

NFTA Metro
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE for Public Transportation- CAC
PROPOSED GOVERNANCE
Final
January 2013

Introduction

The goal of the NFTA Metro Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) is intended to support and encourage broad-based public participation in the development and review of programs and projects carried out by NFTA Metro. In addition, the NFTA Metro CAC seeks to provide opportunities for proactive, early and continuing public participation for NFTA Metro projects, programs and decision-making.

NFTA recognizes the need for public outreach and citizen involvement to encourage and to help remove barriers to public participation. NFTA believes effective public user and stakeholder involvement is essential. Elected officials, major stakeholders, NFTA and citizens all play important roles in how transit service is delivered in this region. NFTA is committed to promote and sustain a responsive citizen's involvement environment.

Purpose

To make recommendations and provide input to NFTA Metro Management Staff on a broad range of community related public transit issues (i.e., fare changes, Long-Range Plan updates, and major or new projects). The CAC will also provide comments on regularly schedule service changes and impacts on riders. The CAC will review, monitor and recommend service and program improvements or expansion projects to NFTA, and strengthen relations within the transit communities through the development and implementation of public relations campaigns, programs and events.

Mission

The mission of the NFTA Metro Citizens Advisory Committee for Public Transportation (CAC) is to serve the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority Board of Commissioners, NFTA Metro management/staff, users and general public in a proactive role as the pulse of the community in the promotion and provision of high-quality transportation programs and services.

SECTION 1

The Citizens Advisory Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to the NFTA Metro Staff with monthly reports to the NFTA Board of Commissioners. It is understood that any recommendations of the CAC are strictly advisory. The CAC will function under the direction of the NFTA Metro Director of Surface Transportation.

The CAC shall be composed of not more than twenty-five (25) volunteer members, appointed by the Director of Surface Transportation and affirmed by the Board of Commissioners. Members of the CAC shall serve without compensation. It is in the best interest of NFTA that the membership of the CAC reflects a diverse and wide representation and be current users of the NFTA Metro Bus and Rail System. In that regard, the membership may include, but shall not be limited to users representing the following interests, groups, or areas:

- Transit service users (regular & disabled)
- Ethnic, Community and Faith based Organizations
- Medical & Mental Health Community
- Business/Economic Development Organizations
- School Districts & Educational Community/Parent Organizations
- Recreational/Bicycling/Pedestrian Advocate
- NFTA management and Metro Operator(s)

CAC Membership: (Representatives from the following entities)

- Service Area Transit users – Randomly selected through an application process and would include representatives from Erie & Niagara Counties (Urban, Rural, Suburban & Small City).
- Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
- Buffalo and Erie County Workforce Development Consortium
- Buffalo Niagara Partnership
- Buffalo Public Schools
- Buffalo State College
- Buffalo Urban League
- Citizens for Regional Transit
- Community Action Organization of Erie County
- Erie County Department of Senior Services
- Go Bike Buffalo
- Hispanics United of Buffalo
- Journey's End
- Niagara Falls Housing Authority
- Opportunities Unlimited of Niagara
- Partnership for Public Good
- VOICE Buffalo
- Western NY Independent Living
- Others to be determined

Powers and Duties

The CAC, under or at the direction of the Director of Surface Transportation, may be authorized and empowered to act as a research and fact-finding agency of NFTA, and shall maintain appropriate confidentiality in regard to issues shared by staff. Any actions or recommendations of this committee are strictly advisory. To that end, it may undertake such surveys, analysis, research and reports as may be generally authorized or requested by the Director of Surface Transportation. In addition, the CAC is further empowered and authorized as follows:

- a) To review significant policy decisions under consideration by the NFTA Director of Surface Transportation including major service changes, fare policy, budget adoption or changes, the development of public and customer facilities, major service policy changes, and such other issues or concerns that may impact the public and customer relations of NFTA Metro and to make recommendations to the Director of Surface Transportation upon these issues and concerns.
- (b) To support the efforts of the NFTA to increase public understanding and confidence in the benefits of public transportation. To increase recognition of the link of public transportation to the economic vitality;
- (c) To support and help facilitate the efforts of the NFTA to improve communication with community and local business leaders concerning the impact of NFTA programs;
- (d) To review ridership and customer service programs in order to identify and recommend practices and technologies that increase ridership and improve customer services. To identify and recommend programs, practices, and technologies that assist riders in the use of fixed route services;
- (e) To make recommendations to the Director of Surface Transportation regarding transit related community concerns;
- (f) To provide a forum for the discussion of local public transportation issues and to foster a better understanding of the issues between users and non-users of the system.
- (g) The CAC is an advisory group and, therefore, it is strictly understood that all actions and recommendations by the CAC are advisory only and do not constitute an action or obligation of the NFTA, NFTA Board of Commissioners or of any NFTA employees. In this capacity, the CAC is not authorized to act as an agent of NFTA, or to contract or incur any obligations on behalf of NFTA.

SECTION 2

Terms

The term of office of each person appointed to membership on said Committee shall be three (3) years, limited to three (3) consecutive terms; with consideration available for additional terms;

- 1) Organizations will receive notice of their representative's term expiration three (3) months before that expiration.
- 2) The Director of Surface Transportation shall have the responsibility to maintain the integrity of the overall CAC function. Changes to member composition will be reviewed by the Committee.

SECTION 3

Vacancies

Vacancies that occur other than through the expiration of a term may be filled for the unexpired term. Appointment to the Committee may be proposed by interested organizations when a vacancy occurs. Insofar as possible, representation shall take into account geographical areas, whether the individual is a user or non-user of public transportation services, population demographics, and appointment shall be made without respect to political affiliation.

Conflicts of Interest

Any member of the Committee having an interest in any matter being considered by the Committee, which would tend to prejudice his or her action shall so publicly indicate and refrain from the discussions. In addition, should the circumstances arise, each member of the Committee shall ensure that his or her actions do not violate the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine.

SECTION 4

Compensation

Members of the Citizens Advisory Committee shall serve without compensation.

SECTION 5

Meetings

The Committee shall hold a minimum of six (6) regular meetings each calendar year with additional meetings established as appropriate. It is the responsibility of a CAC member to inform NFTA when they cannot attend a regular meeting.

SECTION 6

Officers

The Citizens Advisory Committee shall NOT elect any officers

Staff

The Director of Surface Transportation or his designee shall be the Chair of the advisory committee. The duties of the Chairperson shall be to keep a record of proceedings, have charge of all records, and perform other administrative support as needed. A report shall be provided to the NFTA Board of Commissioners each month on the activities of the advisory committee.