

Buses Support Smart Development

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*By Corey Bearak, **The Public Ought To Know***

Queens, NY – Attend a meeting and you never know what ideas come your way. Just that way last Thursday when I responded to an invite to attend a program hosted by the New York State Commercial Association of Realtors in Plainview, Long Island.

The discussion focused on the election, the economy and what would keep and attract families. Much of the discussion focused on downtowns and projects to revitalize them. Housing costs and local amenities obviously play a role. Other than the proximity of downtowns to rail to connect workers to jobs, primarily in Manhattan, public transit did not come into play; well it should, especially with regard to bus public transit.

In discussions after listening to the presentations, it becomes clear affordability becomes the greatest factor. Often those discussions go to how to make housing less of a burden for workers and families. Less, if any, discussion involves transportation. Perhaps more should. If families require a car or two to get everywhere else (and maybe even near the railroad or other transit, thinking to life in the five boroughs of New York City), ownership and insurance could take \$500 to 1,000 each month from these families. Neither figure includes gas or maintenance.

Imagine how government empowers families when it adds adequate bus public transit to the mix. \$500 to \$1000 towards an apartment, condo, co-op, or dare I say, a single-family home. So as governments look to encourage housing and strengthen communities, it makes sense to devote planning to make bus public transit convenient for residents to get to their shopping, education, medical and other appointments. Nothing wrong with a policy that supports affordability, sustainability and green industry.

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