CHAPTER IV - THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

OVERVIEW

The transportation system is a major determinant of quality of life and economic development in every community. The ability to safely and efficiently move people and goods is essential to the social and economic prosperity of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region.

The transportation system in the region can be categorized by the following five modes:

* Highway & Bridge
* Public Transportation
* Bicycle & Pedestrian
* Goods Movement
* Interregional Travel

The transportation system will perform best when these modes are integrated to the greatest extent possible to create synergies among their respective functions, recognizing funding limitations.

HIGHWAYS & BRIDGES

The highways and bridges of the region account for the vast majority of physical infrastructure and carry nearly all trips. Over 12,000 centerline miles of State and local highways and bridges traverse the region as presented in Map 4.

The vehicle miles traveled on highways and bridges in the Rochester TMA total approximately 23 million daily. Annual daily traffic volumes are highest on the Interstates (I-90, I-490, I-390, and I-590) and on select NYS and Monroe County routes. Map 5 presents the annual average daily traffic volumes on the region's State highway and bridge network.

Congestion Management Process

An important aspect of the highway and bridge network is its ability to carry traffic efficiently, minimizing delay due to congestion. As the number of vehicles attempting to travel on a highway (volume) approaches the maximum number the highway can accommodate (capacity), congestion worsens. The ratio of volume-to-capacity is commonly used as a measure of congestion.

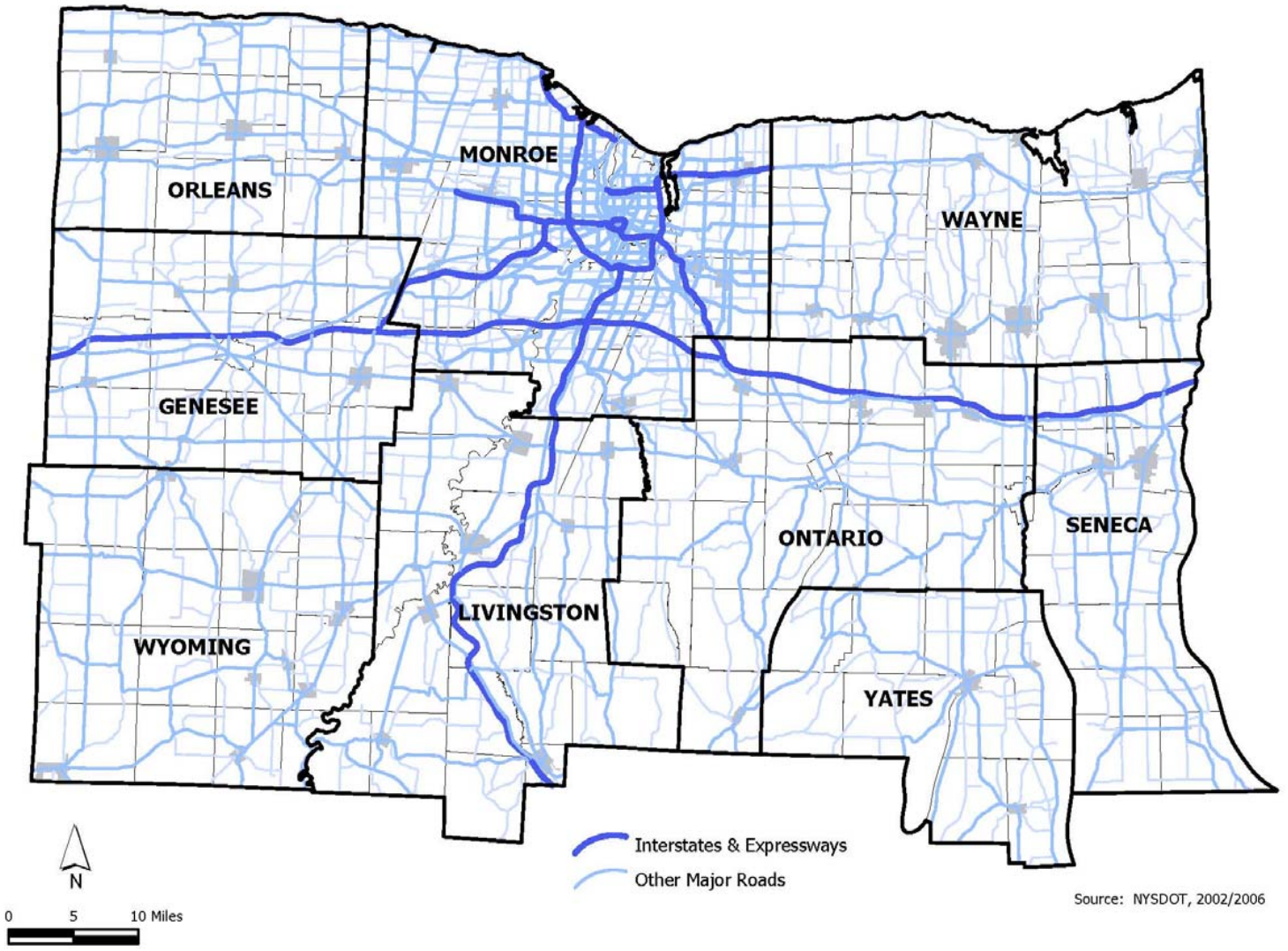
In order to better manage congestion in large urban areas, the Federal government requires each TMA to maintain a Congestion Management Process (CMP) and use it to inform transportation planning and investment decision making through the MPO process. According to USDOT, a CMP should include methods to monitor and evaluate transportation system performance, identify alternative congestion mitigation actions, assess and implement cost-effective congestion mitigation actions, and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented actions. GTC, as the designated MPO for the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region that includes the Rochester TMA, is charged with the development and implementation of the CMP.

Per standard planning practice, highway sections with a volume-to-capacity ratio of 0.9 (90 percent of capacity) or higher are typically considered to have high levels of congestion and result in excess delay. However, most of the congestion in the region is due to unpredictable, non-recurring events such as crashes and weather. To account for this, GTC identified highway segments classified as High Accident Locations that have a volume-to-capacity ratio of 0.7 to 0.9 as roadways that are prone to non-recurring congestion.

Map 6 presents the current (2007) congested roadways and associated bridges in the Rochester TMA. Map 7 presents the forecast (2027) congested roadways and associated bridges in the Rochester TMA. The volume-to-capacity ratios were derived from the GTC Travel Demand Model for the evening peak hour both in the current year and in 2027 if no corrective actions are taken. Without corrective actions, the GTC Travel Demand Model predicts a gradual worsening of the congestion that currently occurs, especially along the interstate highways and principal arterial roads that pass through and surround the City of Rochester, as well as the roads that carry traffic to those areas forecasted to experience the most population and employment growth.

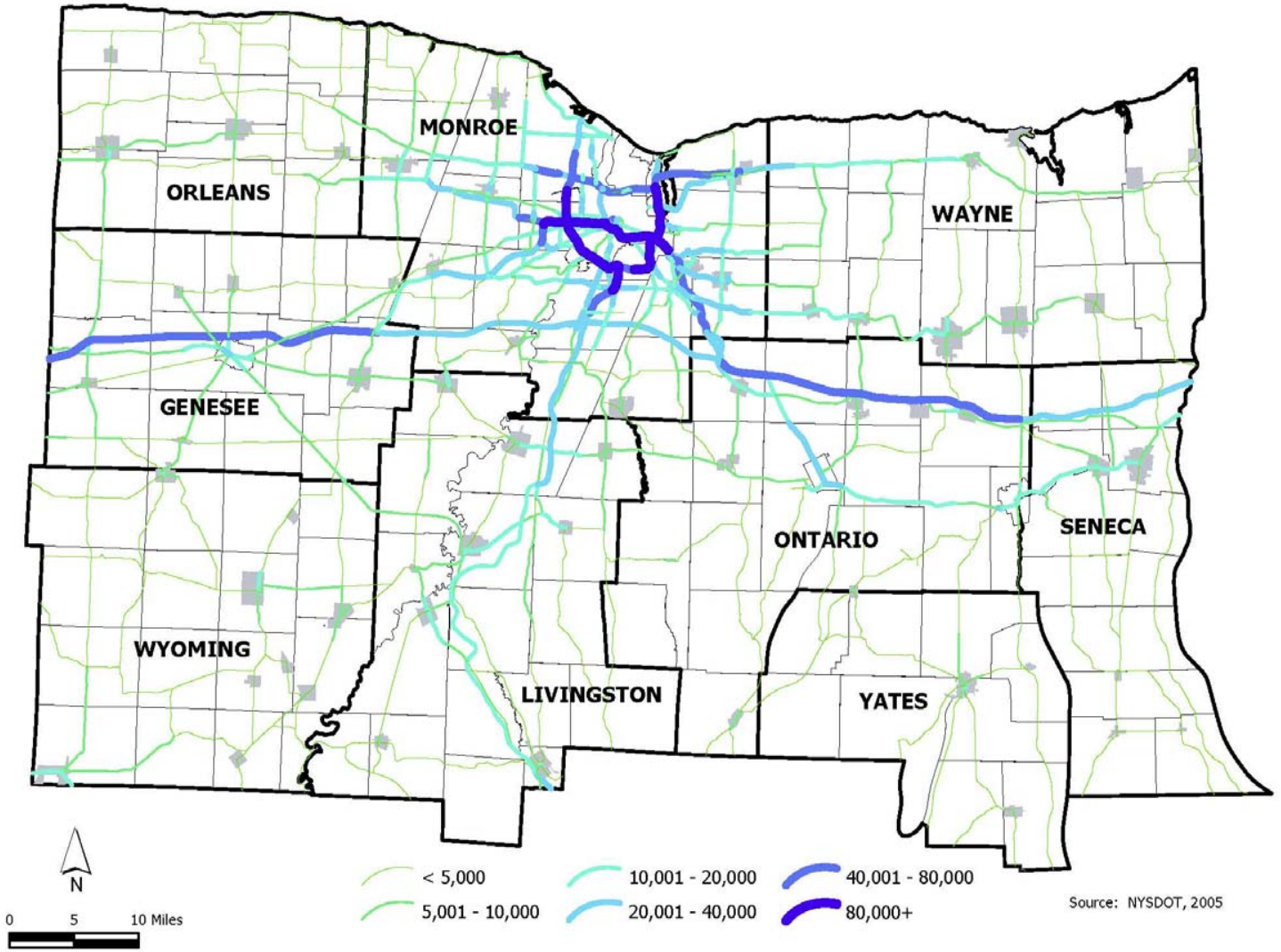
Highway & Bridge Network, 2007

Map 4



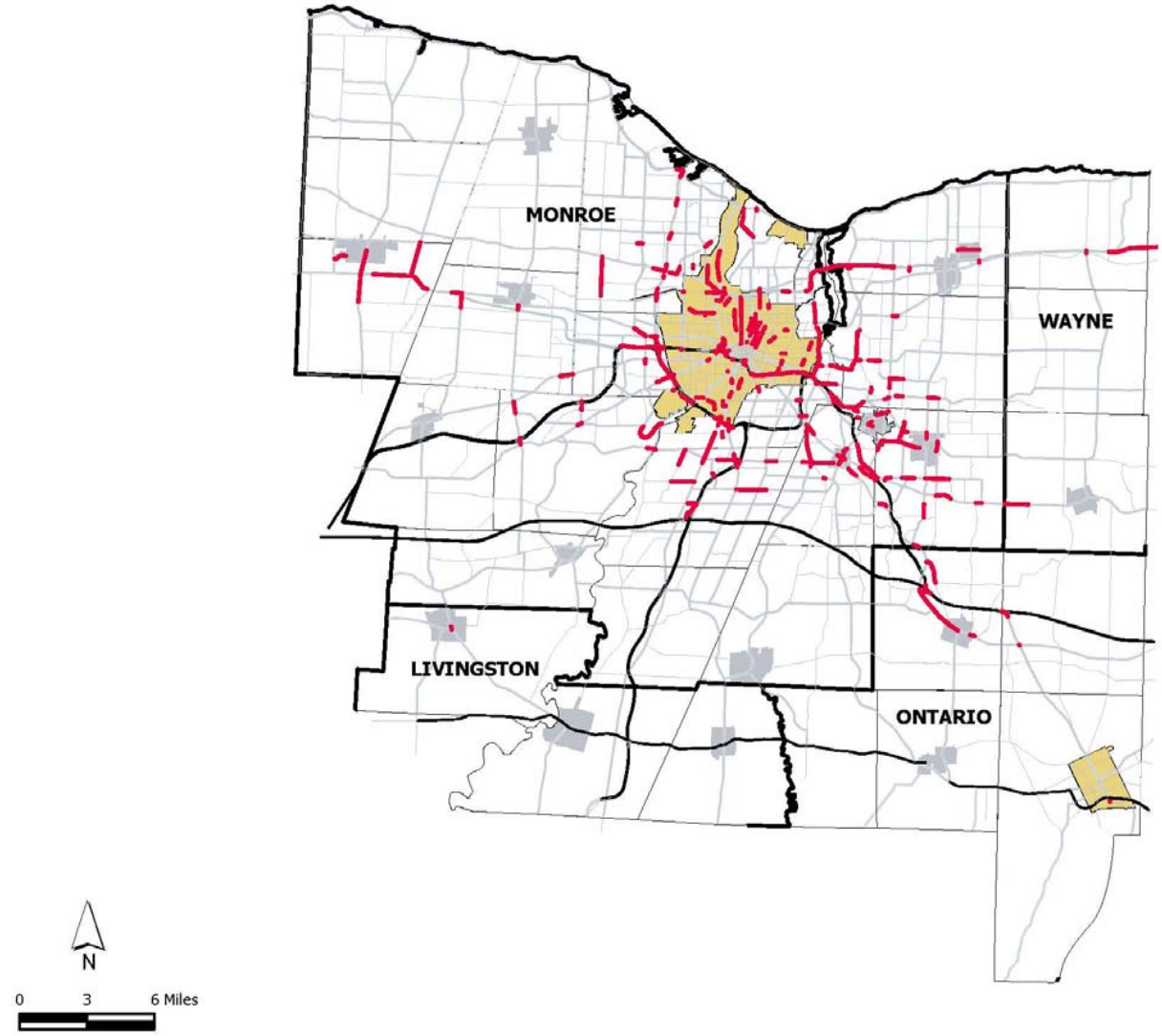
Annual Average Daily Traffic, 2004

Map 5



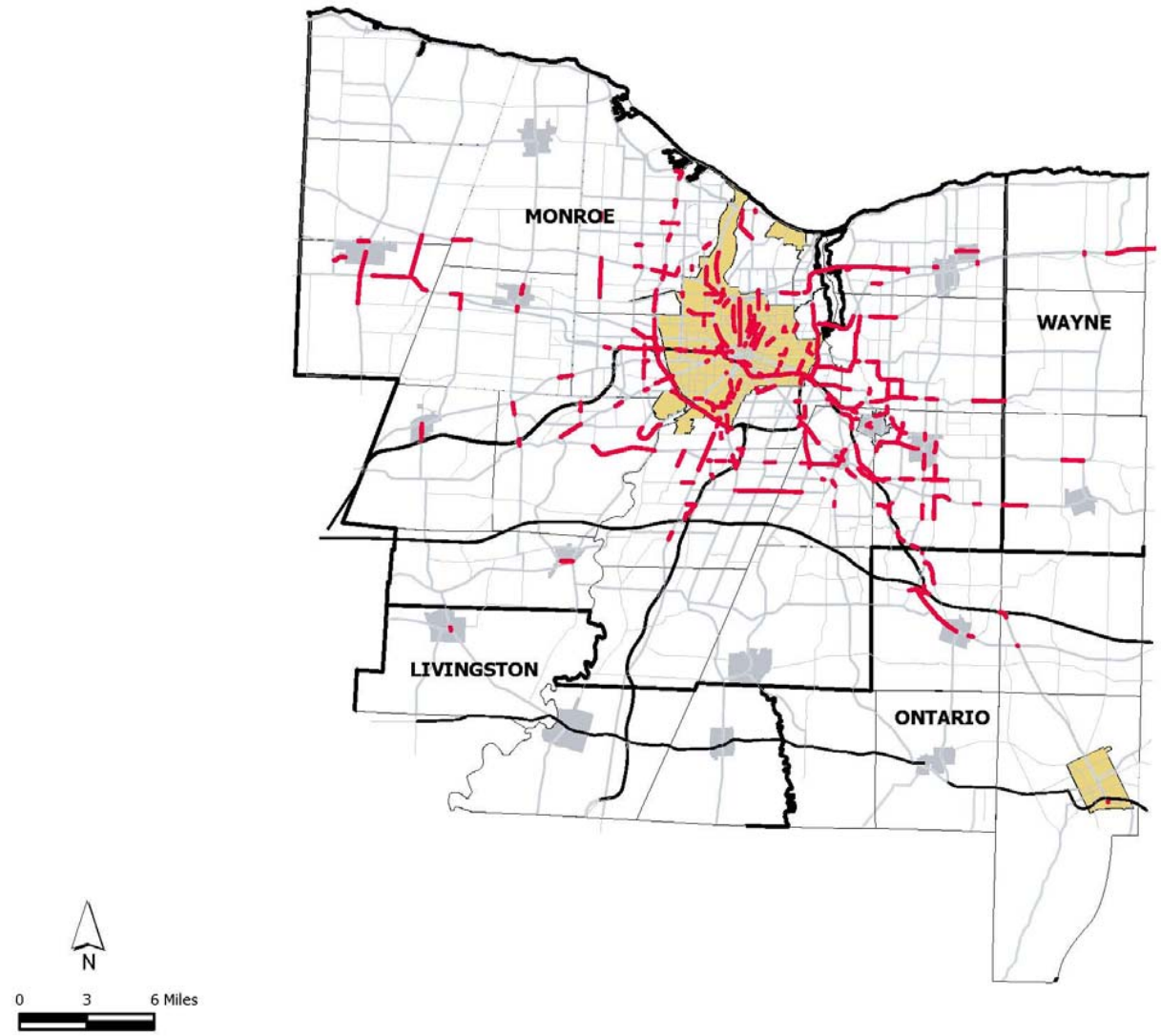
Congested Roadways, 2007

Map 6



Congested Roadways, 2027

Map 7



The CMP provides information on transportation system performance and allows for the assessment of strategies intended to alleviate congestion and enhance the mobility of people and goods. In order to add physical capacity to a roadway in the Rochester TMA, that roadway must be identified as congested in the CMP and the responsible agency must demonstrate that it has examined all other congestion mitigation strategies. These strategies include physical operational improvements, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) approaches, and are summarized in Exhibit 14 along with a more detailed explanation of each in Appendix C, which is separately bound.

Data from the GTC Travel Demand Model and CMP are considered during the identification and selection of transportation projects to be studied or implemented by GTC or its member agencies through the UPWP and TIP.

Accomplishments

The region has historically committed over 90 percent of its federal transportation funds to the preservation and maintenance of existing highways and bridges. Importantly, GTC established a mechanism for funding highway and bridge preventive maintenance projects with federal formula transportation funds during the development of the *2007-2012 TIP*.

Examples of recent highway maintenance and rehabilitation projects include:

- Stone Road in the Town of Greece
- North Street in the City of Canandaigua
- Jefferson Road (NYS Route 252) in the Town of Henrietta
- Union Street (NYS Route 31) in the Village of Newark
- Center Street (NYS Route 31) in the Village of Medina

Examples of recent bridge maintenance and rehabilitation projects include:

- Washington Street Liftbridge in the Town of Ogden
- CR 143 (Ridge Road) Bridge in the Town of Huron
- Fargo Road Bridge in the Town of Darien
- Ingersoll Street Liftbridge in the Village of Albion
- NYS Route 54 Bridge in the Town of Barrington
- Old Browncroft Boulevard Bridge in the Town of Penfield

Exhibit 14 – **SUMMARY OF CONGESTION MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

Supply-Driven Strategies	
Urban Expressways - Design	Urban Expressways - Operations
•High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Facilities •Park and Ride Facilities •Providing Additional Lanes Without Widening	•Highway Information Systems •Highway Pricing Strategies •Incident Management •Ramp Metering
Arterials and Local Streets - Design	Arterials and Local Streets - Operations
•Arterial Access Management •Intersection Improvements •One-Way Streets •Reversible Traffic Lanes •Traffic Calming and Street Space Management •Super Street Arterials	•Arterial Surveillance and Management •Bicycle and Pedestrian Networks •Computerized/Interconnected Signal Systems •Enforcement •Freight Movement Management •HOV Facilities on Arterials •Improved Traffic Control Devices •Parking Management •Traffic Signal Improvements •Turn Prohibitions
Public Transportation	
•Fare Structures •Joint Development •System/Service Expansion: Rail and Fixed Guideway Transit Facilities •System/Service Operational Improvements: Fixed Route and Express Buses •System/Service Operational Improvements: Paratransit Services •Transit Supportive Development	
Demand-Driven Strategies	
•Alternative Hours to Travel •Alternative Modes of Transport •Alternative Workplace Locations •Auto-Restricted Zones •Complementary Support Measures •Congestion Pricing •Growth Management	•Negotiated Demand Management Agreements •Parking Management •Urban Design •Regional Multi-Modal Traveler Information Systems •Trip Reduction Ordinances

A number of major highway reconstruction projects were begun and/or completed since the adoption of the last LRTP in December 2004. Notable among these are:

- Five intersections along Pittsford-Palmyra Road (NYS Route 31) between Turk Hill Road and Aldrich Road in the Town of Perinton are being reconstructed to improve traffic flow, reduce delay, and increase safety.
- West Ridge Road (NYS Route 104) between North Greece Road and I-390 in the Town of Greece is being reconstructed, including three travel lanes in each direction with dedicated right turn lanes and a raised median, new and rebuilt sidewalks, and a coordinated traffic signal system.
- Elmwood Avenue between Hollywood Avenue and Clover Street was reconstructed, including new pavement, utilities, sidewalks, landscaping, and lighting.
- Atlantic Avenue between Culver Road and North Winton Road in the City of Rochester was reconstructed.
- Main Street (NYS Route 36) and State and Chapel Streets (NYS Route 408) in the Village of Mount Morris were reconstructed, including new pavement, sidewalks, and context sensitive features.

There were a number of major bridge reconstruction / replacement projects that were begun and/or completed in the region since the adoption of the last LRTP in December 2004. Notable among these are:

- The I-490 Troup-Howell Bridge over the Genesee River in the City of Rochester - the most heavily traveled section of roadway in the region - was replaced with the Frederick Douglass-Susan B. Anthony Memorial Bridge, a signature 433-foot long, 70-foot tall three-member pure steel-arch bridge. Numerous aesthetic amenities including lighted pylons, decorative signage, landscaping, and new walkways along the river beneath are included.
- The Ontario Central Railroad Bridge over Route 21 in the Village of Manchester is being removed and replaced with an at-grade railroad crossing, new shoulders, sidewalks, and landscaping.
- The Hamlin-Parma Townline Road Bridge over Brush Creek in the Town of Hamlin was replaced with a new structure.
- The Ballantyne Road (NYS Route 252) Bridge over the Genesee River in the Towns of Chili and Henrietta was replaced with an eight-lane span, Scottsville (NYS Route 383) Road and River Road were realigned to improve traffic flow on NYS Route 252, and environmental improvements were made.

The City of Rochester is developing the City of Rochester Vehicle Fleet Alternative Fuels Systems Study to determine if the City should convert any of its vehicle fleet to alternative fuels and, if so, which fuels should be used and how should the conversion be implemented. The findings of this study will be transferable to other municipal fleets in the region. In addition, Monroe County, the City of Rochester, and the Rochester City School District are beginning development of alternative fueling stations (“Green Stations”) for use by public fleets.

The deployment of Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies has emerged as an integral part of transportation improvements in the region. ITS employs communications and information technologies to better manage and improve the performance of the transportation system. ITS is discussed here because the majority of existing and planned components are intended to improve the operation of the highway and bridge network. ITS plays a major role in public transportation and goods movement as well.

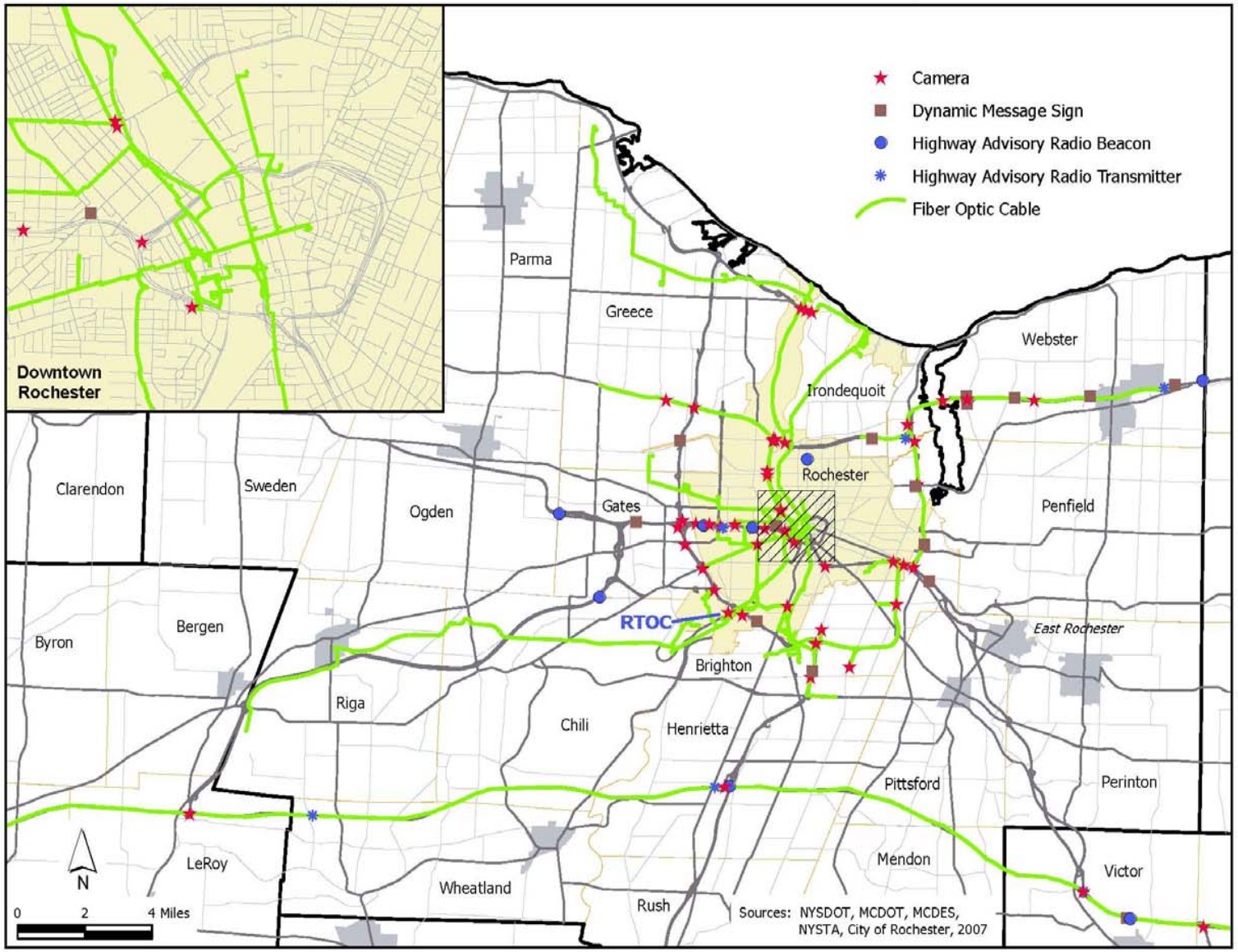
A number of ITS components have been deployed, maintained, or expanded since the adoption of the last LRTP in December 2004, including:

- Ongoing support for the Regional Traffic Operations Center (RTOC), the backbone of the region's growing ITS capabilities, including commitment to expand its coverage to 24 hours a day year-round.
- The deployment of dynamic message signs (DMS), closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras, fiber optics, and highway advisory radio (HAR) components on area roadways, including, but not limited to, I-90, I-390, I-490, I-590, NYS Route 104, Lake Avenue, and Brighton-Henrietta Townline Road.
- Expansion of the Highway Emergency Local Patrol (HELP) program coverage area.

Map 8 and Map 9 present the existing and planned ITS network in the Rochester area: Map 8 shows the location of deployed ITS components in 2007 and Map 9 shows where additional ITS components are planned for deployment by 2017.

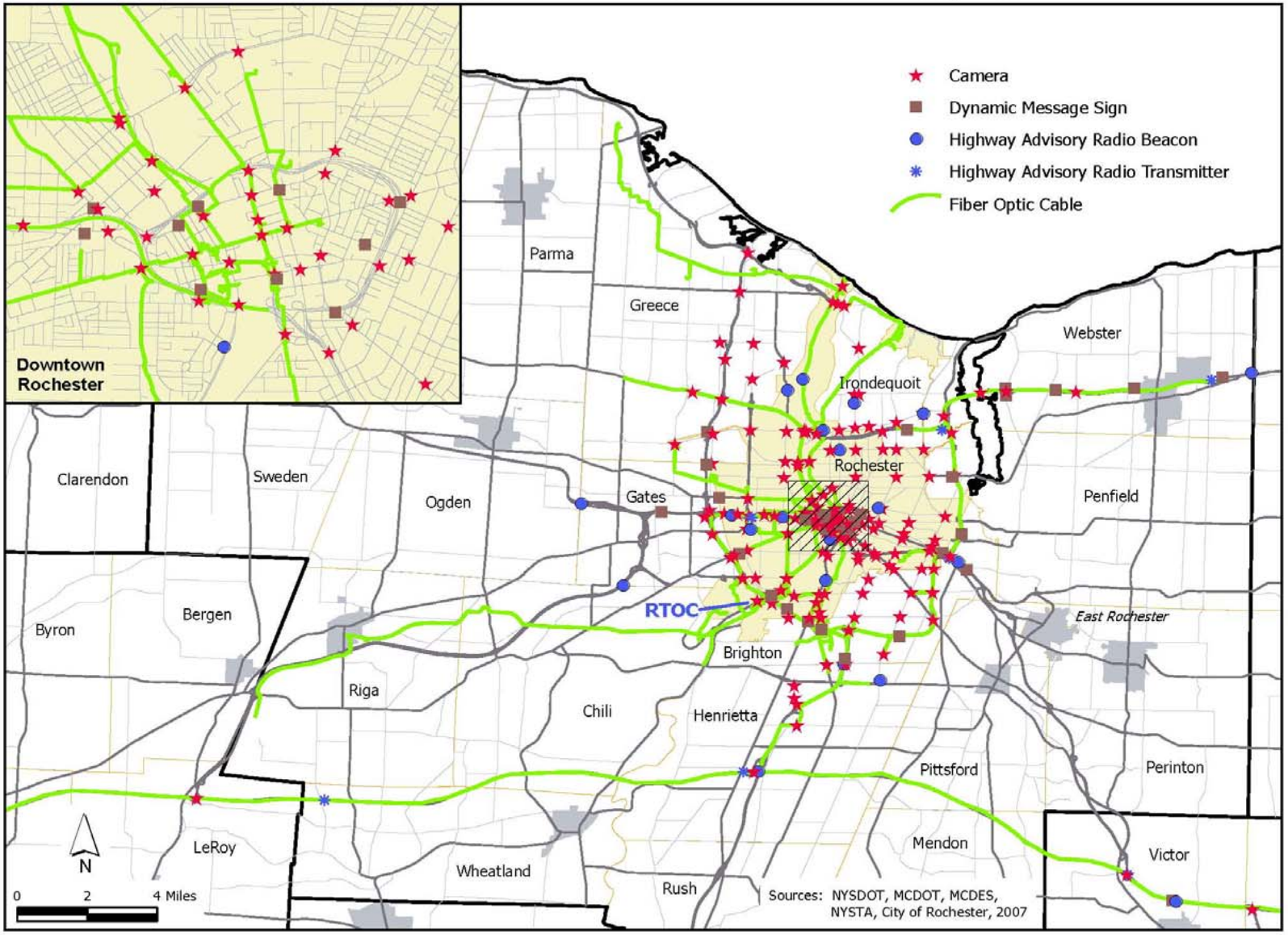
Existing ITS Network in the Rochester Area, 2007

Map 8



Planned ITS Network in the Rochester Area, 2017

Map 9



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The provision of public transportation service is an important component of the transportation system in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Public transportation offers:

- Improved access to employment and needed services for individuals without a private automobile
- Expanded mobility options for the physically challenged
- Delayed deterioration of the region's highway and bridge network
- Positive contributions to air quality

Public transportation service is currently available in eight of the nine counties in the region. Combined, public transportation services throughout the region provide nearly 15 million trips covering 50 million passenger miles annually.

The current number of trips by public transportation represents an increase of roughly one percent over the last five years.

In Monroe County, RGRTA provides public transportation service through its Regional Transit Service, Inc. (RTS) subsidiary. In addition to RTS, several other RGRTA subsidiaries provide fixed-route and/or demand-responsive public transportation service outside Monroe County:

- Batavia Bus Service, Inc. (B-Line or BBS) serves Genesee County
- Livingston Area Transportation Service, Inc. (LATS) serves Livingston County
- Orleans Transit Service, Inc. (OTS) serves Orleans County
- Seneca Transit Service, Inc. (STS) serves Seneca County
- Wayne Area Transportation Service, Inc. (WATS) serves Wayne County
- Wyoming Transportation Service, Inc. (WYTS) serves Wyoming County

Ontario County operates the County Area Transit System (CATS) which provides fixed-route public transportation service to residents of Ontario County. Weekday demand-responsive service is provided in areas not served by the fixed route system.

The RTS fleet includes over 200 vehicles and provides over 90 percent of all public transportation trips in the region. All RTS buses, and an increasing number of rural county buses, are equipped with bicycle racks.

Paratransit services are available to individuals with developmental and/or physical disabilities throughout the region with the majority of these trips provided in Monroe County by Lift Line, Inc. a subsidiary of RGRTA. Nearly 200,000 people used Lift Line services in 2006, an increase of roughly 70 percent since 2001.

Map 10 presents the current routes of the eight public transportation service providers operating in the region.

Accomplishments

The transit center component of Renaissance Square, a downtown transit center combined with a performing arts complex and the Monroe Community College downtown campus, has been allocated more than $100 million in federal transportation funds. Renaissance Square will integrate main street revitalization in downtown Rochester with improved public transportation to the largest employment center in the region. Groundbreaking for this project is expected to take place in late 2007.

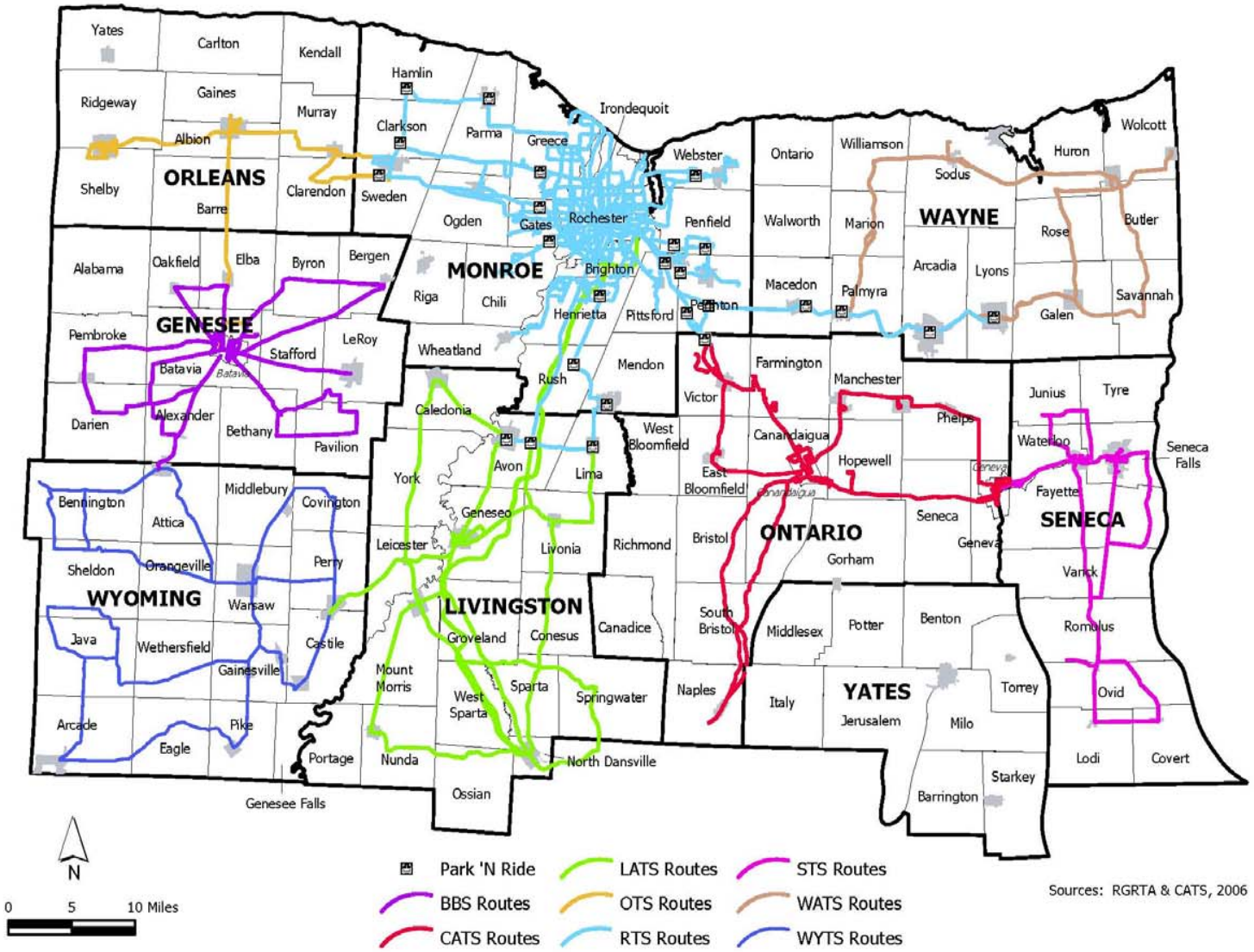
RTS replaced nearly 60 buses since the adoption of the last LRTP in December 2004. As a result of this aggressive replacement schedule, all RTS buses are now accessible to the disabled. The average age of the RTS fleet is now under seven years, well below the federal retirement age of 12 years for most vehicles. Lowering the average age of the fleet allows RGRTA to allocate fewer funds for preventive maintenance and more for operations.

RTS added a new line of quiet and comfortable suburban coach buses to its fleet. These new buses have been credited with increasing ridership on Park & Ride routes. RTS also purchased diesel-electric hybrid buses which represent a significant improvement to air quality. RGRTA also continued its program of replacing Lift Line paratransit buses, replacing 29 vehicles with more flexible and efficient models.

RTS has restructured a number of routes to improve efficiency. A new simplified fare structure was implemented in 2006 which eliminated fare zones and instituted a number of new fare media and payment options.

Public Transportation Routes, 2007

Map 10



RGRTA is taking advantage of emerging technologies to improve safety, efficiency, and customer service. Kiosks and online fare purchasing and trip planning were recently implemented and, in the coming years, the Technology Initiatives for Driving Excellence (TIDE) program will deploy a number of technologies to improve customer service, such as "next-bus" traveler information displays at major bus stops.

To complement the strategic plans for public transportation completed in seven of the eight rural counties of the region prior to development of the previous LRTP, a strategic plan for public transportation service was begun in Yates County.

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are key elements of the regional transportation system. From increasingly walkable cities, villages, and towns to an interconnected network of multi-use trails, walking and bicycling as reasonable travel alternatives are quickly becoming distinguishing features of the Genesee-Finger Lakes Region.

Whether used for transportation or recreation, bicycle and pedestrian activity offers the potential for:

- Improved transportation choice
- Reduced congestion and more efficient use of the transportation system
- Healthier citizens and decreased community health care costs
- Increased attractiveness to existing and potential residents, employers and visitors
- Improved air quality and more efficient use of limited energy resources

The highway and bridge network doubles as the main component of the bicycle and pedestrian network. In addition, there are approximately 350 miles of existing multi-use trails and approximately 80 miles currently under development in the region.

These multi-use trails have the potential to increase the viability of bicycling and walking as an attractive alternative to motorized transport by serving as an expressway for non-motorized users of the transportation system - provided that convenient access to and from the highway and bridge network is provided.

Map 11 on the following page presents the existing, under development, and planned multi-use trails in the region.

Accomplishments

New or reconstructed sidewalks and wider shoulders and travel lanes suitable for bicyclists were constructed as part of many highway and bridge projects. These constitute a large portion of the improvements made to the bicycle and pedestrian network.

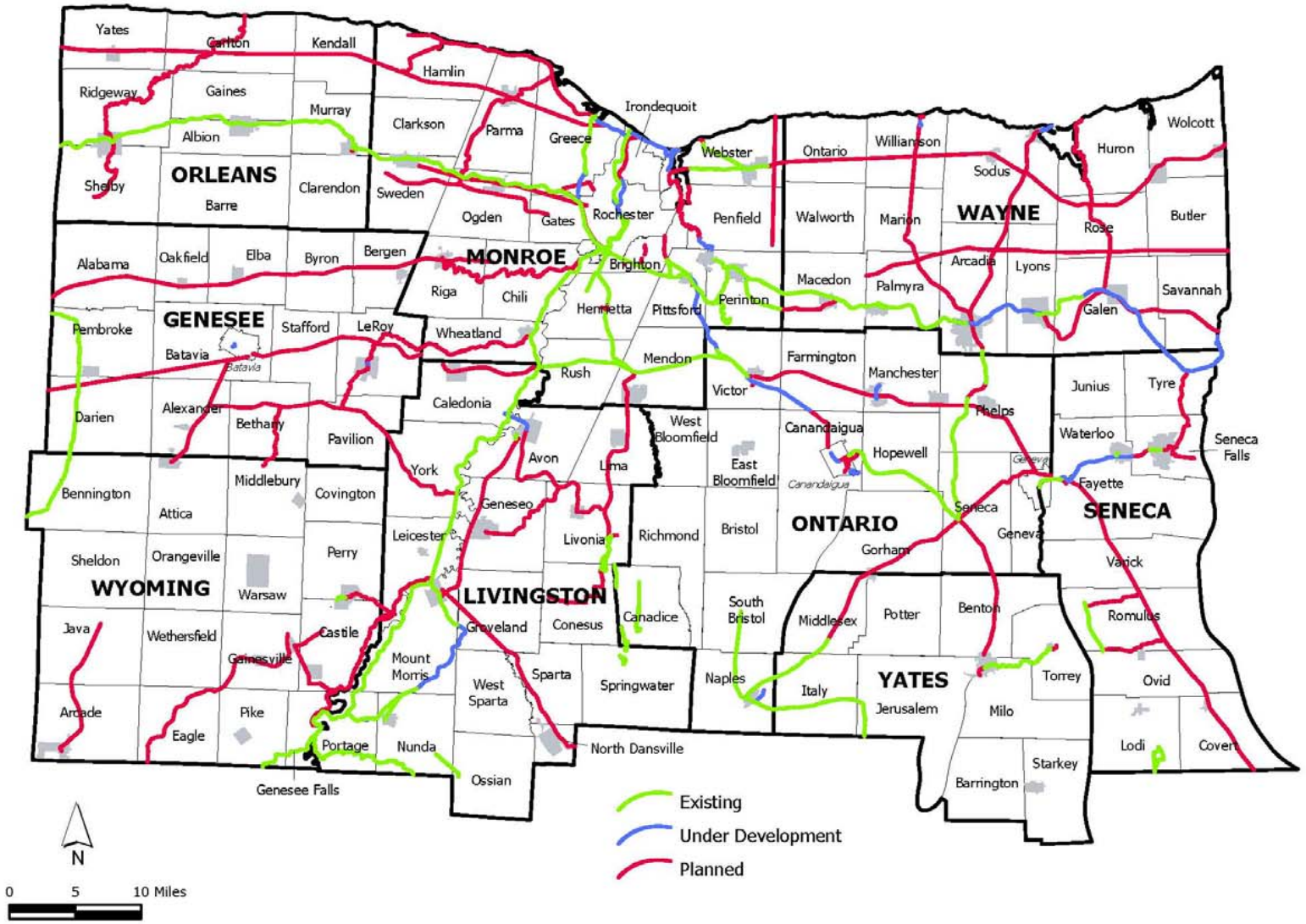
Notable trail extensions and additions include:

- Genesee Riverway Trail - two miles of new trail between Turning Point Park and the O'Rorke Bridge, including a new bridge over the Genesee River turning basin, was completed in 2006, RG&E is currently constructing a pedestrian bridge at its Lower Falls Dam that will be a key link in the Riverway Trail, and the City of Rochester is advancing a number of neighborhood connector trails providing improved access to the main trail.
- Erie Canalway Heritage Trail - construction of 13.8 miles of new trail between the Villages of Newark and Clyde is underway and rehabilitation of 8.5 miles of trail between Long Pond Road (Town of Greece) and Clover Street (Town of Pittsford) was completed in 2006.
- Lake Ontario State Parkway Trail - construction of a three-mile segment of new trail connecting the Genesee Riverway Trail and Port of Rochester with the Route 390 Trail in the Town of Greece is currently under design with construction scheduled in 2008.

Additional investment is planned and/or underway on a number of other trail facilities in the region including, but not limited to, the Route 390 Trail in the Town of Greece, the Auburn Trail in the Town of Victor, the Butterhole-Seneca Park Rail Trail in the City of Rochester, the Erie-Attica Railroad Bridge & Trail in the Village of Avon, and the Canandaigua Downtown Rail-with-Trail in the City of Canandaigua.

Multi-Use Trails Network, 2007

Map 11



GOODS MOVEMENT

The economic growth and vitality of the region is dependent on the efficient movement of goods into, out of, within, and through the region. The relative ease of getting products to market and receiving necessary inputs is a key consideration of goods-producing businesses when looking to continue, expand, or relocate operations. Despite the region's decline in manufacturing, the ability to transport goods produced locally to other markets remains vital. The region's important agricultural economy is also highly dependent on the transportation system.

To ensure the economic success of the region, the goods movement network needs to be a distinguishing competitive feature of the transportation system relative to other metropolitan areas within New York State, across the nation, and around the globe. Map 12 presents the region's primary, secondary, and collector trade corridors which were identified by examining truck traffic and rail service as well as current and expected future locations for manufacturing and distribution facilities. The primary regional trade corridors are the major thoroughfares for moving trade between this region and other major economic centers. The secondary regional trade corridors are highly important trade routes that feed into the primary regional corridors. The collector trade corridors are important on a sub-regional scale and feed into the primary and secondary trade corridors. These corridors reflect existing conditions, not necessarily where trade corridors should be promoted in the future.

The majority of inbound (75.9 percent) and outbound (87.5 percent) tonnage to and from the region originates and terminates within the Northeast U.S. Map 13 and Map 14 present the inbound and outbound tonnage of goods moving into and out of the region by U.S. and Canadian economic area.

Truck Service

Since the development of the interstate highway system, trucks have handled the vast majority of goods moving into, out of, within, and through the region, constituting the fastest growing component of travel on the region's highways and bridges.

The continuing increase in freight transport by truck coupled with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the region's close proximity to the Canadian border have resulted in measurable impacts to the highway and bridge network.

According to freight movement data for 2001, trucks handled 91 percent of all inbound traffic to the region and 99 percent of all outbound traffic, totaling 57 million tons of transported goods. The distinct competitive advantage that trucks offer in terms of flexibility for short hauls indicates that these trends will continue over the period covered by the LRTP Update.

Map 15 presents roadways with significant truck traffic as defined by facilities with average daily truck traffic that is more than 20 percent above the regional average. As expected, these roadways include interstates, major east-west routes, and the Route 63 corridor.

Rail Service

The transport of freight in the region via railroads continues to decline. Two Class 1 (annual revenues in excess of $250 million) railroads, CSX and Norfolk Southern, and ten Class 3 or "shortline" (annual revenues less than $20 million) railroads operate in the region as displayed in Map 16.

Less than 10 percent of the total tonnage imported to the region in 2001 arrived by rail. More than half of this 2 million tons was coal shipped from mines south of New York State. At the same time, less than one percent of the total tonnage produced by firms in the region was shipped out via rail. Much of this decline is the result of shifting logistics and management practices including, but not limited to, just-in-time delivery requirements.

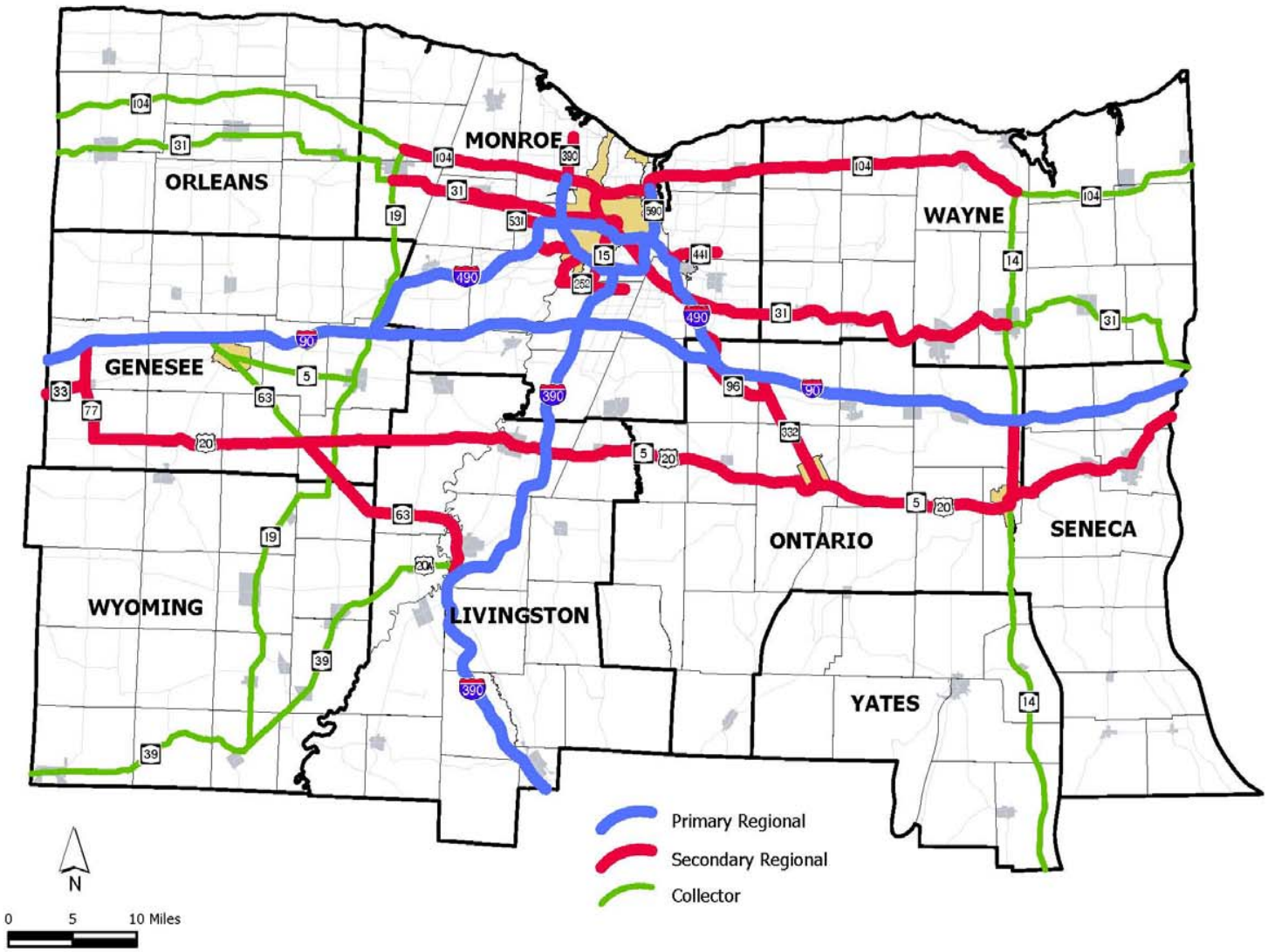
Air Cargo

According to the Federal Aviation Administration, more than 272,000 tons of freight were shipped through facilities at the Greater Rochester International Airport (GRIA) in 2005. This was a 31 percent increase over the amount of tonnage transported through GRIA in 2001.

GRIA has been the largest air cargo airport in upstate New York every year since 2001. While the tonnage shipped through GRIA will in all likelihood never compete with that transported by truck, the value of goods moving through GRIA will gain a greater share of the regional total in the future.

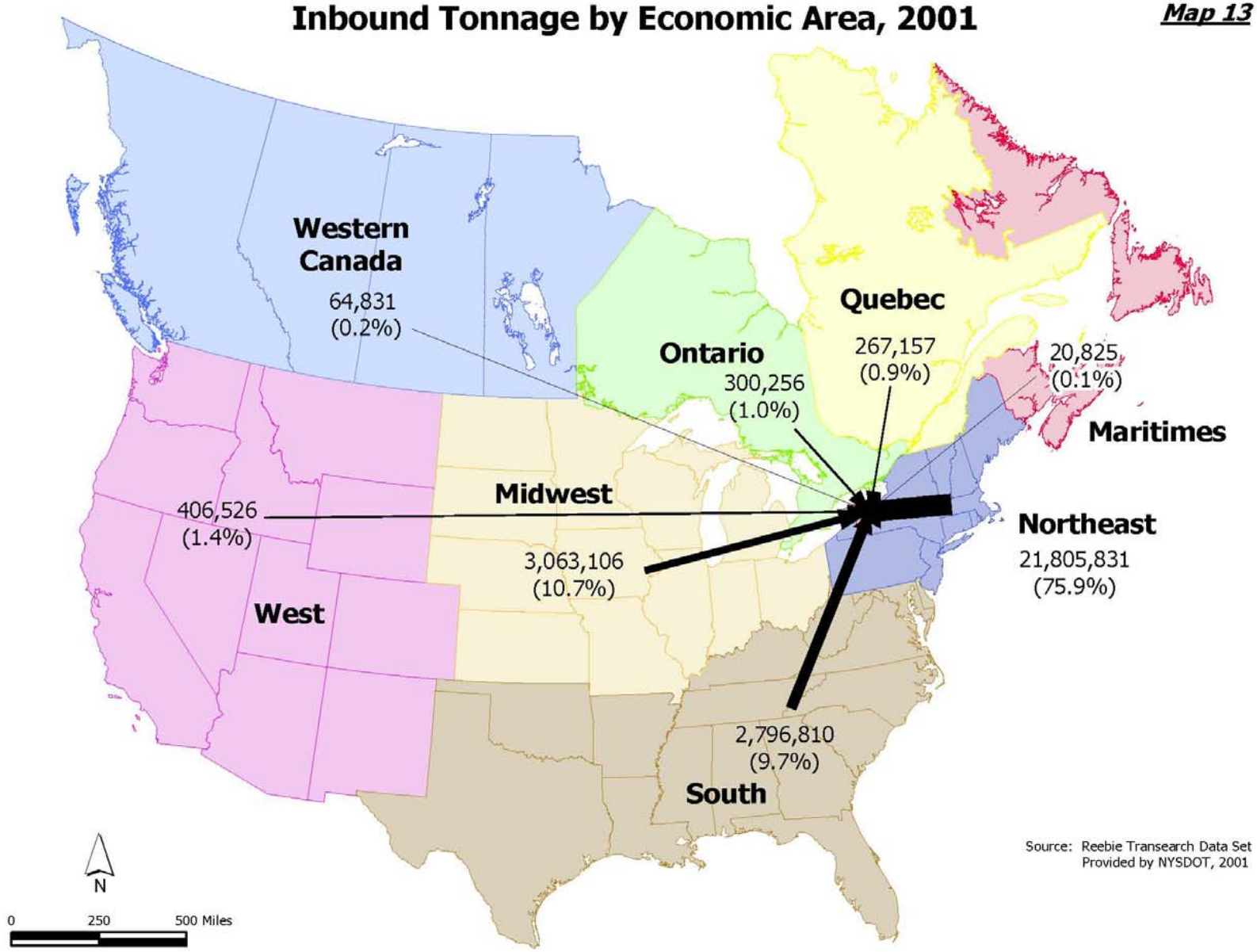
Trade Corridors, 2007

Map 12



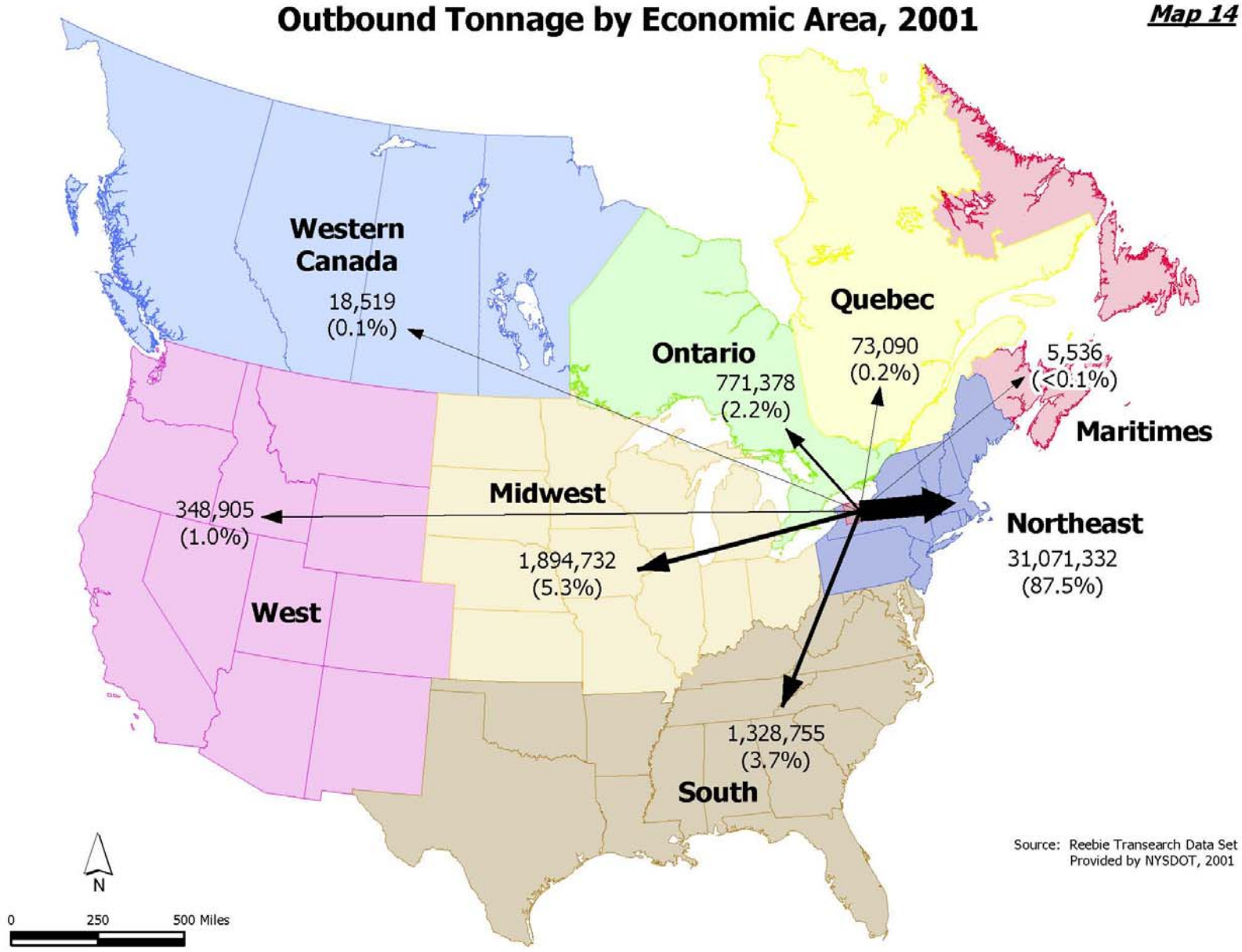
Inbound Tonnage by Economic Area, 2001

Map 13



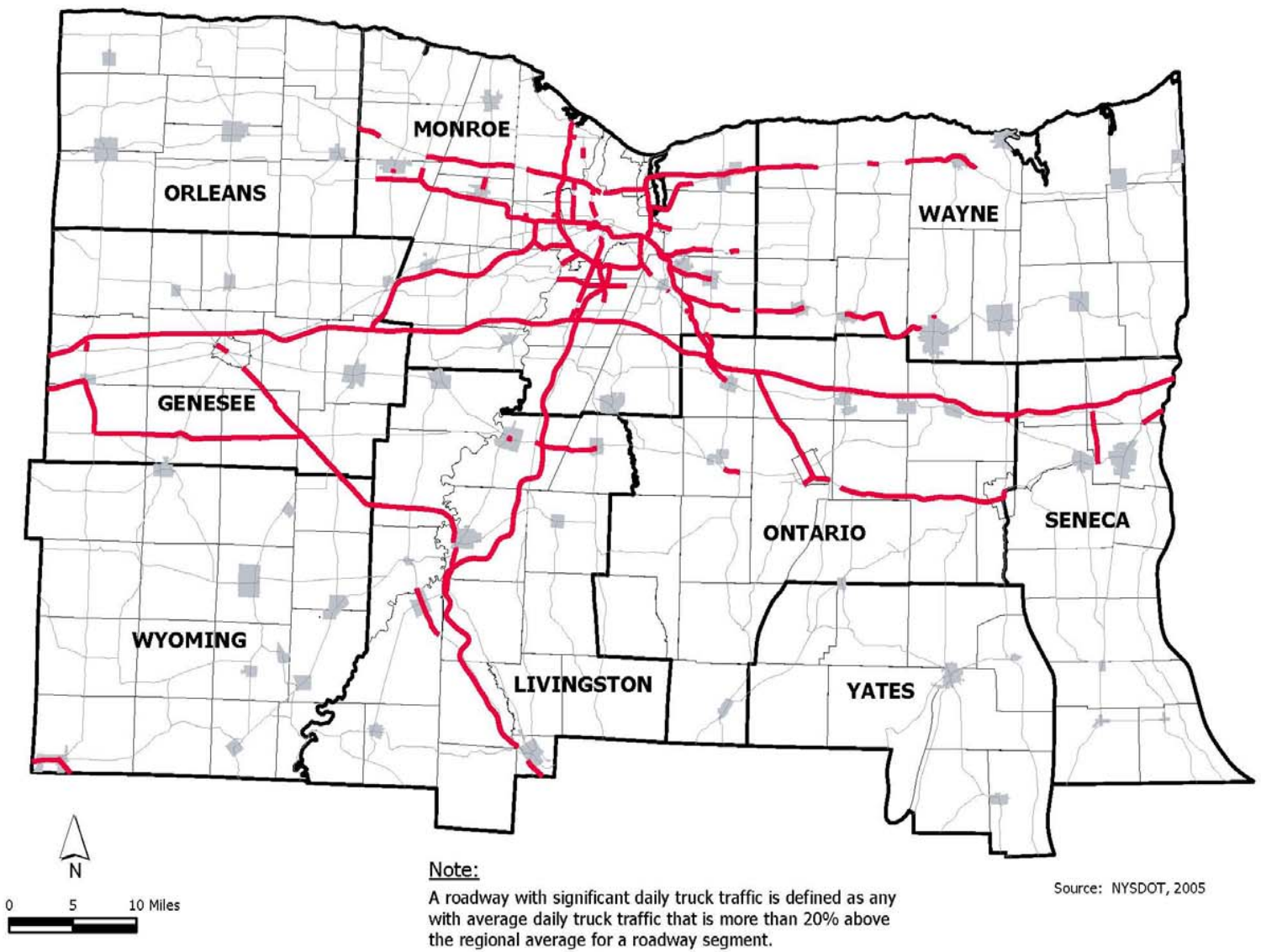
Outbound Tonnage by Economic Area, 2001

Map 14



State Roadways with Significant Daily Truck Traffic, 2004

Map 15

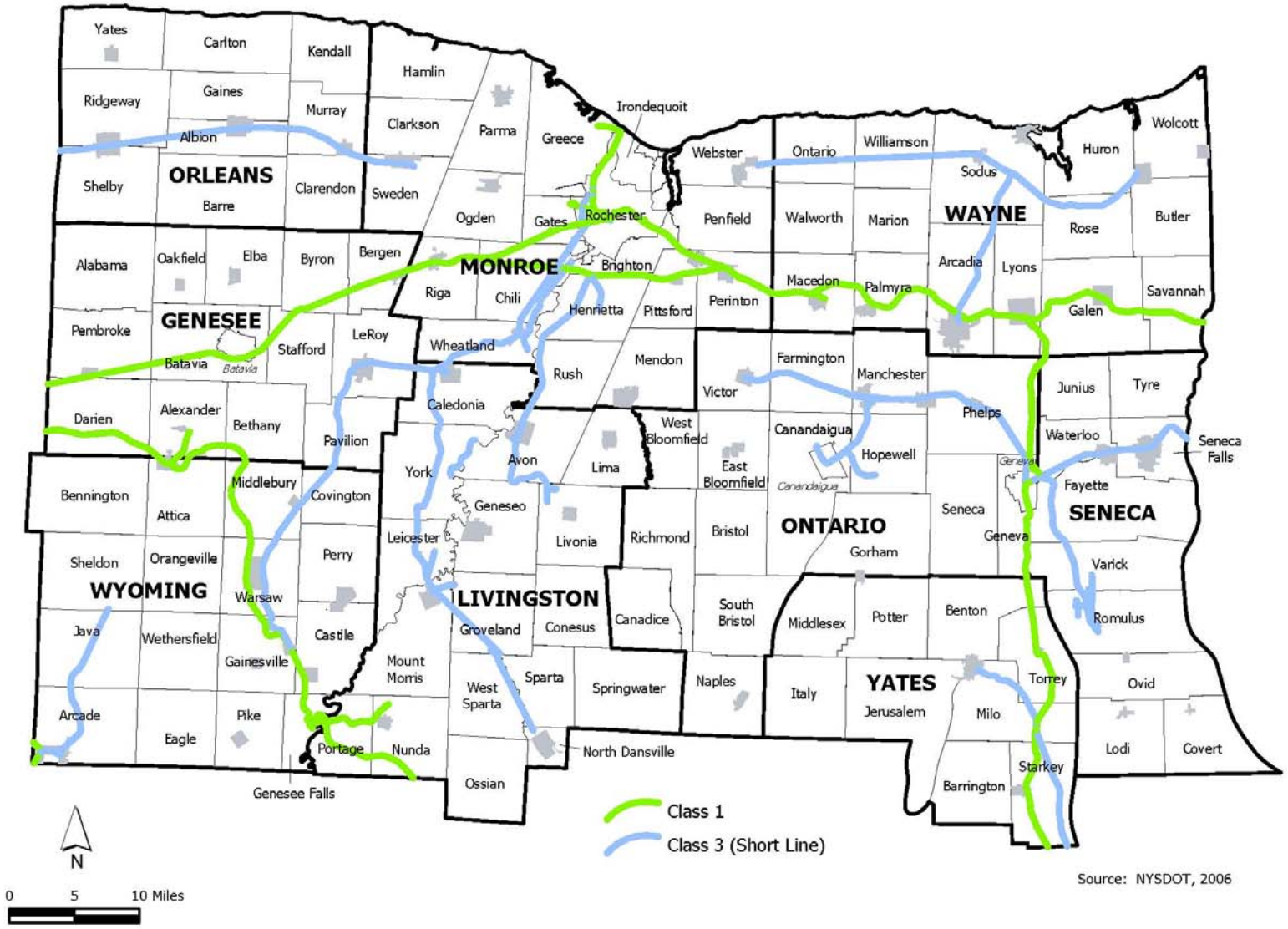


Note:
A roadway with significant daily truck traffic is defined as any with average daily truck traffic that is more than 20% above the regional average for a roadway segment.

Source: NYSDOT, 2005

Active Class 1 & Class 3 Railroads, 2006

Map 16



As the regional economy continues to transition itself to higher value-added production industries, the requirements placed on GRIA's air cargo capabilities will increase, as will the ability of trucks and other vehicles to access freight facilities at the airport.

Water Transport

The Port of Rochester at the mouth of the Genesee River handles the only significant waterborne freight movement in the region. Inbound shipments of cement to be distributed throughout the state are regularly received here. The viability of the Port of Rochester is dependent on regular dredging of the Genesee River to ensure that there is adequate depth to handle large freight vessels.

Increasing the amount of goods transported along the Erie Canal has been raised by members of the community. Commercial activity along the Erie Canal is limited by varying controlling depths along the 524-mile long waterway. The New York State Canal Corporation, a subsidiary of the New York State Thruway Authority, is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Erie Canal as well as entitling the transport of goods along it.

Accomplishments

The highway and bridge network provides the primary infrastructure for the region's goods movement network. The further consideration of trucks and associated safety and efficiency issues will need to increase as future planning and improvements to the highway and bridge network are advanced.

Recent examples of planning studies conducted or underway with respect to goods movement include:

- *Airport Corridor Major Investment Study* - Monroe County conducted a study to assess current and forecasted mobility needs along roads leading and providing access to GRIA. The study recommended extending Jetview Drive and adding auxiliary lanes along Brooks Avenue and other roadways to increase through-flow of vehicles. The study was completed in April 2002.
- *Palmyra Route 21 Truck Traffic Study* – Wayne County is advancing a study to assess the impact of truck traffic on the Town and Village of Palmyra along Route 21.
- *Route 63 Corridor Study* - NYSDOT is finalizing a study which identifies strategies to improve the safety and efficiency of the NYS Route 63 corridor (including portions of NYS Routes 20 and 77) in Genesee, Livingston, and Wyoming counties. The corridor is heavily traveled by eastbound trucks as a shorter, faster, and less expensive alternative to I-90 for accessing I-390 .
- *Transportation & Industrial Access* – GTC staff are finalizing a study which identifies concept-level improvements to enhance the marketability of industrial parks and sites in each of the counties in the region and the City of Rochester.
- *Intermodal Freight Terminal Study* - RGRTA conducted a study to determine the feasibility of developing an intermodal freight facility in the Rochester area. The study recommended developing an intermodal terminal combining rail and truck service to serve as an inland distribution facility for the Port of New York/New Jersey. The study was completed in October 2001.

  Currently, no traditional intermodal freight facility with the ability to handle significant volumes of freight from various modes at a single location exists in the region. The development of a tri-modal freight facility in the vicinity of GRIA near now-vacant Rochester and Southern Railroad yards in the Town of Chili has been and continues to be discussed.

- *Regional Goods Movement Strategy* – Funding has been allocated through the UPWP for GTC staff to undertake a comprehensive (i.e., truck, rail, air, and water) goods movement plan that will position the regional transportation network as a distinguishing factor in retaining and attracting both traditional and emerging-technology manufacturing firms as well as enhancing the viability of agriculture.

INTERREGIONAL TRAVEL

Interregional travel facilities provide opportunities for travel into and out of the region. Regions that are easily accessible by a variety of modes are generally considered more attractive places to live and to visit as well as to do business. Multiple modes of interregional travel currently provide service to the region, offering convenience to residents and visitors alike. The interregional travel facilities in the region are presented in Map 17.

Via Air

There are 23 Public Use airports in the region. The Greater Rochester International Airport (GRIA) is the Primary Commercial Service airport for the region. A Primary Commercial Service airport provides regularly scheduled passenger and freight service and serves more than 10,000 enplanements annually.
GRIA served nearly three million passengers in 2005, the most in the airport's nearly 80-year history. Passenger growth at GRIA between 2000 and 2005 was the highest among major Upstate New York airports at nearly 20 percent. Estimates for 2006 indicate continued increases above the record levels experienced in 2005.

There are currently nine commercial air carriers providing nearly 90 daily round trip flights to 23 destinations from GRIA. The carriers and their respective destinations are as follows:

- Air Canada (Toronto)
- AirTran Airways (Atlanta, Baltimore/Washington, Fort Lauderdale (seasonal), Las Vegas (beginning August 2007), Orlando, and Tampa)
- American Airlines (Chicago - O'Hare and Dallas/Ft. Worth)
- Continental (Cleveland and Newark)
- Delta (Atlanta, Cincinnati, New York – JFK, and Orlando (seasonal))
- JetBlue (New York - JFK)
- Northwest Airlines (Detroit and Minneapolis/St. Paul)
- United (Chicago - O'Hare and Washington - Dulles)
- USAirways (Boston, Charlotte, Hartford, New York - LaGuardia, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Washington - Reagan)

There are 10 General Aviation airports in the region. General Aviation refers to all civil aircraft that are not classified as air carrier, commuter, or military. Of these General Aviation airports, five are classified as Reliever airports and five are classified as Other.

A Reliever airport pulls private aircraft away from the Commercial Service airports, such as Greater Rochester, Buffalo Niagara, or Syracuse Hancock international airports, to reduce air traffic delays and increase the safety of air travel in the region.

Improvements are being made to the many General Aviation airports in the region. Genesee County recently completed an expansion of their airport and the Ontario County Industrial Development Agency is in the process of a similar expansion in Canandaigua that would extend the current runway to allow service by corporate jets.

GRIA and the 10 General Aviation airports are State Aviation System Plan (SASP) airports, making them eligible for federal-aid

Via Rail

Amtrak service in the region is provided at the Central Avenue station in downtown Rochester. Nine trains per day - four westbound and five eastbound - serve Rochester. Ridership at the Rochester station was 78,750 in 2006, a decrease of nearly 40 percent since 2000. Recent declines in Amtrak ridership in Rochester may be attributed to reduced air fares between Rochester and New York City.

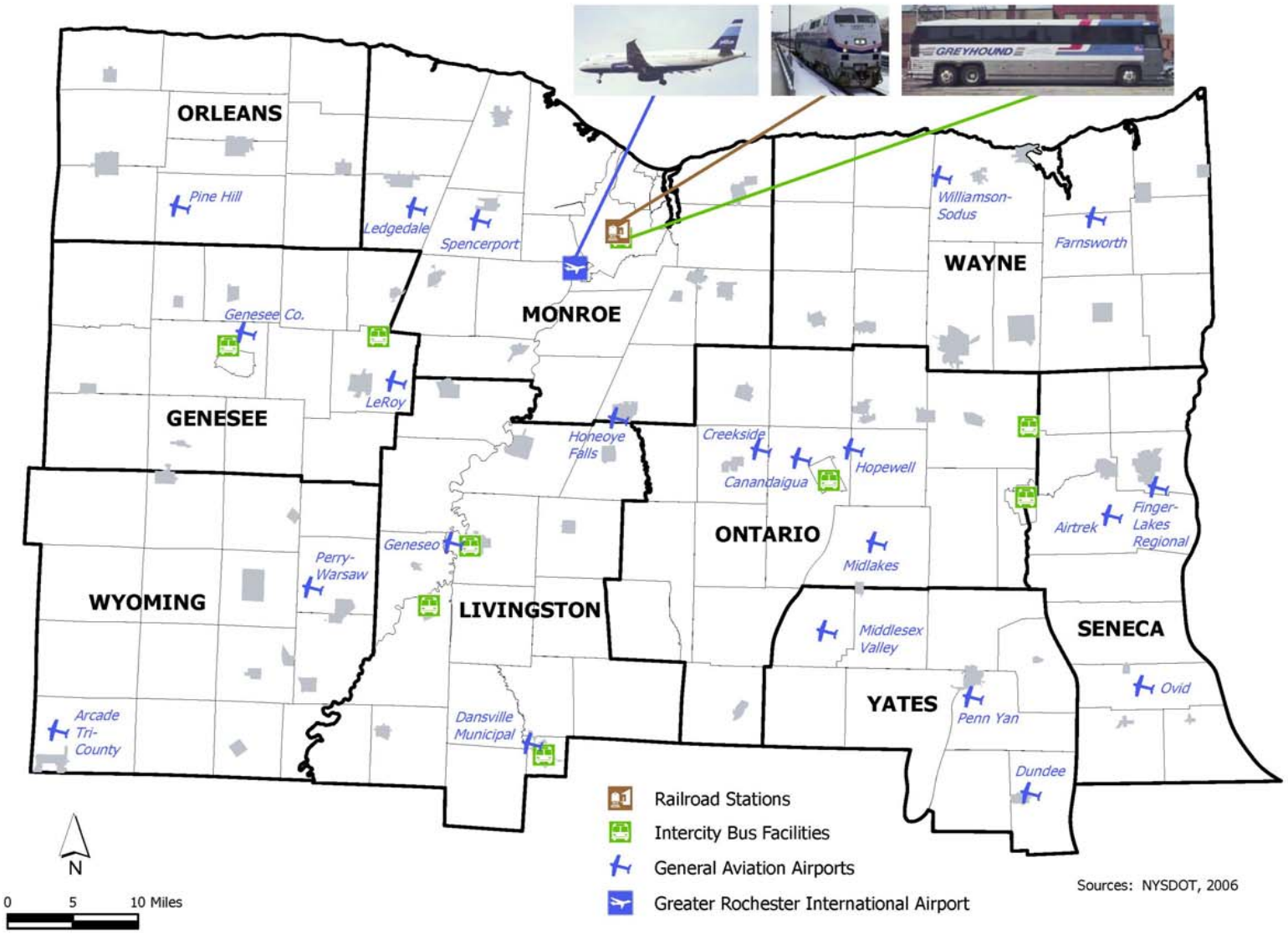
The status of Amtrak as the national passenger rail provider remains unclear. A significant infusion of funds is required for Amtrak to remain competitive and expand service. Planned high-speed rail improvements for the Empire Corridor linking Buffalo and Rochester with Albany and New York City are in question due to the current uncertainty surrounding Amtrak. GTC remains supportive of efforts to bring high-speed rail to the Empire Corridor.

Via Bus

Intercity bus service in the region is provided by Greyhound Lines and New York Trailways. The central transfer point for intercity buses in the region is the terminal at Midtown Plaza. Greyhound and/or Trailways

Interregional Transportation Facilities, 2007

Map 17



make stops at eight additional locations throughout the region. Current connections between intercity and intracity (public transportation) buses allows for convenient transfer between the two modes at Midtown Plaza. The opening of Renaissance Square in 2010 (estimated) will enhance convenience by providing a single point for all bus transfers in downtown Rochester.

Via Water

The Spirit of Ontario fast ferry across Lake Ontario between the Port of Rochester and Toronto, Ontario began service in June 2004. Service temporarily stopped in September 2004, but was restarted by the City of Rochester in June 2005. The ferry service ceased permanently in October 2005 and the ship was sold to foreign interests in March 2007. During its nearly two seasons of service, the Spirit of Ontario carried more than 200,000 passengers.

Accomplishments

Extensive physical improvements are continuing at GRIA. A new six-lane centralized security checkpoint opened in February 2005 to enhance the safety of the airport and its airlines for travelers and employees. Airfield improvements including new taxiways, reconstructed runways, and rehabilitated or reconstructed internal roadways are either complete, under construction, or planned.

A key consideration when flying into and out of a region is the cost. GRIA had some of the highest air fares in the nation in 1998. Since that time, fares have been cut substantially, due in large part to the presence of low-fare carriers, notably AirTran and JetBlue. Airfares to and from GRIA fell 33 percent between 1999 and 2004.

GTC completed the *Rochester Amtrak Station Revitalization Study* in March 2002. The purpose of the study was to position the greater Rochester area for the arrival of high-speed rail through the functional and aesthetic redesign of the station. Strategies were identified to ensure its full integration with downtown Rochester and the regional transportation system.

The study calls for the construction of a new station to be built just west of the existing station as well as the installation of high-level platforms, new passenger rail tracks to the north and south of the existing tracks, and a pedestrian bridge connecting the new station with the new tracks.

In addition, a new Amtrak station is planned in Lyons. This new station will improve access to passenger rail in the region and may act as a catalyst for economic development in Wayne County.

The cessation of ferry service between Rochester and Toronto via the Spirit of Ontario represents the most significant change in interregional travel since the last LRTP was adopted in December 2004.