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BUSPLUS IS A BIG SUCCESS

This April, the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) celebrated the one year anniversary of BusPlus. After just one year of operation, BusPlus has been a big success, with ridership in the Route 5 Corridor increasing by more than 25%.

BusPlus is an important part of the CDTC regional transportation plan, called New Visions. The New Visions Plan recognizes New York State Route 5 as the region's most important transit corridor, with 15 percent of the region's households and 30 percent of its jobs located within ½ mile of the roadway.

BusPlus represents an important regional investment in the anchor cities in the corri-

dor – Albany and Schenectady. And because it has urban anchors on either end, it is fairly unique nationally, integrating urban and suburban travel. It supports smart growth, and is good for economic development. With gas prices rising, it represents an excellent way to save money. By taking cars off the road, it reduces congestion and improves air quality for everyone.

BusPlus grew out of a partnership between CDTC, CDTA, the New York State Department of Transportation, and the City of Albany, the City of Schenectady, the Town of Colonie, the Village of Colonie, and the Town of Niskayuna. BusPlus is an example of a higher type of transit service called "Bus Rapid Transit"

(BRT). It provides many of the advantages of light rail, without the very high cost of light rail. One of the features of BRT is the provision of bus stations, rather than bus stops. These stations are spaced about one half mile apart (up to a mile in suburban areas), so the BRT service doesn't have to stop on every corner. There are 18 paired bus plus stations, focused on the busiest stops along the 16.5 mile corridor between Schenectady and Albany. Other features included in BusPlus are queue jumpers and "Transit Signal Priority". In addition, improvements to the pedestrian environment along Route 5 are an important part of making BusPlus successful.

Stations: The red and silver themed BusPlus stations are designed to have larger, attractive shelters containing a mix of passenger amenities ranging from benches, lighting, information signs and trash receptacles to emergency telephones, newspaper boxes and bike racks, etc. Stations are provided with electronic signs that announce the expected time the next BusPlus vehicle is to arrive. The sidewalks and crosswalks around the sta-

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Quotable Quote

*"Now shall I walk or shall I ride?
Ride,' Pleasure said;
Walk,' Joy replied."*

-- W. H. Davies, Poet

Franchini appointed as new CDTC Executive Director

CDTC has appointed Michael V. Franchini as the new Executive Director after a four-month recruitment process. Mr. Franchini replaces John Poorman who recently retired after 37 years of exemplary service. Mr. Franchini has a B.S. in Marine Science from the United States Coast Guard Academy and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the Harvard University. Previously, he worked as the City of Albany Commissioner of Water, Albany County Commissioner of Public Works, and Albany County Director of Operations. He was also the Albany County representative at the CDTC for 14 years and served as the CDTC Planning Committee Chairman for seven years.



LINKAGE CORNER

CDTC's Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program (the Linkage Program) offers planning assistance via a consultant or CDTC staff for regional/local planning initiatives that link transportation and land use. It is a key implementation activity of New Visions 2035 and the cornerstone of CDTC's local planning assistance and public outreach efforts.

CDTC has funded 73 collaborative, jointly-funded studies over the past eleven years. Study sponsors have included 40 separate urban, suburban and rural municipalities and counties as well as not-for-profits and other public entities. Roughly \$4.7 million in federal, state and local funds have been committed to the Linkage Program since its inception in 2000.

LINKAGE PROGRAM FOCUS SHIFTED FROM PLANNING TO IMPLEMENTATION

When the Linkage Program began in 2000, there was a great deal of regional demand for planning assistance that integrated land use with transportation. In the first two years of the program alone, 16 planning initiatives were funded in 12 municipalities (several initiatives were inter-municipal).

Much has been learned since that time and the planning needs throughout the region have slowly changed. Where before municipalities needed assistance with strategic planning, today they need assistance with plan implementation.

Over the last eleven years, the Linkage Program has been continuously refined to best meet local needs. In 2011, implementation initiatives were added to the list of eligible activities for the first time. Four implementation projects were funded that year: Albany Bike Share & Signage Strategy, East Greenbush Site Design Standards, Malta Down-

town Master Plan Implementation, and Schenectady Gateway Plaza Implementation Plan.

In 2012, CDTC shifted the program focus entirely on implementation activities related to completed local planning work (i.e. Linkage Program Plans, Comprehensive Plans, Waterfront Redevelopment Plans, etc.). The proposed initiatives had to be tied directly to local plan recommendations and had to have a clear and direct connection to transportation issues. The following types of initiatives were prioritized:

- Strategic zoning code changes/zoning code overlays
- Site design standards or guidelines
- Official mapping
- Operational modeling

Other types of follow up planning work related to implementing local plans was also

eligible but was only considered after all worthy projects related to the above four activities were funded.

With reduced resources available at all levels of government, only two projects were funded for the 2012-2013 federal fiscal year: Clifton Park Town Center Strategic Zoning Code Revisions, and Watervliet Bicycle Master Plan.

CDTC will once again review and refine the eligible activities for the Linkage Program in the late summer/early fall of 2012 (pending the availability of federal funds to support a 2013 Linkage Program). If additional or different forms of assistance are needed, CDTC will do its best to offer the broadest set of opportunities for municipalities to achieve success.

For more information on the Linkage Program visit <http://www.cdtcmppo.org/linkage.htm>.

ONGOING LINKAGE STUDIES

1. Railroad Avenue Corridor Study (Albany County/Guilderland/Colonie): The Draft plan is available for review. The second public meeting will be held on June 13.
2. Hamlet of New Scotland Master Plan: The draft plan is available for review. The second public workshop was held on May 23.
3. Albany Bike Share & Signage Strategy: Proposals are being evaluated.
4. Westmere Corridor Study (Guilderland): The scope will be developed as soon as the Railroad Avenue Corridor Study is complete.
5. East Greenbush Site Design Standards: The project scope is in development.
6. Schodack Town Center Plan: The consultant contract is being finalized.
7. Malta Downtown Master Plan Implementation: The draft zoning code is in development.
8. Schenectady Gateway Plaza Implementation Plan: Alternative designs will be presented at the first public meeting in June.

New projects funded under the 2012-13 Linkage Program

1. Watervliet Bicycle Master Plan
2. Clifton Park Town Center Strategic Zoning Code Revisions

CDTC & A/GFTC PARTNER IN PEDESTRIAN/ BICYCLE SAFETY TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

In January 2012, CDTC through the Capital Coexist campaign, partnered with the Adirondack Glens Falls Transportation Council (AGFTC) and We BIKE etc. to conduct a Continuum of Training in Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety for Law Enforcement. The continuum of training has proven to be very successful at increasing officers' pedestrian and bicycle safety knowledge and has resulted in increased pedestrian/ bicycle safety enforcement activity & a greater sense of security for pedestrians & bicyclists of all ages & abilities.

The Continuum of Training in Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety for Law Enforcement approach includes multiple types of media – written, video, interactive computerized-based training, and personalized classroom instruction to appeal to a broad cross section of officers with different learning styles. It consists of the following tools:

- “Enforcement for Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety” brochure

- National and local pedestrian & bicycle safety materials
- Pedestrian & bicycle safety videos to be shown at roll call
- Computer-based pedestrian & bicycle safety training
- Instructor-led two-day *Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety for Law Enforcement* course

This approach to pedestrian and bicycle law enforcement training was originally developed and tested by WE BIKE as part of the federally funded Sheboygan County, Wisconsin Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Project in 2008-2009. It was also implemented in Brown County, Wisconsin in 2009-2010 and is currently underway in the greater New Orleans, Louisiana area.

The two day in-person training was held on April 30th and May 1st at the NYS Police Academy Training Center on the Harriman Campus in Albany.

Twenty-one officers from ten different enforcement agencies spent the two days fully engaged in discussion and learning. The training focused on the 3 E's of the highway safety triangle, Engineering, Education, and Enforcement. The officers learned how the 3 E's must work together to make the walking and biking travel environment safer for people of all ages and abilities.

Feedback has been very positive. There have been discussions of either offering the same training again or expanding it to include more subject matter. There has been a large increase in interest in the Capital Coexist education and safety material.



“The training has proven to be very successful at increasing officers’ pedestrian & bicycle safety knowledge and has resulted in increased pedestrian & bicycle safety enforcement activity and a greater sense of security for pedestrians & bicyclists of all ages and abilities.”

SHIFT FROM CAR OWNERSHIP TO CAR USERSHIP? CDTC INITIATES CAR-SHARING STUDY

Driving is becoming less and less “cool” in America. Young people (“Gen Y” or those born between 1980 and 1999) would rather spend their limited funds on a smartphone than the expense of owning a car, which costs upwards of \$400/month. Smartphones are a means of mobility. A NYTimes article pronounced the iPhone as “the Ford Mustang of today.” With so many “apps” that can help users find far cheaper means of mobility, a vehicle is no longer convenient or preferred. Some examples are the Google Transit app, which delivers step-by-step transit

directions to your mobile phone and Nextbus, which uses GPS tracking to track bus arrival time. Locally, CDTA has developed the iRide and BusPlus apps that let you look up bus schedules & transit maps from your phone. NYSDOT has developed a 511NY app which delivers traffic and travel alerts for all of New York to users’ mobile phones.

Sometimes the bus can’t take us where we need to go. Enter smartphone-powered car share companies and peer-to-peer car sharing software. It’s largely a self-

service where subscribers reserve a vehicle near their location via smartphone app or online and telephone-based reservation system, access the vehicle using a RFID-enabled membership card, and return the car to a “pod” or parking space at the end of their trip. Billing is tracked and completed automatically by an interface between the vehicle and car-sharing service, with no further action required by the member. Peer-to-peer car sharing software allows individuals to loan out their personal vehicles, for a fee, to others.

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“Car sharing is a transportation innovation which gives subscribers the flexibility of having a vehicle available for short-term trips while freeing them from the obligations of owning a car.”

BUSPLUS

(Continued from page 1)

tions are improved so pedestrians will feel safe and comfortable reaching the station.

Queue Jumpers: Because it is important for BusPlus vehicles to stay on schedule and to be reasonably competitive with auto travel times, special "queue jump" lanes have been provided at three locations: at Wolf Road in Colonie (westbound), New Karner Road in Colonie (westbound) and Nott & Veeder Streets in Schenectady (eastbound). At these intersections, a lane is reserved for buses so that they can move up to the head of the line and get through the intersection ahead of the rest of the traffic, while not noticeably affecting the flow of auto traffic. At the same time, every person who takes the BusPlus service instead of

driving is actually contributing to better traffic flow for autos, by reducing auto traffic.

Transit Signal Priority: Transit Signal Priority (TSP) is an innovative use of technology that allows buses to stay on time. Reliability is a very important factor in making transit attractive. If a bus is approaching a green light, the signal will extend the green time up to ten seconds to allow the bus to make it through the intersection. This is a win-win for everyone, because extending the green time for the bus is also extending green time for auto traffic on Route 5. The vehicles waiting to turn onto Route 5 will also benefit once they are traveling on Route 5 because of the signal coordination and improved traffic flow. TSP has been tremendously successful in the

Route 5 corridor.

Vehicles: Part of the attraction of BRT systems around the world is the use of advanced vehicle technology. The red and silver themed BusPlus vehicles include features such as alternative fuels (hybrid electric), low floors, automated announcement systems, LED lighting, and other amenities to increase passenger comfort.

Travel information: CDTA has unveiled a BusPlus app available through the iTunes store, downloadable by iPod/iPhone/iPad users. The application features all BusPlus service schedules, an interactive map offering the ability to touch a stop to view its schedule, frequently asked questions, and related CDTA links.

"The mobile application features all BusPlus service schedules, an interactive map offering the ability to touch a stop to view its schedule, frequently asked questions, and related CDTA links.."

"This new mapping service is more user-friendly and allows greater flexibility for CDTC to display TIP information."

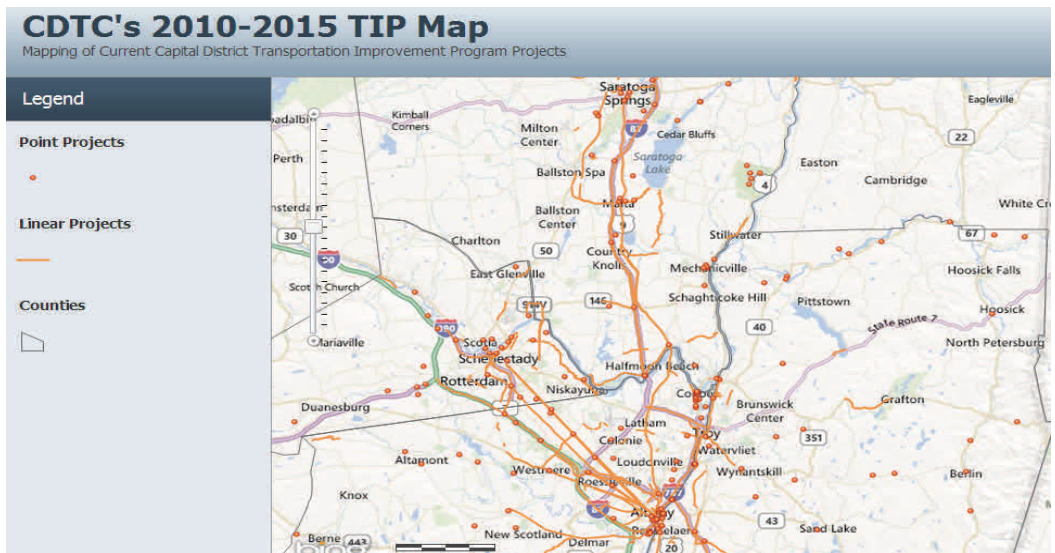
MAKING IT EASIER TO LOCATE CAPITAL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS CDTC'S TIP IS NOW ON ARCGIS ONLINE

CDTC has moved its TIP mapping from Google Maps to ArcGIS online. This map displays TIP projects in the Capital District Transportation Committee MPO Planning area. Single-location and road segment projects are dis-

played, along with county boundaries. The users can view the locations of projects, zoom in and out of the map, and click on the project display (line or point) to obtain background information. It also gives a link to the project

details on CDTC webpage.

This new mapping service is more user-friendly and allows greater flexibility for CDTC to display TIP information.



This service can be accessed at www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=c817401cce35450d9accbf4accb765cd

CAR SHARE

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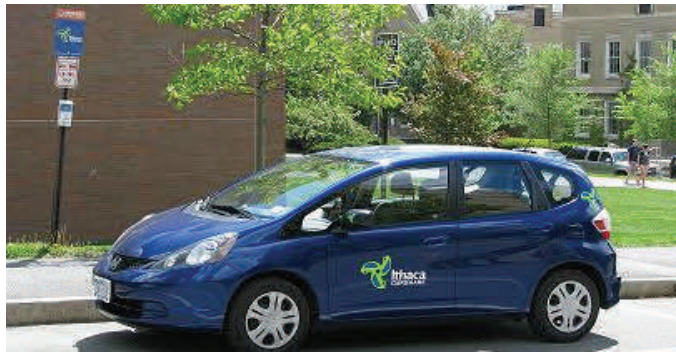
Popular car sharing companies like Zipcar and Flexcar have over a half million members and thousands of vehicles in major cities and on college campuses across the US. Where these popular, for-profit, car sharing companies are not located, you might be able to find community-based non-profit car sharing companies like Ithaca Carshare (Ithaca, NY) and Carshare Vermont (Burlington, VT). CDTA and CDTC recently partnered to solicit consultation to develop a carshare operations plan for the Capital Region. This study, funded through a regional travel demand management set-aside, has a budget of \$5,000. The project partners include representatives from educational and government institutions as well as non-profits. Car-sharing in the Capital Region is envisioned as complementing the existing transit system and services and will likely start in dense neighborhoods and employment nodes in our urban centers. The consultants have begun developing the plan and are coordinating a public meeting for late Spring.

Carsharing in the Capital Region is a component of CDTC's overall effort to promote multi-modalism & the *New Visions* principles. Car-sharing increases travel choices, allows people to give up their car, supports transit & non-motorized transportation, reduces parking demand and promotes less auto-dependent communities and development. Carsharing isn't only for "Gen Y", but it does demonstrate CDTC's enthusiasm for transportation innovations that provide mobility options for changing demographics & economic realities.

Everyone is becoming more connected and internet-dependent rather than auto-dependent and the auto industry is reacting to this. Many new vehicles behave like smartphones so drivers

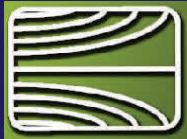
can take advantage of their smartphone's features while driving. GM recently hired MTV's marketing arm to help combat Gen Y's lack of interest in cars. NASCAR spent millions of dollars to research how to attract new fans since its popularity has stalled. Americans are simply not interested in just driving anymore but want to be entertained - talk on the phone, eat, drink, text, play with their iPods and GPS. More and more drivers are opting to ride transit to save money and spend more time emailing, texting, and just being connected to the internet. People are opting for mobility services like carsharing over personal car use. In general, society is moving from a long tradition of car ownership to car usership, and CDTC is acknowledging this trend too!

"Popular car sharing companies like Zipcar and Flexcar have over a half million members and thousands of vehicles in major cities and on college campuses across the US."



NYSDOT MAKING PROGRESS ON FULLER ROAD & WASHINGTON AVENUE

The project intends to relieve congestion at one of the region's busiest intersections; integrate Albany Nanotech development; and, improve pedestrian, bicycle and transit access. The project is consistent with New Visions principles and a success story of CDTC's TIP programming. Credit goes to Albany County for getting this project off the ground, Nanotech for the strong support, and NYSDOT for keeping the project moving in the right direction.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CALENDAR

Please call CDTC to confirm dates & times

- 07/10/12 CDTC Bike-Pedestrian Task Force @ 9:00 AM, CDTC Office
- 07/11/12 CDTC Planning Committee @ 9:30 AM, CDTC Office
- 08/01/12 CDTC Planning Committee @ 9:30 AM, CDTC Office
- 08/14/12 CDTC Bike-Pedestrian Task Force @ 9:00 AM, CDTC Office
- 09/06/12 CDTC Policy Board @ 3:00 PM, CDTC Office
- 09/11/12 CDTC Bike-Pedestrian Task Force @ 9:00 AM, CDTC Office
- 10/03/12 CDTC Planning Committee @ 9:30 AM, CDTC Office
- 10/09/12 CDTC Bike-Pedestrian Task Force @ 9:00 AM, CDTC Office
- 11/02/12 CDTC Planning Committee @ 9:30 AM, CDTC Office
- 11/13/12 CDTC Bike-Pedestrian Task Force at 9:00 AM @ CDTC Office
- 12/06/12 CDTC Policy Board @ 3:00 PM, CDTC Office
- 12/11/12 CDTC Bike-Pedestrian Task Force at 9:00 AM @ CDTC Office

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Comments and requests to be added or deleted from the mailing list are welcome and should be sent to: newsletter@cdtcmpo.org