



Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senate
Larkin at Exchange
Buffalo, NY 14210

04/20/2009

Dear Senator Gillibrand;

The Central Terminal Restoration Corporation (CTRC) enthusiastically supports the proposal to develop the Empire Corridor from Albany to Buffalo as an important part of President Obama's national high speed rail initiative.

Furthermore, we would like to encourage your consideration to utilize any or all parts of the Buffalo Central Terminal complex, adjacent acreage and track layouts for the Buffalo terminus of high speed rail in the Empire Corridor. Our railroad address is "Milepost 437" (437 miles from New York City), which is at the very end of this shovel ready corridor.

We believe that the terminal is the optimal location for the Buffalo terminus for the following reasons:

- The Central Terminal is located along the Main Line track at the end of the Empire Corridor and has been designed with enough room to get trains in and out quickly and efficiently. A downtown terminal would not have enough room to direct the high speed trains to anywhere other than Niagara Falls (see map).
- The existing trackage and track layout at the Central Terminal is the only place near the downtown hub that accommodates travel to Chicago (approx. 536 miles), New York City and other points north, south, east and west. The track layouts were designed for these routes and were an integral part of the New York Central Railroad's original passenger service.
- The Central Terminal's central location is only 2 ½ miles from downtown, approx. 4 miles to the airport and less than 4 miles to the Walden Galleria Mall. NFTA (Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority) light rail service would be the logical solution for these destinations, as well as for the 20 mile trek to Niagara Falls (crossing several residential roads in Niagara County). Rail rights-of-way still exist for these destinations. The Central Terminal is the regional hub for all rail lines that enter the City of Buffalo and remains the focal point of all rail lines entering the city.
- The Central Terminal was designed as an intermodal transportation facility, housing operations for not only passenger rail, but buses and taxi services, as well. It would easily accommodate light rail operations and maintenance and has hundreds of secure "park-and-ride" parking spots for those commuters looking to utilize the expanded and reliable Empire Corridor service. In addition, hundreds of thousands of sq. ft. of leasable office space is available to supplement these services for headquarters for any of these services.



- Federal Transportation Funding (e.g. SAFETEA-LU) is currently available for rehabilitation of old train stations into intermodal transportation facilities. Approx. 80% of the Worcester, Massachusetts train station's rehabilitation was done using this type of funding:

(see http://archives.buffaloring.com/story/if_worcester_can_do_it)

- Intermodal transportation operations may only occupy about 20% of the available 523,000 sq. ft. The connectivity afforded by intermodal transportation would significantly increase the rehabilitation potential of the entire complex, as well as the entire, economically depressed east Buffalo district. It is strategically located within an in the Empire Zone and also offers available historic tax credits. Nearby high-speed fiber optic internet service make the terminal readily adaptable for modern commerce and logistical support.
- With the potential return of foot traffic inside the main building, the Main Concourse could once again house restaurants and artisan shops, and the remaining space could house office, residential, hotel or museum space. Not only would this incremental rehabilitation return the property to the tax rolls, it would add several hundred jobs to this economically depressed area.
- Rehabilitating historic buildings (National Register listed in 1984) like the art deco masterpiece Central Terminal is not only a moral responsibility, but is a true "Green" solution, respecting the quality of the original design and materials and avoiding adding to crowded landfills. Like many old buildings, the terminal is spacious enough to be easily retrofitted for new HVAC configurations and infrastructure required for wind, solar and gray water technologies.
- As stewards for the building for the last 12 years, we have been able to seal the roofs and windows in the main building, remove hundreds of tons of debris, secure the building, and put it back into the public conscience with our events. As these temporary fixes approach their 7th year, we are constantly faced with replacing much of the original preservation work. Sections of the brick façade desperately need repointing. At some point in the not-too-distant future, the resources required for some of these preservation challenges will fall outside the scope of our organization.

We hope that we have given you some serious facts for your consideration. For additional information on the building and the project, please visit www.buffalocentralterminal.org.

We would certainly appreciate the opportunity to show you the building and grounds and to discuss some of these points, should the opportunity arise. I can be reached at (716) 635-4024 or at mmiller@mtb.com during regular business hours. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely yours,

Michael J. Miller
President
Central Terminal Restoration Corp.

