
Strategic Plan for Public Transportation in Livingston County



**Livingston County
Board of Supervisors**



**Rochester-Genesee
Regional Transportation
Authority**

July 11, 2001

The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation in Livingston County contains seven general goals and six 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.

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 cars and people with disabilities.***
- C. *Provide transportation for agency clientele.***
- D. *Increase awareness that LATS is a public transportation service.***
- E. *Improve access to medical services, both within and outside of Livingston County.***
- F. *Improve access to employment.***
- G. *Establish a central location in Livingston County for the LATS facility.***

Summary of Proposed Initiatives

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

1. Establish a centralized transportation brokerage and information service to serve a network of human service agencies and organizations as well as the general public.
2. Expand marketing and publicity to improve the image and awareness of LATS services.
3. Establish a LATS facility at Hampton Corners.
4. Study ways to link LATS service with services provided by other R-GRTA subsidiaries (e.g., new WYTS route from Warsaw to Mt. Morris).
5. Explore establishment of a medical shuttle service, to augment the existing service provided by volunteer drivers from human service agencies and organizations.
6. Consider establishing fixed route service to be integrated with dial-a-ride service and increased sharing of contracted routes.

The following section describes the proposed initiatives. For each action, the anticipated time frame for implementation is indicated. Actions that are already underway by RGRTA are designated with a 

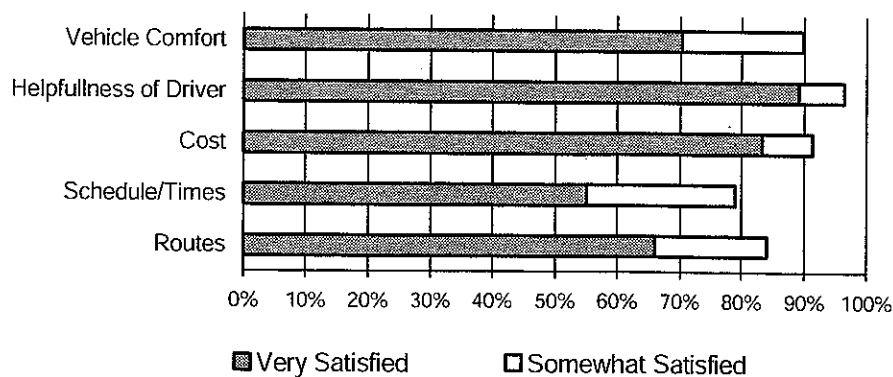


Research Findings

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

- Survey of current LATS riders
- Written surveys of and personal interviews with transportation providers, human service agencies, and community leaders with an interest in transportation issues
- "State of Public Transportation Report," prepared in February 2001
- Public forum held January 9, 2001

Surveys provided an assessment of existing public transportation services



SOURCE: LATS Rider Survey, 2000



Research Findings

- Persons with low incomes, persons with disabilities, and senior citizens are served by several public and private human service agencies in Livingston County. Coordination with these agencies would help to establish and sustain a customer base for public transportation.
- ARC has expressed interest in cooperating with LATS to improve public transportation services. Potential areas of cooperation include operating routes, and sharing maintenance facilities.
- DSS has received a 2-year grant to establish a "broker" position to coordinate transportation for DSS clients. This position could serve as a model for a centralized brokerage service for all County residents.

The following agencies and organizations may participate in a network to coordinate transportation services:

Livingston County Agencies

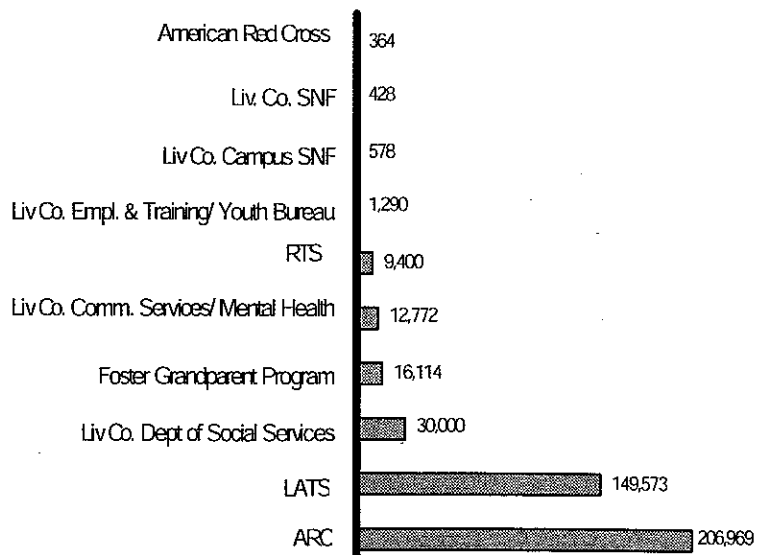
- Social Services
- Community Services/ Mental Health
- Adult Day Health Care
- Foster Grandparent Program

Description of Proposed Initiatives

- I. Establish a centralized transportation brokerage and information service to serve a network of human service agencies and organizations as well as the general public.
 - A. Establish a database of information on transportation services, providers, and contacts at human service organizations. (*Short Term*)
 - B. Organize human service agencies and transportation providers into a network to coordinate transportation services. (*Medium Term*)
 1. Utilize the internet to receive and respond to requests for dial-a-ride service from human service agencies on behalf of clients.
 2. Utilize the internet to notify human service agencies of schedules and routes for subscriber service.
 3. Utilize the internet to coordinate rides to medical appointments and treatment.

Coordination among agencies that provide transportation services helps to maintain public transportation ridership.

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



SOURCE: Transportation Provider Survey, 2000.

4. Distribute information to the network on a weekly basis.

C. Encourage individuals and agencies to use the internet to access information on available services.

(On-going)



1. Maintain information on routes and services on the RGRTA/ LATS website
2. Promote the LATS website among college students at SUNY Geneseo and Genesee Community College (GCC.)

D. Work with the Department of Social Services to establish a centralized brokerage service for DSS clients.
(Short Term)

1. Maintain information on the availability and terms of public and private transportation alternatives.
2. Maintain contacts with human service agencies affiliated with the network.
3. Maintain the internet-based coordination service (see A. above.)
4. Work with DSS to provide service to DSS clients as well as to the general public.
5. Respond to requests for transportation services from the general public.
6. Work with major employers to help meet the transportation needs of their employees.

Livingston County Agencies
(Continued)

- Rehabilitation and Recreation Program
- Health Department
- Skilled Nursing Facilities
- Cornell Cooperative Extension
- Probation Department
- Housing Assistance

Other public agencies

- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Liv. Co.
- Genesee Valley BOCES, Adult Education
- SUNY Geneseo-America Reads Program

Private organizations

- ARC
- American Red Cross/ Northern Livingston Co.
- Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Head Start
- Focus on the Children
- Liv. Co. Youth Advocacy
- Conesus Lake Nursery School
- Upstate NY Chapter Multiple Sclerosis
- Hillside Children's Center
- Health & Wellness Referral Services
- Leicester Kid's Place, Inc.
- Noyes First Steps
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Family Focus Even Start
- Conesus Lake Nursing Home
- Catholic Charities



Research Findings

- LATS is perceived as a service for the elderly and disabled; not for the general public
- It is difficult to obtain information about service
- Agencies refer their clients and customers to a long list of transportation services. Each service has its own criteria for eligibility, cost, and availability. A central source of information on available transportation services is needed.
- The weekly PennySavers and Shoppers are the best way to reach potential riders.

II. Expand marketing and publicity to improve the image of LATS and public awareness of public transportation services

A. Aggressively advertise both new and existing LATS services. (*Short term/ On-going*)

1. Work with grocery stores to distribute flyers to customers.
2. Work with human service agencies, medical facilities, employers, churches and other organizations to encourage ridership.
3. Target housing complexes/ developments served by LATS, including apartment complexes and mobile home parks. Distribute flyers to every housing unit in these complexes. Work with management and/or tenant organizations to publicize services.
4. Publicize services to SUNY Geneseo students. Emphasize service to Wegman's and connections to RTS service in Rochester.
5. Publicize the service at medical facilities, shopping centers, educational institutions and government offices along the route. Continue to distribute service information at these locations.
6. Advertise regularly in the local Pennysavers.
7. Make information on transportation services easy to read and understand.

B. Emphasize that LATS is a public transportation service and is not limited to senior and disabled riders (*On-going*)

1. Expand ridership, especially among those residents who are neither senior citizens nor disabled.
2. Encourage coverage of the new service in church newsletters, other organization publications, and the media.

C. Maintain information on routes, schedules and brokered services on the LATS website. (*On-going*)



1. Encourage use of the website among SUNY Geneseo students.
2. Promote the website among seniors and other residents.

III. Establish a LATS facility at Hampton Corners.

(*Short-Term*)



IV. Study ways to link LATS service with services provided by other R-GRTA subsidiaries (e.g., new WYTS route from Warsaw to Mt. Morris).

(*Short-Term*)



**Recent Initiatives
Undertaken by
RGRTA**



Several recent initiatives already underway reflect the goals and initiatives in the Strategic Plan. These include:

- Planned relocation of the LATS facility to the County Highway facility at Hampton Corners
- Geneseo College/Marketplace Mall Shuttle
- Expanded Wegman's College Shuttle
- College Shuttle to link with downtown Rochester EZ Rider
- Planned purchase of five heavy-duty buses to give fleet a new look
- Planned purchase of two vans for greater flexibility
- New WYTS service from Warsaw to Mt. Morris. The route serves Perry, Castile and Silver Springs. It is funded by Wyoming County DSS and is open to the public.



Research Findings

The survey of transportation providers and human service agencies identified 118,182 trips for medical/ health purposes in 1999. This amount includes approximately 60% of all LATS trips and 75% of all DSS trips (22,000 trips per year.)

- DSS volunteer drivers provide an average of 11 trips per day to medical appointments:
 - 3 to Rochester facilities,
 - 2 to Honeoye Falls
 - 6 within Livingston County, with occasional trips to Warsaw and Hornell
- The Motor Corps operated by the Red Cross of Northern Livingston County provides 3-5 trips per week (364 trips in 1999.)
- Nursing homes and skilled nursing facilities have difficulty transporting residents for medical treatments at hospitals. Some patients cannot be discharged from hospitals to nursing homes if they require frequent transportation to treatments.
- Volunteers affiliated with churches often assist with rides.

V. Explore establishment of a medical shuttle service, to augment the existing service provided by volunteer drivers from human service agencies and organizations.

A. Provide coordinated, on demand trips to medical facilities (*On-going*)

1. Provide customized service to groups of individuals to medical facilities in Hornell, Batavia, Warsaw, and Honeoye Falls.
2. Work with DSS, human service agencies, churches and other organizations in the human services network to coordinate trips. Utilize the "broker" service to arrange coordinated trips.
3. Work with nursing homes and Noyes Hospital to design and finance a patient transport service.

B. Consider establishing a medical shuttle service. (*Short Term*)

1. Consider establishing a regular shuttle service from points in Livingston County to medical facilities in the Rochester area.
2. Work with Livingston County DSS, other human service agencies, health-related facilities and churches to encourage "subscriptions" to the proposed medical shuttle service.
3. Utilize vans to increase the comfort of the ride.
4. Consider retaining the services of a paid or volunteer aide to help passengers on and off the bus, as needed.
5. Utilize demand responsive services and volunteer drivers to bring people to central boarding sites.

C. Support the use of volunteer drivers for medical transportation (*On-going*)

1. Continue to encourage the use of volunteer drivers, as needed to fill gaps in service.
2. Support the Red Cross Motor Corps, DSS volunteer drivers, and other services by encouraging people to volunteer. Maintain a database of potential volunteers.
3. Publicize volunteer-based services to potential riders through the transportation broker.
4. Periodically recognize the contributions made by volunteer drivers and aides.

- Family members are challenged to provide needed medical transportation.



Research Findings

Existing RTS Service

RTS Route 91 provides 3 morning and 2 evening trips to and from Rochester via Route 15A. During fiscal year 1999-2000, these routes carried an average of 16.45 passengers per day from Avon and 20.22 passengers per day from Lima. One morning and one evening trip services the Lakeville Park and Ride lot.

Current LATS Services

Livingston Area Transportation Service (LATS), a regional subsidiary of RGRTA, provides demand responsive service from 8:30 am until 5:00 pm on weekdays. Advance notice of 24 hours is generally required. Buses housed at facilities in Avon, Dansville and Mt. Morris serve residents in different parts of the County on different days of the week.

LATS operates customized route service to the following government and human service agencies: Finger Lakes DDSO, ARC, Office for the Aging, Adult Day Health Care, Operation Friendship, and the Rehabilitation and Recreation program of Rochester Psychiatric Center.

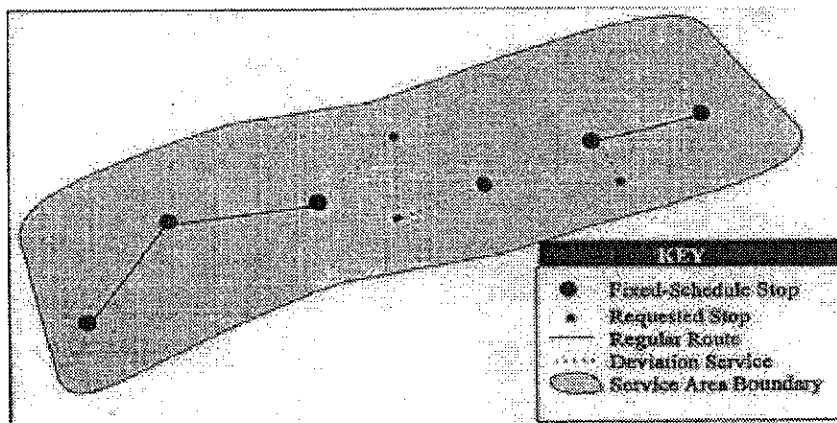
VI. Consider establishing fixed route service to be integrated with dial-a-ride service and increased sharing of contracted routes.

The following tasks shall be undertaken to evaluate the feasibility of fixed route service.

A. Evaluate possible routes to serve major population centers and destinations. (*Short Term — Medium Term*)

1. Consider regular Monday-Saturday route service between population centers and frequent destinations.
2. Consider basing some buses in Dansville and basing other buses at the new facility in Hampton Corners.
3. Explore possible routes serving major destinations such as medical centers, government agencies, shopping centers, employment sites, and senior housing facilities on a regular schedule.
4. Work with major employers to customize routes on a subscription basis. Conduct surveys of employees to determine demand for service.
5. Consider a point deviation system to comply with ADA. (See diagram.) Departure times from specific points would be fixed. The route connecting these points would be flexible. Riders may call in advance to be picked up from locations between the fixed points.

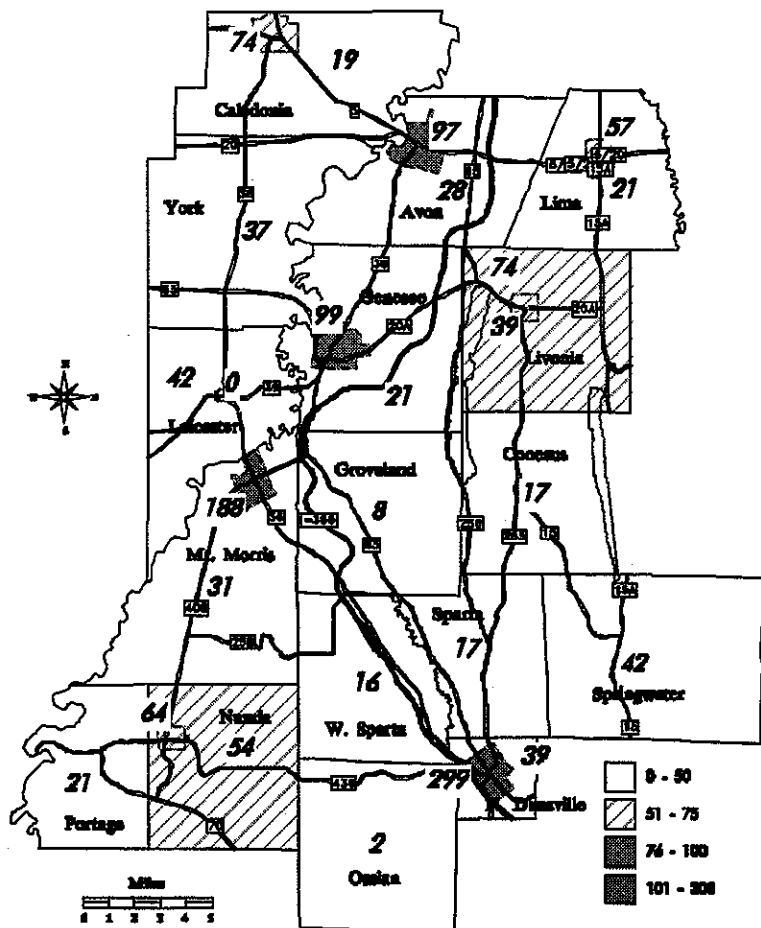
In point-deviation service, fixed stops (points) are established on a pre-determined time schedule, but the vehicle may follow any route needed to pick up individuals along the way and make it to the fixed points on schedule.



6. Work with the network of human service agencies to identify ridership. Work to coordinate route schedules with appointments and class schedules.
7. Explore re-orienting the demand-responsive service to feed the proposed route service whenever possible.
8. Work with agencies that currently support contract routes to encourage the use of fixed route service. Explore re-working the contract routes to feed the proposed fixed route service whenever possible.
9. Identify supplemental revenue sources to support fixed route service.

A route system should maximize service to areas with large numbers of households with no vehicles available.

Households with No Vehicles Available Livingston County – 1990 Census



Frequent Destinations

Destinations mentioned most often in the Rider and Agency Surveys include:

- Geneseo (Government Center, Courts, Wegmans)
- Mt. Morris (County Campus, ARC, BOCES)
- Dansville (Noyes Memorial Hospital, Tops)
- Lakeville (Genesee Community College, Council on Alcoholism)

Transportation to Employment

Large industrial employers within Livingston County that may benefit from public transportation include:

- Comstock/ Seneca Foods (Leicester)
- Kraft General Foods (Avon)
- Foster-Wheeler (Dansville)

Other potential employment sites include offices, restaurants and fast food facilities, correctional institutions, educational institutions, lodging facilities, and retail stores.

Daily Transportation Needs

- Several representatives of human service agencies shared anecdotes about the struggles of many residents to shop for groceries.
- A large grocery store in Mt. Morris closed in the fall of 2000, requiring residents to travel to Dansville or Geneseo for groceries.

B. Continue to provide Dial-A-Ride service.

C. Evaluate the integration of Dial-A-Ride Service with Proposed Fixed Route Service (*Short-term —Medium-term*)

1. Consider offering demand responsive service in conjunction with fixed route service
2. Evaluate feeding the fixed route service whenever possible.
3. Continue to place riders on contract ("subscriber") routes whenever possible

C. Customize Routes for Subscribers (*On-going*)

1. Continue to arrange customized routes for human service agencies which are open to the public. Increase the number of these routes.
2. Prepare a brochure, flyer or fact sheet to distribute to human service organizations, government agencies, and educational institutions to explain the process and potential cost of setting up a customized route.
3. Emphasize that these routes and schedules are customized for agency clients, in exchange for guaranteed revenue, but remain public routes.
4. Publicize routes and schedules among agencies in the human service network to increase ridership. Continue to encourage agencies to share customized routes.

Strategic Plan for Public Transportation -- Livingston County

Potential Costs and Revenues	
Costs	Revenues
I. Central database and brokerage service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time to set up and maintain database/ contact list • Staff time/ consultant to set up and maintain web site 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 from 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/ timetables • Staff time to prepare and issue periodic press releases • Advertising in local Pennysavers (approximately \$200 per week for full-county coverage) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating funds
III. Establish a LATS facility at Hampton Corners	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction and setup costs 	
IV. Study ways to link LATS service with services provided by other RGRTA subsidiaries	
<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
V. Medical Transportation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle(s) for shuttle service • Staff time to coordinate with agencies and medical facilities • Staff Driver for shuttle service • 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 • Foundation support • DSS/ Medicaid

Potential Costs and Revenues (continued)	
Costs	Revenues
VI. Fixed Route, Dial-A-Ride and Subscriber Service	
A. Fixed route service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add vehicles • Add staff (drivers) • Fuel/ maintenance/ insurance/ other operating costs • Staff time to coordinate with human service agencies and re-organize contract routes • Staff time/ consultant to design schedules and informational brochure • Printing costs for new timetables • Staff time to confirm and document route deviation guidelines to comply with ADA • Staff time to identify boarding locations • Staff time to design and install signs at bus stops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public financing for buses • Fares • Support from retailers and employers
B. Demand responsive service	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue existing service in conjunction with fixed route service (i.e., through point deviation and at ends of routes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain current level of support
C. Contract/ subscriber routes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff time for communicating with human service agencies and customizing routes • Staff time for on-going marketing/ customer service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency payments to cover cost of routes • Fares from additional riders

Projected Impact on Operating Budget and Ridership

Projected Increase in Annual Operating Expenses

<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Route Service	\$30,000 - \$250,000	Depends on number and frequency of routes, and the extent to which resources are transferred from Dial-A-Ride to fixed route service.
Medical Shuttle	\$40,000	Assumes one round trip to Rochester per day, M-F
"Transportation Broker" position	\$60,000	Labor, fringe and office expenses
Increased publicity	\$10,000	Pennysaver ads

Projected Increase in Annual Operating Income

<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Farebox	\$12,000 - \$40,000	Depends on number and frequency of routes and promotion
Special Services/ Contributions from Agencies	\$25,000	
Contract with DSS for Broker service	\$50,000	
Reimbursement for DSS medical trips	TBD	
Grants for medical shuttle	TBD	
Revenue from advertising on buses	TBD	

Projected Impact on Annual Ridership

<u>Description</u>	<u>Additional Riders</u>	<u>Comments</u>
New DSS trips (primarily medical)	5,000 - 20,000	Depends on establishing a service relationship with DSS
Referrals from human service agencies	1,000 - 5,000	Depends on building and maintaining relationships with agencies
Commuter trips	2,500 - 5,000	Depends on extent of participation among employers in establishing and promoting route service
Additional trips from the general public	1,000 - 5,000	
Medical shuttle trips	2,500 - 5,000	Assumes 5-10 round trips per day
Total:	12,000 - 40,000	

Summary of Recommendations

On-going Actions

1. Advertise existing LATS services. (II.A)
2. Emphasize that LATS is a public transportation service and is not limited to senior and disabled riders. (II.B)
3. Maintain information on routes, schedules and brokered services on the LATS website. (II.C)
4. Provide coordinated, on-demand trips to medical facilities. (V.A.)
5. Support the use of volunteer drivers for medical transportation (V.C)
6. Continue to provide dial-a-ride service. (VI.B)
7. Customize routes for subscribers (VI.C)

Short Term Actions (Years 1-2):

1. Establish a database of information on transportation services, providers and contacts at human service organizations (I.A)
2. Work with the Department of Social Services to establish a centralized brokerage service for DSS clients. (I.D)
3. Advertise new LATS services. (II.A)
4. Establish a LATS facility at Hampton Corners. (III.)
5. Study ways to link LATS service with services provided by other R-GRTA subsidiaries. (IV.)
6. Consider establishing a medical shuttle service (V.B.)

Medium Term Actions (3-5 years)

1. Organize human service agencies and transportation providers into a network to coordinate transportation services (I.B)
2. Expand the "transportation broker" position to serve all County residents (I.D.)

Short-term — Medium-term Actions (1-5 years)

1. Evaluate possible routes to serve major population centers and destinations. (VI.A)
2. Evaluate the integration of dial-a-ride service with proposed fixed route service. (VI.C)