Transit Development Plan

February 2026

NFTA-METRO

In Progress

Appendix: Completed Projects

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives
2026

Shelter Expansion Plan

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to add up to 30 additional shelters annually over a five-year period, starting in 2022, to provide better rider facilities and align our practices with those of peer agencies. Shelter locations will be chosen based on level of need (based on our current scoring system and Transit Need Index) and geographic spread throughout the system.

Purpose & Need

Bus shelters are important for rider safety and comfort, providing protection from wind, snow, rain, and sun to passengers waiting for transit. When this initiative began in 2022, Metro had over 4,100 bus stops, but only 250 shelters; only 5% of boarding locations across our entire system possessed a shelter.

Transit riders and elected officials frequently request additional shelters. Providing more shelters will immediately benefit our current riders, while potentially attracting new ridership. New shelters also provide additional marketing and branding opportunities.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Identify locations for shelters
- Secure additional funding
- Produce CAD drawings for the sites
- Obtain municipal permissions and/or permitting
- Install shelters

Progress Update

In 2022, NFTA-Metro installed 30 shelters at new locations around the system.

In 2023 NFTA-Metro identified new locations for 43 shelters. Due to supply chain and procurement issues, no additional shelters were installed.

In 2024, NFTA-Metro installed 36 new shelters.

In 2025, NFTA-Metro installed 32 new shelters.

In 2026, NFTA-Metro plans to install at least 30 shelters at new locations around the system. Metro is also working on a new shelter design for stops with ROW or other geometric constraints.

Bus Stop Balancing

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro has some of the smallest average distances between bus stops in the country. This means that NFTA-Metro has more bus stops per mile than most peer agencies, leading to inefficiency in runtimes. By balancing bus stop distances based on industry standards, NFTA-Metro can make travel times quicker and easier to understand, while requiring less maintenance from NFTA-Metro staff.

Purpose & Need

Bus stop balancing campaigns are necessary to increase efficiency in service delivery, saving time and resources which can then be reinvested into the existing bus network in the form of greater service frequency. By balancing the distances of stops, NFTA-Metro can improve service in a cost-efficient manner whilst also improving the conditions of bus stops in the network, identifying areas that may receive a bus shelter or bench due to increased demand for amenities.

Prerequisites

- Bus Stop Balancing analysis completed

Steps/Timeline

- Bus routes ranked in order of need to balance (complete)
- Phasing for employment of bus stop balancing (complete)
- Signage and public awareness on physical bus stop and on website (complete for routes completed to date)

Progress Update

In 2022, NFTA implemented bus stop balancing for routes 2, 4, and 22, as well as for all routes in downtown Buffalo and parts of Niagara Falls. In addition, the bus stop balancing analysis was completed, along with a draft of proposed bus stops to move or remove, for high priority routes. In 2023, NFTA implemented bus stop balancing for routes 20, 5, and 18. In 2024, NFTA implemented bus stop balancing for route 26. In 2025, NFTA implemented bus stop balancing for routes 12 and 13. In 2026, NFTA plans to implement bus stop balancing for two to three additional routes.

Battery Electric Bus Implementation

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro completed a Facility Electrification Study in 2020 to better understand possible approaches to adding battery electric buses (BEBs) to our system. The Study looked at which garage had the space and grid capacity required to be upgraded to charge electric buses. As a result of this Study, NFTA decided to move forward with electrification of Cold Spring Garage, and broke ground on this project in December 2021.

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro wants to provide the most environmentally friendly transportation possible, and is carefully planning for the operationalization of battery electric buses to best serve the public, beginning with the installation of charging infrastructure at Cold Spring Garage.

Prerequisite

- Facility Electrification Study (complete)
- Continued engineering and construction to electrify garage(s)

Steps/Timeline

- Cold Spring Garage partially electrified (2022)
- First set of electric buses purchased (2021-2022)
- Service plan for electric vehicles conducted (2022-2023)
- First electric bus service is implemented (2023)
- Ongoing planning and implementation of further charging infrastructure and electric buses
    - Cold Spring Garage is now able to charge up to 36 electric vehicles

Progress Update

NFTA-Metro has continued its work to electrify Cold Spring Garage, beginning in 2022. While the original delivery of the electric buses was delayed due to supply chain issues, by the end of the year NFTA-Metro had received 6 electric buses. In 2023, the buses were put in service, starting with Routes 8, 12, 13, and 26 before expanding to all routes out of Cold Spring Garage. Currently, NFTA-Metro has 37 electric vehicles and is able to utilize those vehicles on all routes out of Cold Spring Garage. Delivery of additional vehicles is anticipated in 2026.

DL&W Stair Tower and Pedestrian Bridge – Engineering and Construction

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

In addition to constructing the new DL&W Station, NFTA-Metro has undertaken several projects to connect the future station potential mixed-use development and to KeyBank Center using a stair tower and overhead pedestrian bridge.

Purpose & Need

A stair tower to connect DL&W Station to potential mixed-use development in the DL&W complex is essential to the success of this project. In addition, community stakeholders and partners have long requested a connection between DL&W Station, KeyBank Center, and the parking ramp at the corner of Illinois Street and South Park Avenue.

Prerequisites

- LRRT DL&W Station Pedestrian Bridge Study (completed)

Steps/Timeline

- Preliminary engineering (completed)
- Final engineering (completed)
- Construction (in progress)

Progress Update

Construction started on the Stair Tower in late 2022. The DRR for the Pedestrian Bridge(s) was also completed in 2022. Construction work continued from 2023 to 2025, with construction scheduled to be completed in 2026.

Rail Realtime Communications Improvements

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro has received a grant of $3 million to improve communications for Metro Rail. This includes improving passenger information display systems (PIDs), the public address (PA) system, and PACE emergency contact panels. NFTA-Metro is also exploring additional communications upgrades, such as in-tunnel communications.

Purpose & Need

Improvements to communications for Metro Rail will directly benefit NFTA-Metro operations and the rider experience by providing more accurate information for wayfinding, safety, and emergency broadcast. Connectivity to Wi-Fi will benefit customers who do not have cell service in Metro Rail Stations and allow them to purchase tickets or check their MetGo account/pass using their phones without fear of losing connection going underground.

Prerequisites

- NFTA received a $3 million grant for rail communications improvements

Steps/Timeline

- Grant money received
- Develop set of agency objectives
- Release RFI to determine state of industry
- Onboard consultant to assist in developing Concept of Operations
- Develop RFP for procuring appropriate consultants to integrate components
- Project design completed
- Improvements made to communications

Progress Update

NFTA-Metro is continuing to scope and plan this project. Metro is working with the IT department on identifying eligible purchases to upgrade the relevant technology and is looking to onboard a consultant to help develop a Concept of Operations document. As the infrastructure in the rail is largely outdated, there are many interdependencies relating to these upgrades that need to be accounted for.

Metro Transit Expansion Preliminary Engineering

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro has received funding from New York State to advance preliminary engineering and design efforts for the Metro Transit Expansion Project. This work will build off the conceptual design efforts completed in previous project phases to position the project to compete for federal capital funding provided through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)'s Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program.

Purpose & Need

Detailed design and engineering are crucial in the advancement of the Metro Transit Expansion Project because it allows NFTA-Metro to develop a refined capital cost estimate for the Project. An accurate and reliable capital cost estimate is required before the Project can advance through the Project Development phase of FTA's CIG Program and into full engineering.

Prerequisites

- EIS submitted/Record of Decision (ROD) issued (complete)
- Funding contract in-place

Steps/Timeline

- Complete 30% design
- Enter into the Project Development phase of the CIG Program
- Identify local funding streams
- Move into full engineering and design

Project Update

- Held design kick-off meeting in May 2022
- Executed Supplemental Agreements with the project consultant to complete preliminary design and Project Development efforts in January 2022 and February 2024
- Design workshops were held in 2024 and 2025 with NFTA-Metro staff to discuss elements of station design, LRT tunnel design, track/track bed alignment, and light maintenance/storage facility design.

Bailey BRT Design and Environmental

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro, along with our partners at GBNRTC and the City of Buffalo, is pursuing bus rapid transit (BRT) on Bailey Avenue. Design work for this Project includes infrastructure design and recommendations, bus station treatment, and identification of fleet needs.

Purpose & Need

The Bailey corridor is one of the most highly utilized transit corridors in the region. The 19 – Bailey route consistently has high ridership along the whole of the corridor and connects to 13 other bus routes, as well as the Metro Rail at University Station. Improvement of transit on Bailey also coincides with City of Buffalo initiatives and other multimodal improvement projects to the corridor.

Prerequisites

- Bailey Avenue Transportation Study (NFTA, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC) (completed)

Steps/Timeline

- Secured funding (done)
- Consultant chosen (done)
- Design engineering begins (in progress)
- Design engineering completed

Progress Update

- In March 2024, NFTA-Metro received a $102 million grant from the United States Department of Transportation to design and construct a low or no-emission Bus Rapid Transit line.
- NFTA-Metro hired an additional project manager in 2024 to oversee this project within the Service Planning department.
- In mid-2024, NFTA-Metro and Creighton-Manning began preliminary outreach activities, including hiring Community Ambassadors, conducting surveys, attending tabling events, and working with a Key Stakeholder Group of local advocates and organizations. Outreach by NFTA-Metro staff and Community Ambassadors continued through 2025.
- In mid-late 2024, preliminary design work was conducted, including confirming the planned alignment and station locations, traffic analysis, inventory of street and sidewalk infrastructure, and initial conceptual design and kit-of-parts for the BRT stations and mobility hubs.
- In February 2025, NFTA-Metro held a set of Open Houses to inform the public about the Project and solicit feedback on initial design concepts. Additional Open Houses were held in June 2025 to provide an update on design work and demonstrate how public input has influenced the project.
- In 2025, NFTA-Metro and Creighton-Manning advanced the project to 30% design and began preliminary efforts to assemble construction bid packages. NFTA is currently advancing the project to 70% design.

ITS4US

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

ITS4US is a program that specializes in complete trip deployment to identify and deploy solutions that meet a population's multi-modal mobility needs. NFTA-Metro is participating in an ITS4US deployment through its Buffalo All Access pilot program, based in the area in and around the Buffalo-Niagara Medical Campus in the City of Buffalo, intended to integrate accessible trip planning with current NFTA-Metro transit services.

Buffalo All Access is to be based around four components: a Complete Trips Platform intended to support travelers with disabilities or special needs with trip planning, wayfinding, and information availability; an on-demand community shuttle offering service within a predefined zone of operations; smart infrastructure at intersections and along sidewalks to aid in wayfinding and safety; and a publicly-available performance dashboard that measures and displays the system performance.

Purpose & Need

The deployment area includes the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus and three adjacent neighborhoods: Masten Park, the Fruit Belt, and Allentown. The 120-acre Medical Campus is just north of Buffalo's Downtown Central Business District and borders Main Street. The campus is 9 million square feet in area, consists of 8 member institutions, and is home to more than 150 private companies. Today, more than 16,000 people work or study on the Campus and more than 1.5 million people visit each year for health care and other services, generating significant transportation demand from residents, employees, and visitors.

The deployment in Buffalo will integrate accessible trip planning with current NFTA-Metro transit services, incorporate an on-demand shuttle which will be the first of its kind in the region, have indoor and outdoor wayfinding and intersection safety technologies for travelers, and an accessible platform that will also factor in traveler preferences and accessibility needs.

Prerequisites

- Grant funding received
- Phase 1 (planning) completed
- Phase 2 (design and testing) completed

Steps/Timeline

- Currently in Phase 3 (Implementation), which began in early 2026

Progress Update

NFTA-Metro has worked with our project partners on design and testing for the past 30 months. These elements are being integrated into the Complete Trip Platform. NFTA-Metro is currently seeking to test the Human Driven Shuttle, with implementation slated for Spring of 2026.

Church Street Crossover and Station Rehabilitation

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

This project involves design and construction of a light rail crossover north of Church Street Station, and rehabilitation of Church Street Station itself.

Purpose & Need

Building a new rail crossover gives the opportunity to reduce the distance of single-tracking required for future improvements or maintenance projects. This leads to more operational flexibility, enhanced safety for riders, pedestrians, and other road users like cars, and improved rider experience by not requiring riders to switch trains for a longer distance during single-tracking events downtown.

The rehabilitation of Church Street Station was needed to keep the Station in a state of good repair, and in response to rider safety and comfort requests for a facility with more protection from weather.

Prerequisites

- Funding sources identified

Steps/Timeline

- Funding secured
- Design completed
- Construction begins

Progress Update

Construction began in the summer of 2024. The rail crossover was constructed and installed in Fall 2025, while the station rehabilitation is expected to be completed in Spring 2026.

North Division Street Linear Transit Hub Full Design

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

As part of a larger project by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in 2017, NFTA-Metro relocated a bus stop and pull-off from the entrance of the Metropolitan Transportation Center to the north side of North Division Street between Ellicott Street and Washington Street. This change has provided an opportunity to create an enhanced waiting area for the buses that pick up on North Division Street, as well as establishing a direct pedestrian connection between the Church Street Metro Rail Station and the Metropolitan Transportation Center (MTC). In March 2019, NFTA completed the Design Review and Rationale for this project, which recommended a fabric-covered superstructure (canopy) that covers the entire sidewalk from Ellicott St to Washington St. This canopy will protect riders and pedestrians from rain, snow, and sun.

Purpose & Need

The goal of this project is to provide enhanced amenities to our passengers, increase the visibility and visual appeal of the North Division Street Linear Transit Hub, and provide a visual connection between the Metro Rail and the Metropolitan Transportation Center. About 2,000 riders board buses here every weekday, and existing shelters cannot accommodate all waiting customers, which is why we seek to improve protection from wind, snow, rain, and sun as part of this project.

Prerequisites

- Design Rationale and Review (DRR) completed in March 2019
- Draft concepts presented to NFTA management in March 2019

Steps/Timeline

- Refinement of draft concepts
- Selection of preferred design
- Engineering & design work begins
- NFTA Board approves staff to pursue funding opportunities
- Construction begins

Progress Update

NFTA Engineering, in cooperation with Metro, bid and started final design and engineering for this project in 2022. In 2023, a preliminary DDR was released, where a preferred alternative (Scheme A) was selected to continue into schematic design as it best satisfies the NFTA's goals for the project. 70 Percent Design schematics were delivered in 2025, with the intent of advancing a construction bid package for 2026.

Express Service Plan Update

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro is working to update our Express Service Plan. This plan will include an evaluation of existing Express bus service, developing recommendations for changes or improvements, and conducting an analysis of existing and potential park and ride locations.

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro has not updated our Express Service Plan since before the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel patterns have changed dramatically in the past five years, and as such it is necessary to evaluate current levels of service and plan for the future.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Conduct existing conditions assessment (in progress)
- Catalog existing park and ride inventory
- Develop recommendations

Progress Update

- NFTA-Metro made substantial route updates to the existing express network in September 2023. This will facilitate the proposed park and ride analysis.
- In 2024, NFTA-Metro staff visited all existing park and ride locations as part of the existing conditions assessment.
- In 2025, NFTA-Metro staff conducted an existing conditions assessment of the express network, analyzing ridership patterns of existing routes by average daily ridership, timepoint, and signup period. NFTA-Metro also reclassified the 24X – Genesee Express as the 78 – Cheektowaga Express, to reduce confusion with the standard 24 and 24L routes.
- In 2026, NFTA-Metro will conduct community outreach, further data analysis, develop recommendations, and pull together the final plan.

PAL Service Changes

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

The Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study concluded in late 2024. NFTA-Metro plans to pilot some recommended improvements to PAL service, based on the short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations made in Phase 3 of the Study (Implementation Strategy and Planning).

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro operates its Paratransit Access Line (PAL) service to meet ADA requirements for providing ADA complementary paratransit service, but would like to evaluate additional services to ensure we are following best practices to meet community needs going forward.

Prerequisites

- Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study completed.
- Additional funding secured

Steps/Timeline

- The Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study was conducted from May 2024 to January 2025. Key components of the Study dealt with demand analysis and service expansion (with cost estimates); and with implementation of short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations.
- Paratransit scheduling and dispatching software (PSDS) was evaluated as part of Phase 2 of the Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study. In January 2026, NFTA received Board approval to begin negotiation with Spare Labs for procurement of a new Paratransit Scheduling and Dispatch Software service, with the PSDS changeover to be completed by the end of 2026.
- A pilot was conducted from May 5 to October 25, 2025, providing eligible customers with free PAL trips on a Grocery Shuttle to designated shopping centers within a preset window on Saturdays. The intent of the Grocery Shuttle Pilot was to explore ways to manage peak PAL demand by encouraging PAL clients to travel at off-peak times. There were 51 total participants in the pilot program; given the high administrative burden and the low total participation, the pilot will not be continued at this time.
- A pilot to evaluate implementation of the standardized Core Service Area and service spans proposed during the Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study will run from December 7, 2025 to September 5, 2026.

BRT Network Study

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

The BRT Network Evaluation Study will identify corridors that will be a priority for investment in bus rapid transit (BRT) and related infrastructure and treatments.

Purpose & Need

Establishing a long-term vision for bus rapid transit in the region will ensure that the BRT Network best meets the needs of NFTA transit users and the NFTA-Metro system as a whole. This Study will also aid in developing BRT corridor projects that can effectively compete for Federal discretionary funding through the FTA's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program.

Steps/Timeline

- Identify preliminary list of corridors to be evaluated
- Identify appropriate consultants
- Choose consultant
- Prepare study

Progress Update

In early 2025, NFTA-Metro began a preliminary screening process to identify prospective BRT corridors within the NFTA-Metro service area. Once this screening process was completed, NFTA-Metro kicked off with a consultant, Creighton Manning, to further assess these corridors in their BRT potential and compatibility with transit-supportive infrastructure and land use patterns, with the end goal of identifying 3-5 corridors that are high-priority for implementation as a BRT Network. The Study is scheduled to conclude in June 2026.

Bus Garage Alternative Fuel Study

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

Now that NFTA-Metro is electrifying Cold Spring Garage, the agency is interested in investigating alternative fueling options for Babcock and Frontier Garages. This study will include multiple options, including battery electric, CNG and hydrogen. Additionally, this Study will determine the best fleet mix at those garages to give NFTA-Metro the best level of operational flexibility. This Study is being conducted by NFTA Engineering to evaluate the utility, infrastructure, capital, and operational requirements and costs.

Purpose & Need

The first step to upgrading the rest of the fleet to alternative fuel vehicles is to study the options that are feasible for Babcock and Frontier Garages.

Prerequisites

- Funding identified
- Discussion with community partners (utilities, municipalities)

Steps/Timeline

- Draft scope
- RFP advertised and consultant selected
- Project begins

Project Update

NFTA Engineering kicked this project off in late 2025 by conducting site visits to assess existing conditions at Babcock and Frontier Garages. The study is schedule to be complete by mid 2026.

Pass Programs with Partners

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to update and expand our current CRAM Pass program based around the new MetGo fare system, and to strengthen existing relationships and create new relationships with interested third parties (schools, developers, housing complexes, affordable housing providers, etc.)

Purpose & Need

While the CRAM, Corporate Pass, and related bulk pass programs have been highly successful, full implementation of the MetGo fare payment system opens new possibilities for the types of programs that can be offered, especially given new post-pandemic travel patterns. For example, some organizations have indicated that as their staff no longer commutes to work five days a week, they are looking for more flexibility in the type of pass available. NFTA-Metro will develop and pilot new types of programs, such as pay as you go, in order to continue to best serve our partners and to encourage them to distribute transit passes widely.

Prerequisites

- Full rollout of MetGo fare collection system – complete
- Interest from existing corporate pass partners
- Outreach to potential corporate pass partners

Steps/Timeline

- Develop an action plan for reaching out to interested parties, providing training and technical assistance on our new system
- Create a "pay per ride" option, to offer potential partners greater flexibility

Project Update

- Staff have begun to estimate the costs and technical requirements of a pay per ride program via a pilot program with Canisius University in the 2025-26 school year.

Apprenticeship Program

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro is working with our labor unions to develop apprenticeship programs. The goal of these programs is to train staff to move into higher positions with better pay. This will strengthen our workforce and create a sustainable staffing level for the agency.

Purpose & Need

- Skill Development and Workforce Readiness: Apprenticeship programs provide hands-on training and practical experience, equipping individuals with the specific skills and knowledge required for various trades and professions, ensuring a highly skilled and job-ready workforce.
- Bridging the Skills Gap: As industries evolve, there is often a gap between the skills taught in traditional education and those required in the workplace. Apprenticeships help bridge this gap by aligning training with industry needs, ensuring that workers are proficient in current technologies and practices.
- Economic Growth and Competitiveness: By fostering a skilled labor force, apprenticeship programs contribute to economic growth and enhance the competitiveness of businesses. Employers benefit from a steady pipeline of qualified workers, which can lead to increased productivity and innovation.
- Career Advancement and Job Security: Apprenticeships provide a structured pathway for career advancement, offering opportunities for individuals to earn while they learn. This can lead to higher job satisfaction, greater job security, and long-term career prospects in their chosen fields.

Prerequisites

- MOU with labor union (completed)

Steps/Timeline

- Discussion with labor union (completed)
- Initiation of MOU with labor union (completed)
- Kick-off meeting with management and labor union (completed)
- Rollout of program (in progress)

Project Update

In January 2025, NFTA-Metro launched a new Mechanic Mentorship Program, offering Metro staff additional compensation to participate in the program. A mechanic apprenticeship program was also launched in 2025. NFTA will continuously evaluate these programs in subsequent rollouts.

Next Generation Railcar Design

Ongoing Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

The current NFTA Metro Rail fleet was designed in 1978. These vehicles have been in service since 1984, with a midlife rebuild beginning in 2012.

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro needs to design and acquire new railcars to maintain and improve the existing quality of service on NFTA's Metro Rail line. Additionally, the acquisition of new railcars will advance both the ongoing Rail Renewal projects and the Metro Rail Expansion project into Amherst.

Steps/Timeline

- Develop specs for new railcar design in 2026
- Develop RFP for bid in 2026

DL&W Riverwalk Enhancements

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

The DL&W terminal is located along South Park Avenue and the Buffalo River in the heart of Buffalo's downtown waterfront district near several major attractions. The DL&W Terminal and its surrounding public spaces also serve as a major source of access for bicyclists and pedestrians seeking to travel between the Canalside and Cobblestone Districts and other areas to the north and south. This area has the potential to be a gateway to downtown Buffalo for people arriving from the south and southeast.

Purpose & Need

Several challenges currently exist in the use of this space. The public right-of-way surrounding the DL&W Terminal is narrow and uninviting for pedestrians and bicyclists due to confusing intersections, sharp turns, a driveway, chain link fencing around the NFTA-Metro rail yard and parking lot, and several staircases. These accessibility issues create a gap in the nearby multi-use trail network and limit public interaction with Buffalo's waterfront and other downtown attractions.

As NFTA-Metro has opened DL&W Metro Rail Station and is beginning redevelopment of the adjacent space, the agency seeks to plan and implement access and trail improvements to establish a safe and pedestrian and cyclist-friendly multimodal network adjacent to the DL&W Terminal that facilitates activity to and from the station, connects people to the Buffalo River Waterfront, supports adaptive reuse of a Buffalo landmark, and creates a unique commuter and recreational user experience.

The scope of work for this RFP is based on previous work done in the DL+W Multimodal Access Enhancement Study, performed by NFTA-Metro in 2022.

Prerequisites

- DL+W Multimodal Access Enhancement Study – completed in 2022
- Funding sources identified
- RFP developed

Steps/Timeline

- Develop RFP (completed)
- Release RFP (completed)
- Select consultant (completed)
- Design and Engineering plans finalized
- Construction begins

Project Update

- NFTA Engineering kicked off this project with the consultant in January 2025. The consultant delivered 70% design in Fall 2025 and construction will start in 2026 or 2027.

Emerging Projects/Initiatives 2026

Bench Expansion Program

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to work with supportive municipalities and elected officials to add up to 20 benches in a given corridor or neighborhood. Partnership with municipalities and elected officials is critical, as NFTA-Metro has struggled in the past with municipal permitting processes for benches.

Purpose & Need

Benches are important for customer comfort and safety, providing a seat to passengers waiting for transit. Metro currently has over 4,000 bus stops.

Elected officials and transit users frequently request benches. Providing more benches will immediately benefit our current ridership, while potentially attracting new ridership.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Identify municipal and state partners
- Identify locations for benches
- Secure additional funding
- Obtain municipal permissions and/or permitting
- Install benches

Project Update

NFTA-Metro installed close to 20 benches at transit centers in 2022, including University Station Bus Loop, Black Rock Riverside Transit Hub, and Amherst Station. In 2023, 14 additional benches were installed at locations along Amherst Street. Staff are moving forward on creating a process for permitting additional benches with our municipal and state partners across our service area.

Rail Station Joint Development

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

Transit-oriented development (TOD) at or near several of our Metro Rail stations provides the opportunity to attract riders and improve our existing station infrastructure. As interest in property along Main Street has increased, NFTA-Metro is in a position of flexibility with respect to several stations and NFTA-owned property along the line. In addition to being able to develop or reconfigure stations and properties such as the LaSalle Station Park and Ride for operations, NFTA-Metro may wish to explore entering into a private development agreement at some sites.

Purpose & Need

Several rail stations and adjacent sites have the potential for future development through a public private partnership. Supporting increased development and property improvements near Metro Rail stations will support higher ridership on the Rail and improve conditions for existing riders.

Prerequisites

- RFQ conducted to gauge development interest along rail line (completed)
- Community engagement (Equitable Transit Oriented Development engagement) (completed)

Steps/Timeline

- RFP released for LaSalle Station
- RFPs evaluated for appropriateness
- Course of action (internal or external) recommended to the board
- Construction begins on properties

Project Update

On May 1, 2024, NFTA-Metro released a Request for Proposals for LaSalle Station. By September 2024, NFTA-Metro and the City of Buffalo received three development proposals and solicited community members to review the proposals and provide public comment. In September 2025, Albanese Organization was selected as the developer for the Main/LaSalle Development project.

Bailey BRT Construction Begins

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

The goal of the NFTA is to establish a bus rapid transit (BRT) line in the Bailey Avenue corridor, much like similar BRT systems in peer agencies in Cleveland and Indianapolis. Bailey BRT construction will be based on design work completed in previous tasks, including infrastructure changes, bus station treatment, and identification of vehicle needs.

Purpose & Need

The Bailey corridor is one of the most highly utilized transit corridors in the region. The 19 – Bailey route consistently has high ridership along the whole of the corridor and connects to 13 other bus routes, as well as the Metro Rail at University Station. Improvement of transit on Bailey also coincides with City of Buffalo initiatives and other multimodal improvement projects to the corridor.

Prerequisites

- Bailey Avenue Transportation Study (NFTA, City of Buffalo, GBNRTC) (complete)
- Bailey BRT Design and Environmental (in progress)

Steps/Timeline

- Construction is scheduled to begin in late 2026, with revenue service planned to begin in late 2028 or early 2029.

Enhancing Facilities for Mobility Integration

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro plans to continue working with regional partners to develop and improve mobility hubs. Existing transit facilities can serve as the basis for successful mobility hubs. For example, NFTA-Metro has worked with Reddy Bikeshare to locate bike share stations at all rail stations as well as the MTC in downtown Buffalo. Additional modes that could be incorporated into a mobility hub include electric bikes, scooters, car share facilities, and more. Successful mobility hubs can also aid NFTA-Metro in building relationships with other community stakeholders, such as Reddy Bikeshare (as mentioned above) and carshare service providers.

Purpose & Need

Integrating multiple forms of transportation at mobility hubs can help improve transportation options and improve overall travel times for current and potential riders. For example, riders may be able to reduce their walk time by using an electric bike to get to and from the bus stop or rail station. Increased convenience and access to transit can also encourage people to switch from single occupancy vehicles to a multimodal and/or transit-based trip.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- NFTA-Metro staff continue to progress mobility hub initiatives as the opportunity arises.

Project Updates

- Mobility hubs are included in the Bailey BRT project scope, with the stations at University Station, Langfield Dr/Connelly Ave, Genesee St, Walden Ave, Broadway, Clinton St, Seneca St, and South Park Ave being evaluated.
- NFTA-Metro is participating in ongoing discussions with the newly relaunched Buffalo Carshare about locating carshare opportunities in locations with frequent transit service.
- NFTA-Metro is coordinating with the City of Buffalo about a CMAQ grant they received to install mobility hubs.

Schedule Optimization

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

Evolving technology provides more opportunities to collect information regarding service delivery, on time performance (OTP), and runtimes. Improved and upgraded scheduling systems allow NFTA-Metro staff to proactively incorporate this information into schedules. Upgrades to programs like Hastus provide NFTA-Metro staff with additional tools that will allow scheduling practices to be optimized.

Purpose & Need

Schedule optimization is critical to balancing the needs of riders and operators and making the most out of limited resources.

Prerequisites

- Hastus Upgrade (complete)
- APC Upgrade (complete)
- OrbCAD upgrades (in progress)
- Evolving technology (in progress)

Steps/Timeline

- Data collection
- Data application
- Increased proactive and real-time adjustments of schedules, as possible

Project Updates

- As of 2026, Service Planning Schedulers are investigating the potential of using new Hastus tools to pilot revised schedules.

Pass Program Evaluation and Evolution

Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2026

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to continuously evaluate and update our pass and partner programs as conditions change. For instance, in 2026, NFTA-Metro plans to investigate updating and replacing the CRAM/CPP with a "pay as you go" model.

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro's pass and partner programs build and sustain long term relationships with partner organizations who distribute transit passes to their participants or constituents, with the ultimate goal of getting more transit passes into the hands of more people, thereby increasing transit accessibility.

Prerequisites

- 2025 update of CRAM/CPP
    - 2026 CRAM/CPP pilot program

Steps/Timeline

- Identify emerging needs
- Identify emerging technologies and opportunities
- Identify additional partner organizations
- Continuous updates and improvements to pass programs

Short Range Projects/Initiatives
2027-2028

North Division Street Linear Transit Hub Construction

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

As part of a larger project by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in 2017, NFTA-Metro relocated a bus stop and pull-off from the entrance of the Metropolitan Transportation Center to the north side of North Division Street between Ellicott Street and Washington Street. This change has provided an opportunity to create an enhanced waiting area for the buses that pick up on North Division, as well as establishing a direct pedestrian connection between the Church Street Metro Rail Station and the Metropolitan Transportation Center (MTC). In March 2019, NFTA-Metro completed the Design Review and Rationale for this project, which recommended a fabric-covered superstructure (canopy) that covers the entire sidewalk from Ellicott St to Washington St. This canopy will protect riders and pedestrians from rain, snow, and sun.

Purpose & Need

The goal of this project is to provide enhanced amenities to our passengers, increase the visibility and visual appeal of the North Division Street Linear Transit Hub, and provide a visual connection between the Metro Rail and the Metropolitan Transportation Center. About 2,000 riders board buses here every weekday, and existing shelters cannot accommodate all waiting customers, which is why we seek to improve protection from wind, snow, rain, and sun as part of this project.

Prerequisites

- Design Rationale and Review (DRR) completed in March 2019
- Draft concepts presented to NFTA management in March 2019
- Funding sources identified

Steps/Timeline

- Refinement of draft concepts
- Selection of preferred design
- Engineering & design work begins
- NFTA Board approves staff to pursue funding opportunities
- Construction begins

Project Update

NFTA Engineering, in cooperation with Metro, bid and started final design and engineering for this project in 2022. In 2023, a preliminary DDR was released, where a preferred alternative (Scheme A) was selected to continue into schematic design as it best satisfies the NFTA's goals for the project. 70 Percent Design schematics were delivered in 2025, with the intent of advancing a construction bid package for 2026.

Development of Community Based Service Strategies

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

NFTA-Metro Service Planning will develop community targeted strategies for Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Amherst, Tonawanda, Cheektowaga, Lackawanna, and West Seneca. These plans will focus on key ridership generators within communities, such as educational institutions, retail centers, employment generators, medical facilities, and neighborhood destinations. This will allow NFTA-Metro to identify key areas that we are committed to serving, as well as those that we may not be serving currently.

Purpose & Need

Effective community strategies will guide how service is provided to these municipalities in the future. Current evaluation techniques rely on examining ridership by specific routes, as opposed to viewing how NFTA-Metro would like to serve a particular community more generally. Establishing community strategies will allow NFTA-Metro to have a comprehensive long-term vision relating to neighborhoods and activity centers that we are committed to serving, regardless of the associated route(s) or service delivery method.

Prerequisites

- On-board survey data
- Ridership data

Steps/Timeline

- Data collection and assembly
- Public outreach to communities
- Mapping
- Plan document development

Rail Storage, Maintenance, and Operations Study

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

Rail storage, maintenance, and operations headquarters have been at the same location for the entirety of Metro Rail's existence. This facility has been adequate to handle the amount of rail cars and physical trackwork under the current operational environment. However, multiple rail expansion projects are underway that will impact NFTA-Metro's ability to perform these tasks while also constricting the amount of space at DL&W Station for these activities.

Purpose & Need

With the expansion of revenue service to DL&W Station, and the ongoing Metro Transit Expansion project in Amherst and Tonawanda, there will be changes to the storage and operational capabilities and requirements for Metro Rail. This Study is needed to determine operational impacts and potential off-site storage needs of Metro currently and in the future.

Prerequisites

- Preliminary design work completed for DL&W (construction is complete)
- Preliminary design work completed for Amherst Metro Rail Expansion

Steps/Timeline

- RFP issued for study
- Consultant selected
- Evaluation of rail infrastructure

Paratransit and Mobility Services Strategic Plan

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to understand the opportunities for the future of paratransit and mobility services by conducting a Strategic Plan. This Plan will build on the findings and conclusions of the NFTA-Metro Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study, and account for existing services, new demands and patterns realized through the use of new scheduling and dispatch software. The plan will evaluate future customer demand, alternative service delivery methods, and future needs in terms of staffing, facilities, and fleet composition.

Purpose & Need

Paratransit demand is growing exponentially, and while we have taken steps to manage the demand, its growth is not currently sustainable. We need to evaluate and plan for future capacity and alternative service delivery methods.

Prerequisites

- Complete Paratransit Comprehensive Analysis Study
- Complete ITS4US pilot
- Identify funding sources

Steps/Timeline

- Develop RFP for Paratransit and Mobility Services Strategic Plan

Dedicated Rail Operating Assistance

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to work with our partners in elected office to advocate for dedicated operating assistance for the Metro Rail system at the state level.

Purpose & Need

Keeping the Metro Rail in a state of good repair takes consistent funding. As the only transit agency in Upstate New York with a light rail system, NFTA-Metro has a unique asset to maintain, above and beyond our upstate peers.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Ongoing

Project Updates

- The New York State budget for FY 2026 included annual funding of $26 million from a new $130 million five-year capital plan for Metro Rail. This new investment will also fund track and tunnel repairs and rehabilitate stations. As of publication, in FY 2027, we anticipate receiving an additional $26 million to continue to fund major capital repairs and upgrades.

Cold Spring Garage Electrification Completed

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

Cold Spring Garage finishes its complete rehabilitation to an electric bus facility. At this stage, most vehicles housed at Cold Spring will be electric, including those used for BRT service.

Purpose & Need

Electric buses are more environmentally friendly than the diesel or compressed natural gas buses that currently operate in NFTA-Metro's fleet. By electrifying Cold Spring Garage, NFTA-Metro can reduce emissions and increase efficiency while lowering maintenance costs and burdens on our workforce.

Prerequisites

- Identify funding
- Construction of charging infrastructure
- Align with vehicle procurement
- Electrification pilot
- Bus supplier identified

Steps/Timeline

- Funding
- Procurement of additional vehicles
- Electrification rehabilitation of Cold Spring Garage completed

Project Updates

- The Cold Spring Garage Electrification project is anticipated to be concluded in 2028.

Transit Supportive Corridor Enhancement Plan

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

The BRT Network Study is currently evaluating transportation corridors in NFTA-Metro's service area that are suitable candidates for bus rapid transit (BRT) service as part of a broader transit network. Based on the recommendations from this Study and other ongoing efforts, NFTA-Metro will develop a plan to work with regional partners on investments in bus-related infrastructure and right-of-way improvements separate from and in addition to the previously identified BRT corridors. These transit supportive investments will increase the level of passenger comfort on routes where BRT may not be feasible or warranted. Infrastructure improvements may include shelter design, transit signal priority, and right-of-way improvements. The plan will seek to examine the appropriate locations for these improvements and any necessary service changes.

Purpose & Need

Transit supportive investments on high density corridors will help increase ridership and improve regional mobility options, as well as preparing corridors for expansion of bus rapid transit service where feasible. Enhanced stops and shelters, place-making features like green infrastructure and public art, and other related improvements will provide additional safety and comfort measures. The inclusion of transit signal priority and/or queue jump lanes will allow for greater efficiency and speed of buses along the corridor. The enhancement of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure will improve safety and promote multimodality in our high use corridors.

Prerequisites

- Identify appropriate corridors internally
- Identification of capital funding opportunities
- Conduct community engagement

Steps/Timeline

- Inventory of existing passenger amenities
- Completion of BRT Network Study
- Identification of municipal and regional partners

Fare Collection Modernization

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

NFTA-Metro is committed to continuing to modernize our fare collection systems with the ultimate goal of making it as easy as possible to pay for and ride NFTA-Metro bus and rail. Emerging technologies include contactless payment, payment with Apple Pay, Google Pay, and similar services, additional mobile and cashless options, offboard fare payment options, enhanced partner and pass programs, and more.

Purpose & Need

Fare payment is necessary to cover some of the cost of providing transit service, however, it can also serve as a barrier to transit usage and can slow down operations. NFTA-Metro's goal for fare payment is to make it as simple and seamless for riders as possible.

Prerequisites

- MetGo project implementation (completed)
- MetGo project acceptance (completed)
- Continued research about fare collection best practices

Steps/Timeline

- Research
- RFP as appropriate
- Implementation

BRT Corridor 2 Design and Environmental

Short-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2027-2028

Description

NFTA-Metro, along with our partners at GBNRTC, is pursuing bus rapid transit (BRT) in high-priority transit corridors. This project will begin the planning process for implementing BRT along a high-priority transit corridor selected based on the results of the BRT Network Study. This project will involve an in-depth assessment of corridor conditions, land use context, existing transit demand, and benefits to regional mobility and multimodal connectivity. Design work will address operational considerations, right-of-way (ROW) constraints, and infrastructure requirements.

Purpose & Need

The BRT Network Study will identify transit corridors in the Buffalo-Niagara that are high-priority for implementation of BRT service, as part of a broader transit network with the Bailey BRT and the Metro Rail LRT system. This project will take one of these high-priority corridors and advance BRT design and environmental.

Prerequisites

- NFTA BRT Network Study completed

Steps/Timeline

- Funding secured
- Consultant chosen
- Design engineering begins
- Design engineering finished

Mid Range Projects/Initiatives 2029-2033

Service Delivery Evaluation

Mid-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2029-2033

Description

This project will involve internal evaluation of ongoing and planned changes to express service, downtown routing, and local service to determine their impacts on the NFTA-Metro system. NFTA-Metro may also seek outside consultants to aid in the evaluation. The goal of this project is to develop a robust plan of action that will consider industry best practices and the changing regional context to allow NFTA-Metro to provide better service to our passengers and create an operating environment that is efficient and highly productive.

Purpose & Need

While small alterations to service will remain ongoing, large-scale changes to the system should be evaluated and reevaluated every 3-5 years. By doing so, NFTA-Metro can determine if the way we provide service to the public is appropriate and effective.

Prerequisites

- Evaluation of current metrics
- Mapping of new/underserved activity centers

Steps/Timeline

- Internal evaluation of service
- RFP issued
- Service plan developed
- Implementation Plan complete

Bailey BRT Completed and Operational

Mid-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2029-2033

Description

After design work has been completed on the Bailey BRT project, the implementation and construction of BRT infrastructure will commence in coordination with projects conducted by the City of Buffalo and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), among others.

Purpose & Need

The Bailey corridor is one of the most highly utilized transit corridors in the region. The 19 – Bailey route consistently has high ridership along the whole of the corridor and connects to 13 other bus routes, as well as the Metro Rail at University Station. Improvement of transit on Bailey also coincides with City of Buffalo initiatives and other multimodal improvement projects to the corridor.

Prerequisites

- Finished designs
- Approval from City of Buffalo & other key stakeholders
- Secured funding

Steps/Timeline

- Permitting complete
- Select contractors
- Procure additional vehicles
- Begin construction

Metro Transit Expansion Construction Begins

Mid-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2029-2033

Description

After design work has been completed on the Metro Transit Expansion project, and funding has been identified, the implementation and construction of the Project will commence in coordination with Project stakeholders and involved agencies.

Purpose & Need

This project will provide enhanced transportation options and increased access to major activity centers in the corridor, building upon current investments along the Metro Rail line on Main Street and connecting additional TOD opportunities in the corridor.

Prerequisites

- Completed design
- Approvals/permits from agencies with local jurisdiction
- Secured funding

Steps/Timeline

- Permitting complete
- Select contractors
- Procure additional railcars
- Begin construction

Babcock and/or Frontier Garage Alternative Fuel Conversion

Mid-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2029-2033

Description

After identifying the appropriate fuel type(s), NFTA Engineering will work on a path forward to convert the garage(s) appropriately. New vehicles will be procured through our standard procedures. NFTA Operations will work with Service Planning on identifying any necessary changes for service and operational procedures. Bus Maintenance will work to ensure the facility is appropriately equipped to meet its needs.

Purpose & Need

By addressing these prerequisites, NFTA's existing diesel bus garages can be effectively converted to support and maintain a fleet of alternative fuel buses, contributing to cleaner and more sustainable urban transportation.

Prerequisites

- Funding identified
- Discussion with community partners (utilities, municipality)
- Alternative Fuel Study complete
- Infrastructure upgrades

Steps/Timeline

- Identify appropriate fuel type(s)
- Complete engineering design to move towards new fuel type
- Infrastructure upgraded to accommodate new capacities
- Facility modifications
- Operational changes

Light Rail Corridor Feasibility Study

Mid-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2029-2033

Description

The Light Rail Corridor Feasibility Study will identify appropriate corridors for investment in high-capacity and high-speed light rail transit (LRT) to Buffalo-Niagara. These corridors would be a priority for investment with LRT infrastructure and related transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities. Additionally, the Study would address future transit vehicle storage and operational strategies.

Purpose & Need

Establishing a long-term vision for rail expansion in the region can allow for other stakeholders to prioritize investments in economic development, infrastructure improvement, housing, and TOD.

Steps/Timeline

- Identify appropriate consultants
- Choose consultant
- Prepare study
- Release study to stakeholders and community

BRT Network Expansion

Mid-Range Projects/Initiatives, 2029-2033

Description

The BRT Network Evaluation Study (Emerging Projects/Initiatives, 2025) will identify corridors and appropriate modes to invest in providing high-capacity and high-speed bus rapid transit (BRT) service to Buffalo-Niagara. This task is about moving forward with implementation of high-priority BRT corridors in order to bring much needed improvements to the community in terms of bus speeds and comfort.

Purpose & Need

The purpose of establishing and expanding the BRT Network is to bring faster, more reliable bus service to the region on a large scale.

Prerequisites

- BRT Network Evaluation Study (2025)
- BRT Corridor 2 project Design & Environmental

Steps/Timeline

- Identify priority routes/corridors for implementation
- Identify funding sources
- Move forward with improvements

Long Range Projects/Initiatives
2033 and Beyond

Metro Transit Expansion Opens

Long-Range Projects/Initiatives, Beyond 2033

Description

The Metro Transit Expansion is realized, leading to improved transportation options and increased investment along the Buffalo-Amherst-Tonawanda corridor, and enhanced park-and-ride options for Northtowns residents. The extension of high-capacity transit through the corridor will allow for greater access to jobs, retail, and educational opportunities.

Purpose & Need

This project will provide enhanced transportation options and increased access to major activity centers in the corridor, building upon current investments along the Metro Rail line on Main Street and connecting additional transit-oriented development (TOD) opportunities in the corridor.

Prerequisites

- Environmental review process completed
- Final design approved
- Additional rail cars ordered
- Construction completed

Steps/Timeline

- Construction management plans adopted
- Metro Transit Expansion Project opens
- Operations parameters finalized

Appendix: Completed Projects

Metropolitan Transportation Center (MTC) Layovers

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2018

Description

NFTA-Metro took advantage of new capacity at the Metropolitan Transportation Center (MTC) to bring more bus routes to the core. Routes 1 William, 2 Clinton, and 4 Broadway now operate with the MTC as their endpoint. In the future, the 6 Sycamore and 24 Genesee may also be candidates to layover at the MTC. This will change the routing of several routes, with operational savings and better customer service.

Purpose & Need

Ending more routes at the MTC means that customers can wait and transfer in a comfortable, climate-controlled environment. Additionally, it will offer our operators more amenities and better bathroom facilities. These changes save the NFTA money by reducing the travel time and distance of the aforementioned routes, while also allowing for better interlining between routes operationally.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Finalize MTC lease negotiations
- Analyze optimal routing
- Change schedules
- Print new timetables

Update/Impact

- This arrangement continues to work well for riders, who benefit from waiting and transferring in a comfortable, climate controlled environment.

Transit Options Amherst Buffalo Locally Preferred Alternative

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2019

Description

The technical work for the Transportation Options Amherst Buffalo project has been completed. Reaching a locally preferred alternative has allowed the authority to pursue environmental analysis and preliminary design work to advance the project.

Purpose & Need

Adoption of an LPA has allowed NFTA-Metro to move forward with pursuing funding for the environmental and preliminary design work to advance the project forward. The alternatives analysis process was the first step in the realization of the project and has allowed for further refinement in the environmental assessment stage.

Prerequisites

- NFTA Board support
- Political support
- Municipal staff level support
- Accompanying collateral materials

Steps/Timeline

- Meet with UB to determine level of support
- Gain support from key political officials
- Communication with the stakeholder committee
- NFTA Board adoption of the LPA

Update/Impact

The Metro Transit Expansion project continues.

Mobile Ticketing Pilot

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2019

Description

NFTA-Metro customers can pay for their bus and rail fare using their smart phones. Metro has contracted with Token Transit, a smart phone application developer, for a pilot test of this product with a max investment of $10,000 from NFTA. Customers who download the app can use credit or debit cards to pay for bus and rail tickets, which they then show to the driver or ticket inspector as proof of payment.

Purpose & Need

Mobile ticketing is a new best practice for transit agencies. It is easy for customers to use, allows customers to use credit/debit cards, and customers can plan ahead by purchasing tickets ahead of time. Token Transit has experience in over 200 transit markets.

Prerequisites

- Contracting process is complete

Steps/Timeline

- Launch Token Transit
- Track data and utilization

Update/Impact

Token Transit has been very successful, with usage increasing each month. There was a 21% increase in passes sold over FY 2023-2024, and in December 2023 alone, NFTA-Metro sold over 96,000 passes in Token Transit, which amounts to gross sales of over $385,000. Riders frequently compliment how user-friendly the app is and how it makes riding transit easier. Token Transit has also proven essential in running the Bills Game Day Express service.

Community Bus

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2019

Description

NFTA-Metro renovated a bus to use for education and promotion. The Community Bus was outfitted with schedules and fare payment systems on the inside and an awning on the outside. The Community Bus is driven to events and then set up with the awning so that staff can table outside the bus and people can board the bus to learn more about NFTA-Metro services.

Purpose & Need

The Community Bus assists in helping new and potential riders learn how to ride the bus. Riding the bus for the first time can be intimidating. With the Community Bus, people can practice boarding, paying, and even loading a bike on the bike rack. This will be especially useful when MetGo launches because we can use the Community Bus to teach people how to use the new fare payment system.

Prerequisites

- Obtain and execute grant

Steps/Timeline

- Construction on Community Bus
- Bus went to contractor to have awning installed
- Bus was ready for use starting in Spring 2019

Update/Impact

In addition to public events, the Community Bus has been used extensively as part of the effort to recruit more bus drivers.

DL&W Station Design Completion

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2019

Description

Designs for DL&W were submitted by firms for approval by NFTA Board and the developer chosen.

Purpose & Need

Complete designs are needed to begin construction on the new station at DL&W. This competition allowed for NFTA and the chosen developer to decide on aspects and options for DL&W Station.

Prerequisites

- Design RFP released

Steps/Timeline

- RFP released
- Design proposals received
- Final designs chosen
- Award winning design to submitting firm

Update/Impact

Construction of DL&W Station is ongoing.

North Division Street Bus Canopy DRR

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2019

Description

NFTA-Metro conducted a DRR (design rationale report) for a linear transit hub along North Division Street between the Metropolitan Transportation Center (MTC) and Church Street Metro Rail Station. This linear transit hub will be an enhanced place for passengers to wait for the bus and purchase transit passes. Bergmann was consulted as designer for this project and explored two options for design of the hub.

Purpose & Need

Given the large number of bus routes that pass through this corridor and the radial nature of Buffalo, North Division serves as an important transit connector between Metro Rail, Metro Bus routes, and intercity buses provided by a handful of operators at MTC. A linear transit hub would solidify this link under a weather protected block with transit supportive design. It would serve customers with a comfortable place to wait and increase NFTA-Metro's presence downtown.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Secure funding
- Release the RFD for the transit hub
- Select designer consultant
- Approve DRR

Update/Impact

This project is ongoing, with construction scheduled for 2026.

DL&W Station Construction Begins

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2020

Description

Once the environmental and design phases are complete, construction work will begin on the DL&W terminal project. The construction phase of the project is expected to last for two to three years. During construction, the NFTA will still need to use the space for rail operations and maintenance. As such, a sound construction plan will need to be developed to minimalize the impacts to our ridership.

Purpose & Need

To construct a passenger station inside the first floor of DL&W Station to provide enhanced access to the Canalside and Cobblestone Districts. Additionally, this will allow the NFTA to utilize the 2nd floor space for potential retail. Second floor retail or office space will provide revenue generation and help with ridership by creating an additional destination within the district.

Prerequisites

- Environmental review accepted
- Final design completed
- Funding/P3 secured
- Construction Manager hired

Steps/Timeline

- Issued bid for construction
- Contractors selected
- Construction began

Update/Impact

Construction of DL&W Station is ongoing.

Bailey Avenue Corridor Improvements Study

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2020

Description

NFTA-Metro, in conjunction with the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council and the City of Buffalo, began a study to evaluate the potential for enhanced transit service along Bailey Avenue. The Study allowed Metro to work closely with agency and community partners on this corridor to determine improvements that are technically and financially feasible in the short and long term. This included an assessment of the feasibility of a range of BRT-style improvements for the route 19 bus, from dedicated lanes to improved stop/shelter amenities.

Purpose & Need

The Bailey Avenue Corridor sees some of the highest ridership in the NFTA-Metro system, and provides linkages to many other routes, acting as a primary north-south connection. During peak periods, vehicular on-time performance is lagging due to high levels of traffic, and roadway and streetscape improvements are needed to improve safety for all modes. Furthermore, transit improvements, in conjunction with streetscape updates and improvements, have the potential to positively impact economic development on this corridor.

Prerequisites

- Identification of funding
- Internal data collection and analysis

Steps/Timeline

- Consultant selection
- Public outreach
- Data analysis
- Preliminary design options developed
- Final report produced

Update/Impact

This feasibility study has enabled NFTA and partners to apply for funding to move the project forward. NFTA was awarded an Areas of Persistent Poverty grant from FTA to begin outreach and engagement in 2023. Significantly, NFTA was awarded $102 million in early 2024 through the Reconnecting Communities grant and was able to enter into environmental and project development. The Bailey Avenue BRT project is ongoing.

Electric Battery Bus Integration Plan

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2020

Description

To prepare for electric vehicles, NFTA first conducted a study to examine what the most effective charging technologies are, where NFTA-Metro would locate an electric bus fleet, and what associated changes are needed to the existing infrastructure to accommodate electric buses. Metro wants to be prepared for purchasing a substantial number of electric buses in the future, with the back-end maintenance systems able to handle not only charging but the servicing of these vehicles as well.

Purpose & Need

Prior to moving into the bus electrification market, a comprehensive study was needed to examine the most appropriate charging technologies and to examine our facility challenges. As we have three bus facilities, each poses their own challenge with regards to electrification, and significant upgrades are anticipated to handle a substantially sized electric bus fleet.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Evaluation of emerging electric bus charging technologies
- Catalog of existing facility constraints
- Costing of potential upgrades to bus facilities to handle an electric bus fleet

Update/Impact

Electrification of Cold Spring garage is ongoing, and NFTA-Metro is starting to plan for a zero-emission vehicle study on the Frontier and Babcock Garages as well.

Rail Infrastructure Funding

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2020

Description

In 2020, NFTA-Metro Rail was granted $100 million over the course of 5 years in dedicated state capital funding. NFTA has properly maintained rail assets since they were installed in the 1980s, but age, lack of capital funds, and harsh operating conditions have resulted in a deteriorating system.

Purpose & Need

$100 million in dedicated state capital funding for Metro Rail will allow NFTA-Metro to make needed improvements to the health, safety, and quality of the Metro Rail system for our riders. It is also a necessary precursor for potential expansion of Metro Rail.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- State legislature passes legislation to provide dedicated, ongoing capital source for NFTA-Metro Rail
- Capital plan developed for drawdown of specific funds
- Project execution

Update/Impact

This funding has funded, and continues to fund, critical Rail repairs including Pad and Fastener, Catenary replacement, and more.

On Board Survey

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2021

Description

In cooperation with GBNRTC, NFTA-Metro conducted an on-board survey of riders in conjunction with the federal Title VI process. The on-board survey asks individuals to complete questions relating to their trip purpose, trip characteristics and demographics. The survey was available during a two-week sampling period and in English and Spanish.

Purpose & Need

This effort collected information on trip characteristics, trip purpose and demographics. This data aids in the development of the Title VI program and other planning functions. Demographic data from the periodic survey are critical in the development of our Title VI reporting for the Federal Transit Administration.

Prerequisites

- Development of survey instrument
- Internal approval of the sampling plan
- Coordination with selected consultant on operations plan

Steps/Timeline

- Survey conducted
- Consultant completes data entry
- Analysis of results
- Presentation to the board

Update/Impact

NFTA-Metro continues to use the onboard survey to inform planning projects. An update Onboard Survey is planned for Fall 2023.

Implementation of Express Bus Changes

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2022

Description

NFTA-Metro updated and streamlined the routing of the express buses, with a particular focus on downtown. Routes were modified to be more logical and reduce wasted time. In addition, routes coming from similar regions were matched up with common routings in downtown Buffalo.

Purpose & Need

Express routes need to be as time competitive as possible with private vehicles. They need to be simple and direct, to help commuters get to and from downtown quickly and smoothly. Before this update, the express network had not been reviewed in a long time, and some routes had become convoluted and inefficient.

Prerequisites

- Development of Express Network Plan (2020)

Steps/Timeline

- Planning
- Community Engagement
- Implementation

Update/Impact

The express route updates are working well so far. Service Planning is working on a revised express plan that takes current travel patterns into consideration.

Local Bus Service Changes

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2022

Description

NFTA-Metro significantly adjusted the bus network in Erie and Niagara Counties, including changes to bus routes, stops, and schedules. The Board approved these changes in September 2021.

Purpose & Need

An update of the bus network was necessary to respond to changing ridership patterns, land use changes over the years, and challenges with staffing (bus driver availability).

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Public engagement
- Plan development
- Implementation

Update/Impact

The updated bus network is running smoothly. A formal review of the bus route changes occurred one year post implementation, and additional reviews will be undertaken as necessary.

DL&W Riverwalk Study

Appendix – Completed Projects

Completed in 2022

Description

This plan brought regional stakeholders together to develop a shared vision for access and trail improvements to the Riverwalk. NFTA envisions improvements that will support the adaptive reuse of DL&W Terminal as well as improving walking and bicycling options along Buffalo's waterfront and improving multimodal transportation options.

Purpose & Need

Located at the intersection of the Shoreline Trail, Niagara River Greenway, and Empire State Trail, the DL+W Terminal and its surrounding public spaces serve as a primary source of access for bicyclists and pedestrians seeking to travel between the Canalside and Cobblestone Districts and areas to the north and south. This area also has the potential to be a gateway to downtown for people coming from the south and southeast. Under existing conditions, the public right-of-way surrounding the DL+W Terminal is narrow and uninviting for pedestrians and bicyclists due to confusing intersections, sharp turns, a driveway, chain link fencing around the NFTA-Metro rail yard and parking lot, and several staircases. These accessibility issues serve to create a gap in the nearby multi-use trail network and limit public interaction with Buffalo's waterfront and other downtown attractions.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Obtain grant funding
- Issue RFP
- Planning process begins
- Implementation

Update/Impact

NFTA-Metro has been using this plan to apply for additional funding to support this project. NFTA Engineering is developing an RFP to move this project forward.

Bus Network Improvements Implementation and Evaluation

Completed in 2023

Description

The Bus Network Improvements Plan was approved by the NFTA Board of Commissioners in September 2021. The plan was implemented in phases beginning in December 2021. The various phases are being evaluated one year after implementation, starting with a review of the changes made in Niagara Falls in December 2021.

Purpose & Need

The planned adjustments to the bus network in both Erie and Niagara Counties were needed in response to changing ridership patterns, community requests, and operational capacity. These changes are allowing NFTA-Metro to match service levels to operator availability while continuing to serve the community with logical service that serves current land uses.

Prerequisites

- Bus Network Improvements Plan approved by NFTA Board of Commissioners on September 23, 2021.

Steps/Timeline

- Local service changes implemented throughout late 2021 and 2022.
- Data collection and community engagement 1 year post implementation

Update/Impact

In 2022, NFTA-Metro developed an evaluation process to study the Bus Network Improvements changes one year post implementation, starting with Niagara Falls. A full Post-Implementation Analysis report was completed in April 2023.

Fare Collection Upgrade – Full Implementation

Completed in 2023

Description

The fare collection upgrade (MetGo) continued implementation through 2022 and was in full operation in October 2023. MetGo is an account based smart card system. The new project will allow for a greater flexibility of payment from customers — including mobile ticketing, the use of credit/debit cards at TVMs, the ability to load value and passes online, automatic reload options, and availability at select local retailers. Additionally, it will allow for 3rd party clients like the Buffalo Board of Education, local universities and colleges, health and human services, and Corporate Pass Members to do more direct management of their accounts with the NFTA-Metro.

Purpose & Need

After over 20 years in service, the previous GFI fareboxes and fare system technologies needed upgrade and replacement. Customers have been seeking greater flexibility with regards to payment options, which this project will allow us to provide. The new system provides a new level of convenience for our riders, while continuing to advance our technology as a company. Lastly, the project will allow us to collect better data on usage, especially in the rail system.

Prerequisites

- Fareboxes, fare gates, and PAL card validators installed.
- Back-end systems established.
- Ticket vending machines upgraded.
- NFTA customer service points-of-sale established.
- Limited local retail presence established.
- Testing completed.

Steps/Timeline

- Approval of testing as final.
- Pilot ticketing (PAL users)
- Pilot ticketing (fixed route bus and rail).
- Pilot ticketing (CRAM and students).
- Pilot ticketing (corporate partners / social services).
- Outreach
- Full-roll out.

Progress Report

2022 saw the first full year of new fareboxes on fixed route bus, featuring legacy fare media. Full system testing began Q1 2023. Full rollout of the system occurred in October 2023, and the faregates at the rail stations were completely closed. Support from the vendor persists to address issues as they occur and ensure smooth operation.

Realtime Information for Bus Riders

Completed in 2023

Description

General Transit Feed Specification-Realtime (GTFS-R) is the transit standard data source for realtime information that is consumed by all major wayfinding applications. In December 2023, NFTA-Metro began to publish this data from compatible buses to improve access to realtime information by customers. Riders are able to access realtime bus arrival data using major smart phone applications such as Moovit, Transit, and Google.

Purpose & Need

Realtime information is digital and is updated based on current conditions, showing the true time when the bus or train will arrive, or whether the service has been cancelled. Transit customers today expect realtime information so that they can make educated choices about their transportation options. For example, if a bus is cancelled, they may choose to walk or bike rather than waiting. Realtime information will improve reliability from a transit rider's perspective, with them able to understand where a bus is and when it is coming for them at any moment.

Prerequisites

- Identify scope and vendor to provide GTFS-R (completed)
- Vendor develops GTFS-R feed (completed)

Steps/Timeline

- Select vendor to produce feed
- Develop system
- Implement system

Progress Update

In 2022, the vendor Conduent developed the GTFS-R feed as requested. In late 2022, NFTA-Metro underwent early testing of this feed. As of late 2023, the GTFS-R feed is compatible with major mobile transit apps (Transit, Moovit, Google Maps). The GTFS-R feed was finalized and launched in December 2023.

Community Cares Reduced Fares Program

Completed in 2023

Description

NFTA-Metro developed a program, in partnership with Erie County and Niagara County, that provides temporary (1-year) Reduced Fare cards to families receiving childcare assistance through the New York state Child Care Block Grant program (categories 2 and 3).

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro seeks to help the community by reducing the cost of transit for individuals in need. While some individuals receive free or reduced transit passes through different social services organizations, or through NFTA's existing Reduced Fares program for individuals who are 65 and older or have a disability, there are segments of the population for whom transportation expenses are a burden but who are currently paying full price for transit. This pilot program seeks to help that population.

Prerequisites

- None

Progress Update

- NFTA and our county partners began distributing passes in September 2022. Around 10 passes were distributed by the end of 2022. The Program was taken out of its pilot phase in 2023. The program continues to be explored.

University Loop and Façade Rebuild and Operational Enhancements

Completed in 2023

Description

A series of projects in 2023 will rebuild the University Station Bus Loop, the sidewalks around the loop, and the station façade. This rebuild is an opportunity to make some operational enhancements to the loop, as well as increase the number of shelters and benches.

University Loop has had operational complications with the number of buses coming into the loop and the amount of space the loop provides. Enhancements will improve the flow, allow customers to transfer to Metro Rail easier, and improve the customer waiting experience.

Purpose & Need

These projects are needed to keep the stations and bus loop in good repair. In addition, University Loop currently experiences operational issues include bus bunching, unsafe passing within the loop, passengers being let off in front of running buses, and parking/layover issues. With changing the layout of the loop, with addition of lanes, marked bus bays, designated drop-off area and a reconfigured route assignment, the goal is to make navigating the loop easier and safer for operators and customers. Addition of shelters and benches will provide customers with comfort waiting for their buses.

Prerequisites

- Engineering has entered into final design for this project.
- Service Planning has a plan to reorient bus stops in the loop to improve efficiency and rider convenience.
- Metro continues to work with Engineering to plan for the operations of University Loop during the construction period.

Steps/Timeline

- Construction of University Loop is scheduled to begin in summer 2023.
- Upon completion of bus loop, signage will be replaced, along with substantial rider outreach to explain the new configuration. Benches and shelters will also be installed.

Progress Update

This project entered into final design in 2022, and construction completed in September 2023.

Safety and Security Study

Completed in 2023

Description

NFTA-Metro engaged a consultant to review existing conditions and make recommendations based on the principle of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design at underground Metro Rail stations as well as Portage Road Transportation Center in Niagara Falls.

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro would like to identify what physical changes can be made to our facilities to help riders feel safer and be safer on our system. After 35 years there may be opportunities to change or upgrade aspects of the stations to fit current best practices in safety and security.

Prerequisites

- None

Steps/Timeline

- Scope project
- RFP project
- Engage consultant

Progress Update

This project started in mid-2022 and was concluded in August 2023, with two deliverables: an Existing Conditions and Risk Assessment Report, and a Final Recommendation Report. Rail is working on an updated implementation plan/program to move these recommendations forward.

Canalside Station Rehabilitation

Completed in 2024

Description

After more than 30 years, Erie Canal Harbor Station is being reconstructed to better align with new land uses in the area, and is being renamed Canalside Station. Special Events Station will be demolished, and Canalside Station will serve as a main station for events at KeyBank Center, the Buffalo-Erie County Naval Park, and Canalside District. Improvements made for accessibility and customer comfort are included in the rehabilitation.

Purpose & Need

Station rehabilitation was needed to keep the facility in good repair and to adapt to the complete transformation of this area since the Metro Rail was construction. The rehabilitation will also substantially improve rider comfort and accessibility.

Prerequisites

- Project is at 100% design

Steps/Timeline

- NTP to contractor
- Submittals and material procurement
- Start construction
- Demolish Special Events station
- Complete construction

Progress Update

Construction progressed well in 2022 and 2023, with the rehabilitated Canalside Station opening in April 2024.

Customer Communication Enhancements

Completed in 2024

Description

Staff are pursuing a pilot project with a company called Simplify Transit which would allow NFTA-Metro to provide much needed service alerts to riders via the website, text, email, and phone, vastly increasing the amount and quality of service information available.

Purpose & Need

Every year on the ABBG/GOAL Customer Satisfaction Survey, NFTA-Metro scores low compared to our peers on providing information (realtime or other) about the services we provide, and on providing alternatives information in the event of a cancellation or detour. There is currently no simple, reliable way for riders to sign up for email, text, and phone call service alert updates. Furthering the Simplify Transit pilot program would help to alleviate both issues.

Prerequisites

- Secure funding sources
- Create implementation plan
- Work with IT to ensure compatibility with existing systems

Steps/Timeline

- Pilot program to begin in 2024

Project Update

- In early 2024, staff held meetings with Public Affairs, IT, and Metro operations/control for advanced coordination on this topic. Staff sent scope, fee estimate, and sole source justification to procurement in April 2024.
- NFTA engaged with Simplify Transit to launch its Metro Alerts service, providing riders with email and/or text-based updates on route delays, service changes, and other announcements. Staff from Service Planning and the Operations Control Center (OCC) worked together to train dispatchers on the system. The product officially launched in October of 2024.

PAL Service Evaluation

Completed in 2025

Description

NFTA was fortunate to receive funding from New York State to conduct a study to reevaluate the Paratransit Access Line (PAL) service and other paratransit-related services that are needed over the coming years. This project will review and evaluate topics including: expanding the PAL service area beyond ¾ mile, the feasibility of on-demand / microtransit service, and partnerships with transportation network companies and/or local taxi and Medicaid transportation providers.

Purpose & Need

NFTA-Metro currently operates paratransit service to meet ADA requirements but would like to evaluate additional services to ensure we are following best practices to meet community needs and desires going forward.

Prerequisites

- Write RFP (done)
- Release RFP (done)
- Select consultant (done)

Steps/Timeline

- Consultant selection expected to go to the NFTA Board of Commissioners in March 2023.
- This project took place over the course of approximately 18 months, with the study concluding in December 2024.

Progress Update

The RFP was released in late 2022. A Project Manager was hired for this project who started work January 2023. A consultant team (Nelson\Nygaard) was hired, with NTP given in May 2023. In December 2023, the consultant team conducted a set of public meetings to solicit input and participation as part of Phase 1 (Existing Conditions Analysis) of the Study and began work on Phase 2 (Estimation of Future Demand and Costs for Paratransit Service Enhancement and Expansion). A second set of public meetings were held in September 2024, providing an update on the progress of the Phase 2 work and a series of initial recommendations. The Study ultimately concluded in December 2024, with the Final Report documents released in January 2025.

New Timetable & Map Process and Printing

Completed in 2025

Description

Information accessibility is important for customers of NFTA-Metro services. Many riders still utilize paper timetables (schedules), but current NFTA-Metro products do not align with industry standards. New, highly readable, and clearly branded timetables including geographically correct maps have the potential for the greatest impact to customers, particularly those without regular access to the internet.

Purpose & Need

New timetable and maps are needed to bring NFTA-Metro up to industry standards of information presentation. Timetables and maps today are not easily readable or understandable according to customers. Both products are about 40 years old. Current maps are abstract, overly stylized, black-and-white, and do not provide enough information for the general public with an absence of consistency of shape, area, or distance.

Internal staffing for relevant departments has changed significantly, allowing for a change in the process of timetable production. A streamlined approach for the assembly of the public timetable will improve staff efficiencies in production.

Limitations on internal printing capabilities must be addressed to produce timetables and maps according to industry best practices.

Prerequisites

- Licenses for required mapping program ArcGIS Pro with interoperability with Adobe Creative Suite (complete)

Steps/Timeline

- Determine style and content of timetables
- Staff process
- Printing options

Progress Update

In 2022, NFTA-Metro designed and finalized a new cover for the timetables. Staff have also begun drafting sample maps for further discussion.

In 2023, redesigned timetables were produced for 11 routes. Public feedback and comments on the new designs was solicited via a web survey.

In 2024, redesigned timetables were produced for an additional 21 routes.

Full rollout of the redesigned timetables occurred in 2025.

Transit Signal Priority on Niagara Street

Completed in 2025

Description

NFTA-Metro seeks to implement Transit Signal Priority on Niagara Street as a pilot corridor to further the goals of making transit on-time and reliable, reducing delays, and reducing signal inefficiency.

Purpose & Need

Transit Signal Priority and related improvements are essential to NFTA-Metro's goals of improving service delivery and efficiency, particularly in high-traffic corridors. This pilot on Niagara Street will help ensure that systems used by relevant transportation/ROW stakeholders (City of Buffalo, New York State, etc.) are compatible with existing tech and on-vehicle equipment used by NFTA-Metro, and can be applied to future corridors such as Bailey Avenue.

Prerequisites

- Coordination with NITTEC, City of Buffalo, NYS Department of Transportation
- NITTEC funded implementation

Steps/Timeline

- Update and install necessary equipment on NFTA-Metro buses
- Configure and launch Miovision pilot.

Project Update

- NFTA-Metro has worked with NITTEC and the City of Buffalo to implement transit signal improvements at 27 intersections along Niagara Street
- The project encountered a series of implementation delays but at this time all equipment is ready and the pilot has begun.
- As the Bailey BRT project advances, NFTA-Metro plans to perform similar signal improvements along the Bailey Avenue corridor.

DL&W Station Open to the Public

Completed in 2025

Description

The new station will be open and operational for revenue service. It will provide additional access to the Canalside, KeyBank Arena, and Cobblestone Districts. The new station will provide second-level access to DL&W which will encourage redevelopment of the facility. NFTA-Metro will continue working with private sector developers and businesses on the operations and maintenance of the second-floor space. The new station will have a great impact on the level of access to the First Ward and Cobblestone districts.

Purpose & Need

To operate a passenger station in DL&W Station to improve customer experience with access to a new station adjacent to Canalside and Cobblestone Districts. The station will facilitate the reuse/ reactivation of the DL&W Terminal and provide the capability to extend Metro Rail service beyond Canalside Station.

Prerequisites

- Environmental clearances
- Complete design
- Fully funded grant agreement
- Construction completes

Steps/Timeline

- Station open
- Operational impacts considered and revised
- Continued build-out of the second floor

Project Update

- Construction was completed in December 2024.
- The station was opened to the public in December 2025.
- Build-out of the second floor space will continue in 2026

Metro Transit Expansion Environmental Impact Statement

Completed in 2026

Description

In early 2026, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as Lead Federal Agency, published a combined Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for expanding high-capacity transit service throughout the Buffalo-Amherst-Tonawanda corridor. Issuance of the ROD concluded the Federal environmental review process, thereby memorializing FTA's review of the Metro Transit Expansion Project's No Build and Build Alternatives.

Purpose & Need

Completion of the NEPA environmental review process is required to advance the Project to future design phases and compete for Federal discretionary funding provided through the FTA's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program.

Prerequisites

- Funding in place for the EIS and preliminary engineering
- NEPA EIS process began in August 2021

Steps/Timeline

- Notice of Intent to prepare EIS in August 2021
- Released the Draft EIS (DEIS) in July 2025
- Released the FEIS and Record of Decision in February 2026
- Secure local matching funds
- Enter into the Project Development phase of the FTA's CIG Program

Project Update

- Completed the EIS public scoping process in Fall 2021
- Published the DEIS for public comment in summer 2025. The public comment period was open from July 25 to September 8, 2025, with a public hearing held at Sweet Home Middle School in the Town of Amherst on August 19, 2025.
- The final ROD was issued by FTA in February 2026.
- Completed administrative steps required to comply with State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) regulations in February/March 2026.