

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 9, 2020

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CNU “Future of Mobility” report guides new transportation and equity developments in downtown Buffalo

The new report by national non-profit Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), produced in partnership with the City of Buffalo and planning firm Stantec’s Urban Places, stands to power Buffalo’s equitable future through mobility innovations. “The Future of Mobility: Remaking Buffalo for the 21st Century” makes recommendations for how Buffalo can adopt new transportation technologies in ways that produce community benefits, which the City of Buffalo now plans to incorporate into its new Race for Place initiative.

The partnership process began in February 2020 with a four-and-a-half day public design workshop and charrette in Buffalo, NY focusing on the arrival of new transportation technologies in American cities, like autonomous vehicles, electric scooters and bicycles, and dynamic parking pricing. Stakeholders and the public were invited to join the workshop’s sessions and help develop policies and design recommendations that show how Buffalo can adapt its existing streets and public spaces to accommodate new forms of transportation, while at the same time taking into consideration how they can unlock community benefits like increased access to quality public space, affordable housing, well-paying jobs, and essential services.

The report emphasizes the power of new transportation technologies, particularly shared autonomous vehicles, to spur the redevelopment of Buffalo’s Lower Main district. It also establishes guidelines for redevelopment, so that the benefits of the district are shared by all Buffalo’s residents.

“With this report, the City of Buffalo now has a toolkit to steer the implementation of next generation mobility solutions so that they can serve the city and its people, not vice versa,” says Lynn Richards, President and CEO of CNU. “While other cities are giving technology companies free rein to test self-driving cars on their streets, without considering consequences, Buffalo’s approach is centered on its community first.”

A series of revolutionary new urban mobility paradigms are set to unfold over the next two decades and Buffalo is a national leader in addressing the future of shared mobility. This report addresses the critical challenge posed by these rapid changes such as managing the advent of transformational mobility innovations to resolve longstanding problems and turn fundamental goals into new realities for the benefit of Buffalo communities. Lower Main Street is the focus of this report, presenting a relatively blank slate to demonstrate and incubate innovative mobility solutions that can unlock revitalization across the district and other Buffalo neighborhoods.

The recommendations made in this report merge the realities of today, including challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, with the innovation-driven opportunities of tomorrow. Investment in planning and coordination today ensures that cities and their residents reap the benefits of a more inclusive, mobility oriented, and opportunity minded future.



About CNU

The Congress for the New Urbanism's (CNU) mission is to champion walkable urbanism. We provide resources, education, and technical assistance to create socially just, economically robust, environmentally resilient, and people centered places. We leverage New Urbanism's unique integration of design and social principles to advance three key goals: to diversify neighborhoods, to design for climate change, and to legalize walkable places. Visit cnu.org for more.