Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan for the Genesee/Finger Lakes Region

November 2007
The Coordinated Public Transit/ Human Services Transportation Plan for the Genesee/ Finger Lakes Region was prepared by the Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) in cooperation with representatives from the following agencies and organizations:

- Genesee Transportation Council (GTC)
- NYS Department of Transportation
- County Area Transportation Service (Ontario County)
- Rochester Works
- Genesee/ Livingston/ Orleans Wyoming (GLOW) Workforce Investment Board
- Wayne/ Finger Lakes Workforce Investment Board
- Medical Motor Service
- Livingston/ Wyoming ARC
- Monroe County
- City of Rochester
- Genesee County
- Livingston County
- Ontario County
- Orleans County
- Seneca County
- Wayne County
- Wyoming County
- Yates County

by

Stuart I. Brown Associates, Inc.
Planning and Management Consultants

This study was funded with US Department of Transportation planning funds made available through the Genesee Transportation Council
# Table of Contents

## Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1

## Overview of Existing Transportation Services ......................................................... 8
  - Public Transit ........................................................................................................... 8
  - For-Profit Transportation Providers ................................................................. 10
  - Specialized Not-For-Profit Transportation Providers ........................................ 11
  - Private Human Service Agencies ....................................................................... 11
  - Government Human Service Agencies .............................................................. 14
  - Medicaid Transportation ..................................................................................... 14
  - Volunteer Services ............................................................................................. 16

## Strategic Plan ............................................................................................................. 17

### Strategies and Recommended Actions .................................................................... 17
  - Strategy #1. Address gaps in public transportation service areas in the Rochester suburbs and rural areas ............................................................... 17
  - Strategy #2. Expand weekend and evening services in suburban and rural areas ........ 20
  - Strategy #3. Improve communications between public transit providers and their customers ................................................................. 21
  - Strategy #4. Improve access to information about private transportation services .... 23
  - Strategy #5. Facilitate public transit connections across jurisdictional boundaries .... 25
  - Strategy #6. Maintain affordability and enhance customer service in providing public transportation services .................................................... 26
  - Strategy #7. Continue to support specialized transportation services and volunteer transportation services in areas where public transit is not sufficient or appropriate ............................................................... 27
  - Strategy #8. Facilitate cooperation and coordination among public transit and human services transportation providers to reduce costs and improve efficiencies 28

## Implementation Framework ...................................................................................... 31

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Outreach Summary
- Notes from Focus Group meetings, stakeholder interviews and public workshops
- Fact Sheets
- Employer Survey Report
- Comments to CoordinatedTransportationPlan@gmail.com

### Appendix B: Demographic tables and maps
1. Census Block Group Statistics
   - a. Households without Vehicles
   - b. Seniors
   - c. Persons with Disabilities
   - d. Median Income
2. Employment by Zip Code
Introduction

Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to identify ways to improve transportation services in the nine-county Rochester/Genesee region for persons with disabilities, older adults and individuals with lower incomes. It will provide a framework for improved coordination between and among public transit providers and human service agencies.

The overall goals of the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan are to:

- Improve the delivery of transportation services for the target population
- Generate efficiencies in operation that can lead to increased levels of service
- Encourage cooperation and coordination among transportation providers
- Provide a framework for project development and the allocation of financial resources

The Plan will guide decisions regarding the funding of specific projects that would receive funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), including Section 5316 - Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), Section 5317 – New Freedom, and Section 5310 – Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities.

The Plan identifies priority projects that will address the transportation needs of the target population. Priority projects identified in the plan will be incorporated into the region’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which identifies all federally funded transportation projects that are being implemented, as well as the State Transportation Improvement Program.

The Plan also identifies other initiatives that are underway or recommended to improve the coordination of public transit and human service transportation. The recommendations are intended to improve efficiency in the use of transportation resources in order to enhance access for clients, minimize duplication of service and provide more cost-effective service.

Background

Following the passage of SAFETEA-LU - the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users in August 2005, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announced a requirement that projects selected for funding under the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (also referred to as Section 5310), JARC, and New Freedom programs be “derived from a locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan” and that the plan be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private, and non-profit transportation and human services providers and participation by members of the public.”
Federal Transit Administration Funding Sources

Section 5310 – Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities Program

- Provides grant funding to private nonprofit groups to meet the transportation needs of elderly and disabled persons when other public and private transportation services are unavailable, insufficient or inappropriate to meeting those needs.

- Funds are distributed to each State based the number of elderly and disabled persons. States apply for grant funds on behalf of local private not-for-profit agencies and certain eligible public entities. Grants are distributed annually and must be matched with a 20% local share.

- The NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), through its Public Transportation Bureau, administers the program in New York State. An inter-agency review committee selects grantees.

- New York’s Section 5310 State Management Plan specifies that 5310 funds may only be used for the purchase of vehicles.

Section 5316 – Job Access Reverse Commute Program (JARC)

- Grants are provided to local government authorities, agencies and not-for-profit agencies to develop services to transport residents of urban centers, rural and suburban areas to suburban employment opportunities.

- Federal funds are allocated on a formula basis, with 60% to areas with population in excess of 200,000. The Federal/local share is 80/20 for capital projects and mobility management and 50/50 for operations projects.

- The Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) is anticipated to be named the “designated recipient” for the distribution of JARC funds within Monroe County and acts as the “pass-through” agent for those organizations that will receive funding. For Federal Fiscal Year 2007, approximately $274,000 is available in Monroe County for JARC funding.

- The New York State Department of Transportation will allocate funds for projects in the Genesee/ Finger Lakes region outside of Monroe County.

- Grants can be used for:
  o Capital and operating costs of equipment and facilities that relate to providing access to jobs
  o Promoting transit for workers with nontraditional work schedules
  o Use of transit vouchers
  o Use of employer-provided transportation

- Eligible activities include, but are not limited to:
  o Late night and weekend service
  o “Guaranteed ride home” service
  o Shuttle service
Federal Transit Administration Funding Sources (cont’d)

- Expanded fixed-route public transit routes
- Demand-responsive service
- Ridesharing and carpooling activities
- Transit related aspects of bicycling
- Local car loan programs that assist individuals in purchasing and maintaining vehicles for shared rides
- Marketing promotions for JARC activities
- Supporting the administrative and related expenses for voucher programs
- Using Geographic Information System (GIS) tools and/or implementing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Integrating automated regional public transit and human service transportation information, scheduling and dispatch functions
- Deploying vehicle position-monitoring systems
- Establishing regional mobility managers or transportation brokerage activities

Section 5317 – New Freedom Program

- Formula grant program for public or alternative transportation services and facility improvements to address the needs of persons with disabilities. Funds cover capital and operating costs to expand services beyond those which are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- Eligible activities include:
  - enhancing public transportation beyond the minimum requirements of the ADA;
  - providing “feeder” services;
  - making accessibility improvements to transit and intermodal stations;
  - providing travel training;
  - purchasing vehicles to support new accessible taxi, ridesharing, and/or vanpooling programs;
  - covering the administration and expenses of new voucher programs for transportation services offered by human service agencies;
  - supporting new volunteer driver and aide programs; and
  - supporting new mobility management and coordination programs among public and/or human service transportation providers.

- Federal funds are allocated on a formula basis, with 60% to areas with population in excess of 200,000. Federal/local share is 80/20 for capital projects and 50/50 for operations.

- For Federal Fiscal Year 2007, approximately $294,000 in New Freedom funds has been allocated to Monroe County. RGRTA is anticipated to be named as the “designated recipient” for these funds, is responsible for administering a competitive solicitation process and acts as the “pass-through” agent for agencies receiving funds.

- The New York State Department of Transportation will allocate funds for projects in the Genesee/ Finger Lakes region outside of Monroe County.
Methodology

The Rochester Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA), assisted by the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC), issued a Request for Proposals for the preparation of a Coordinated Public Transit/ Human Services Transportation Plan for the nine-county Genesee/ Finger Lakes Region.  RGRTA selected the consulting firm of Stuart I. Brown Associates, a division of LaBella Associates, P.C., to prepare the Plan.

A Steering Committee met a total of four times to guide the preparation of the Coordinated Plan. The Steering Committee included representation from:

- all nine counties and the City of Rochester, appointed by the chief elected official of each jurisdiction
- public transit (RGRTA; Ontario County CATS)
- not-for-profit transportation provider (Medical Motor Service; Livingston/ Wyoming ARC)
- all three Workforce Investment Boards
- NYS Department of Transportation

The Steering Committee included representatives from County Offices for the Aging (3), Department of Social Services (1), County Legislatures (2) and County Planning Departments (2). Table 1 presents a list of the Steering Committee members.

Staff from RGRTA and GTC assisted the consultant to prepare the final Coordinated Plan for adoption by the RGRTA and GTC governing boards.

Outreach and Public Involvement

SAFETEA-LU requires that the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan be “developed through a process that includes representatives of public, private and nonprofit transportation and human services providers and participation by the public.” The following narrative describes the activities that were conducted to ensure that all interested parties had an opportunity to participate in the preparation of this Plan.

Focus Group Meetings

A series of Focus Group meetings were conducted to ensure that the perspectives of constituents that have a stake in the plan were incorporated into the planning process.

Regional focus group meetings held in Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates counties included, at a minimum, representatives of public and private transportation providers, government and private human service agencies and workforce development agencies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Designee to Steering Committee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monroe County</td>
<td>Jerry Helfer, Assistant County Executive and Kara Halstead, Senior Staff Assistant / Subsequently appointed Corinda Crossdale, Office for the Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Rochester</td>
<td>John Thomas, City Engineering Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesee County</td>
<td>Mary Pat Hancock, County Legislator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston County</td>
<td>David Woods, Planning Director Subsequently appointed Denise Bentley, Transportation Broker for Department of Social Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario County</td>
<td>Angela Ellis, County Planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orleans County</td>
<td>Henry Smith, Jr., County Legislator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seneca County</td>
<td>Harriet Haynes, County Planner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne County</td>
<td>Penny Shockley, Director, Department of Aging and Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming County</td>
<td>John Prospero (Livingston/ Wyoming ARC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yates County</td>
<td>Kathryn Smeenk, Office for the Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYSDOT</td>
<td>Dan Hallowell (Region 4) Rich Quodomine (DOT Albany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTC</td>
<td>Robert Torzynski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGRTA</td>
<td>Debie Himmelsbach, replaced by Raymond LeChase; Charles Switzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CATS (Ontario Co.)</td>
<td>Janet Starr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochester Works (WIB)</td>
<td>Matt Hurlbutt Subsequently appointed Connie Felder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOW WIB</td>
<td>Mary Lou Hamm, Area Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne/ Finger Lakes WIB</td>
<td>Karen Springmeier, Executive Director (appointed Michael Woloson)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Motors</td>
<td>William McDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston/ Wyoming ARC</td>
<td>John Prospero</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following focus group meetings were held within Monroe County:

- Persons with disabilities: Included representatives from organizations and transportation providers that serve persons with disabilities
- Private (for-profit and not-for-profit) transportation providers. All recipients of 5310 funding for vehicle acquisition were invited to participate.
- Transportation to Work: Included representatives of workforce development agencies, transportation providers, and businesses
- Monroe County human service agencies: Included representatives from Foster Care and the Department of Social Services as well as the public transit provider

Appendix A includes a list of the dates of all Focus Group meetings, notes from the meetings and a summary of the findings.

Stakeholder Interviews

The following interviews were conducted in order to document best practices and identify needs among particular groups of consumers.

- William McDonald, Executive Director, Medical Motor Service: Not-for-profit transportation services
- Sister Ann Guerin, Give-A-Lift Program, LifeSpan: Volunteer transportation service for seniors
- Nan Watts, Retired and Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP), LifeSpan

Notes from the stakeholder interviews are included in Appendix A: Outreach Summary.

Public Meetings

Four public workshops and informational meetings were conducted during the course of the planning process.

- Toward the beginning of the planning process, a public workshop was conducted at a central location (Rochester Public Library) to present an overview of the plan and to receive public input regarding the need for transportation services.
- Toward the end of the planning process, three public informational meetings were held in Canandaigua, Rochester and Batavia to present the initial findings from the planning process and to receive public comments on the draft strategies.

Notes from the public meetings are included in Appendix A.
Fact Sheets

Two Fact Sheets were prepared to publicize the planning process. The first Fact Sheet presented an overview of the planning process, introduced the Steering Committee, and provided an e-mail address for public comments on transportation needs and the coordinated plan. The second Fact Sheet summarized the proposed strategies and recommendations in advance of the public informational meetings.

The Fact Sheets were distributed primarily via e-mail. Copies of the Fact Sheets are included in Appendix A.

Survey

An on-line survey of employers in the nine-county region was conducted in order to identify transportation-related concerns and opportunities. A report highlighting the results of the survey is included in Appendix A.

Components of Plan

As specified by FTA, the coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan includes the following components:

- An assessment of available services
- An assessment of needs
- Strategies to address identified transportation needs among target populations
- Relative priorities for implementation based on resources, time and feasibility for implementing the specific strategies and recommended actions identified.
Overview of Existing Transportation Services

Many seniors, individuals with disabilities, persons with low incomes and other area residents who do not utilize private vehicles must utilize the existing network of transportation providers. This information is based on ridership data from public and private transportation providers as well as reports from representatives of organizations that serve seniors, persons with disabilities and low income households.

The types of transportation available include:
- Public transit
- For-profit transportation providers
- Specialized not-for-profit transportation providers
- Private human service agencies
- Government human service agencies
- Volunteer services

Public Transit

Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA) – RGRTA was created by the New York State Legislature in 1969 and is authorized to provide public transportation in its member counties. RGRTA provides public transportation services, including paratransit for persons with disabilities, in Rochester and Monroe County as well as in Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne and Wyoming Counties.

Regional Transit Service (RTS) serves the City of Rochester, Monroe County and some municipalities outside Monroe County with fixed route service. All of the major medical facilities are accessible by public bus service. Nearly all of the City of Rochester’s population resides within 1/4 mile of an RTS bus stop. All of the RTS buses meet requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for accessibility to persons with disabilities. For City residents who are physically able to use the bus, this is the most cost-effective means of transportation at $1.25 per ride throughout the RTS service area.

Lift Line offers demand responsive¹, curb-to-curb service to persons with disabilities with advance reservation. The service area corresponds to regular RTS bus lines, excluding Park & Ride routes, and includes all of the major medical facilities. Riders must be certified as unable to utilize the regular RTS buses. Requests for rides must be made by 5:00 p.m. the day before the

¹ “Demand responsive” service is defined as service that is scheduled based upon consumer requests, as opposed to “fixed route” service that follows a regular route and schedule.
ride. Lift Line will schedule pick-ups and drop-offs for up to one hour before or after the requested time. The fare is based on distance traveled per one-way trip: 1 mile or less: $1.50; 1-3 miles: $1.75; 3-20 miles: $2.50; more than 20 miles: $5.00. Lift Line also offers same-day service, as available, at an additional cost ($10).

**RGRTA’s Regional Subsidiaries** provide public transportation within Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne and Wyoming counties.

- **Batavia Bus Service (B-Line) (Genesee County)** – Fixed route service is available within the City of Batavia, to Genesee Community College, and between Batavia and the Village of LeRoy. The fare \(^2\) is $1.00 per one-way trip within the Batavia and $3.00 for the route between LeRoy and Batavia. Demand responsive service is available within the City of Batavia and the Village of LeRoy and in the rest of the County. The fare is $3.00 for countywide service.

- **Livingston Area Transportation Service (LATS)** – Fixed route service operates in and around Geneseo and serves the SUNY Geneseo campus. Fixed routes have also been established countywide. Demand responsive service is also available. The fare is $2.00 for fixed routes, $1.00 for dial-a-ride within a Village, and $2.00 for inter-community dial-a-ride trips. Scheduled service provides round-trip rides from Dansville and Lakeville to major medical destinations in Rochester on Tuesday and Thursday mornings for $6.50 one-way.

- **Orleans Transportation Service (OTS)** was established by RGRTA in 2003. Fixed route service operates within the Villages of Medina and Albion and between Albion and Medina, Albion and Batavia, and Albion and Brockport. One-way fares are $1.00 within a Village and $3.00 for inter-municipal trips. Demand-responsive service is available countywide for $3.00 per one-way trip.

- **Seneca Transportation Service (STS)** was established by RGRTA in 2004. Services include fixed routes, including service to Geneva, as well as demand responsive service at designated times and in specific areas. Fares range from $1.00 for the northern routes to $3.00 for demand-responsive service.

- **Wayne Area Transportation Service (WATS)** – Fixed routes include: a clockwise and counter clockwise “loop” that serves Newark, Palmyra, Marion, Williamson, East Williamson, Sodus, Wallington, Alton, Wolcott, North Rose, Rose, Clyde, and Lyons; a “Route 31 Shuttle” between Macedon and Lyons; and the “Route 104 Connector” which makes morning and evening trips between Newark and Webster and connects with RTS service in Webster. One-way fare for fixed route service is $1.00. Demand responsive service is available countywide for $3.00 each way. A demand-responsive service provides transportation to medical destinations in Clifton Springs, Geneva, Victor and Rochester for $13.00.

- **Wyoming Area Transportation Service (WYTS)** – Fixed route service with deviations is offered with three interlocking “loops” that intersect in the Village of Warsaw. Demand-responsive service is offered in the Villages of Arcade, Warsaw and Perry.

\(^2\) Seniors and persons with disabilities receive half-price fares on all RGRTA subsidiaries.
One-way fare is $2.00 for loop service and $1.50 for dial-a-ride. WYTS also offers demand responsive service to dialysis clinics in Batavia and Rochester on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

**County Area Transportation Service (CATS)** serves Ontario County with seven fixed routes as well as county-wide demand responsive service. The fixed routes operate seven days per week, except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Two routes serve the Cities of Geneva and Canandaigua; and three routes provide service to Victor, Manchester, Shortsville, Clifton Springs, Phelps and Hopewell; and one provides service to the Village of Naples. Demand responsive service is available in areas not served by the fixed route service Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The base fare is $1.00 for fixed route, $2.00 for route deviation, and $5.00 one-way for demand responsive service. Seniors and persons with disabilities are eligible for half-price fares.

**Yates County** currently has no public transportation. However, in 2007 Yates County prepared a Strategic Plan for Public Transportation with funding from the Genesee Transportation Council.

**For-Profit Transportation Providers**

Several for-profit private carriers provide transportation to medical and other services. Some carriers only transport ambulatory patients, some offer wheelchair service only and others offer a range of services.

Ambulatory providers that serve Monroe County include:

- Marge’s Trolley
- Apple Transportation
- Genesee Transportation
- Heirloom Senior Services
- Helping Hand for Elderly & Disabled
- Services for Seniors
- Tiffany Transportation Services
- VIP Companion Care, Inc.

The costs range from $9 to $15 for a one-way trip within the City of Rochester. Service for “outer suburbs” may be up to $50 for a one-way trip.

Wheelchair carriers include:

- Able Medical Transport
- Genesee Transportation
- Handicare Transportation
- Medicab
- Monroe Medi-Trans
- Rochester Medical Transportation
The costs range from $20 to $48 for a one-way trip within the City of Rochester. Additional charges apply for longer trips. Most services require advance reservations and many are not available evenings or weekends.

Several taxi companies operate in the City of Rochester and Monroe County. Taxi service is limited in the regional counties. Some companies have only one vehicle and many limit their service area. The cost per ride varies.

**Specialized Not-For-Profit Transportation Providers**

**Medical Motor Service**, based in Rochester, is a private, not-for-profit organization that provides transportation to individuals and agency clients to medical appointments and other locations within Monroe County. Medical Motor Service (MMS) is strictly a transportation provider that transports clients of other human service agencies to medical and other appointments. MMS has ongoing contracts with such agencies as the Monroe County Office for the Aging for transportation to senior nutrition centers, Monroe County Foster Care, Mary Cariola Children’s Center, Monroe County ARC, and others. Transportation is provided in cars, vans and minibuses, and includes wheelchair accessible transportation. Staff are trained to provide special assistance to riders and to transport very young children. During the 2006 fiscal year, Medical Motor Service provided 428,000 one-way trips.

The Orleans County **Community Action Transportation Service (CATS)**, based in Albion, operates a fleet of buses to provide transportation to seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons from low-income households. Orleans County CATS contracts with the following agencies, among others, to provide transportation services:

- Orleans County ARC for transportation to day treatment
- Orleans County Department of Social Services for in-county medical transportation
- Genesee County Office for the Aging for transportation for frail elderly

In Yates County, Pro-Action of Steuben and Yates Counties, which also administers the Yates County Office for the Aging (OFA), operates a fleet of four vehicles to transport seniors and persons with low incomes to medical appointments. The OFA/ Pro-Action transportation service also provides transportation to clients of human service agencies such as the Yates County Department of Social Services (Medicaid-eligible clients to group therapy at a mental health facility.)

**Private Human Service Agencies**

Many private human service agencies operate extensive fleets of vehicles to transport their clients and consumers to programs, appointments and other destinations. These agencies typically provide services to seniors, persons with disabilities and persons with low incomes. As transportation is needed to enable clients and consumers to access agency services, these providers have established in-house transportation services. Most of these agencies provide transportation exclusively to their own clients and consumers. However, some make their vehicles and drivers available for public service or service to other human service agencies.
ARC Chapters

Each of the ARC chapters that operate within the region either provide transportation directly or arrange for their consumers to be transported from their residences to “day habilitation” and sheltered employment sites at central locations. In addition, most ARC chapters provide limited transportation services to their consumers who reside in community residences to medical and other appointments.

The following ARC chapters utilize their fleets of vehicles exclusively to transport ARC consumers:

- Arc of Monroe
- Genesee County ARC
- Cayuga/ Seneca ARC
- Yates County ARC

The following ARC chapters operate vehicles to transport their own consumers and utilize these vehicles to transport individuals who are not ARC consumers:

- Livingston/ Wyoming ARC
- Ontario ARC
- Wayne ARC

These local ARC chapters utilize their vehicles to provide transportation to clients of other human service agencies such as Departments of Social Services for Medicaid-funded transportation. Such agencies frequently arrange for the ARC to provide transportation when wheelchair-equipped vehicles are needed.

Some of the ARC chapters supplement their in-house transportation services by utilizing public or not-for-profit transportation providers. For example, Genesee County ARC, Livingston/Wyoming ARC, Orleans County ARC and Wayne ARC utilize public transit to bring ARC consumers to daily programs. The Arc of Monroe contracts with Medical Motor Service to transport some of its consumers to day treatment programs.

The Orleans ARC does not operate any vehicles. All of its transportation is provided either by public transit or by Orleans County CATS.

Nursing Homes

Several nursing homes throughout the region own and operate vehicles to transport residents to medical appointments, recreational and other destinations. Nursing homes that have received subsidized vehicles through the 5310 program include:

- Fairport Baptist Home
- Park Ridge Nursing Home
- Clifton Springs Hospital – affiliated nursing home
- Geneva General Hospital – affiliated nursing home
- Soldiers & Sailors Hospital - affiliated nursing home
Other Not-for-Profit Human Service Agencies

Lakeview Mental Health operates community residences, assists clients to find independent housing, provides case management services, and operates a social club for people with mental illnesses. Lakeview Mental Health operates a fleet of vehicles that transports clients in Ontario, Seneca and Yates Counties to mental health appointments. (8 vehicles) Lakeview also provides transportation under arrangements with other not-for-profit agencies.

Several other not-for-profit agencies that serve persons with disabilities operate fleets of vehicles, many of which were purchased with subsidies from the Section 5310 program, to provide transportation exclusively to agency clients. The following list provides a brief description of these agencies and indicates the number of vehicles acquired with 5310 subsidies.

- Continuing Developmental Services (CDS), based in Perinton, Monroe County, operates 20 residences for persons with disabilities as well as employment training and placement, day habilitation programs in Webster and Perinton, and family support programs. CDS operates a fleet of vans to transport its consumers. (8 vehicles)

- Lifetime Assistance operates community residences, day programs, vocational training and other services to persons with developmental disabilities. Transportation is included in the services provided. (11 vehicles)

- Heritage Christian Services operates 51 community residences as well as 13 day habilitation sites in Monroe, Erie and Genesee Counties. The organization also provides employment and other services. (7 vehicles)

- Rochester Rehabilitation Center provides physical, mental health, and vocational rehabilitation services to people with disabilities. (5 vehicles)

- St. Ann’s Community is a not-for-profit organization providing a varied range of services and care levels designed to meet the individual needs of older adults. Services include a 388-bed skilled nursing facility (St. Ann’s Home) as well as independent and retirement living options, assisted living, short term rehabilitation, transitional care and Adult Day Services. (4 vehicles)

- The Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc. (CPGR) was formed in 2001 to provide developmental and social programs and services to residents in the northeast sector of Rochester and throughout the greater Rochester area. (3 vehicles)

- The Norman Howard School (NHS) is an independent day school for students with learning disabilities located at 275 Pinnacle Rd. in Henrietta. (1 vehicle)

- The Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Rochester operates three residential facilities and provides supportive services to people with epilepsy, seizure disorders, traumatic brain injuries and other conditions. (1 vehicle)
Government Human Service Agencies

Human services provided by government agencies, predominantly at the County level, often include a transportation component to ensure that clients are able to access needed services. While some County agencies operate vehicles to provide transportation directly to clients, many, including virtually all Monroe County departments, arrange for public or private transportation providers to transport clients to services.

Medicaid Transportation

Medicaid regulations require Counties to ensure that clients have transportation to their medical appointments. Each county has an approved Medicaid Transportation Plan that specifies the transportation that is eligible for Medicaid reimbursement.

Monroe County utilizes a brokerage to arrange for rides for Medicaid-eligible patients. The brokerage, Medical Answering Service, has a flat-fee contract with Monroe County to provide all required transportation to medical appointments, consistent with the County’s Medicaid Transportation Plan. Means of transportation range from public transit, for which bus passes are frequently issued, to specialized services such as ambulances or stretcher vans.

Managed care, provided by the Monroe Plan, arranges for transportation for clients to access medical appointments. The Monroe Plan distributes bus passes whenever possible, and arranges for the least expensive cost of alternative transportation for clients who cannot use transit to access their appointments.

Ontario County contracts all of its Medicaid transportation to the for-profit transportation provider that operates its public transportation service. The company arranges for transportation via public transportation, where feasible, or via private providers.

Each of the other counties in the region employ at least one staff person in the Department of Social Services (or equivalent) to coordinate Medicaid-funded transportation. The transportation method must be pre-approved in order to be eligible for reimbursement.

Genesee County utilizes a network of volunteer drivers, public transit and private providers.

In Livingston County, a “Transportation Broker” within the Department of Social Services arranges for the least expensive means of transportation, starting with LATS fixed route and demand-responsive service. For medical appointments in Rochester, DSS clients are instructed to schedule the appointments for Tuesday or Thursday mornings, and to utilize the medical shuttle operated by LATS. Volunteer drivers also provide transportation to medical appointments.

Orleans County contracts with CATS (Community Action Transportation Service) to provide transportation to Medicaid clients within Orleans County and to Brockport. If public transportation can be used, Medicaid funds pay the fare. Out-of-county trips, primarily to Buffalo and Rochester area facilities, are provided by staff drivers. Wheelchair and other specialized services are contracted to other vendors.

The Seneca County Division of Human Services relies largely on the Seneca Transit Service to transport clients to medical appointments. DHS also operates its own vehicles to transport clients to out-of-county appointments. Wheelchair and other specialized trips are contracted to private vendors.
Wayne County operates its own vehicles to transport clients to medical appointments, encourages the use of public transportation, and arranges for transportation with private vendors.

Wyoming County directs its clients to utilize public transportation for medical appointments within the county, and operates vans to transport clients to medical appointments outside of the county. DSS utilizes WYTS and private vendors for wheelchair and other specialized transportation.

Yates County arranges transportation on a limited basis for Medicaid-eligible clients for patients who have no other means of transportation. Providers include Pro-Action of Steuben and Yates Counties, taxis and other private providers.

Offices for the Aging

Many of the region’s Offices for the Aging provide or arrange for transportation for seniors to access medical appointments.

- Ontario and Yates counties operate their own vehicles for this service.
- Genesee County OFA contracts with Orleans County CATS to provide transportation to medical and other appointments for “frail elderly.”

Some OFAs provide transportation to meal sites.

- The Monroe County Office for the Aging contracts with Medical Motor Service to transport seniors to the 14 Senior Centers throughout the county. The Senior Centers offer meals and other services to seniors.
- Livingston County OFA utilizes LATS and Wyoming County OFA utilizes WYTS to transport seniors to meal sites on certain days of the week.

Public Health

Several County Health Departments arrange for transportation to Adult Day Health Care. Typically, this transportation is provided by a private transportation provider.

Mental Health

County Mental Health services often include transportation to mental health appointments. Some counties, including Seneca and Genesee, operate a fleet of vehicles with staff drivers to transport clients to appointments and day treatment programs. Other counties, including Livingston, Wayne and Wyoming, utilize public transit. Livingston County also utilizes volunteer drivers to transport patients to appointments.

Preschool for children with disabilities

Transportation to preschool for children with disabilities is a service that counties are required to provide. In Yates County, the Yates County ARC provides this service for children in the Penn Yan School District. Other counties contract with private, for-profit providers.
Foster Care

The federal foster care program provides funds for transportation for required services, such as monitored visitation. Monroe County contracts with Medical Motor Service, which employs drivers trained to safely transport very young children. However, federal funding is not available when children are placed with relatives outside of the foster care system.

Veterans Services

The federal Veterans Administration provides reimbursement for certain veterans’ travel costs for medical appointments. Nearly all of the Veterans Services agencies operate vehicles with staff and/or volunteer drivers to take veterans to appointments at various Veterans Administration facilities.

Volunteer Services

Many churches and other organizations organize volunteers to help bring people to medical appointments. These services depend on volunteer drivers as well as volunteer coordinators to take requests for rides and schedule rides with an available driver.

Lifespan has organized a consortium of organizations, representing faith-based, social service and government agencies, which use volunteer drivers to transport residents of Monroe County to medical appointments. Lifespan Volunteer Services recruits, trains and places drivers with volunteer-based transportation programs. The program provides volunteers with supplemental accident and liability insurance coverage and other benefits. In addition, Lifespan Volunteer Services will help develop new volunteer transportation programs, especially in underserved and rural areas of Monroe County. The program was supported initially by the Rochester Primary Care Network Health Initiative Fund. It is currently financed by Lifespan.

Formal and informal volunteer services are available in the rural counties through organizations such as churches, Catholic Family Center, and the American Red Cross of Northern Livingston County. Faith in Action of Catholic Charities of Livingston County operates a volunteer driver program utilizing trained drivers. Several Departments of Social Services, including Livingston and Genesee Counties, utilize volunteer drivers to transport patients to medical appointments.
Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan includes two components:

- strategies and recommended actions; and
- implementation framework

Strategies and Recommended Actions

The Strategic Plan recommends the following eight strategies:

1. Address gaps in public transportation service areas in the Rochester suburbs and rural areas
2. Expand weekend and evening services in suburban and rural areas
3. Improve communications between public transit providers and their customers
4. Improve access to information about public and private transportation services
5. Facilitate public transit connections across jurisdictional boundaries
6. Maintain affordability and enhance customer service in providing public transportation services
7. Continue to support specialized transportation services and volunteer transportation services in areas where public transit is not sufficient or appropriate
8. Facilitate cooperation and coordination among public transit and human services transportation providers to reduce costs and improve efficiencies

The following narrative includes a summary of the transportation needs and analysis of issues and opportunities that provide the basis for each strategy as well as descriptions of “best practices” that were identified during the planning process. A set of recommended actions are proposed to implement each strategy.

Strategy #1. Address gaps in public transportation service areas in the Rochester suburbs and rural areas

Needs

Certain parts of Monroe County lack regular fixed route services. In many areas, fixed route service is limited to Park & Ride, which operates only in the early morning and late afternoon. Fixed routes typically operate between suburban locations and downtown Rochester; service between Monroe County suburbs is virtually non-existent.
As the Lift Line service area is only available within ¾ mile of existing fixed routes, excluding Park & Ride, there are many areas in Monroe County where Lift Line service is not available. (See Figure 1).

In Ontario County, fixed route service operates within the two cities (Geneva and Canandaigua) and along established corridors. Demand-responsive service is available elsewhere in the County.

In Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne and Wyoming Counties, fixed route service is limited to loops within villages and along certain corridors. Demand-responsive service is available elsewhere and is typically limited as to days and hours of service.
There is currently no public transportation service in Yates County. Yates County has recently prepared a Strategic Plan for Public Transportation which may lead to the establishment of public transportation service.

The lack of public transportation severely impedes the mobility of many seniors, persons with disabilities, individuals with low incomes and others who do not own cars or drive private vehicles. While demand-responsive service provides an alternative means of transportation for individuals in many areas of the region, additional fixed route service would enable persons who depend on public transportation to schedule appointments around the fixed route schedule and support independent living.

Fixed route service is not currently available to many employment locations. The lack of transportation to work impedes many job-seekers from obtaining employment.

**Issues and Opportunities**

The establishment or extension of fixed route services is costly. Public transit operators typically will not create or expand service to unserved areas without a partner who is willing to provide a financial subsidy and/or guarantee a certain number of riders. Some additional service may be provided by human service agencies or other transportation providers in cooperation with public transit providers (see Strategy #8.)

Lift Line service is designed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Extending the service area would require additional financial resources. Future expansion that would include service to existing residential facilities that house significant numbers of people with disabilities would improve the quality of life for these individuals.

Private human service agencies may be able to supplement public transportation services in certain areas. For example, several of the regional ARCs offer transportation services to other human service agencies.

Increasing the use of public transit among suburban residents may be helped by the creation of “satellite” transit hubs in various suburban locations. Such facilities may incorporate services such as retail, food service or day care centers and would provide a comfortable and convenient place to access public transportation. Circulator or “feeder” routes would bring suburban riders to fixed routes.
Recommended Actions

a. Public transit providers should expand fixed route services to additional areas as warranted by demand and as additional resources are available.

b. RGRTA should expand the Lift Line service area as warranted by demand and as additional resources are available.

c. RGRTA should seek to partner, where possible and feasible, with other agencies to extend service.

d. RGRTA should establish public transit satellite stations in various Monroe County locations to enable riders to travel from suburb-to-suburb without the need to transfer in downtown Rochester, as warranted by demand and as additional resources are available.

e. Yates County should take action to establish public transportation service, consistent with the Yates County Strategic Plan for Public Transportation.

Strategy #2. Expand weekend and evening services in suburban and rural areas

Needs

Most of the RTS services between the City of Rochester and its suburban areas operate weekday mornings and evenings only. Public transportation services operated by Ontario County CATS and RGRTA’s regional subsidiaries end at 5, 6, or 7:00 pm. Although CATS provides some weekend service, the RGRTA regional subsidiaries do not.

Many entry-level jobs are at service establishments, institutions and factories. Shift times are rarely 9-5. The lack of transportation is a significant obstacle to employment for many potential workers. In addition, the lack of service in the evenings and on weekends makes it difficult for transit-dependent persons to utilize public transit to access employment or to travel to appointments, shopping and recreation.

Issues and Opportunities

Extending the time of service faces similar obstacles to expanding service areas. Public transit providers will need financial support or guaranteed ridership from businesses or institutions in order to provide services during evenings and weekends.

The ability to access public transit service one evening per week and one Saturday per month may be acceptable to residents in the rural areas of the region. People who depend on public transportation would schedule activities and appointments for those days that transportation is available.
Potential sources of funding for improved service to non-traditional work locations and shifts include federal funding through the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program.

**Recommended Actions**

a. Public transit providers should establish evening and weekend service in the regional counties as warranted by demand and as additional resources are available, in coordination with private employers.

b. Public transit providers should continue and/or establish fixed route services to the Rochester suburbs, particularly during evenings and weekends, to provide access to suburban employment centers, as warranted by demand and as additional resources are available.

**Strategy #3. Improve communications between public transit providers and their customers**

**Needs**

Communication between transportation providers and their customers is necessary to provide information about services, to obtain feedback about existing services and to determine how effective the existing services are in meeting needs.

Information about available transit services is not always accessible to people in need of transportation. For example:

- Many people, including human service agency employees who advise potential riders, find that bus schedules are difficult to understand.

- Persons with disabilities who rely on public transportation may have special needs. For example, websites need to accommodate viewing software used by the visually-impaired; too often, links are not identified except by the word “link.”

- Translation services may be needed for riders who have only basic proficiency in English.

- Some riders find the automated telephone information system maintained by RGRTA to be cumbersome and time-consuming to use to obtain bus and schedule information.

- In Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne and Wyoming Counties, in particular, public awareness of transit services could be improved.

Municipalities do not always consider transit access in designating areas for higher density housing or in reviewing designs for residential facilities for seniors and persons with disabilities. As a result, such facilities are located where public transit service is very limited or unavailable, or buses cannot access the main entrance to the facility to pick up passengers.
Transportation providers should distribute accurate information about available transportation services on a continual basis. At times, this is needed to counter incorrect or misleading information that may be distributed by other entities. For example, it has been reported that, in some cases, managers of senior housing facilities in Ontario County advertise that public transportation is available. Potential renters then assumed that the facilities are located along a fixed route, when in reality only demand-responsive service is available.

Public transit providers need to be made aware of the locations of employment sites that may be suitable for extended fixed route service. Job training staff need current information regarding which employment sites are accessible via public transit.

Monroe County agencies, in cooperation with RGRTA, need to establish a system to monitor the distribution of bus passes. Currently, clients may receive multiple monthly or multi-ride passes from numerous agencies, such as the Medicaid transportation broker, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and job training. The distribution of duplicate passes could result in their misuse and be costly for Monroe County agencies.

Issues and Opportunities

Many public transportation customers are also clients of human services and job training agencies. Agency staff frequently direct clients to utilize public transit to access agency appointments and other services, as public transit typically represents the most efficient means of transportation. Staff of human service agencies play a significant role in promoting the use of public transportation and accumulate information from clients regarding the effectiveness and/or limitations of transit services. Public transit providers should consider human service and job training staff as intermediaries in providing information to and obtaining feedback from the public.

Human service and job training staff need to maintain up-to-date information regarding public transit services. All of the public transportation services have websites and human service agencies can include links to transit websites on their sites.

In Wyoming County, WYTS sometimes provides transportation to out-of-county medical appointments. Other human service agencies would arrange for additional riders to utilize this service if they had advance notice of the date, time and destination.

Rural counties have identified the weekly PennySavers as the most effective means of advertising.

Recommended Actions

a. Public transit providers should maintain clear, effective and ongoing channels of communication with customers and human service agencies. Websites and other information sources should be thoroughly accessible to persons with disabilities.

b. Public transit providers should provide training sessions for staff at job training and other human services agencies in how to read bus schedules. RGRTA should incorporate training in how to use the Trip Planner feature of the RGRTA website.
c. County Planning Departments should work with municipalities to ensure that transit access is considered in the siting and design of residential facilities that serve seniors and persons with disabilities.

d. Public transit providers should meet regularly with human service and job training staff to provide information about existing services, obtain feedback regarding the effectiveness of public transit services, discuss how services may be improved, explore potential new bus routes and convey a better understanding of the prerequisites for establishing new bus routes.

e. Human service agencies should include links to public transit providers’ websites on the agencies’ websites.

f. RGRTA’s regional subsidiaries should publicize the availability of public transportation services more effectively.

g. RGRTA should reevaluate web-based mechanisms to allow for the public and agencies to make suggestions regarding route changes.

h. Monroe County and RGRTA should work together to establish a system to monitor the distribution of bus passes and multi-ride passes to agency clients.

---

**Strategy #4. Improve access to information about private transportation services**

**Needs**

Persons in need of transportation and human service agencies that serve these individuals often have difficulty finding information about available services, especially where public transit services are not available or suitable. There is no single source of information, in any of the counties in the region, about available for-profit and not-for-profit transportation providers.

In addition to maintaining information on transportation providers, there is a need for an organization that is able to refer customers to available transportation services and/or make arrangements for rides on behalf of consumers.

**Issues and Opportunities**

The lack of transportation often prevents clients from accessing needed services that are provided by human service and job training agencies. Although a few human service agencies have established their own transportation services, most rely on a network of public, not-for-profit and for-profit transportation providers to transport consumers to programs. If transportation is not available, clients frequently miss appointments. This compromises the efficiency and effectiveness of the human service and/or job training programs.
Currently, each human service agency that refers clients to various transportation services maintains its own separate list of available transportation providers. Staff of human service and job training agencies spend considerable amounts of time finding information about available transportation services, advising clients about available services, and arranging for private transportation for clients. The time spent in these activities detracts from the primary mission of these agencies.

The establishment of a centralized database and referral service would result in improved efficiencies among human service and job training agencies. The database would need to include information about the geographic area served by each provider, cost of services, eligibility and contact information. As private transportation providers frequently change, the database would need to be updated on a continuing basis. Internet technology should facilitate sharing of information among participating agencies. Information about transportation service may be incorporated into a 511 or 211 system.

The establishment of a centralized, shared database would require the following steps:

1) Identify an entity willing to create, maintain and share the database.
2) Prepare a plan that identifies the agencies that will participate in the shared service as well as staffing and other costs.
3) Secure funding, either with contributions from each participating agency or through grants.

Agencies that have expressed a willingness to house a centralized database, provided that funding is secured to cover costs, include Medical Motor Service, Orleans County CATS, and Wayne County Rural Health Network.

**Best Practices**

_Eldersource, a program of LifeSpan and Catholic Family Center, maintains an extensive list of transportation providers and makes this information available to seniors and their caretakers. Contact: (585) 244-8400._

**Recommended Actions**

a. Establish and maintain a central database of information on available transportation services. Establish a mechanism to share this information among agencies that serve persons in need of transportation.

b. Establish and maintain a coordinated referral service to provide information about the most appropriate service available to persons in need of transportation.

c. Establish and maintain a centralized service that would arrange for transportation on behalf of consumers.
d. Economic development agencies that provide financial incentives to new businesses should consider requiring the businesses to contact the public transit provider and to provide information about employee shift schedules, number of employees, and the required level of education. This information would enable the transit provider to evaluate potential new bus routes.

Strategy #5. Facilitate public transit connections across jurisdictional boundaries

Needs

Transfers between neighboring transit systems are often difficult and time-consuming. Riders need to access information about routes, schedules, and fares from several public transit providers. Where transfers are possible, the length of the trip may be excessive. Consumers frequently need to cross county boundaries to access medical facilities and jobs. For example, Monroe County residents need to access jobs in Victor or other parts of Ontario County, and residents of regional counties need to travel into Monroe County or to other regional counties for work or medical appointments.

Best Practices

The Seneca Transit Service operates a regular route to Geneva. Bus drivers communicate with one another to ensure that passengers do not miss a transfer.

Several of RGRTA’s regional subsidiaries have established “medical shuttle” services that transport passengers to major hospitals in neighboring counties. Approvals from neighboring counties have been obtained as needed. These services are open to the public and provide an affordable alternative to private services.

Issues and Opportunities

Ontario County CATS must obtain approvals from neighboring counties in order to provide public transportation service into the neighboring county. Similarly, RGRTA must obtain approval from Ontario County to extend routes operated by RTS or one of RGRTA’s regional subsidiaries to sites in Ontario or other counties that are not members of RGRTA. These arrangements have authorized RTS to provide service to Eastview Mall, Ontario County CATS to provide service to Rushville Health Clinic in Yates County, and several RGRTA regional subsidiaries to provide route service to Geneva Hospital and the Waterloo Outlet Mall.

Such approvals are typically for a specific service. Any change in the service requires a separate approval. Although such approvals are typically granted, and the process serves to reduce the potential for duplicative services, the process is cumbersome.

Inter-jurisdictional travel is often a significant obstacle to travel for riders who live near county boundaries. For example, Lift Line cannot transport riders to the nearest medical facility, if that...
facility is in a neighboring county (for example, from the Town of Perinton in Monroe County to the Town of Victor in Ontario County.)

The use of Geographic Information System (GIS) software to analyze routes and ridership may be useful in identifying the most common points of inter-jurisdictional transfers. Such data is maintained by RGRTA, the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC), the NYS Department of Transportation.

**Recommended Actions**

a. Encourage cooperation among counties to facilitate cross-jurisdictional operations.

b. Facilitate transfers between fixed route services at inter-jurisdictional transfer centers (i.e., Eastview Mall in Victor, Geneva Hospital, Outlet Mall in Waterloo)

c. Provide customers with information about transit systems in neighboring jurisdictions.

**Strategy #6. Maintain affordability and enhance customer service in providing public transportation services**

**Needs**

For many people with limited financial resources, the cost of transportation is a significant impediment to mobility. Seniors, persons with disabilities, low income workers and others find even the relatively low cost of public transportation to be a burden.

**Issues and Opportunities**

Continued training is needed to ensure that bus drivers and other staff are aware of the needs of persons with disabilities. As the use of regular fixed route service is significantly more cost-effective than paratransit, it is important that fixed route service should meet the needs of persons with disabilities as effectively as possible.

**Recommended Actions**

a. Maintain subsidies to continue affordable fares for public transit.

b. Maintain and enhance driver training to ensure that riders with disabilities are treated with sensitivity and respect.
Strategy #7. Continue to support specialized transportation services and volunteer transportation services in areas where public transit is not sufficient or appropriate

Needs

Although public transit is recognized as the most efficient means of transportation, it is not available in all areas and is not suitable for certain types of passengers. For example, frail elderly cannot board buses without assistance. In addition, specialized care is required to transport young children to programs and appointments.

Issues and Opportunities

Specialized transportation services, both for-profit and not-for-profit, serve specific transportation needs that cannot be met by public transit. Private for-profit services typically provide more individualized service, although the cost of the service is often prohibitive for low-income consumers.

Numerous government and private human service agencies have been able to reduce their transportation costs by contracting with a specialized transportation provider rather than operating their own vehicles. Several human service agencies that operate vehicles, such as the Arc of Monroe, also contract with specialized providers in order to improve overall efficiencies.

Smaller human service agencies and institutions that have been able to contract with a specialized transportation provider have been able to eliminate the administrative burden associated with owning and operating vehicles. In some cases, the smaller organization has acquired a vehicle and transferred ownership to a transportation provider in exchange for a specified quantity of transportation services.

Best Practices

Medical Motor Service (MMS) has provided transportation services in Monroe County under arrangements with government and private human service agencies since the 1920s. MMS has established an efficient operation that often provides highly specialized services. For example, it transports children, including infants, to supervised visitations arranged by the Monroe County Foster Care program. Its staff are trained to transport children with special needs as well as persons with disabilities and ambulatory riders.

The Senior Transportation Ministry acquired a vehicle through a legislative member item to transport Irondequoit seniors to medical and other appointments. The organization arranged for Medical Motor Service to operate the vehicle, in exchange for a specified number of service hours. Medical Motor Service has made a similar arrangement with Rochester Rehab Center, which acquired two vehicles through the 5310 program.

The “Give a Lift” program operated by LifeSpan assists not-for-profit agencies in Monroe County with recruiting volunteer drivers. The program matches volunteers with agencies in need of drivers, provides assistance with insurance and provides training. For more information, contact LifeSpan at (585) 244-8400.

Several small not-for-profit agencies have received financial subsidies through the 5310 program to purchase vehicles that are underused. For example, several facilities in the region own
vehicles that provide less than 200 trips per year. These entities should consider arranging for a private provider to transport residents.

Smaller not-for-profit agencies may also benefit from sharing scheduling/dispatching software with larger not-for-profit transportation providers.

Volunteer drivers provide invaluable transportation services, particularly in areas that are not well-served with public transportation and among consumers with limited financial means.

Private transportation services should coordinate with public transit to maximize efficiencies. For example, private services could be designed to bring riders to points where they could access public transportation (i.e., “feeder” service.)

**Recommended Actions**

a. Provide financial support through FTA Section 5310 and other government and private programs for not-for-profit specialized transportation services that assist populations (e.g., elderly and disabled) who are unable to utilize public transit.

b. Encourage small not-for-profit agencies that operate their own vehicles to utilize more efficient transportation providers.

c. Provide support for not-for-profit volunteer-based transportation services.

d. Encourage the establishment of affordable private transportation options for persons with disabilities.

e. Encourage private transportation providers to coordinate with public transit whenever feasible to maximize the efficiency of the overall transportation network.

**Strategy #8. Facilitate cooperation and coordination among public transit and human services transportation providers to reduce costs and improve efficiencies**

**Needs**

Public transit providers and human service agencies need to reduce costs in order to stretch scarce financial resources. Increased cooperation and coordination are needed to reduce the cost of services.

**Issues and Opportunities**

Public transit, fixed routes in particular, represents the most efficient means of transportation. Agencies and organizations that currently utilize their own vehicles to transport clients and consumers may find it more cost-effective to work with public transit providers to arrange for appropriate services.
Some of the ARCs in the regional counties may be able to open some of their existing “routes” to the public. Some of the ARCs would need to obtain additional authorization from the NYS Department of Transportation as well as DOT inspection for their vehicles.

Cost savings can be realized through cooperative maintenance, fueling and vehicle wash facilities as well as joint purchases of fluids and parts and vehicle wash facilities. Successful examples of these are found in Genesee County (County, City, ARC, and BBS share maintenance/ fueling facilities); Livingston County (County and LATS share vehicle housing and maintenance); Ontario County (County and CATS will share maintenance, fueling, vehicle wash – under construction); Wayne County (County and WATS share vehicle maintenance facility). Shared facilities are typically sponsored by the County. Participants include public transit providers, school districts, police/ fire departments, cities/towns/ villages, ARCs and other not-for-profit organizations.

Obstacles to sharing facilities and services include requirements in State regulations, insurance, and agency policies. For example, County-operated fueling facilities need to be registered as a fuel “distributor” in order to pass along low fuel costs to some public and not-for-profit transportation providers. Tax regulations require complicated billing systems, with separate bills required for government, for-profit and not-for-profit users.

Not-for-profit agencies must follow requirements of funding agencies in the use of grant-funded vehicles, staff and equipment. Grant agreements often require that these resources be used only for the purposes specified and for the benefit of specific populations.

Insurance concerns often prevent the sharing of vehicles and drivers among human service agencies. Agencies have not been successful in reducing insurance costs through group rates on insurance has been difficult to achieve.
Coordinated committees help participating organizations to identify opportunities to reduce costs and eliminate duplication. These committees should include representatives from the public transportation provider, ARC, public and private human service agencies and possibly school districts.

Livingston County’s Quarterly Transportation Review Committee has been in existence for more than 25 years, with representation and participation by RGRTA, LATS, GTC, ARC, County officials and many public and private human service agencies. This committee has been instrumental in improving communication and cooperation among transportation providers and human service agencies and in improving service to County residents.

Wyoming County holds a semi-annual transportation coordination review meeting that involves public and private transportation providers as well as human service agencies. Genesee County has a Transportation Coordination Committee, facilitated by the Office for the Aging, that includes representatives of transportation providers and human service agencies. Ontario County is in the process of establishing an ongoing coordination committee.

RGRTA has established advisory committees in Wayne, Seneca, and Orleans counties that include human service agencies. These committees could help to advance coordination among transportation providers as well as opportunities to increase efficiencies among human service transportation providers.
Counties that have centralized transportation services have realized significant cost savings. Examples include Ontario County, which has established a Transportation Department that serves all County Departments, and Livingston County, whose Transportation Broker, based in the Department of Social Services, arranges for transportation for clients on behalf of most County agencies.

**Recommended Actions**

- a. Encourage human service agencies to utilize public transit, whenever feasible, to transport clients and consumers to programs and services.

- b. Design fixed routes to serve facilities that house persons who are transportation disadvantaged – seniors, persons with disabilities and low-income households - wherever possible.

- c. Support the sharing of dispatching software among not-for-profit transportation providers.

- d. Facilitate the sharing of fueling and maintenance facilities as well as the cooperative purchasing of parts, fluids, and other supplies. Eliminate disincentives to coordination, including those resulting from State agency requirements.

- e. Continue or establish regular transportation coordination committees to facilitate communication among transportation providers and human service and job training agencies.

- f. Provide notice to human service agencies when new services are established or scheduled to enable agencies to arrange for rides for their consumers (e.g., WYTS trips to out-of-county medical appointments.)

- g. Encourage public transit operators to work with other transportation providers as needed to provide service in areas where traditional public transit is not viable.

**Implementation Framework**

Projects that are consistent with the strategies included within this Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan will be prioritized for funding through the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) based on their potential to contribute toward program success measures as identified in the Federal Transit Administration Final Circulars for the Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (Section 5310), Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (Section 5316), and New Freedom (Section 5317) Programs.

The two measures established for the Section 5310 program are:

- a. Gaps in Service Filled. Provision of transportation options that would not otherwise be available for older adults and individuals with disabilities measured in numbers of older
adults and individuals with disabilities afforded mobility they would not have without program support.

b. **Ridership.** Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided annually for individuals with disabilities and older adults on Section 5310-supported vehicles and services.

The two measures established for the JARC Program are:

a. **Actual or estimated number of jobs that can be accessed as a result of geographic or temporal coverage of JARC projects implemented in the current reporting year.**

b. **Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided as a result of the JARC projects implemented in the current reporting year.**

The three measures established for the New Freedom Program are:

a. **Increases or enhancements related to geographic coverage, service quality and/or service times that impact availability of transportation services for individuals with disabilities as a result of the New Freedom projects implemented in the current reporting year.**

b. **Additions or changes to environmental infrastructure (e.g., transportation facilities, sidewalks, etc), technology, and vehicles that impact availability of transportation services as a result of the New Freedom projects implemented in the current reporting year.**

c. **Actual or estimated number of rides (as measured by one-way trips) provided for individuals with disabilities as a result of the New Freedom projects implemented in the current reporting year.**

It is recommended that RGRTA be named the “designated recipient” of federal JARC and New Freedom funds for transportation projects within Monroe County. Upon such designation, RGRTA, in cooperation with GTC, will conduct a competitive solicitation process for JARC and New Freedom funds to be used in Monroe County. In all other counties covered by the Plan, the competitive solicitation process will be conducted by the NYS Department of Transportation.