

**TRANSIT OPTIONS AMHERST-BUFFALO – PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE**  
**ALLEN HALL, UB SOUTH CAMPUS, 3435 MAIN STREET, BUFFALO, NY**  
**Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015**  
**Summary of Outcomes**

A public open house meeting was held on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> at Allen Hall on the University at Buffalo South campus. This location was easily accessible by transit and automobile with ample parking close to the building. 53 participants attended the meeting.

Participants were asked to sign in, participate in an interactive exercise that collected data about where they live and work in the study area, and then view presentation boards to get an update on study progress.

Participants then had an opportunity to speak with study team members and complete comment forms to provide input about the four recommended alternatives that are proposed to advance to Tier 3 analysis. The following represents major observations and themes heard during the public meeting:



1. Meeting Observations



- A number of people who attended the both the first and second workshop were return visitors to this public meeting, a good sign of successful outreach to those on existing stakeholder email distribution lists
- The turnout (53 people, excluding NFTA staff) was acceptable for a planning study. This is less than the second workshop (85 people) but compares with about the same number as the first workshop for the Buffalo location with 60 participants in attendance.
- The largest turn-out was between 4 and 6 PM with a significant drop-off after 7:30 PM; we may not need as lengthy a session next time.
- Attendees included:
  - 4 from ECO – Eggertsville community organization
  - 5 from Amherst – including town officials
  - 11 from UB, either students, administrators, or staff
- Overall the information boards were well received; that said, many participants skimmed the early background boards (such as ‘What is BRT’) and spent the most time on the findings of the Tier 2 analysis.

- The color scheme on some of the boards was reported as a bit confusing – the project team should move to a simpler format for the next public meeting
  - Our observation was that there were too many boards and we could have used fewer for the informational aspects.
  - The use of the table in the middle of the room worked well; many participants took advantage of it.
  - A number of attendees asked about a hand-out to take home with them. A graphically rich, easy-to-understand handout should be prepared for attendees to take home at the next public meetings in October.
2. Summary of comments from Comment Cards – and Post-It notes
- THEMES in feedback
    - LRT was clearly the preferred option – 90% of the comment cards favored LRT
    - Concern with serving the environmental justice/economically disadvantaged population – this should be a priority – transit service benefits should be shared equally/fairly among all user types
    - One-seat ride/focus on travel time for workers is important
    - Good job with this study thus far; glad this study is happening and service is long overdue
    - Connectivity to existing bus and other modes of transport is important
  - Summary of individual comments:
    - Advancing a transit improvement project, especially LRT, in the corridor as soon as possible is critical to helping address future access and parking issues at the Buffalo-Niagara Medical Campus
    - Use buses on Millersport
    - LRT on Millersport would be a good way to provide transit connections to emerging/growing residential development nearby
    - Need to identify operating losses anticipated long term for LRT
    - Prefer LRT, if it is chosen, to be underground
    - Prefer one-seat ride
    - Do not want any changes along Grover Cleveland or Bailey
    - Need to extend LRT regionally to maximize its use
    - LRT is more user friendly during hottest and coldest months
    - LRT is more sustainable and would have less environmental impact long term
    - LRT accommodates bicycles better – bicycle access is very important
    - BRT transfers along with travel in mixed-traffic is seen as creating too long a ride via transit; perception that BRT would be too slow
    - Millennials want to travel by transit more so than other generations – LRT would serve their needs and lifestyle best
    - LRT is most user friendly of the options for seniors/older people
    - Just improve buses and talk to UB
    - Important to include bike lanes and station design to welcome bikes as part of the project
    - This is a tremendous opportunity to be visionary and inclusive in planning – should continue to do outreach to everyone.
    - Tunneling under Bailey Avenue is a good idea – avoids traffic.
    - LRT at Main and Bailey will attract riders
    - Support for the idea of more stations to encourage TOD

- Support for an underground route close to Millersport Ave.; make travel as direct and frequent and fast as possible
  - Important to think about serving riders from east of the study area; careful consideration of park and ride lots will be important
  - Think beyond just connecting to Amherst – this should be part of expansion of service regionally – and especially out to the airport next
  - Enhanced and improved bus service should be implemented in the interim while waiting for this project to be built.
  - Do not see the value or justification for going to Crosspoint – seems to encourage sprawl
  - Suggest major employment destinations and commercial destinations absorb the cost of providing shuttles from the LRT or BRT line to their sites; skip Crosspoint – it can be served by shuttles
  - Some support for ending LRT at UB North
  - Should consider LRT and BRT in a hybrid plan
  - It is important to provide transit for UB students from the north campus to the downtown campus and medical facilities there where their training occurs
  - Millersport option does not seem to significantly boost zero-car ridership
  - Use this opportunity to employ cutting edge design
  - Important to have service to all three - Amherst/Buffalo/ and Lockport
  - Need to connect among shopping destinations along Niagara Falls Blvd. and Maple Street
  - Service should be frequent enough to be competitive with the time it takes to bicycle between campuses.
  - UB funds for the Stampede should be used towards the BRT or LRT service
- Questions Posed:
    - How have UB students and staff been involved in this discussion?
    - How has UB leadership been involved?
    - How do the alternatives support or conflict with local plans like Amherst Comprehensive Plan?
    - Are we encouraging sprawl with this project?