912-1500  
[stevecalvaneso@aol.com](mailto:stevecalvaneso@aol.com)

MAIN OFFICE

600 MAIN STREET  
SUITE 804  
BUFFALO, NY 14202

CALVANESOS  
COSMOPOLITAN GRILLE  
5185 TRANSIT ROAD @ MAPLE  
WILLIAMSVILLE, NY 14221  
tel: 716-633-6683 | fax: 716-633-2700

CITY GRILL  
268 MAIN STREET @ SWAN  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716.856.2651 | fax: 716.852.4889

LA YAY BAYOU BREWHOUSE  
77 MAIN STREET @ THEATRE PLACE  
BUFFALO, NY 14203  
tel: 716.854.YAYA | fax: 716.854.9295

BACCHUS  
56 WEST CHIPPEWA STREET  
BUFFALO, NY 14202  
tel: 716.854.WINE (9463)

EXQUISITE CATERING  
@ DELAWARE PARK CASINO  
716.883.5932

1/28/03

**City of Buffalo Multi-Modal Main Street Access  
and Revitalization Project**

Please fax: c/o Keirsten Snell @ (716) 852-2761

**OR**

Email your comments to mainst.buffalo@erm.com

**Please check one of the following alternatives:**

- Alt. #1 Enhancing the Pedestrian Mall
- Alt. #2 Two-way traffic separate from LRRT
- Alt. #3 Traffic on selected blocks
- Alt. #4 Two-way traffic sharing LRRT trackbed ← Bold

**Additional Comments:**

15 employees.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

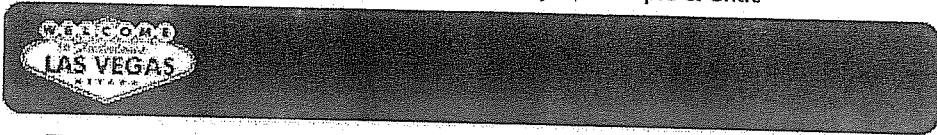
**Name:** Robert L. Miller, Chairman

**Business:** Miller Gestco & Co. Also Cimara Financial

**Address:** 237 Main St - Suite 600  
Buffalo, NY 14203

**Email:** mjg @ millergestco.com

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stephenslynda@hotmail.com

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From : Bill Banas <bill@banasclan.com>

To : Lynda Stephens <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>

CC : Pat McNichol <pat\_mcnichol@lycos.com>, Jeremy Toth <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>, Nathan Neuman <nneuman@yahoo.com>

Subject : Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo

Date : Tue, 08 Apr 2003 17:44:42 -0400

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Lynda,

We appreciate your interest and share your concerns about public input in the downtown Main Street project. I have included the full text of the NMG Transportation Action Group position statement below (which was submitted to the project team and then to Buffalo Place when it was discovered that the comments never made it into the record). Please contact me or Pat McNichol (whom I've copied with this message) if you'd like to discuss this further.

- Bill

Bill Banas

Chair, Transportation Action Group

The New Millennium Group of WNY, Inc.

www.nmgonline.org

bill@banasclan.com

(716) 854-9283

*Not accurately portrayed on table + not considered.*

The New Millennium Group of Western New York, Inc. (NMG) fully supports an open and fair public process and would like to thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project. We applaud the efforts of city of Buffalo, Buffalo Place, NFTA, and the State of New York on attempting to create a vibrant downtown.

LONG TERM VISION

Our long-term vision of Main Street downtown is one that is full of people and vitality, as it once was. Our vision includes ideas that are not new, but takes many of the attributes of Buffalo's Main Street past and applies them to our goals today.

Our long-term vision includes an uninterrupted facade of mixed-use buildings that include apartments, condos, retail and office space. It consists of wide sidewalks to allow for outdoor cafes and to give sense of easy passage for the pedestrian. Our vision comprises of orderly rows of trees, possibly double rows on each side of Main. Pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture, would be plentiful to give people places to congregate and socialize. Public spaces would be meticulously planned and integrated to provide occasional focal points and a sense of place. The sidewalks would be illuminated mainly by storefronts and augmented with softer, focused light from lampposts built on a smaller, human-sized scale. Of course the MetroRail would be there to provide a means of easy transportation to, from, and within downtown.

All streets would again intersect Main Street and be two-way. Reconnecting Genesee Street to itself would restore Joseph Ellicott's radial street

- MSN Home
- Autos
- Business
- Buy Tickets
- Careers
- City Guides
- Downloads
- Entertainment
- Find Friends & Colle
- Games
- Greeting Cards
- Health
- Horoscopes
- House & Home
- Instant Messaging
- Internet Access Spe
- Kids
- Learning & Researc
- Love & Relationship
- Maps & Directions
- MSN 8 Internet Sofi
- News
- Send Money
- Shop AT&T Wireles
- Shopping
- Sports by ESPN
- Travel
- Women

pattern. Bayle Street and Erie Street would again cross Main Street to recreate Shelton Square, an important focal point and gathering place for people.

#### METRORAIL

We fully support keeping MetroRail on Main Street. All four of the alternatives do so. It is important to note that MetroRail is just one ingredient needed for a successful Main Street. It is unfair to blame MetroRail (or the pedestrian mall) for the demise of Main, especially given the fact that no policy of the last 20 years has supported MetroRail. In fact, most policy decisions have undermined MetroRail, such as the creation of thousands of new parking spaces, failure to enforce the transit overlay code, a nonexistent downtown housing policy, and other "hidden" subsidies that create suburban sprawl. Even so, MetroRail still ranks as one of the best public transit systems in the nation, with the third highest passenger per mile ridership among other light rail systems (between 25 and 30 thousand passengers per day). MetroRail is the envy of Mayors of other cities throughout the U.S. and is fundamental (but not sufficient) to a vibrant Main Street. Indeed, given its success, we should be planning to complete and expand MetroRail (as virtually all cities in the U.S. with light rail are currently doing or planning to do).

We believe restoring auto traffic to Main will not necessarily lead to a revitalized street. With Main Street being the exception, all streets downtown have auto traffic, yet their condition is the same or worse than that of Main Street. Indeed, when observing other downtowns and Main Streets across the state and nation, the argument can be made that MetroRail may have saved Main Street from further demise.

#### WHAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH NOW

We can not accomplish everything overnight. However, this does not inhibit us from eventually reaching the long-term goal of a thriving Main Street. By having a long term "blueprint" in place, we can accomplish the vision in phases.

The first phase should include opening up the cross-streets and making them two-way. Currently, Main Street feels like a long canyon. By opening up the cross streets, it will create shorter blocks and help Main Street "breathe."

We praise the city of Buffalo for the recent conversion of Huron, Ellicott, Franklin, and Washington streets to two-way traffic. Goodell, Tupper, Mohawk, Swan, and Seneca streets should also be converted to two-way. One-way streets create a "rat maze" for people traveling into and within downtown, which makes for difficult navigation. Two-way streets "calm traffic" and provide better access and mobility.

If necessary, we would approve of opening Main Street to automobile traffic, similar to Alternative #4, "Two-Way Traffic sharing LRRT." Streets in Downtown Toronto provide one excellent example of how a shared roadway can benefit all who use it. (Indeed, there are countless other good examples of the "shared roadbed" across the U.S., Europe, and the rest of the world.) When trolleys used to travel up and down Buffalo streets, automobiles and carriages shared the road with them.

We oppose any plan that reduces the sidewalk width. An exception would be made for parking lanes. In our opinion, Alternative #2, "Two-Way Traffic Separate from LRRT," is unacceptable.

We would like to share the following specific suggestions for Alternative #4. It should be noted that implementation of these types of details will either "make or break" the effectiveness of this project.

\* Visual cues, such as bollards, should be used to protect pedestrians and distinguish between the different modes of travel.

\* Orderly rows (as opposed to random patches or pockets) of trees should be planted, without exception. According to city code Chapter 467 (D), a commercial establishment does not have the right to prevent trees from being planted in front of their storefront. Orderly rows of trees create a sense of place, calm traffic, clean the air, and beautify the street. Trees should be planted in large tree pits with protective grating. The verge, which is the area between the curb and sidewalk, could be either grass or pea gravel. If a hard surface is

deemed necessary, then permeable brick should be used, not concrete. This will ensure good root health and significantly increase the chances of large, mature trees developing. Also, double rows of trees should be considered on blocks without a parking lane.

\* Use of granite or brick pavers should be considered for the parking lanes and crosswalks. These building materials are aesthetically pleasing, have a traffic calming effect, and have longer life cycle (and lower cost) when compared to asphalt.

\* Main Street needs to be "aerated" so that it can "breathe" again. Where applicable, alleys should be restored or enhanced. Alleys help to service buildings, create better access, and shorten blocks.

\* Illumination should be provided by standards of appropriate (human) scale & character. Frequent, shorter, low-intensity lamps are preferable to fewer, taller, high-intensity lamps. The light from the standards should be focused downward onto the sidewalk where it is most useful, and to minimize light pollution and glare.

\* Recently, R/UDAT has identified the block between Goodell and Tupper streets as having the most potential for downtown housing. Allowing for more on-street parking will help alleviate the demand to demolish existing buildings to create off-street parking. Main Street's large road width allows for both a planted median and angled parking on this block (with two-way traffic). Angled parking can provide up to 40% more on-street parking.

Ultimately, the long-term vitality of downtown does not depend on whether cars are allowed on Main Street. To create a 24-hour downtown, you need to have residents living and working there.

We feel the first transportation step to a healthy Main Street should be finishing the conversion of all streets to two-way traffic (including all cross-streets). If it is deemed necessary by the community to open Main Street to automobiles, then it must be done using Alternative #4, including all the proper details, and giving the pedestrian the highest priority.

Bill Banas  
Chairman, Transportation Action Group

Patrick McNichol  
Co-Chairman, Transportation Action Group

The New Millennium Group of WNY, Inc.  
(716) 854-9283

> From: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
> Date: Mon, 07 Apr 2003 12:14:02 -0400  
> To: bill@banasclan.com  
> Subject: Fwd: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
>  
>  
> Please excuse the extra mess. to reach you regarding NMG position on this  
> topic. Hope to hear from you. Lynda Stephens  
>  
>  
>

>> From: "Jeremy Toth and Nava Fader" <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>  
>> To: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
>> Subject: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
>> Date: Sun, 6 Apr 2003 18:37:31 -0400  
>>

>> bill@banasclan.com  
>>

>> ----- Original Message -----

>> From: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
>> To: <jtoth@net.bluemoon.net>  
>> Sent: Sunday, April 06, 2003 11:39 AM  
>> Subject: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo

MSN Journal - Message

>>  
 >>  
 >>> Thanks for your response. Bill's message was undeliverable. Can you  
 >> give  
 >>> me his correct e-mail address?  
 >>> Thanks  
 >>>  
 >>>  
 >>>  
 >>>  
 >>>  
 >>>  
 >>>> From: "Jeremy Toth and Nava Fader" <jtoth@net.blumoon.net>  
 >>>> To: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>, <bill@banisclan.com>  
 >>>> Subject: Re: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
 >>>> Date: Fri, 4 Apr 2003 20:51:56 -0500  
 >>>>  
 >>>> Bill is better able to answer this as Transportation Action Group  
 >> Chair.  
 >>>>  
 >>>> ----- Original Message -----  
 >>>> From: "Lynda Stephens" <stephenslynda@hotmail.com>  
 >>>> To: <jtoth@net.blumoon.net>; <bill@banisclan.com>  
 >>>> Sent: Thursday, April 03, 2003 1:07 PM  
 >>>> Subject: Returning cars to Main St. Downtown Buffalo  
 >>>>  
 >>>>> Dear Mr. Toth and Mr. Banis,  
 >>>>> Hello, I am a person with concerns about the City's plan to return  
 >> cars  
 >>>>> to  
 >>>>> Main St. and change the streetscape. I submitted comments to the  
 >> City  
 >>>>> and  
 >>>>> their consultant, ERM by the deadline last Dec. 12. In the Final  
 >>>>> Environmental Assessment only the consultant's display of the  
 >> submitted  
 >>>>> public comments was attached. (The City staff person said he had  
 >>>>> advised  
 >>>>> the consultant to attach comments in full which is the usual  
 >> procedure.)  
 >>>>> When I visited the City's Public Works Dept. to view the actual  
 >>>>> submissions,  
 >>>>> some were missing and mine was missing a critical middle page. The  
 >> New  
 >>>>> Millennium Group of WNY e-mail was missing, although a student  
 >>>>> member, Nathan  
 >>>>> Neuman, response was included among the originals. It seemed to me  
 >> that  
 >>>>> Mr.  
 >>>>> Neuman's remarks were probably not the "official" NMG version.  
 >>>>> My comments were grossly mischaracterized. I wonder if yours were.  
 >> I  
 >>>>> have  
 >>>>> copied the consultant's distillation of your comments. I would be  
 >> most  
 >>>>> interested in reading your comments in complete form. I can e-mail  
 >> mine  
 >>>>> to  
 >>>>> you if you like.  
 >>>>> ERM characterization of NMG of WNY comments:  
 >>>>> "Provides their Long Term Vision for Main Street, supports LRRT, and  
 >>>>> opening  
 >>>>> all streets to two way traffic"  
 >>>>> I look forward to hearing from you.  
 >>>>> Lynda Stephens  
 >>>>>  
 >>>>>  
 >>>>> 

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Gladys Gifford, *President*  
Seth C. Triggs, *Vice President*  
Elizabeth M. Howell, *Secretary*  
Alvin J. Schuster, *Treasurer*

CITIZENS REGIONAL TRANSIT CORPORATION P O Box 1186 / Buffalo, New York 14231-1186 / 716-836-2825 / crtc@citizenstransit.org

FTA/TRQ-2  
2006 DEC 11 A 10:54

December 6, 2006

Latisha Thompson, Regional Director  
Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson:

Under your direction the FTA is reviewing the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Main Street Multimodal Revitalization and Access Project in Buffalo, NY, commonly referred to as "Cars Sharing Main Street." At issue is whether the project qualifies for a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

I serve as President of the Citizens Regional Transit Corporation (CRTC), a nonprofit grassroots organization that advocates for expansion of the light rail system in Buffalo. We are concerned with the impact that the Cars Sharing Main Street project will have on the economic vitality and livability of downtown Buffalo.

The CRTC objects to the plan to remove the Theater District Station from the proposed project. The existing light rail system must be expanded, not reduced!

The proposed project offers a welcome opportunity to enhance the transit stations, thereby making the whole of downtown Buffalo into a transit-oriented development. However, the EA does not address two significant questions that should be answered to qualify for a FONSI:

Does the proposal to eliminate the Theater District Station have a negative impact on current and future residents living in the immediate area of the current station?

Does the proposal to eliminate the Theater District Station have a negative impact on current transit riders, especially the young and the transit-dependent who currently use the station?

Downtown Buffalo is enjoying a resurgence in residential life which depends on the light rail system for personal mobility. This project must fulfill the intended goals stated in the "Final Design Report" which include: "Increase Multi-Modal access options and Light Rail Rapid Transit ridership, Simplify access to downtown, Encourage public/private economic development..." The CRTC urges you to insist that the Theater District Station remain in the project, as an essential component to reach those stated goals for the project.

Sincerely,

Gladys Gifford, President

cc: Gregory Stamm, NFTA  
Hon. Byron Brown, City of Buffalo

Executive Board: Joan K. Bozer / E. Edward Deutschman / Gladys Gifford / Elizabeth M. Howell / Jack Howell / Richard A. Olday / Alvin J. Schuster / James W. Smyton / Gregory P. Stein / Seth C. Triggs



# SIGNATURE DEVELOPMENT

FTA/TR0-2  
2006 DEC 26 A 10:08

December 15, 2006

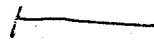
Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director  
Federal Transit Administration  
Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I am writing to you to express serious concerns about a proposal to close a Metro Rail station proximate to the Ellicott Commons, a new transit-oriented, mixed-use community my company has been developing in the Ellicott Street corridor in downtown Buffalo, New York. Your office is reviewing the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project, which calls for removing the Theatre station, a proposal that would put our development out-of-range of the Metro Rail.

I believe very strongly a proposal to remove the Theatre station, if enacted, would threaten our property values and negatively impact the quality-of-life and convenience to transit of our residential, retail and office tenants. I advise that your office fully review the potential environmental, social and economic development impacts of this proposal to remove the Theatre station before issuing a decision on the project.

Sincerely,



Rocco R. Termini  
Managing Member

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489 ELLICOTT STREET BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14202

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December 15, 2006

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director  
Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

FTA/TRO-2  
2006 DEC 18 A 11:15

Dear Ms. Thompson,

We hope this letter finds you well. While we generally support and applaud the efforts of many to revitalize downtown Buffalo, my colleague and I, after due diligence, have concluded that the recent proposal to close the Theatre District Metro Rail station (as part of the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project in downtown Buffalo, NY now under review by the Federal Transit Administration) limits access and convenience of the light rail rapid transit system and diminishes the value it provides residents of our city and region.

We both have long advocated for enhancing environmental supports that facilitate improved access and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to increase the health and quality of life of our region. We believe that the Theatre District Metro Rail station removal does not meet this objective. Nor does it meet the objective of The Queen City Hub, the national APA award winning regional action plan for Downtown Buffalo and the explicit goals of the City of Buffalo's Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project Environmental Assessment (May 2006) which states its goals as threefold; to stimulate economic development, increase multimodal access options and transit ridership and improve the quality of life for users of downtown Buffalo.

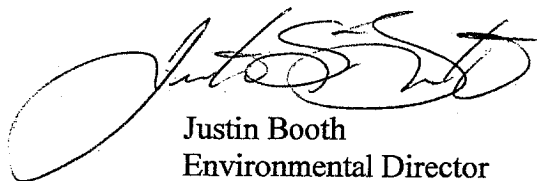
Recognizing the high usage of the Theatre District Metro Rail station (644,856 boardings and alightings annually), and the distance that will be created in the current plan for its removal to the next closest station (Allen/ Medical Station) many theatre patrons, especially older adults and residents in the downtown housing projects, will be negatively impacted. It is our understanding that the decision to remove the station did not occur publicly until this past August (2006) and the end users, who were mentioned above, were not surveyed in the decision to remove the station which will reduce their access.

As your office continues to review the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project, we hope that you will take into consideration the stated goals for this major infrastructure project, the needs of the public who use the station and if these goals and the public's needs will be met through the implementation of the current design that removes the Theatre District Metro Rail Station.

Sincerely,



Phil Haberstro  
Executive Director



Justin Booth  
Environmental Director

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director - Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

December 9, 2006

FTA/TRO-2  
2006 DEC 14 A 11:28

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I am a resident of the Ellicott Lofts in downtown Buffalo, located less than a five-minute walk from the Theatre Metro Rail station, now being considered for closure under the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project under review by your office.

Nearly 1,000 new residents have settled in the Theatre Historic District area within the last five years alone. Many of these residents, including myself, would lose their adjacency to the Metro Rail if the popular Theatre station is closed.

Many of my neighbors cite the easy convenience to the Metro Rail as one of the great attractions of downtown living, allowing people to walk more, use transit frequently, and depend on cars less.

New retail venues, such as the Washington Market, are opening up within a five-minute's walk of the Theatre Metro station. Many of those retail venues, existing and potential, would lose their adjacency to the Metro Rail with the closing of the Theatre station.

As a person who has been able to depend on my automobile less because of my proximity to transit, I believe the easy availability of public transportation is an important aspect of improving air quality and reducing the emission of greenhouse gases.

As a resident who believes I represent the views of many of my neighbors in the Ellicott Commons area, I ask the Federal Transit Administration to consider the following concerns before moving forward on a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the project:

- Will removing the station and placing new residents more distant from high-quality transit have a negative impact on the quality of life of downtown?
- Will closing the Theatre station have a negative impact on foot traffic to those new retail venues?
- Will removing the station undermine conditions for continued investment in new housing construction in the Theatre Historic District area and the Ellicott/Genesee Street corridor, both identified by the city's *Queen City Hub Plan* as priority areas for neighborhood development?
- Will removing the Theatre Metro station discourage use of public transportation and encourage other modes of transport, such as automobile use, that contribute to negative environmental conditions regionally and globally?

Thank you for listening to our questions and I look forward to seeing how they are addressed.

Sincerely,

  
Nancy Siegel

489 Ellicott St. Apt. 4

Buffalo, NY 14203

e-mail: [Nansieg@aol.com](mailto:Nansieg@aol.com)

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director, Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson

I am writing to you on a most urgent matter. As a resident of the downtown core in the City of Buffalo I am greatly disturbed by the City of Buffalo's decision as part of the plan to reopen Main St. to traffic, to eliminate the Theater District Metro-Rail station.

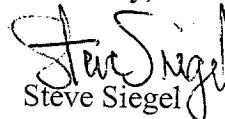
As one who has spent much time researching this issue, I have posed a series of concerns and questions to the decision makers and have been either ignored or met with a hostile response.

Specifically:

1. Why would they eliminate a station that served 644,000 people last year?
2. Why would they create a 3600 foot gap between stations when most new housing that is going up is located in this gap?
3. Why were no residents surveyed for their opinions during the planning process?
4. Why was the advisory committee that made this decision comprised of only business owners or managers of businesses?
5. Why must the supposed need for parking spaces and limousine drop off points for the theater receive more priority than the needs of residents and others who, due to choice or economic need, do not or wish to use an automobile?
6. Why are businesses being allowed to essentially "sanitize" this Theater District of minorities and young adults – the typical user of this transit system, in order to supposedly make it less threatening for suburban users of the theaters? I base this on comments made by those pushing for the relocation of the station.

Given how closed the process has been to residents and the failure of those same decision makers to accept any input for a compromise, I feel that the FTA should stop this process until the above questions are adequately addressed.

Sincerely,



Steve Siegel  
489 Ellicott St Apt 4  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14203

e-mail: [shsiegel@niagara.edu](mailto:shsiegel@niagara.edu)



December 11, 2007

Letitia Thompson  
Regional Director, Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

VIA E-MAIL THROUGH [anthony.carr@dot.gov](mailto:anthony.carr@dot.gov)  
VIA FACSIMILE

URGENT:

RE: Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project, Buffalo

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I understand an FTA decision on the above-referenced project is imminent. As knowledge spreads of the proposed closure of one of Buffalo's Metrorail stations, indeed, the gateway station into and out of downtown, citizens are becoming alarmed by the proposed action itself and the lack of meaningful public discussion and input.

The locally designated Theater Historic District has much to lose if the so-called "Theatre Station" is eliminated. There has been much residential growth in the area recently, with room for more. Much of that is predicated on having a rail station within effective walking distance of residences and other points of origin and destination. The historic district is composed largely of, and the Theatre Station serves, buildings built between 1895 and 1925, the peak years of the American downtown, when electrified trolley service led to great concentrations of services in a relatively small area. Today, those buildings are being converted to residential uses, including the most costly new rentals in the Buffalo area, directly adjacent to the station, in the Pierce Building. The streetfront theaters, restaurants, and clubs in the two-block long historic district also provide much-needed evening usage of the transit system.

Conversely, "only" one stop south, the neighborhood changes drastically. The Fountain Plaza station there is enveloped by two Urban-Renewal-style office blocks isolated within their plazas, attracting only office workers. At night, it is a dead zone. It is here that project proponents hope Theatre Station patrons will go in undiminished numbers once the Theatre Station is demolished. That, as any serious urban geographer will tell you, will not happen. Many passengers will simply stop using the metrorail altogether, leading to fewer patrons and people on the streets of the Theater District. This can only negatively effect the financial viability of these historic buildings, and other pre-auto-era buildings on the adjacent blocks.

The Campaign for Greater Buffalo History, Architecture and Culture, a non-profit preservation and planning organization therefore has a strong interest in the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project now under review by your office. Members who lived in the area first alerted us to the problem. We are concerned that, despite prudent and feasible alternatives for reestablishing a new station area only 227 feet south of the existing Metrorail Theatre Station, or leaving things as they are on that block, plans are to demolish the station altogether and not replace it.

We urge the FTA to thoroughly investigate, before any decisions are made to advance the project, the impact the removal of the Theatre Station would have on pedestrian accessibility and usage to transit and the continued viability and redevelopment of historic resources in the Theater Historic District.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Tim Tieman  
Executive Director

Chris Hawley  
257 Summer St, Apt 4  
Buffalo, NY 14222-2191  
(716) 984-5664  
chrishawley@buffalo.com

December 9, 2006

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director  
Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project, Buffalo, NY  
URGENT

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I have several concerns for the Federal Transit Administration as it moves forward on its review of the above-referenced Environment Assessment (EA), which I ask to be considered which may affect the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). I am a city planner employed in the 600 Block of Main Street in Buffalo, New York. The so-called Theatre station of Metro Rail is in front of the building where I work.

1) Studies on pedestrian use of transit stations appear to show that distance is the single most important factor in the attracting patronage of transit systems. Closing the Theatre Metro station would increase walking distances to Metro Rail stations from a rapidly-developing corridor of downtown, particularly the 700 Block of Main Street and the Ellicott Street corridor. In addition, the closure of the Theatre Station would put many current and future downtown residents and patrons beyond than the typical "five-minute walk" catchment area now covered by the existing Theatre station. Will removing the Theatre Station negatively affect patronage of the transit system? Will the diminished adjacency to transit cause people to walk less, use cars more often, thus also raising environmental and social impact concerns?

2) If the Theatre station is removed, in its place will be curbside parking and two drop-off zones for limousines. Are there environmental justice concerns raised by the unnecessary removal of transit access for the encouragement of auto- and limousine-access used by likely higher-income residents who do not customarily use transit?

3) There were over 644,000 passengers at the Theatre station in 2005, according to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority. Will removing the Theatre station impose an unnecessary hardship on those 644,000 transit passengers? Will removing the Theatre

station impair the convenience and attraction of the Metro Rail?

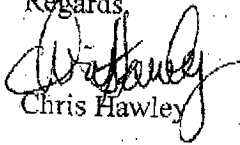
- 4) Planning studies find that transit stations have the highest economic impact within a quarter-mile radius of the station. Will removing the Theatre station diminish the economic potential of areas of downtown that now enjoy adjacency to the Theatre station, such as the 700 Block of Main Street and the Ellicott Street corridor, now both undergoing considerable new development and population growth? If the Theatre station is removed, would the areas that are beyond the quarter-mile radius of the proposed Fountain Plaza station, see a drop in locational and investment value?
- 5) Among the three most important project goals identified by the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project is "increasing multi-modal access options." Does the current plan increase access to transit? Does closing the Theatre Metro station, used by 644,000 passengers every year, increase access to transit?
- 6) Community planning documents, such as the award-winning Queen City Hub Plan for downtown Buffalo, cite the expansion of the Metro Rail as a key strategy in uplifting the city's economy and quality-of-life. How does the proposed closure of the Theatre station, essentially a retraction of the Metro Rail, comply with the goals of community planning documents that call for the expansion of the Metro Rail?
- 7) The *Queen City Hub Plan (2003)* identifies the 600-800 Blocks of Main Street as one of the top four priority areas for neighborhood development and residential construction in downtown Buffalo (page 8). Is the removal of the Theatre Metro station, which is the only transit station that exists in those blocks, consistent with the stated objectives of the *Queen City Hub Plan* and the continued viability of planned land uses in the 600, 700 and 800 Blocks of Main Street?
- 8) Sections 3 and 5 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act require that federally funded transit projects be consistent with official plans for the comprehensive development of an area, as well as with a community's goals and objectives. Land use impacts would be considered significant if they are inconsistent or non-compliant with current land use plans or policies applying to the area, or would preclude the viability of existing land use. Residential development in the 600 and 700 Blocks of Main Street and in the Ellicott Street corridor have, in part, been predicated on convenience to the Theatre Metro Rail station. Removal of the Theatre station would create a 3650-foot gap in transit access (the distance between the Fountain Plaza and Allen/Hospital stations) along a high growth corridor of Main Street. Is removing the Theatre station consistent with planned expansion of higher-density and mixed-use residential development in the Theatre Historic District area?
- 9) The *GBNRTC 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan* states as two regional objectives: 1) support existing and future economic development activities, and 2) improve

transportation and land-use connection. These goals place high priority on smart growth practices that improve access in urban core areas, support urban reinvestment and infill development, and take advantage of existing infrastructure. The Theatre Metro station improves access to the Theatre Historic District area, is already supporting urban reinvestment and infill development, and represents existing transit infrastructure. Is the proposed removal of the heavily-used Theatre Metro station consistent with the stated goals of the *GBNRTC 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan*?

10) Is the removal of Theatre station consistent with the goals of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project: economic development, increase multi-modal access options and transit ridership, and quality-of-life?

Thank you kindly for listening to my concerns.

Regards,



Chris Hawley



# Niagara

UNIVERSITY

## COLLEGE OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

- HOTEL MANAGEMENT
- RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT
- TOURISM MANAGEMENT
- RECREATION/SPORTS MANAGEMENT

DATE: Dec 11 2006  
TO: Latitia Thompson  
FAX # 212-668-2136  
FROM: Steven Siegel  
EXT. # 716-286-8269

NO. OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: 2

COMMENTS:

Urgent Message re: Main St. Multi-Modal  
Access & Revitalization Project - Buffalo, NY  
Comment: Regarding Environmental Assessment

St. Vincent's Hall - Room 416  
P.O. Box 2012  
Niagara University, NY 14109-2012  
[www.niagara.edu/hospitality](http://www.niagara.edu/hospitality)

Fax: (716) 286-8277  
Phone: (716) 286-8270

Please call (716) 286-8270 if there are any problems with transmission of this fax.

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director - Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

December 9, 2006

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I am a resident of the Ellicott Lofts in downtown Buffalo, located less than a five-minute walk from the Theatre Metro Rail station, now being considered for closure under the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project under review by your office.

Nearly 1,000 new residents have settled in the Theatre Historic District area within the last five years alone. Many of these residents, including myself, would lose their adjacency to the Metro Rail if the popular Theatre station is closed.

Many of my neighbors cite the easy convenience to the Metro Rail as one of the great attractions of downtown living, allowing people to walk more, use transit frequently, and depend on cars less.

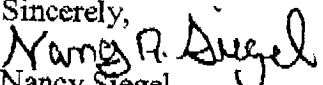
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- Will removing the Theatre Metro station discourage use of public transportation and encourage other modes of transport, such as automobile use, that contribute to negative environmental conditions regionally and globally?

Thank you for listening to our questions and I look forward to seeing how they are addressed.

Sincerely,  
  
Nancy Siegel  
489 Ellicott St. Apt. 4  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
e-mail: [Nansieg@aol.com](mailto:Nansieg@aol.com)

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director, Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson

I am writing to you on a most urgent matter. As a resident of the downtown core in the City of Buffalo I am greatly disturbed by the City of Buffalo's decision as part of the plan to reopen Main St. to traffic, to eliminate the Theater District Metro-Rail station.

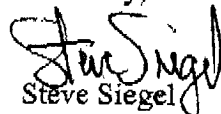
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Specifically:

1. Why would they eliminate a station that served 644,000 people last year?
2. Why would they create a 3600 foot gap between stations when most new housing that is going up is located in this gap?
3. Why were no residents surveyed for their opinions during the planning process?
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5. Why must the supposed need for parking spaces and limousine drop off points for the theater receive more priority than the needs of residents and others who, due to choice or economic need, do not or wish to use an automobile?
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Given how closed the process has been to residents and the failure of those same decision makers to accept any input for a compromise, I feel that the FTA should stop this process until the above questions are adequately addressed.

Sincerely,



Steve Siegel  
489 Ellicott St Apt 4  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14203

e-mail: [shsiegel@niagara.edu](mailto:shsiegel@niagara.edu)

FTA/TRO-2

2007 FEB -2 P 1:08

*GHE*  
*Project File*

January 31, 2007

Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin,

As the Director of the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center and a member of the Cars Sharing Main Street Advisory Committee, I would like to reiterate my approval of this critical project for downtown Buffalo. I am writing to express my strong support of the plan to return vehicular traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo, including combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Streets.

Downtown Buffalo needs the access and vitality that automobile traffic can provide to Main Street, as soon as possible. We have seen property values fall and vacancy increase since the pedestrian transit mall opened in 1987. Even new buildings have difficulty securing storefront tenants when potential patrons can't easily see the business.

Pedestrian traffic, additional on street parking and vehicular traffic on Main Street and the positive impact this change would have on existing and potential new business would enhance Buffalo's tourism product. Visitors and Convention Delegates to Buffalo will have easier access to the premier street in downtown Buffalo.

Returning traffic to Main Street as soon as possible is the absolute priority!

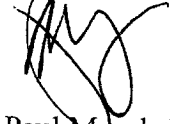
The Theatre Station issue is one of cost vs. benefit. The roadway around the portal and the train safety zone preventing automobiles from following the train underground cause any Theatre Station to move further south. On the outbound side a Theatre Station would only be two station lengths from the Fountain Plaza Station. On the inbound side, the stations would be 750 feet apart, measured platform to platform, a three-minute walk.

The incremental cost to include the Theatre Station in 2008 construction would be over two million dollars, a 25% increase over available funds. It just doesn't seem to be a good use of public resources to build Metro Rail Stations so close together. Further, if our region had to secure additional funding it would slow the project and the improved development of Main Street.

In addition to budget and proximity, removing the Theatre Metro Station will make it possible for the City to offer an official bike path on Main Street that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. A bike path would not be possible in a station area.

Thank you for considering this opinion in the Environmental Review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PM', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Paul Murphy  
Facility Director  
Buffalo Niagara Convention Center

PM/lc

Seth C Triggs  
343 Franklin St #2  
Buffalo NY 14202

FTA/TRO-2

2006 DEC 11 A 10:54

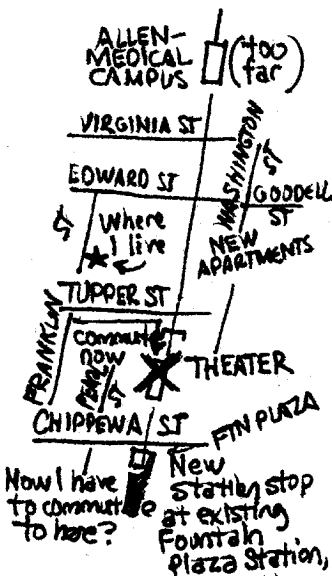
Latisha Thompson  
Regional Director  
Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green Suite 429  
New York NY 10004-1415

December 8, 2006

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I am a resident of downtown Buffalo, NY. Recently, a proposal was made to remove my local Metro Rail station (Theater) as part of the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project. This project is designed to replace the pedestrian mall on Main Street in downtown Buffalo with a mixed automotive and light rail roadway, and is currently under review by your office.

However, certain interests have added a feature to this project (differently from the original proposal) that actually removes the Theater District station. This results in a gap between stations of 3/4 of a mile, and significantly lengthens the commute and distance to the station for all affected residents within the catchment area of the existing Theater Station. Additionally, significant new and planned development in the Theater Historic District would be isolated from the increasingly well-utilized Metro Rail system, and that violates modern planning practice of developing around train stations.



The situation by itself was distressing, but then I learned that the station is being removed to facilitate, of all things, curbside access for limousines of theater patrons on the street. This is despite the fact that the major theaters on the street already have streetside entrances on other streets such as Washington.

I moved to downtown Buffalo specifically to take advantage of the superior public transit access. Now this superior public transit access is being ripped out from under me - slated to be taken away that is. And it's arguably for the benefit of higher-income nonresidents that spend far less time in the area than the existing residents.

I also fail to recognize how removing a highly-used transit station—a key amenity for many of us who commute to jobs outside of downtown—benefits the residents of the area. I also fail to see how eliminating this transit station increases multimodal access, particularly to transit as called for in the environmental assessment (EA) for the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project.

As an African-American resident served by the Theater station, I am particularly interested in how the Environmental Assessment (EA) addresses potential high and adverse environmental effects, including social and economic effects on minority and low-income populations.

As required by NEPA and 23 U.S.C. -109 (h), impacts on all communities including minority and low-income communities must be routinely identified and addressed as part of any environmental review.

At the start of the planning process, planners must determine whether Environmental Justice Issues exist and use data and other information to: 1) determine benefits to and potential negative impacts on minority populations and low-income populations from proposed investments or actions; 2) quantify expected effects (total, positive & negative) and disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority populations and low-income populations; and 3) determine the appropriate course of action, whether it's avoidance, minimization or mitigation. Title VI and Environmental Justice applies to all planning and project development programs, policies and activities of the Federal Transit Administration. So far I've not seen evidence that this process has occurred in the current EA for the Main Street project, particularly as it pertains to the removal of Theater station.

There are several Environmental Justice concerns I am requesting your office address before the issuance of a FONSI (Finding of No Significant Impact) for the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project:

1. Would the proposed removal of the Theater Metro Rail station result in increased traffic congestion, isolation, exclusion, or separation of minority & low-income individuals within a given community, or from the broader community?
2. Would the proposed removal of Theater Station result in the denial of, reduction in, or significant delay in the receipt of benefits of D.O.T. programs, policies or activities for minority and low income individuals?
3. Would the proposed removal of Theater Station result in the disruption of the Theater Historic District's economic viability for the community or the community cohesion?
4. Would the proposed removal of the Theater Station result in disruption of the availability of the public service of Metro Rail for minority & low income populations or the public facility of Metro stations that now exist within 1/4 mile of minority and low-income populations (such as Theater Station)?

Thank you ahead of time for addressing my concerns.

  
Seth C. Triggs  
Resident of downtown Buffalo &

(2)

Chris Hawley  
257 Summer St, Apt 4  
Buffalo, NY 14222-2191  
(716) 984-5664  
chrishawley@buffalo.org

December 9, 2006

Latitia Thompson  
Regional Director  
Federal Transit Administration, Region II  
1 Bowling Green, Suite 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project , Buffalo, NY  
URGENT

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I have several concerns for the Federal Transit Administration as it moves forward on its review of the above-referenced Environment Assessment (EA), which I ask to be considered which may affect the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). I am a city planner employed in the 600 Block of Main Street in Buffalo, New York. The so-called Theatre station of Metro Rail is in front of the building where I work.

- 1) Studies on pedestrian use of transit stations appear to show that distance is the single most important factor in the attracting patronage of transit systems. Closing the Theatre Metro station would increase walking distances to Metro Rail stations from a rapidly-developing corridor of downtown, particularly the 700 Block of Main Street and the Ellicott Street corridor. In addition, the closure of the Theatre Station would put many current and future downtown residents and patrons beyond than the typical "five-minute walk" catchment area now covered by the existing Theatre station. Will removing the Theatre Station negatively affect patronage of the transit system? Will the diminished adjacency to transit cause people to walk less, use cars more often, thus also raising environmental and social impact concerns?
- 2) If the Theatre station is removed, in its place will be curbside parking and two drop-off zones for limousines. Are there environmental justice concerns raised by the unnecessary removal of transit access for the encouragement of auto- and limousine-access used by likely higher-income residents who do not customarily use transit?
- 3) There were over 644,000 passengers at the Theatre station in 2005, according to the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority. Will removing the Theatre station impose an unnecessary hardship on those 644,000 transit passengers? Will removing the Theatre



station impair the convenience and attraction of the Metro Rail?

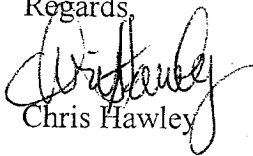
- 4) Planning studies find that transit stations have the highest economic impact within a quarter-mile radius of the station. Will removing the Theatre station diminish the economic potential of areas of downtown that now enjoy adjacency to the Theatre station, such as the 700 Block of Main Street and the Ellicott Street corridor, now both undergoing considerable new development and population growth? If the Theatre station is removed, would the areas that are beyond the quarter-mile radius of the proposed Fountain Plaza station, see a drop in locational and investment value?
- 5) Among the three most important project goals identified by the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project is "increasing multi-modal access options." Does the current plan increase access to transit? Does closing the Theatre Metro station, used by 644,000 passengers every year, increase access to transit?
- 6) Community planning documents, such as the award-winning Queen City Hub Plan for downtown Buffalo, cite the expansion of the Metro Rail as a key strategy in uplifting the city's economy and quality-of-life. How does the proposed closure of the Theatre station, essentially a retraction of the Metro Rail, comply with the goals of community planning documents that call for the expansion of the Metro Rail?
- 7) The *Queen City Hub Plan (2003)* identifies the 600-800 Blocks of Main Street as one of the top four priority areas for neighborhood development and residential construction in downtown Buffalo (page 8). Is the removal of the Theatre Metro station, which is the only transit station that exists in those blocks, consistent with the stated objectives of the *Queen City Hub Plan* and the continued viability of planned land uses in the 600, 700 and 800 Blocks of Main Street?
- 8) Sections 3 and 5 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act require that federally funded transit projects be consistent with official plans for the comprehensive development of an area, as well as with a community's goals and objectives. Land use impacts would be considered significant if they are inconsistent or non-compliant with current land use plans or policies applying to the area, or would preclude the viability of existing land use. Residential development in the 600 and 700 Blocks of Main Street and in the Ellicott Street corridor have, in part, been predicated on convenience to the Theatre Metro Rail station. Removal of the Theatre station would create a 3650-foot gap in transit access (the distance between the Fountain Plaza and Allen/Hospital stations) along a high growth corridor of Main Street. Is removing the Theatre station consistent with planned expansion of higher-density and mixed-use residential development in the Theatre Historic District area?
- 9) The *GBNRTC 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan* states as two regional objectives: 1) support existing and future economic development activities, and 2) improve

transportation and land-use connection. These goals place high priority on smart growth practices that improve access in urban core areas, support urban reinvestment and infill development, and take advantage of existing infrastructure. The Theatre Metro station improves access to the Theatre Historic District area, is already supporting urban reinvestment and infill development, and represents existing transit infrastructure. Is the proposed removal of the heavily-used Theatre Metro station consistent with the stated goals of the *GBNRTC 2025 Long Range Transportation Plan*?

10) Is the removal of Theatre station consistent with the goals of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project: economic development, increase multi-modal access options and transit ridership, and quality-of-life?

Thank you kindly for listening to my concerns.

Regards,



Chris Hawley



February 5, 2007

To: Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415  
From: Michael R Militello Owner Bijou Grille  
643 Main Street  
Buffalo, 14202

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin,

The Militello family has been a part of the dining and entertainment landscape for over 30 years. We have owned the BIJOU GRILLE for 17 years and feel very strongly that if a change is not made soon, (to bring traffic back on Main) the consequences will be dire. Therefore, I am writing in support of the plan to return vehicular traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo, including combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Streets.

Downtown Buffalo needs the access and vitality that automobile traffic can provide to Main Street, as soon as possible. We have seen property values fall and vacancy increase since the pedestrian transit mall opened in 1987.

Even new buildings have difficulty securing storefront tenants when Potential patrons can't easily see the business.

The Theatre Station issue is one of cost vs. benefit. The roadway around the portal and the train safety zone preventing automobiles

"Something fresh is always needed"

- 2 -

February 7, 2007

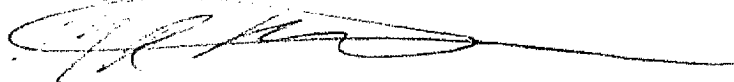
from following the train underground cause any Theatre Station to move further south. On the outbound side a Theatre Station would only be two station lengths from the Fountain Plaza Station. On the inbound side, the stations would be 750 feet apart, measured platform to platform, a three-minute walk.

The incremental cost to include the Theatre Station in 2008 construction would be over two million dollars, a 25% increase over available funds. It just doesn't seem to be a good use of public resources to build Metro Rail Stations so close together. Further, if our region had to secure additional funding it would slow the project and the improved development of Main Street.

In addition to budget and proximity, removing the Theatre Metro Station will make it possible for the City to offer an official bike path on Main Street that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. A bike path would not be possible in a station area.

Thank you for considering this opinion in the Environmental Review process.

Sincerely,



Michael R Militello  
Owner Bijou Grille

# SENECA ONE REALTY LLC

January 29, 2007

Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator Region II  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: Theater Metro Rail Station-Car Sharing Main Street Project

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I have been a member of the Car Sharing Main Street Advisory Committee for the last two years. Before getting into the question at hand I would like to clarify that I am an advocate of mass transit. I have taken the Metro Rail to work in downtown Buffalo from the suburbs for 8 years. In addition to that I grew up in New York City where my family did not own a car. As a result we took a bus or the subway whenever we needed to get some place. I also understand that if Buffalo is to grow and prosper we must look to mass transit to ease the traffic congestion that would otherwise come along with this progress.

I am also a member of the Board of Directors of Buffalo Place. Buffalo Place is the organization charged with among other things planning and improving the central business district. I run the largest commercial office building in downtown Buffalo and am painfully aware that the Metro Rail System cannot exist on its own. We need to bring other modes of transportation to Main Street. After the system being in place for twenty years we are now finally achieving rents of the level that predated the installation of the Metro Rail System.

A question has been raised in regards to the proposed removal of the Theater Place Metro Rail Station as a result of the re-introduction of vehicular traffic to Main Street. This is a straightforward cost vs. benefits question. The Cars Sharing Main Street Advisory Committee consists of residents, merchants, theater operators, as well as owners of commercial office buildings, and other businesses. As such there is a wide range of opinion. We all came to the consensus that it makes sense to remove the Theater Place Station. In addition the Niagara Frontier Transportation Agency, the agency responsible for operating the Metro Rail System is also on our Advisory Committee. They have no objection to the removal of this station. In fact they have stated that it will help speed up service for the entire system.

OWNER AND OPERATOR OF ONE HSBC CENTER

---

ONE HSBC CENTER, SUITE 2800, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14203 - 2897 716/853-4944 FAX: 716/847-6721

## SENECA ONE REALTY LLC

In our Advisory Committee meetings we determined that it would be impractical to have both the Theater Place Station as well as the Fountain Plaza Train Station 350 feet apart from each other. Going through this process, we spoke with residents, merchants, and the theater operators adjacent to the Theater Place Station. While they acknowledge that it is important for their patrons to reach the theater by the Metro Rail System, it's more imperative for them at this point to have a vehicular pick up/drop off zone adjacent to the theater than to have the Theater Place Station in place. The residents and restaurants operators don't see any downside to removing the station. On the other hand, the property owners and major companies adjacent to the Fountain Plaza Station have been very vocal in their support for maintaining their station as it is now. Thousands of people work in the buildings adjacent to this station and therefore it is imperative they have access to the train station. Simply put you have two train stations 350 feet away from each other. The individuals served by these stations want the Theater Place Station removed and the Fountain Plaza Station to remain.

I am mystified by the efforts of the Save Our Stations group. The issues they raise amount to tempest in a teapot. If they are successful, they could halt this project indefinitely and eliminate the planned bike path. In addition, the public would not be served well with an additional 2.2 million dollars spent to have a train station 350 feet away from another station. Previously I mentioned the diverse stake holders that make up the Cars Sharing Main Street Advisory Committee. I don't know the make up of the Save Our Station group. However, it's very disturbing that they can't grasp the logic of our decision after we've taken the time to meet with them and explain the situation in depth.

We trust that you understand that the Cars Sharing Main Street Advisory Committee has made an informed, practical, and cost effective decision to eliminate the Theater Place Station in this first phase of the Car Sharing Main Street project. As someone who is directly affected by the lack vehicular traffic on Main Street, I ask that you approve the first phase of the Car Sharing Main Street so that this long awaited project may begin.

Sincerely,

Seneca One Realty LLC



Stephen P. Fitzmaurice  
Chief Operating Officer

OWNER AND OPERATOR OF ONE HSBC CENTER

ONE HSBC CENTER, SUITE 2800, BUFFALO, NEW YORK 14203 - 2897 716/853-4944 FAX: 716/847-6721



One M&T Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14203, 716 842 5887

Michael S. Piemonte  
Senior Vice President

February 1, 2007

Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin,

My name is Michael Piemonte and I am the president of the Board of Trustees at Studio Arena. I am writing in support of the plan to return traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo, including combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Streets.

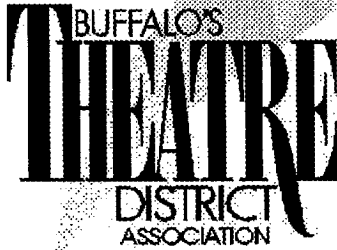
I believe re-opening Main Street for cars, busses, etc., will greatly improve the economic vitality of Downtown Buffalo. I think we all agree this is something the area needs desperately. As I understand it, the cost of not combining these two stations is more than \$2 million. Personally, I do not see the benefit of keeping two stations that would be a few hundred feet apart.

Maintaining the Theatre station would also appear to prevent construction of a bike lane on Main Street. The bike path is also something I strongly support.

Thank you for considering this opinion in the Environmental Review process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Piemonte', written in a cursive style.



January 31, 2007

Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
1 Bowling Green, Room 429  
New York NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson:

As President of the Theatre District Association of WNY, I would like to advise you of our full support of the Cars Sharing Main Street Project and the recommendation of its Advisory Committee to combine the current Theatre District and Fountain Plaza stations. In mid-2006, the Theatre District Association Board had a detailed presentation on the final design recommendations including the consolidation of rail stations. We had considerable discussion and the final result was to pass a resolution fully supporting the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

The Theatre District Association represents 43 commercial and not-for-profit businesses and theatres that are located in the Theatre District. It is the feeling of the Board and membership that this consolidation will have a very positive influence on activity and operation of Buffalo's Theatre District. Thank you for your concern on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony C. Conte", written in a cursive style.

Anthony C. Conte  
President





January 31, 2007

Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
1 Bowling Green, Room 429  
New York NY 10004-1415

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Anthony C. Conte  
President

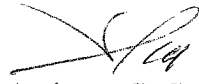
Dear Ms. Thompson:

I am writing regarding the Cars Sharing Main Street Project being managed by the City of Buffalo. This project will restore traffic to the current pedestrian mall in downtown Buffalo. An issue has arisen regarding the project management decision to combine the current Theatre District station and Fountain Plaza station into one station located roughly 350' south of the current Theatre District stations.

As President of Shea's Performing Arts Center, the largest theatre in Buffalo's Theatre District, we fully support the Committee's recommendation to combine these stations. Over the course of a year, we attract between 250,000 to 300,000 patrons to our theatre and develop an economic impact of approximately \$85,000,000. We have polled the patrons of the theatre and find no objection to combining these stations.

This action will improve access to all the theatres in the 600 block of Main Street for both patrons with disabilities and our regular patrons. It will allow daytime parking and evening drop off at the front entrance of all the theatres along Main Street. We feel that this is an important benefit that we could provide to our patrons and far outweighs the minor inconvenience that relocating these stations will create. Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,

  
Anthony C. Conte  
President

ACC:mbd

**THE STAR OF THE  
THEATRE DISTRICT**

.....  
**ESTABLISHED 1926**

.....  
646 MAIN STREET

.....  
BUFFALO, NY 14202

.....  
716.847.1410

.....  
FAX 716.847.1644

January 31, 2007



Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin,

I am writing to you as the Chairman of Buffalo Place, the downtown Buffalo business improvement district, and as the chairman of the committee appointed by the Mayor of Buffalo to represent the interests of downtown stakeholders as it relates to the above referenced project. I and the organization/parties I represent support the plan to return vehicular traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo, including combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Streets.

Downtown Buffalo needs the access and vitality that automobile traffic can provide to Main Street as soon as possible. We have seen precipitous drops in property values and building occupancy since the pedestrian transit mall opened in 1987, eliminating vehicular access to the front doors of our Main Street properties.

As for combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza stations, the engineering implications of the required relocations were we to retain the Theatre District stations are such that retention is absurd. The roadway around the portal and the train safety zone preventing automobiles from following the train underground require any Theatre Station to be repositioned south of the existing stations. A repositioned northbound Theatre Station would be at best only two station lengths from the Fountain Plaza Station. On the southbound side, the stations would be 750 feet apart, measured platform to platform, a couple minute walk at most.

The immediate stakeholders, including the theatres in the adjacent theatre district, do not want the stations in their block. They rather have the loading and unloading zones for patrons who arrive by car. They and other businesspersons in downtown like the idea that those who would utilize public transit for access to the Theatre District would still have only a short walk to any venue in the district, but one that would expose them to our historic architecture and nearby supporting retail.

Removing the Theatre Metro Stations will make it possible for the City to offer an official bike path on Main Street, a path that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. A bike path would not be possible in this block were we to retain the stations.

The above reasons and about two million more (the cost implications) have us solidly in favor of the consolidation of the Theatre District stations and the Fountain Plaza stations. Thank you for considering this opinion in the Environmental Review process. We look forward to a speedy approval of the Environmental Assessment and the advancement of this much-anticipated project.

Sincerely,

  
Keith M. Belanger  
Chairman

William J. Jones  
600 Main Street  
Buffalo, NY 14202

January 31, 2007

Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin,

As a resident of 600 Main Street, I am writing in support of the plan to return vehicular traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo. I have lived on this corner of Main and Chippewa for over twelve years. I have also spent several years working as a volunteer citizen on the design committee for this project. With that fact in mind, I would like to state my support for combing the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Street.

The additional access and vitality that automobile traffic can provide to Main Street is desperately needed. Most store fronts in this part of Main Street remain empty while other sections of our City flourish. We need the twenty four hour a day activity vehicular traffic can provide.

The Theatre Station removal makes sense from a taxpayer's point of view as well. The cost to maintain this un-needed station will go on forever. Having two stations so close to one another makes no sense. Often times, when I ride the train, people are annoyed or get a laugh about the close proximity of these two stations. I would also say that retail first floor businesses will do far better with the planned new design eliminating the Theatre Station. The Fountain Plaza Station provides a much more practical place to have the train stop and there is no ground floor space negatively affected by it.

It is my understanding that the Theatre Station construction would be over two million dollars. It just doesn't seem to be a good use of public resources to build and maintain un-needed stations. Furthermore, the additional funding required will slow this project and the further development of Main Street

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts on this very important project.

Sincerely,

  
William J. Jones



*Buffalo's Nationally Recognized Producing Theatre*

January 26, 2007

Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

RE: Returning Motor Vehicle Traffic to Down Town Main Street

Dear Ms. Thompson:

As Artistic Director and CEO of Studio Arena Theatre, located at the corner of Tupper and Main, I support the current effort to enable cars to return to Main Street! The Theatre District does what it can but with an influx of thriving downtown businesses, which can only happen when we return traffic to downtown Main Street, the area would have an air of excitement to it that would enhance the Theatre experience for our patrons, and inspire them to stay in the area longer and spend more dollars. In turn, it would boost ticket sales for all District Theatres, generating further revenue for the region. With the new medical core located mere blocks away, and new luxury housing in the area, this would be one more needed boost to create a Downtown that could become a beacon for all Western New Yorkers and generate the excitement that a City like Buffalo should have in its downtown core.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathleen Gaffney".

Kathleen Gaffney  
Artistic Director and CEO



## The Spaulding Group

10 Maple Drive  
Orchard Park, NY 14127  
716.662.5030

January 24, 2007

Letitia A. Thompson, Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green, Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: Cars Sharing Main Street

Dear Ms. Thompson:

The project is called "Cars Sharing Main Street" and that is exactly what Main Street needs in the Theater District. Cars and their associated drop offs and parking sharing the space with a light rail and their passengers. Nearby transit stops allow for sharing. Transit stops within the Theater District drastically reduce the availability to share the area with cars and the economic benefits related to having the cars on Main Street.

I have worked in the District for over 25 years and know this to be an undeniable fact. I have owned a building in the District for over 15 years and understand all too well the hardships of not sharing Main Street with cars.

I completely support this project and eliminating/combining the Theater District station with the Fountain Plaza Station. Sharing is the goal of this project.

If you need any further factual background information from me please let me know.

Sincerely,

R. Mark Storch  
Partner

# ALLEYWAY THEATRE

1 Curtain Up Alley, Buffalo, NY 14202 <http://alleyway.com>  
voice: 716-852-2600 fax: 716-852-2266 [email@alleyway.com](mailto:email@alleyway.com)

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Neal Radice

January 22, 2007

Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green, Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I am a theatre operator in the Theatre District of Buffalo New York. I write in support of the design proposed for the City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-Modal Access and Revitalization Project, including its proposal for location of light-rail stations.

Since I founded my company in 1980 I have seen it through some very hard economic times and witnessed my City make some terrible decisions. Now, finally, we have decided to correct one of the gravest mistakes of the past by restoring the functionality, importance and vitality of our Main Street.

Unlike so many municipal initiatives in the past, this effort has proceeded in a remarkably inclusive way. Input has been sought from every corner of our community, and, when offered, it has been thoroughly considered and often integrated into the project design. I know firsthand that merely asking to be part of the process is the only key that was necessary to opening the door to participation.

I firmly believe that this project is essential for the healthy future of not only our downtown, but of our entire city and I as firmly believe that the design which you have before you is the result of a most inclusive and intelligent development process. Please give it your speedy approval.

Sincerely,



Neal Radice  
Executive Director

BUFFALO NIAGARA  
PARTNERSHIP

WWW.THEPARTNERSHIP.ORG

January 29, 2007

Ms. Letitia A. Thompson  
Regional Administrator  
Region 2 Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green, Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Dear Ms. Thompson:

The Buffalo Niagara Partnership, a tenant on Main Street in the Theatre District, supports the Cars on Main Street project. The Partnership, whose mission is to organize and undertake actions to expand private sector jobs and stimulate investments in the Buffalo Niagara region, supports all reasonable efforts to reinvigorate and rebuild downtown Buffalo's urban core. We believe that returning cars to Main Street offers an opportunity to stimulate such an outcome and have included it in the 2006 and 2007 Regional Agenda.

In addition, the project should move forward as soon as possible with the removal of the Theatre Metro Station. The Partnership agrees with the Cars Sharing Main Advisory Committee that the project should move forward without the additional cost of \$2.2 million to replace the Theatre Metro Station. It would be impossible to secure a 25% increase in project funding with out indefinitely delaying the start of construction.

In addition to budget considerations, removing the Theatre Metro Station makes it possible for the City to offer an official signed bike path on Main Street that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. By doing so, the project has much increased value to the tenants and property owners on Main Street.

We urge the Federal Transit Administration to proceed with completing the federal environmental review process so the City can access federal funding and start final Theatre District design.

Sincerely,



Andrew Rudnick  
President and CEO

# COLUCCI & GALLAHER, P.C.

Direct Dial: (716) 854-8671  
Email: [ajc3@colucci-gallagher.com](mailto:ajc3@colucci-gallagher.com)

January 30, 2007

Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, New York 10004-1415

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin:

I am President and Vice-Chairman of Buffalo Place, Inc. I am writing in support of the plan to return vehicular traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo, including combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Streets.

Downtown Buffalo needs the access and vitality that automobile traffic can provide to Main Street, as soon as possible. We have seen property values fall and vacancy increase since the pedestrian transit mall opened in 1987. Even new buildings have difficulty securing storefront tenants when potential patrons can't easily see the business.

The Theatre Station issue is one of cost vs. benefit. The roadway around the portal and the train safety zone preventing automobiles from following the train underground cause any Theatre Station to move further south. On the outbound side a Theatre Station would only be two station lengths from the Fountain Plaza Station. On the inbound side, the stations would be 750 feet apart, measured platform to platform, a three-minute walk.

The incremental cost to include the Theatre Station in 2008 construction would be over two million dollars, a 25% increase over available funds. It just doesn't seem to be a good use of public resources to build Metro Rail Stations so close together. Further, if our region had to secure additional funding it would slow the project and the improved development of Main Street.



# COLUCCI & GALLAHER, P.C.

January 30, 2007

Page 2

In addition to budget and proximity, removing the Theatre Metro Station will make it possible for the City to offer an official bike path on Main Street that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. A bike path would not be possible in a station area.

Thank you for considering this opinion in the Environmental Review process.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony J. Colucci, III". The signature is stylized and includes a flourish at the end.

Anthony J. Colucci, III  
for COLUCCI & GALLAHER, P.C.

krt

February 8, 2007

Brigid Hynes-Cherin - Regional Administrator for Region 2  
Federal Transit Administration  
One Bowling Green  
Room 429  
New York, NY 10004-1415

Re: City of Buffalo Main Street Multi-modal Access and Revitalization Project

Dear Ms. Hynes-Cherin,

I am writing in support of the plan to return vehicular traffic to Main Street in downtown Buffalo, including combining the Theatre and Fountain Plaza Metro Rail Stations south of Chippewa Streets.

Downtown Buffalo needs the access and vitality that automobile traffic can provide to Main Street, as soon as possible. We have seen property values fall and vacancy increase since the pedestrian transit mall opened in 1987. Even new buildings have difficulty securing storefront tenants when potential patrons can't easily see the business.

The Theatre Station issue is one of cost vs. benefit. The roadway around the portal and the train safety zone preventing automobiles from following the train underground cause any Theatre Station to move further south. On the outbound side a Theatre Station would only be two station lengths from the Fountain Plaza Station. On the inbound side, the stations would be 750 feet apart, measured platform to platform, a three-minute walk.

The incremental cost to include the Theatre Station in 2008 construction would be over two million dollars, a 25% increase over available funds. It just doesn't seem to be a good use of public resources to build Metro Rail Stations so close together. Further, if our region had to secure additional funding it would slow the project and the improved development of Main Street.

In addition to budget and proximity, removing the Theatre Metro Station will make it possible for the City to offer an official bike path on Main Street that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. A bike path would not be possible in a station area.

Thank you for considering this opinion in the Environmental Review process.

Sincerely,

ALBERT RAMIA

SUE'S NY. DELI (OWNER/OPERATOR)  
Signature

*Albert Ramia*

**Cars Sharing Main Street Advisory Committee Position on  
Theatre District Station  
December 4, 2002**

**Background**

The Cars Sharing Main Street Project is a cooperative project sponsored by the City of Buffalo, NFTA and Buffalo Place Inc. The City of Buffalo is the lead agency, and the Brown Administration has identified this project as their highest priority. The City created an Advisory Committee of property, resident and business owners to provide guidance during the design process.

The City, NFTA and Buffalo Place have worked continuously to return vehicular traffic to Main Street since 1997. The commitment to retain the Metro Rail System on Main Street was made in 2000. The preferred alternative of automobile and Metro Rail vehicles sharing the trackbed was selected in 2002, after an extensive public Environmental Review process selected the alignment that most favored pedestrian use of Main Street while achieving project goals.

Construction funding became available for a \$6 million first phase of construction in 2005, through the efforts of Congressman Brian Higgins, and US Senators Charles E. Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton. The design master plan for Main Street was developed over a year-long Preliminary Engineering contract completed in August 2006. The New York State Legislature provided \$8 million this summer for a Lower Main Street phase. An additional \$1 million was obtained through a Transportation Enhancement Program Grant for phase 1.

One of the most difficult elements of the preliminary design process is to develop a buildable project that can be constructed at the funding levels available to the City and NFTA. Many aspects of Main Street will not be adjusted because the cost is more than could be secured. For example, trackbed rail and curbing will not change, instead pavement will be patched.

**Theatre Station Issue**

The Theatre Station issue is really one of cost vs. benefit. The portal curbing and protection need to be lengthened south to create a safety zone where inbound train and automobile operators can view each other through side and rear view mirrors, and outbound trains can pause while cars behind the train proceed on the road around the portal. This will keep cars from following the train into the tunnel. The longer portal results in the roadway around the portal being placed where current Theatre Metro Station boarding areas are located.

If there were to be a Theatre Station the boarding areas would have to be moved south, putting them within 350 – 400 feet of the Fountain Plaza Station. If you measure platform to platform, the Fountain Plaza Station is just 750 feet further south (1/8 mile) on the inbound side and 650 feet south on the out bound side. In this location the outbound station is adjacent to the Bijou Café, creating a 10-foot wide sidewalk which may be too narrow. To avoid this problem the station could be moved an additional 110 feet south, putting it within two station lengths of Fountain Plaza.

The Cars Sharing Main Advisory Committee reviewed the Theatre District Station for several months. The station was discussed with 600 and 700 block property and business representatives at two additional meetings. There was either a preference to remove the Theatre Station or agreement that retaining the station wasn't worth the cost, given nearness to Fountain Plaza. The priority to all was that vehicular traffic return to Main Street as soon as possible.

A Theatre Metro Rail Station would cost an additional \$2.2 million over the current Cars Sharing Main plan. The Cars Sharing Main Advisory Committee did not believe this cost was justified so close to the adjacent station. The average distance between stations on the surface section of Metro Rail will be 1000 feet from platform to platform.

The Theatre District phase of Cars Sharing Main Street is budgeted at \$8 million (plus a 20% local match which would cover the 20% "soft" costs.) If stations were to be built in the Theatre District, a reduction of \$2.2 million in other project costs is not possible to accomplish. Likewise, it would be impossible to secure a 25% increase in project funding with out indefinitely delaying the start of construction.

In addition to budget and proximity considerations, removing the Theatre Metro Station makes it possible for the City to offer an official signed bike path on Main Street that will serve as a link between the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus area and the Erie Canal Harbor area via Chippewa and Pearl Streets. The design team had determined that an official bike lane could not safely pass by a Metro Rail station without conflict with either pedestrians or the rail, which can catch narrow bicycle tires. The bike lane on Main between Edward and Chippewa made it possible to route bikes to Pearl Street while avoiding a turn at the difficult intersection at Edward, Pearl, Main and Goodell. The City anticipates building connecting bike lanes on Pearl and on Main Street north of Goodell during future construction projects.

### Why return Cars to Main Street?

- Facility Age – After 20 to 25 years capital repair is needed regardless of design
- Loss of Value – Main Street Corridor values have dropped by 54% since auto access was removed in 1984. The City and the larger downtown also lost value but only half as much.
- Loss of occupancy – Main Street vacancy increased by 25%, especially storefronts. Even new buildings are unable to secure first floor tenants.
- Other cities benefited from returning access - 90% experienced increased occupancy, investment, value and sales.
- Automobile access will provide year round activity on the premier street in Downtown Buffalo, and bring us closer to the 24/7 goal of the Queen City Hub.

### Other City Examples

The spacing between stations in cities with "streetcar" systems was used as a model by the Save our Station Committee. The Cars Sharing Main Advisory Committee appreciated the benefits of street cars systems, such as shorter station length, increased frequency of service, and the methods for disabled boarding, but found that safety and cost considerations made it impossible to adopt these configurations. The following station spacing was collected from cities with "light rail transit" and either free-fare or car-free pedestrian/transit zones:

| City      | Name of System     | Transit Organization | Spacing between Stations |          |                   | Source |
|-----------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------------|--------|
|           |                    |                      | Free Fare / No Car Zone  | Downtown | Out of Downtown   |        |
| Salt Lake | TRAX               | UTA                  | 1410                     | 1410     | 1 mile plus       | 1      |
| San Jose  | LRT                | VTA                  | 1400                     | 2600     | 1/2 mile          | 2      |
| Dallas    | Red and Blue lines | DART                 | 1600                     | 2200     | 1- 2 miles        | 3      |
| Baltimore | Howard Street      | MTA                  | 3812                     |          |                   | 4      |
| Buffalo   | Metro Rail         | NFTA                 | 1032                     |          | 3034' or 1/2 mile |        |

### Sources

1. Jeff LaMora, Rail Service Project Administrator
2. [http://www.vta.org/schedules/VTA\\_Bus\\_Rail\\_July06.pdf](http://www.vta.org/schedules/VTA_Bus_Rail_July06.pdf)
3. <http://www.dart.org/maps.asp?zeon=stationlocationmaps> and Yahoo maps
4. <http://www.gmap-pedometer.com/> for Howard Street, downtown Baltimore