
Strategic Plan for Public Transportation in Genesee County



Genesee County
Legislature



Rochester-Genesee
Regional Transportation
Authority

Adopted: March 2002

The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation in Genesee County contains six general goals and seven initiatives that have been developed to address public transportation needs. The Strategic Plan describes the proposed initiatives, including projected costs and revenues, and recommends specific actions and a timeframe for implementing the initiatives.

Strategic Plan Steering Committee

The following served on the Steering Committee that guided the preparation of this Strategic Plan:

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Goals for Public Transportation

The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation is designed to address the following general goals:

- A. *Coordinate public and agency transportation services.*
- B. *Provide transportation services to meet the needs of people who do not have access to motor vehicles and people with disabilities.*
- C. *Provide transportation for agency clientele.*
- D. *Increase ridership on B-Line buses by increasing public awareness of B-Line bus schedules and routes.*
- E. *Improve access to medical services, both within and outside Genesee County.*
- F. *Improve access to employment.*

Summary of Proposed Initiatives

The following seven initiatives are designed to achieve the overall goals of the Plan:

1. Establish a centralized transportation coordinator function and information service to serve a network of human service agencies and organizations and the general public.
2. Expand marketing and publicity to increase public awareness of B-line services, bus schedules and routes/service areas.
3. Expand contractual/subscription/specialty transportation services provided by Batavia Bus Service to maximize the utilization of vehicles and increase operating efficiency.
4. Encourage the Department of Social Services and Mental Health Services to coordinate appointments for common clients when the agencies co-locate in a facility on East Main Street Road.
5. Explore ways to link Batavia Bus Service with the public transportation services provided in adjoining counties (i.e., Regional Transit Service, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, Wyoming Transportation Service)
6. Explore the establishment of a medical shuttle service to augment the existing service provided by volunteer drivers and the B-Line medical transport provided to senior citizens through the Office for the Aging.
7. Enhance B-Line bus service.

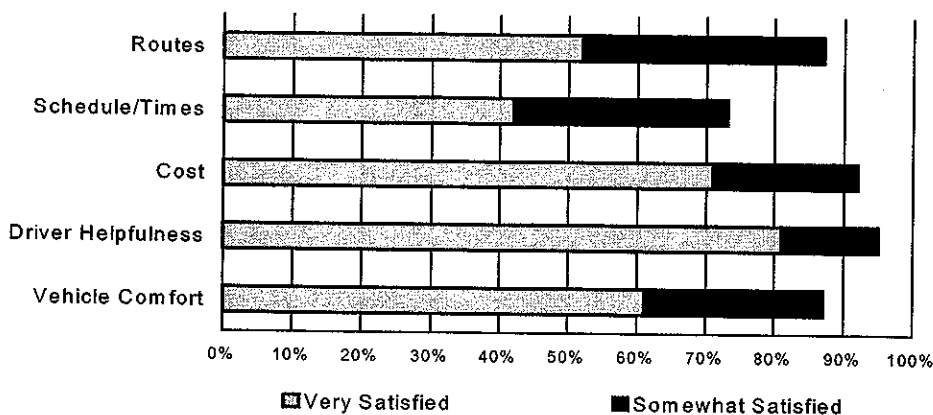


Research Findings

The Strategic Plan is based on the following research and public involvement conducted between November 2000 and July 2001:

- Survey of current B-line riders
- Written surveys of and personal interviews with transportation providers, human service agencies, and community leaders with an interest in transportation issues
- Office for the Aging Senior Transportation Summit Meeting held on April 4, 2001
- RGRTA Public Forum held on June 25, 2001
- "State of Public Transportation Report," prepared in October 2001.

B-Line Rider Satisfaction



Source: B-Line Rider Survey



Research Findings

Existing Bus Service Regional Transit Service

RTS, a subsidiary of RGRTA, provides bus service in Monroe County and between eastern Genesee County and downtown Rochester. RTS Route 95 operates between Midtown Plaza and the LeRoy, Bergen and Batavia Park and Ride lots. Two morning trips and two afternoon trips are provided daily. All morning trips originate at the Batavia Park and Ride Lot. Both evening trips originate at Midtown Plaza in downtown Rochester. Trailways also provides express bus service between downtown Rochester and the LeRoy Park and Ride Lot. One morning trip is provided to downtown Rochester and two afternoon trips are provided from downtown.

Batavia Bus Service

Batavia Bus Service a/k/a B-Line, a regional subsidiary of RGRTA, provides bus service within Genesee County. Batavia Bus Service offices and buses are housed in the Genesee County Highway Department facility in the City of Batavia. Batavia Bus Service operates the following eight different bus services which are available to the general public:

The following section describes the proposed initiatives.

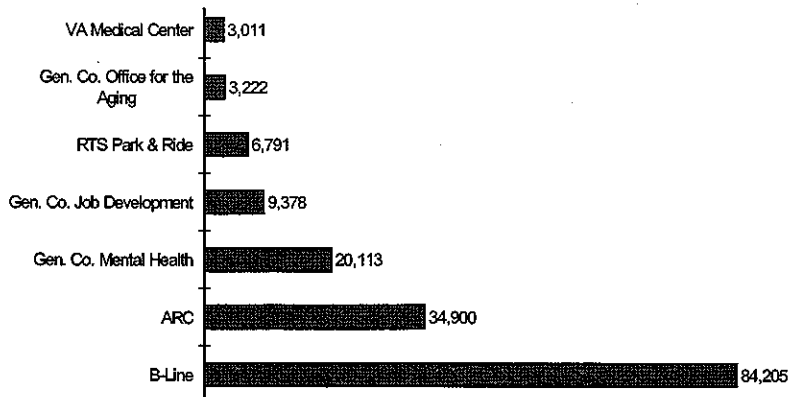
Description of Proposed Initiatives

I. Establish a centralized transportation coordinator function and information service to serve a network of human service agencies and organizations and the general public.

A. Integrate transportation services in Genesee County

1. Establish a transportation coordinator function to coordinate governmental and agency transportation services County-wide.
2. Establish a database of information on transportation services, providers, and contacts at governmental and not-for-profit human service agencies.
3. Utilize e-mail to receive and respond to requests for dial-a-bus service from human service agencies on behalf of their clients.
4. Establish a centralized telephone number for the public to use to obtain information about all of the transportation services provided in Genesee County and to arrange for all specialty transportation services, e.g., demand-responsive services and volunteer drivers.
5. Maintain information on routes and services on RGRTA/BBS web-site.

Trips Provided or Financed by Government and Non-Profit Organizations—1999



II. Expand marketing and publicity of B-Line bus services, schedules and routes. Educate prospective riders who are unfamiliar with public transportation on how to utilize B-Line bus services.

A. Publicize B-Line bus services

1. Periodically publish in the Batavia Daily News and the Pennysaver and Drummer publications that are distributed in Genesee County B-Line bus schedules, bus routes, and central telephone number for obtaining information and/or arranging for specialized transportation services.
2. Publicize the B-Line central telephone number through WBTA/WBTF radio advertisements and public service announcements.
3. Display RGRTA website address on the exterior of B-Line buses.
4. Maintain B-Line bus schedules and route/service area information on the RGRTA/BBS web-site.
5. Continue to make B-Line bus schedules available in various locations throughout Genesee County (e.g., human service agency offices, physician waiting rooms, libraries, banks, grocery stores, community centers, etc.)

B. Educate the public on how to utilize B-Line bus services.

1. Periodically sponsor "How to ride the bus" workshops for groups of people who are unfamiliar with and/or who have no prior experience riding public transportation. Take workshop participants for a ride on the bus while explaining how to interpret bus schedules, identify bus stops, flag buses, pay fares, etc.
2. Improve readability of B-Line bus schedules. Incorporate instructions on bus schedules that passengers must flag buses at intersections to board. Identify in the bus schedule the exact location of bus stops in shopping plazas and parking lots. Install bus stop signage in shopping plazas and parking lots.

Batavia Bus Service (Con't.)

- Fixed-route service within the City of Batavia (weekdays)
- Dial-a-bus service within the City of Batavia (weekdays)
- Fixed-route service between Batavia and Genesee Community College (weekdays)
- Fixed-route service between Batavia and LeRoy (weekdays)
- Dial-a-bus service in the Village of LeRoy (Thursdays)
- Dial-a-bus service between Batavia and outlying areas of Genesee County (one day per week to each of five areas)
- Subscription student bus service within the City of Batavia (weekdays during the school year)
- Senior citizen (grocery) shopping shuttle within City of Batavia (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

Evening or weekend service is not provided. All dial-a-bus service requires reservations 24 hours in advance.

Batavia Bus Service also provides transportation services, under contract, to clients of ARC, Mental Health Services, and Office for the Aging.



Research Findings

Transportation to Employment

Concentrations of employers within Genesee County that may benefit from public transportation services customized to meet the needs of their employees include:

- Batavia Industrial Park
- Batavia Gateway Corporate Park
- Pembroke Thruway Plaza
- Ontario Thruway Plaza
- Six Flags Darien Lake Amusement Park
- Commercial areas within and near the City of Batavia

III. Continue to provide existing services, and expand contractual / subscription / specialty transportation services provided by Batavia Bus Service.

- A. Explore expanding the existing transportation contract with ARC to include transporting ARC clients who reside outside the City of Batavia to and from the ARC sheltered workshop.
- B. Explore expanding the existing transportation contract with Mental Health Services to transport Mental Health clients who reside in the northwestern and eastern portions of Genesee County to and from the Mental Health day care center in Batavia.
- C. Explore providing customized subscription transportation service to and from employment centers, e.g., Pembroke and Ontario Thruway Service Plazas, industrial/corporate parks, Six Flags Darien Lake Amusement Park, and areas with concentrations of retail businesses. Work with major employers at each site to determine demand for transportation services, explore guaranteed-revenue contracts, and facilitate employers working together to coordinate employee work schedules to make such transportation services feasible where sufficient demand exists.
- D. Continue to provide specialty shuttle bus service (e.g., OFA social transportation shuttle bus service), the school bus subscription service in Batavia, and the senior citizen supermarket shuttle service in Batavia.
- E. Identify and secure supplemental revenue sources to support the expansion of bus service.

IV. Encourage the Department of Social Services and Mental Health Services to coordinate appointments for common clients when the agencies co-locate in a facility on East Main Street Road.

- A. DSS and Mental Health counselors with common clients should confer with each other and the client when scheduling client appointments so that each client's appointments with both agencies are scheduled on the same day and in succession to each other.

V. Explore ways to link Batavia Bus Service with the public transportation services provided in adjoining counties (i.e., Regional Transit Service, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, Wyoming Transportation Service)

- A. Explore expanding BBS existing weekly service to Attica to encompass the entire Village, and coordinate services with the Wyoming Transportation Service (WYTS).

VI. Explore the establishment of a medical shuttle service to augment the existing service provided by volunteer drivers and the B-Line medical transport provided to senior citizens through the Office for the Aging.

A. Explore establishing a medical shuttle service

1. Explore establishing medical shuttle services between points in Genesee County and the medical facilities in Monroe and Erie Counties.
2. Work with DSS, other human service agencies and health-related facilities to encourage subscriptions.
3. Utilize demand-responsive and route services and volunteer drivers to bring people to central boarding sites.

B. Support the use of volunteer drivers to provide medical transportation

1. Continue to encourage the use of volunteer drivers as needed to fill gaps in transportation services
2. Establish a centralized volunteer data base with information about the availability of each volunteer driver (days of week, times of day, etc.), the area(s) within which each is willing to provide transportation, contact telephone numbers, etc.
3. Coordinate scheduling volunteer drivers for persons needing medical transportation through the Transportation Coordinator's office.
4. Establish a recognition program to express appreciation to the volunteer drivers for the services they provide.

New RGRTA Initiatives

- Commuter Park and Ride Services from the City of Batavia to Rochester was implemented in January 2002. More comfortable over-the-road coaches are being used to provide the service. The bus route will originate in the City of Batavia with stops at the LeRoy and Bergen Park and Ride Lots.
- Seasonal bus service to and from Six Flags Darien Lakes Amusement Park was implemented in the summer of 2001. The buses operate daily between Rochester and the amusement park with a stop at the Tops Market in Batavia.

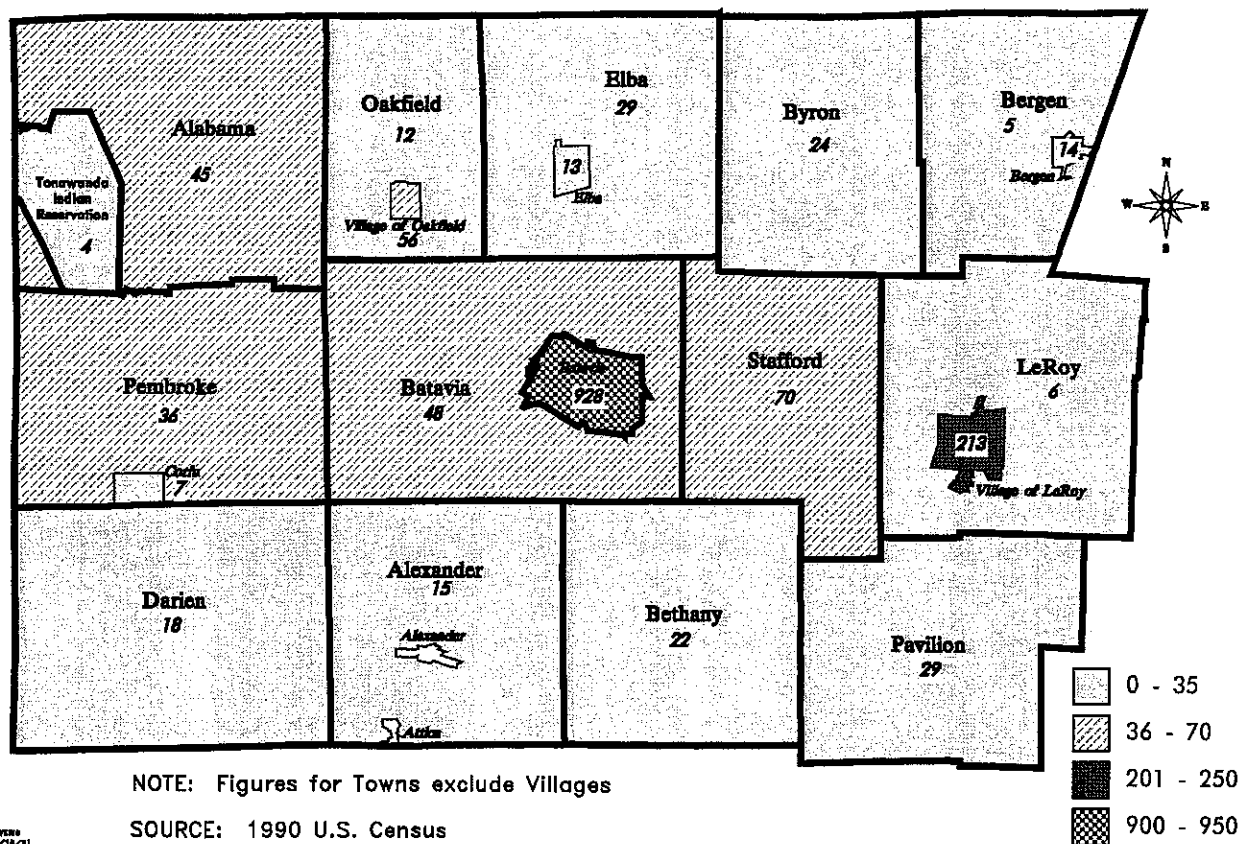
VII. Enhance B-Line bus service

A. Take measures to maintain the high level of B-Line bus service and to increase the utility of the service.

1. Sell bus tokens and passes to eliminate the need for passengers to have the exact change.
2. Periodically review the eligibility of senior citizens who have been certified for curb-to-curb service to limit the frequency with which fixed-route buses must deviate from the route.

Households with No Vehicles Available

Strategic Plan for Public Transportation - Genesee County



Potential Costs and Revenues	
Costs	Revenues
I. Brokerage service and central database	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to set up and maintain database/contact list • Staff time/consultant to set up and maintain website or e-mail list to distribute weekly information on available services • Staff time to update schedule information on website/e-mail list • Staff time to maintain a volunteer database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions from participating agencies • State funds for Transportation Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
II. Marketing and publicity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time/consultant to develop ads/flyers • Staff time to distribute flyers/schedules • Staff time to prepare and issue periodic press releases • Advertising in Daily News / Pennysaver / Drummer • Advertising on WBTA / WBTF radio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating funds • Bus advertising revenue
III. Explore expanding contractual /subscription services	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicles for service • Drivers for vehicles • Fuel and maintenance • Overhead allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts fees/subscriptions • Fares
IV. DSS / Mental Health coordination of client appointments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to set up common client database • Staff time to confer with each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSS /Mental Health operating funds

Potential Costs and Revenues (continued)	
Costs	Revenues
V. Explore ways to link B-Line service with public transit in adjoining counties.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time for research and coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fares from increased ridership • Contributions from DSS and other agencies and organizations
VI. Explore establishing a medical shuttle service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shuttle vehicle(s) • Staff time to coordinate with agencies and medical facilities • Driver(s) for shuttle(s) • Staff time to coordinate on-demand service • Cost to provide on-board aide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fares / Subscriptions • Subsidy from medical facilities • Contributions from human service Agencies • Muriel Marshall Fund Grant • DSS / Medicaid
VII. Enhance B-Line bus service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to sell tokens / fees for third-party to sell tokens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating budget

Projected Impact on Operating Budget and Ridership

Projected Increase in Annual Operating Expenses		
Description	Amount	Comments
Transportation coordinator/ broker function	\$40,000-\$60,000	Contract fee for services or labor, fringe benefits plus office expense for employee
Medical Shuttle(s)	\$90,000-\$180,000	One round trip per day to Rochester or Buffalo, M-F = \$90,000. One round trip to both cities, M-F = \$180,000.
Expanded Contractual / Subscription Services	\$90,000	Assumes two vehicles operating for a total of 8 hours daily, M-F
Increased advertising /publicity	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Newspaper and radio ads
Projected Increase in Annual Operating Income		
Description	Amount	Comments
Contract fees / subscription fees	\$25,000-\$50,000	Depends on the degree to which contractual /subscription services are expanded
Fares	\$5,000-\$10,000	From increased ridership due to advertising
Agency contributions for brokerage/coordination function	\$50,000	Contributions from all agencies that benefit
Reimbursement for medical trips /grants for medical transportation	TBD	Medicare reimbursement
Advertising on buses	TBD	
Projected Impact on Annual Ridership		
Description	Additional Passenger Trips	Comments
Medical trips	2,500-5,000	To destinations within and outside Genesee County
Additional trips by general public	1,000-5,000	Depends on extent of advertising and promotion
Contractual/ subscription services	25,000 - 35,000	Depends on extent contractual /subscription service is expanded.
Total:	28,500-45,000	

Summary of Recommendations

On-Going Actions

1. Increase advertising and promotion of BBS services.
2. Maintain BBS routes and schedules on the RGRTA/BBS web-site.
3. Sponsor "How to ride the bus" workshops.
4. Support use of volunteer drivers for medical transportation.
5. Continue to provide existing services.

Short Term Actions (1-2 years)

1. Establish database on transportation services, providers, volunteer drivers and agency contacts.
2. Establish centralized transportation coordinator function and centralized telephone number for all public and agency transportation services.
3. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing medical shuttle service.
4. Explore ways to link BBS with public transportation services in adjoining counties.
5. Encourage DDS and Mental Health Services to coordinate appointments for common clients.
6. Utilize e-mail to receive and respond to requests for dial-a-bus service from human service agencies.
7. Sell bus tokens to eliminate need for exact change.
8. Review eligibility of senior citizens to continue to receive curb-to-curb service.

Medium Term Actions (3-5 years)

1. Explore expanding contractual/subscription / specialty transportation services with various human service agencies.