



Buffalo-Amherst-Tonawanda Corridor Transit Expansion

Draft Environmental Impact Statement and
Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation



Federal Transit Administration



Public Hearing August 19, 2025

Agenda

Draft EIS Overview

Project Overview

DEIS Findings

Public Comment and Hearing

Common Terms/Acronyms

- Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
- Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Light Rail Transit (LRT)
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Overview

What is a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)?

A DEIS is a key document prepared under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) **to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of a proposed federal action**—such as a major transportation project.

The purpose of a DEIS is intended **to inform decision-makers and the public of the environmental consequences** of proposed actions, support **transparent and informed decision-making**, and serve as the basis for the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

CORE COMPONENTS OF DEIS



Purpose and Need



Alternatives Considered



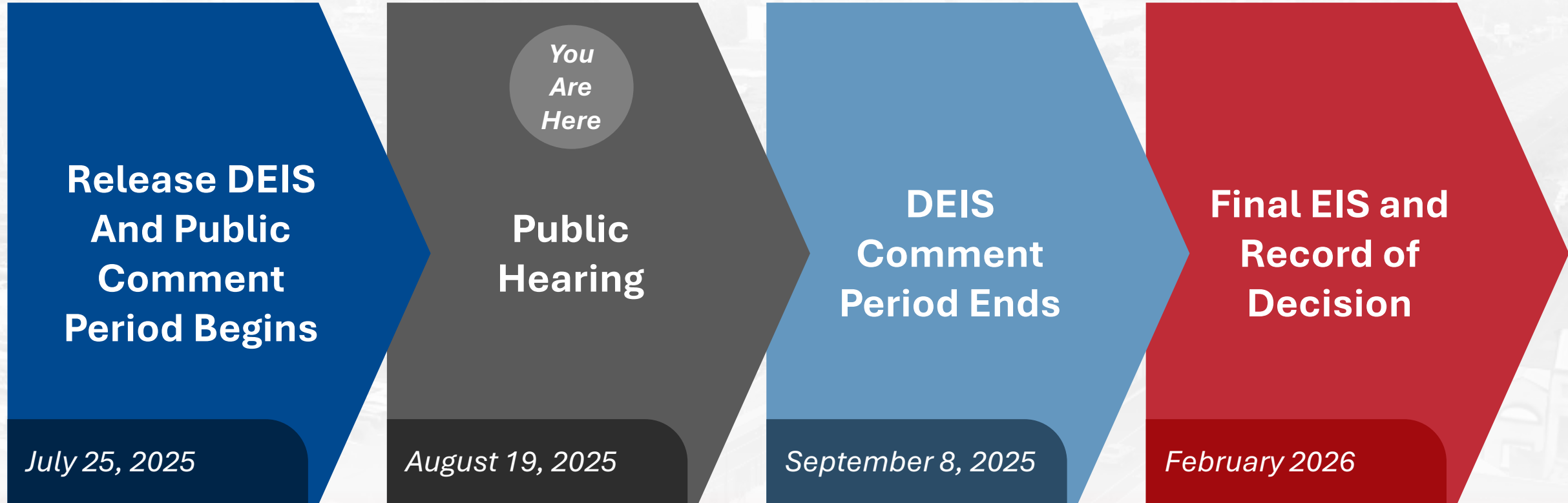
Environmental, Social,
and Economic Impact
Analysis and Mitigation



Public and Agency Review

Source: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Metro Transit Expansion EIS Schedule



The background of the slide features a photograph of a white and blue Metro train on the left side. A large, semi-transparent blue rectangle covers the right two-thirds of the slide. A thick diagonal stripe, colored red and light blue, runs from the top left towards the bottom center, separating the train image from the text area.

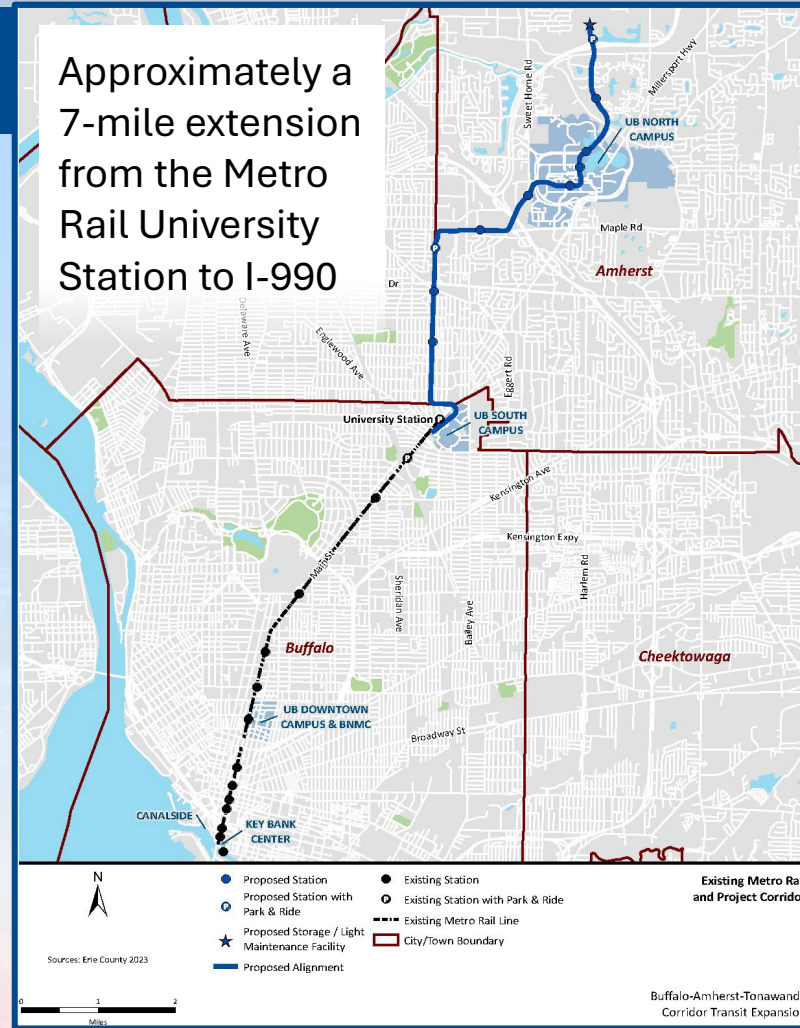
Overview: Buffalo-Amherst-Tonawanda Corridor Transit Expansion

Also Known as Metro Transit Expansion

Metro Transit Expansion

Purpose

Link established and emerging activity centers along the existing Metro Rail line in Buffalo with existing and emerging activity centers in Amherst and Tonawanda via a **fast, reliable, safe, and convenient transit ride.**



Need



Serve existing and future travel demand



Provide high-quality regional transit service



Improve service for transit-dependent population

Project Goals

» Project **Goals** were established at the beginning of the Project's environmental assessment and in association with the purpose and need.



Develop a cost-effective, attractive, and high-quality transit service to serve the corridor.



Mitigate the growth of traffic congestion on study area roadways.



Improve the accessibility of transit in the study area.



Increase the effectiveness of the regional transit system.

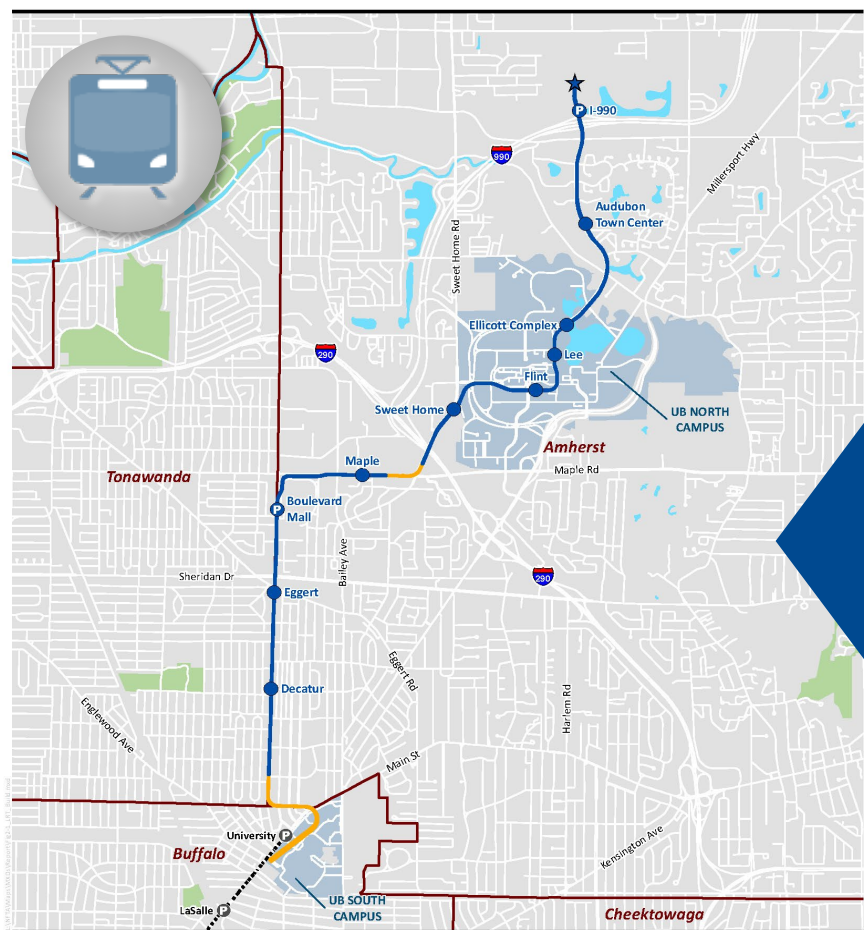


Support sustainable future economic growth in the study area.



Avoid or minimize adverse community and environmental impacts.

Light Rail Transit (LRT)



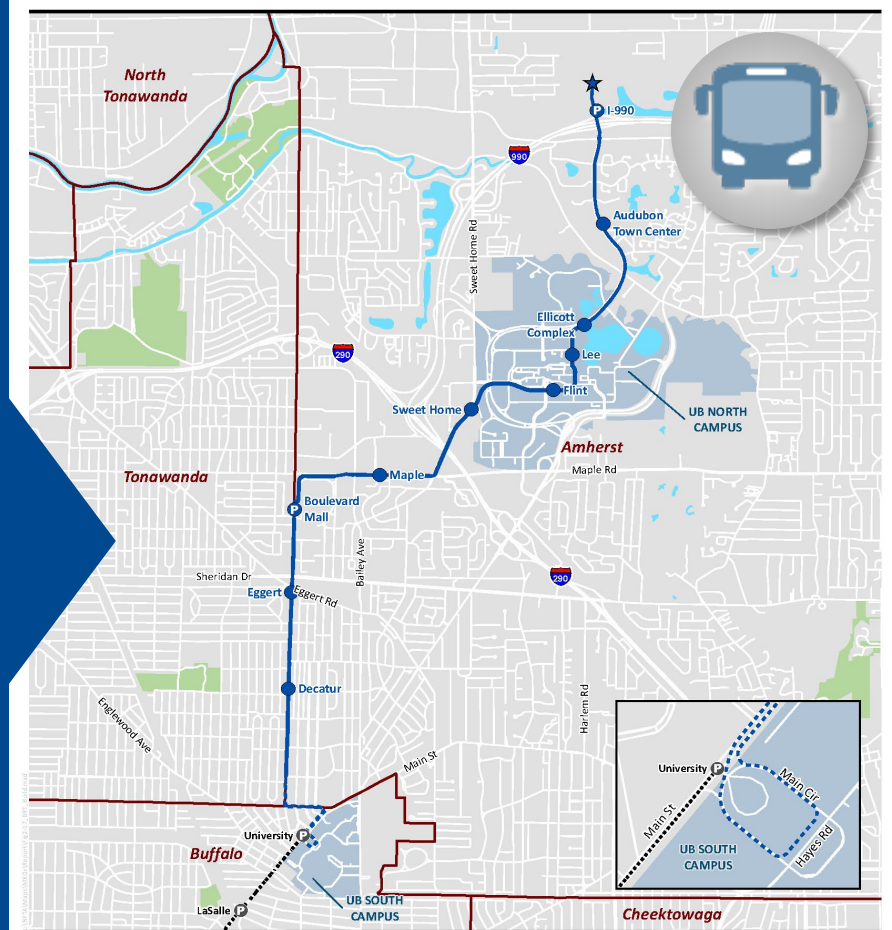
- Proposed Station
- Proposed Station with Park & Ride
- Proposed Storage / Light Maintenance Facility
- Track Alignment, Above Grade
- Track Alignment, Below Grade
- Existing Station with Park & Ride
- Existing Metro Rail Line
- City/Town Boundary

Buffalo-Amherst-Tonawanda Corridor Transit Expansion

Comparison

- » Same corridor, operating primarily in the median
- » Nearly the same width
- » University Station to Niagara Falls Boulevard:
 - » *LRT underground*
 - » *BRT in traffic*
- » Maple and Sweet Home Roads Intersection:
 - » *LRT underground*
 - » *BRT in traffic*

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)



- Proposed Station
- Proposed Station with Park & Ride
- Proposed Storage / Light Maintenance Facility
- Dedicated Busway
- Mixed-Traffic
- Existing Station with Park & Ride
- Existing Metro Rail Line
- City/Town Boundary

Buffalo-Amherst-Tonawanda Corridor Transit Expansion



Light Rail Transit (LRT)

10

Stations

2

Park & Ride Facilities

1

Storage/light maintenance facility

10

Arrives every 10 minutes

8

Would require 8 trains



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

10

Stations

2

Park & Ride Facilities

1

Storage/light maintenance facility

5

Arrives every 5 minutes

17

Would require 17 buses



Light Rail Transit (LRT)

**2,520 Per
Hour**

Would carry 2,520 riders per hour (hourly capacity)

**3.4 M
Riders**

3.4 Million Annual Riders (Weekday Boardings)

**23
Minutes**

23 minutes to travel from I-990 to UB South Campus

**\$2.0 to
\$2.5
Billion**

Opinion of probable costs is between \$2.0 Billion and \$2.5 Billion in 2032 dollars



Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

**1,080 Per
Hour**

Would carry 1,080 riders per hour (hourly capacity)

**2.1 M
Riders**

2.1 Million Annual Riders (Weekday Boardings)

**26
Minutes**

















26 minutes to travel from I-990 to UB South Campus

**\$0.9 to
\$1.1
Billion**

Opinion of probable costs is between \$0.9 Billion and \$1.1 Billion in 2032 dollars

»The opinion of probable cost is draft, based off 15% design of each Build Alternative and will change as the Project design continues to advance. The opinion of probable cost is expressed as range given the preliminary nature of the Project's design.

Comparison of Alternatives Against Goals

Goal		
	LRT Build Alternative	BRT Build Alternative
High-quality transit service (one-seat ride or no transfers)		
Mitigate the growth of traffic congestion		
Improve the accessibility of transit in the study area		
Increase the effectiveness of the regional transit system		
Support future economic growth in the study area		
Avoid or minimize adverse impacts		
KEY: Best Meets Goal:  Meets Goal: 		

Project Benefits

» Anticipated benefits resulting from the construction and operation of the project

Result in expected **new economic development**, both commercial and residential.



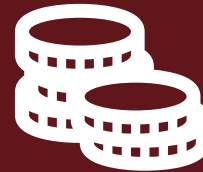
Project investments in new **advanced traffic signals** and **new cross walks** and **sidewalks**.



Significant **job creation** opportunities because of new development and local construction jobs.

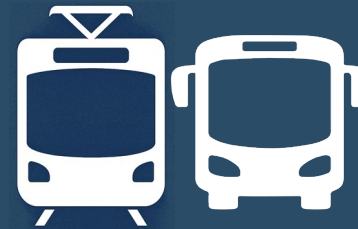


Between **\$2,500** and **\$4,400** in transportation **savings** per year per household.

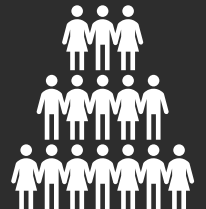


Source: APTA 2016

Connect all UB campuses with new **modern vehicles**.



Increases Metro patronage with a **significant number** of those riders **using Metro for the first time**.





Environmental Findings

Resources with Limited or No Adverse Impacts

(Both Build Alternatives)



Parking



**Pedestrian
and Bicycle**



Transit



Socioeconomic



**Land Use and
Community Character**



**Visual
Resources**



**Neighborhoods
& Communities**



**Parks &
Recreation**



Air Quality



Energy

Resources with Impacts and Proposed Mitigation

(Both Build Alternatives)



**Traffic: BRT
Alternative Only**



**Property and
Displacements**



**Geology and
Wildlife**



**Water
Resources**



**Noise: LRT
Alternative Only**



**Vibration: LRT
Alternative Only**



**Hazardous
Materials**



Construction

Sample of Proposed Mitigation

Proposed Mitigation	Resource	Reference
Infrastructure investments in embedded track, pedestrians, bicycles, signals, and compensation for parking	Transportation	Chapter 3
Fair and just compensation for property and assistance with displacements	Real Property	Section 4.1
Any removal of trees would occur during winter hibernation to reduce disturbance to long-eared bats, replace vegetation removed during construction	General Ecology and Wildlife	Section 4.9
Invest in water treatment infrastructure	Water Resources	Section 4.10
Invest in vehicles and track infrastructure that reduce noise impacts, reduce speeds, and evaluate final design	Noise and Vibration	Sections 4.11 and 4.12
Properly treat, remove, and handle hazardous materials	Hazardous Materials	Section 4.15
Variety of Project investments to reduce construction impacts	Construction Effects	Section 4.17

Resources Still Under Evaluation

(To be Included in Final EIS)



**Section 106:
Archeological
Resources**



Section 4(f)

The background of the slide features a photograph of a Metro train, likely in Buffalo, New York, as indicated by the 'BUFFALO' sign visible on a building in the background. The train is white with blue and red accents. A large, semi-transparent blue overlay covers the right two-thirds of the image, with a diagonal red stripe running from the top left towards the bottom center. The text 'Public Comment' is centered in the blue area in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Public Comment

How Are Public Comments Used to Inform the EIS?

- » FTA is **required to consider and prepare responses to all substantive comments** received during the DEIS comment period.
- » These **responses are documented** in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and **help shape the final decision-making** process.
- » Public comments help **ensure transparency and accountability** and the identification of **potential environmental, social, or economic community concerns**.



How to Provide Comments on the Project DEIS

- » Provide oral testimony at tonight's Public Hearing
- » Record your comment on a comment card available at tonight's Public Hearing
- » Submit comments online at nftametrotransitexpansion.com
- » Email comments to transitexpansion@nfta.com
- » Call and leave comments via voicemail at **(716) 855-7382**
- » Mail comments to the **Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, 181 Ellicott Street, Buffalo, New York 14203; Attention: Jeffery Amplement**

- » Metro will consider all comments received on or by **September 8, 2025**
- » Responses to substantive comments will be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, which will be posted on the project website (<https://www.nftametrotransitexpansion.com>)



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THANK YOU!

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The background features a photograph of a Metro train, likely in Buffalo, New York, as indicated by the 'BUFFALO' sign on a building in the background. The train is white with blue and red stripes and has 'NFTA-METRO' written on its side. A person is standing on the platform in the foreground. A large, semi-transparent blue overlay covers the right half of the image, with a diagonal red stripe running from the top left towards the bottom center. The text 'THANK YOU!' is centered in the blue area.

THANK YOU!