

Seneca County Public Transportation Study

Final Report: February 2002

Seneca County Public Transportation Study

Summary of Findings

February 2002

The Seneca County Public Transportation Study was completed in February 2002. A Steering Committee consisting of the following members contributed their time, knowledge and insight to the development of the Study:

- Glenn Cooke, Director, Seneca County Department of Development and Planning
- Harriet Haynes, Planner, Seneca County Department of Development and Planning
- Charles Schillaci, Commissioner, Division of Human Services
- Dale Wagner, Transportation Coordinator, Division of Human Services
- Angela Reardon, Director, Office for the Aging
- Chuck Valder, Transportation Director, Seneca-Cayuga Arc
- Rose Rathbone, Seneca Director, Cayuga/ Seneca Community Action Agency
- David Hekel, Director of Community Services, Seneca County Department of Mental Health
- James Stack, Genesee Transportation Council

The study was financed by the Genesee Transportation Council, and coordinated by Stuart I. Brown Associates.

Existing Transportation Services

Seneca County agencies currently provide approximately 18,041 one-way passenger trips annually, at a cost of approximately \$384,426. Transportation services are either required by regulation or needed to ensure that these organizations' clients and consumers receive necessary services. These services include:

- Medical and other transportation services provided by the Division of Human Services (DHS), using staff drivers (7,800 trips)
- Wheelchair and other medical transportation for DHS clients that are contracted to private carriers (4,153 trips)
- In-house and contracted transportation services provided by the Division of Mental Health (2,200 trips)
- Transportation provided by the Senior Center, Inc. for the Office for the Aging to Nutrition Sites and to medical appointments (8,041 trips)

In addition, private not-for-profit organizations provide transportation to Seneca County residents. The Seneca/ Cayuga Arc provided 48,600 trips to its consumers in 2000, at a cost of \$354,000. Other private not-for-profit agencies that provide transportation services include Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency (3,100 trips) and the American Red Cross (20 trips.)

The clients and consumers of these organizations typically belong to segments of the population that have difficulty accessing private means of transportation: the disabled, the elderly, and others who do not have access to private transportation. According the U.S. Census, approximately 4.4% of the total population in Seneca County, age 16 and older, have a disability that limits their mobility. This represents approximately 1,000 individuals. Approximately 20% of the County's population is age 60 or older. More than 900 households in the County do not have access to a private vehicle. Without a private means of transportation, these individuals are isolated and unable to take care of basic daily needs such as grocery shopping.

Unmet Needs

Existing transportation services do not meet the needs of Seneca County's seniors, disabled, and other individuals who do not have access to cars. Although DHS provides transportation to medical appointments for eligible clients, transportation is not available to provide access to employment or for shopping. OFA provides transportation to Nutrition Sites, but is unable to meet seniors' demands for transportation to medical appointments and shopping. Although Mental Health provides necessary transportation to appointments for its consumers, the agency is required to expend a considerable portion of its financial resources (approximately \$35,000/year) to do so.

In addition, existing transportation services overlap, resulting in an inefficient system. Vehicles from various agencies literally "follow each other down the highway" to bring their respective passengers to the same destinations. Each agency is restricted by regulation from transporting clients of other agencies.

Approximately one-half of the County's population resides in the Towns and Villages of Seneca Falls and Waterloo. More than three-quarters of the households without access to a vehicle are located in these communities. However, residents of the more rural areas of the County who are not able to drive are more isolated, and more difficult and expensive to serve with public or agency transportation services.

Service Alternatives

The Public Transportation Study for Seneca County presents four alternative service options for public transportation. The alternatives incorporate the following components:

- Fixed route service within the "northern corridor" (Seneca Falls - Waterloo - Geneva) with "point deviation" to pick up riders, by pre-arrangement, between scheduled points along the route.
- Fixed route "shuttle" service between Ovid and Waterloo, with point deviation.
- Demand responsive service in the southern and northern parts of the County. Service in the southern area would to bring people to destinations in the southern area or to Ovid for "shuttle" service to Waterloo. Demand-responsive service in the northern part would bring people to destinations in the northern area, or to points along the fixed route.

- Integration of the Nutrition Site service for Office for the Aging clients.

This service would be open to the public by pre-arrangement. Routes would be flexible, depending upon the reservations received for the service on each day. OFA would continue to contract with the Senior Center for demand-responsive transportation.

The attached map depicts the service areas of these components. Descriptions of these services are provided in the full Seneca County Public Transportation Study.

Table 6 summarizes the four alternative service options. Detailed budgets and ridership estimates are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Each of the four alternative service options would accommodate a portion of the medical trips currently provided by DHS and Mental Health, thereby reducing the cost to these agencies of providing these services. In addition, the availability of public transportation would help achieve these agencies' objectives of encouraging self-sufficiency.

Institutional Options

The study identified three potential institutional options for operating a public transportation service in Seneca County:

- 1) Join the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority.
- 2) Create a public transportation system within the County and operate the system with County employees.
- 3) Contract with a private operator (either commercial or not-for-profit) to operate the system.

Table 9 summarizes the pros and cons of each institutional option.

Financing Public Transportation

As shown in the following table, County agencies (DHS, OFA, and Mental Health) expended approximately \$262,000 in 2000 on transportation.

Amount Spent on Transportation - 2000				
Agency	Total Expenses	Direct costs	Cost of purchased transportation	Reimbursements to clients
Division of Human Services	\$ 304,226	179,000	122,226 (1)	3,000
Mental Health	\$ 45,000	35,000	10,000	
Office for the Aging/ Senior Center	\$ 35,200	-	35,200	
	\$ 384,426	\$ 214,000	\$ 167,426	\$ 3,000

(1) Wheelchair and other non- ambulance trips that could not be provided by DHS staff.

If public transportation were available, DHS and Mental Health could reduce the number of vehicles operated by staff (at a cost of up to \$25/ride), and instead purchase bus passes for their clients (\$1-\$2/ride). Approximately 40% of all DHS medical trips and 30% of all Mental Health trips could be accommodated by the proposed alternative service designs for public transportation.

The amount of cost savings needs to be determined by agency staff, based on the remaining need for staff and drivers to serve clients who cannot use the public system. A conservative estimate of the cost savings is \$5,000 for the County's portion of DHS medical transportation, and \$10,000 for Mental Health.

No cost savings would be realized by the Office for the Aging under the four proposed alternative service designs. OFA would contribute \$12,200 for Nutrition Site service out of existing funds. However, seniors would benefit from the additional transportation service provided by a public system.

State and Federal funding sources are available to support rural public transportation. The annual costs and revenues for the four alternative service options are summarized below.

Alternative Service Designs	#1	#2	#3	#4
Total Operating Costs	118,276	123,624	153,054	181,413
Income from fares (\$1-2/ride) and contracts:	10,100	12,700	13,000	13,750
Annual State/ Federal Assistance:	66,137	85,689	95,097	99,715
Annual Financial Support from County:	45,040	25,235	30,258	53,248
Total Start-up Costs	120,000	120,000	157,000	225,000
State/Federal Assistance	104,400	104,400	137,700	198,900
County	15,600	15,600	19,300	26,100

If Seneca County were to operate a system on its own, the estimated annual cost of operating the system would likely range from \$25,000 to \$53,000, depending upon the alternative selected. Start-up costs for a County-operated system would be between \$15,000 and \$26,000.

If the County were to join R-GRTA, an annual contribution of between \$20,000 and \$30,000 is likely to be required from the County. The exact amount needs to be determined by R-GRTA, based on a proposed service plan. R-GRTA would cover the start-up costs on behalf of the County.

If the County were to contract with a private operator, the amount of the County's contribution would be determined following the receipt of proposals from potential operators. A private operator may be able to cover the start-up costs as well, depending on the responses to the RFP.

Next Steps

In order to establish a public transportation service in Seneca County, the Board of Supervisors needs to take one of the following steps:

- 1) Pass a resolution to join the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority, and work with Authority staff to develop a service plan and budget.

This option provides the easiest way to bring public transportation to Seneca County, as R-GRTA would do all of the work to prepare a service plan, coordinate with NYS DOT, and hire and train employees, and purchase vehicles. No County labor would be required. With this option, public transportation could be instituted sometime in 2003.

- 2) Authorize County staff to submit a service plan to the NYS Department of Transportation, Passenger Transportation Division and obtain the authority to participate in State and Federal funding programs.

This option would require considerable staff time and training before the service could be implemented. A staff person would need to be identified to finalize a service plan and to work with NYS DOT staff to learn all of the requirements involved with participating in the State/ Federal funding program (Section 5311.) With this option, public transportation could be available within 2-3 years.

- 3) Prepare a Request for Proposals for the private operation of public transportation services.

This option requires all of the same requirements of County staff as Option 2. Once NYS DOT approves the service plan and the County becomes a participant in the 5311 program, County staff will need to prepare an RFP. Upon receiving proposals with private operators, County staff will need to negotiate a contract. With this option, public transportation could be available in approximately 3 years.

Key Contacts

Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA)

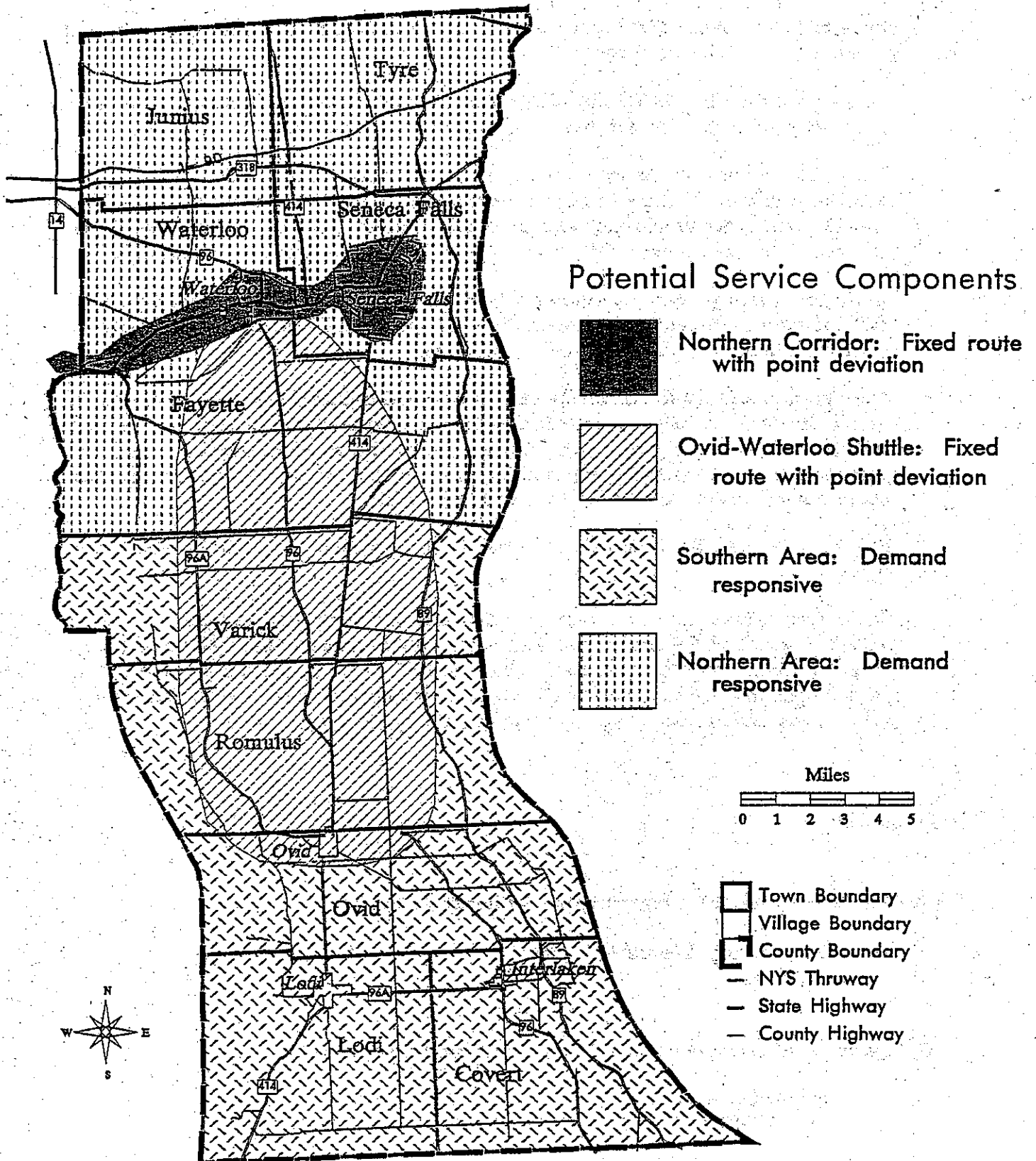
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NYS Department of Transportation, Passenger Transportation Division

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Public Transportation Service Components

Seneca County Public Transportation Study



Summary of Alternative Services

February 2002

Alternative	Northern Corridor Fixed Route Service (with point deviation)	Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle	Vehicles/ Drivers	Demand Responsive/		Integration of OFA Nutrition Site Service	Cost to County	
				Southern Area	Northern Corridor		Annual Operating (1)	Start-up
1	3 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.	One round-trip per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 10:00 a.m. Returns to Ovid at 1:00 p.m.	2 vehicles 2 full-time drivers	4 hours per day	3 1/2 hours per day	None	45,040	15,600
2	4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.	2 round-trips per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Returns to Ovid at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.	2 vehicles 2 full-time drivers	4 1/2 hours per day	2 hours per day	None	25,235	15,600
3	4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.	2 round-trips per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Returns to Ovid at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.	3 buses 2 full time and one part-time drivers	2 hours per day	5 1/2 hours per day	Waterloo and Ovid	30,258	19,300
4	4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.	2 round-trips per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Returns to Ovid at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.	4 buses; 2 full time and 2 part-time drivers	7 hours per day	5 1/2 hours per day	Waterloo and Ovid	53,248	26,100

(1) Based on the assumption that the County would operate the service using its own employees.
As shown in Tables 7 and 8, the potential County costs for a service operated by R-GRTA are comparable.

Alternative Service Designs for Public Transportation in Seneca County

February 2002

Alternative #1

- 3 Northern Corridor routes per day; One round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttle; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; No integration of Nutrition Site Service
- 2 buses; 2 full time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 - 2:30 Demand-responsive service in northern corridor
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 8-9:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 9:30-10:00 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 12:45 - 1:15 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 1:15 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern portion of County and from Ovid

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 10:00 a.m. and returns at 1:00 p.m.
- Two vehicles
- Two full-time drivers
- No integration of OFA Nutrition site service.

Alternative #2

- 4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Two round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttles; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; No integration of OFA Nutrition Site service
- 2 buses; 2 full time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF.)
- 12:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 3-5:00 pm Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 7:00-8:00 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in northern corridor
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 11:00 - 2:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area
- 2:00 - 2:30 p.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and returns at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Two vehicles
- Two full-time drivers
- No integration of OFA Nutrition site service

Alternative #3

- 4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Two round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttle; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; Integrate OFA Nutrition Site service to Waterloo and Ovid
- 3 buses; 2 full time and one part-time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF.)
- 12:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 7:00-8:00 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in northern corridor
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area and Nutrition Site service to Ovid
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 3:30 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area

Bus C (Based in Waterloo)

- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. OFA Nutrition site and demand responsive service to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 6:00 p.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in Northern Corridor

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and returns at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Three vehicles
- Two full-time and one part-time drivers
- Integration of OFA Nutrition site service to Waterloo and Ovid.

Alternative #4

- 4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Two round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttles; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; Integrate OFA Nutrition Site service to Waterloo and to Ovid.
- 4 buses; 2 full time and 2 part-time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF.)
- 12:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in northern corridor
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 11:00 - 2:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area
- 2:00 - 2:30 p.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area

Bus C (Based in Waterloo)

- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. OFA Nutrition site and demand responsive service to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 6:00 p.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in Northern Corridor

Bus D (Based in Ovid)

- 7:00 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. OFA Nutrition site and demand responsive service to Ovid

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and returns at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Four vehicles
- Two full-time and two part-time drivers
- Integration of OFA Nutrition site service in Waterloo and Ovid

Public Transportation Service Operated by the County

Potential Operating Budget

February 2002

	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4	NOTES
Operating Costs					
Driver Salaries	31,200	31,200	44,850	58,500	\$7.50/hour
Administrator's Salary	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	Half of salary for current county employee
Secretary/ Bookkeeper/ Dispatcher Salary	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	New County employee
Fringe Benefits	24,220	24,220	28,998	33,775	35% of salary
Total Salary & Benefits	93,420	93,420	111,848	130,275	
Driver Certifications/ Drug & Alcohol testing	2,000	2,000	3,000	4,000	
Fuel & Oil	7,725	13,073	15,242	16,602	\$0.17/ mile
Vehicle Maintenance, Parts & Supplies	7,200	7,200	10,800	14,400	
Advertising, Insurance and Other Expenses	6,000	6,000	9,000	12,000	
Vehicle Depreciation	1,931	1,931	3,165	4,136	5-year life for 16-pass. bus; 7-years for 24-pass bus; 3-year for 8-pass. bus; only local contribution is depreciated
Total Operating Costs	118,276	123,624	153,054	181,413	
Operating Income					
Fares	10,100	12,700	13,000	13,750	\$1.50 per passenger trip for demand-responsive service;
Donations from Seniors	0	0	2,500	2,500	\$1.00 for fixed route service. DHS and Mental Health may buy passes for their clients)
Subscription Services	0	0	12,200	12,200	Office for the Aging (OFA) Nutrition Site service
Total Operating Income:	10,100	12,700	27,700	28,450	
Deficit (Operating expenses minus income)	108,176	110,924	125,354	152,963	
Operating Assistance					
NYS TOA	33,137	55,689	65,097	69,715	\$0.405/ passenger trip plus \$0.69 per vehicle mile; Adjusted for deadhead miles (80% of total for non-route service)
County match for STOA	6,627	11,138	13,019	13,943	20% of State contribution
Total:	39,764	66,827	78,116	83,658	
Unfunded Deficit	68,412	44,098	47,238	69,305	
Section 5311	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	Maximum County allotment
Additional County Contribution	38,412	14,098	17,238	39,305	
Total County Support	45,040	25,235	30,258	53,248	This cost would be partially offset by local cost savings of approximately \$5,000 for DHS medical trips and \$10,000 for Mental Health

Public Transportation Service Operated by the County

Potential Operating Budget

February 2002

	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4
Anticipated Ridership (One-way Trips)				
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	4,120	4,120
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	1,520	1,520
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	5,200	7,400	7,400	7,400
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	1,100	1,000	1,300	1,300
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	1,300	1,200	1,100	1,600
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	1,300	2,000	2,000	2,000
	8,900	11,600	17,440	17,940
Total Mileage				
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	7,058	7,058
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	7,700	7,700
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	19,760	36,940	36,940	36,940
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	3,200	3,000	5,000	5,000
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	10,000	12,000	8,000	16,000
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	12,480	24,960	24,960	24,960
	45,440	76,900	89,658	97,658
Demand-responsive and flexible route mileage	13,200	15,000	27,758	35,758
Adjusted for deadhead miles (80%)	10,560	12,000	22,206	28,606
Fixed route mileage	32,240	61,900	61,900	61,900
Total mileage minus deadhead	42,800	73,900	84,106	90,506

Public Transportation Service Operated by the County

Potential Start-up Costs

February 2002

Description	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4
Expenses				
16-passenger bus w/ 2 wheelchair slots	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
24 passenger bus w/ 2 wheelchair slots	68,000	68,000	68,000	136,000
8-passenger bus w/ 2 wheelchair slots			37,000	37,000
	116,000	116,000	153,000	221,000
Office setup	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total:	120,000	120,000	157,000	225,000
Revenues				
Section 5311 assistance: (90% of vehicle cost)	104,400	104,400	137,700	198,900
County contribution (10% of vehicles plus office setup):	15,600	15,600	19,300	26,100

Potential Operating Budget r Service Provided by RGRTA

February 2002

	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4	NOTES
Operating Costs					
Driver Salaries	35,360	35,360	50,830	66,300	\$8.50/hour
Administrator's Salary	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	Full-time local manager; RGRTA employee
Secretary/ Bookkeeper/ Dispatcher Salary	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	Full-time assistant; RGRTA employee
Fringe Benefits	28,826	28,826	34,241	39,655	35% of salary
Total Salary & Benefits	111,186	111,186	132,071	152,955	
Driver Certifications/ Drug & Alcohol testing	2,000	2,000	3,000	4,000	
Fuel & Oil	7,725	13,073	15,242	16,602	\$0.177 mile
Vehicle Maintenance, Parts & Supplies	7,200	7,200	10,800	14,400	
Advertising, Insurance and Other Expenses	6,000	6,000	9,000	12,000	
Vehicle Depreciation	2,320	2,320	3,060	4,020	5-year life; only local contribution is depreciated
Total Operating Costs	136,431	141,779	173,172	203,977	
Operating Income					
Fares	10,100	12,700	13,000	13,750	\$1.50 per passenger trip for demand-responsive service; \$1.00 for fixed route service. DHS and Mental Health may pay fares for their clients)
Donations from Seniors	0	0	2,500	2,500	
Subscription Services	0	0	12,200	12,200	Office for the Aging (OFA) Nutrition Site service
Total Operating Income:	10,100	12,700	27,700	28,450	
Deficit (Operating expenses minus income)	126,331	129,079	145,472	175,527	
Operating Assistance					
RGRTA	46,194	13,390	13,376	32,812	Indirectly supported by mortgage tax revenue
NYS TOA	33,137	55,689	65,097	69,715	\$0.405/ passenger trip plus \$0.69 per vehicle mile; Adjusted for deadhead miles (80% of total for non-route service)
County match for STOA	22,000	30,000	35,000	38,000	Estimates
Section 5311	25,000	30,000	32,000	35,000	Estimates
Total:	126,331	129,079	145,472	175,527	
Total County Support (in addition to approximately \$85,000 from mortgage tax)	22,000	30,000	35,000	38,000	This estimated would be partially offset by local cost savings of approximately \$5,000 for DHS medical trips and \$10,000 for Mental Health.

Potential Operating Budget for Service Provided by RGRTA February 2002

Table 8

Anticipated Ridership (One-way Trips)					
	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4	
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	4,120	4,120	
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	1,520	1,520	
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	5,200	7,400	7,400	7,400	
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	1,100	1,000	1,300	1,300	
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	1,300	1,200	1,100	1,600	
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	1,300	2,000	2,000	2,000	
	8,900	11,600	17,440	17,940	
Total Mileage					
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	7,058	7,058	
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	7,700	7,700	
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	19,760	36,940	36,940	36,940	
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	3,200	3,000	5,000	5,000	
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	10,000	12,000	8,000	16,000	
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	12,480	24,960	24,960	24,960	
	45,440	76,900	89,658	97,658	

Comparison of Institutional Options

	Join RGRTA	Operate System with County Employees	Contract with Private Operator (commercial or not-for-profit)
County Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal staff involvement. Appointed commissioner would act as liaison to County staff and Board of Supervisors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing or new staff, possibly within DHS, would operate system and report to NYS DOT. Current DSS proposal suggests that 50% of the Transportation Director's time, plus one full-time assistant, would be sufficient to operate system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County staff would be assigned to oversee contractor and report to NYS DOT. Oversight would require 20% to 50% of one County employee's time. (\$15-25,000)
County financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required match to STOA to be determined by NYS DOT. Other Counties affiliated with RGRTA contribute between \$20,000 and \$50,000 annually. Additional 1/4 of 1% of the mortgage tax (approximately \$85,000/year) would go to RGRTA and indirectly support the service. RGRTA would maintain service levels according to annual budget, even if revenues are less than expected. RGRTA would pay all start-up costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required match to STOA established by formula (20% of State contribution) Additional County funds would be required Including STOA, a total of \$25,000 - \$45,000 annually would be required, depending on level of service and revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operator may be able to pay County match. An RFP would be required to determine need for County subsidy.
Local control/oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RGRTA operates independently, with input from local commissioner and officials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System would be designed and operated by County staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight by County staff needed to influence service changes.
Efficiency of service and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in operating systems would minimize "learning curve." Professional support for driver training, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has some experience with the current "loop" system. However, "learning curve" will apply, especially with regard to driver certifications and other requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced operator would provide professional quality service.
Interaction with other County agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time staff and central support would help build partnerships with human service agencies and businesses. Additional customized routes would provide revenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seamless interaction with DHS. Additional contracted services with other human service agencies would increase revenues; however, part-time director may find it difficult to pursue these arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor may pursue additional contract routes as revenue source. If the operator is a local not-for-profit, existing partnerships could be expanded.

Seneca County Public Transportation Study

Final Report: February 2002

Seneca County Public Transportation Study

Final Report: February 2002

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
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Assessment of Existing Transportation Services.....	3
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Existing Transportation Providers.....	3
ARC.....	3
Office for the Aging/ Seneca County Senior Center	3
Division of Human Services.....	4
Seneca County Mental Health	5
Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency.....	5
Private for-profit transportation providers	5
School bus service.....	6
Financial Assessment of Transportation Services.....	6
Expenses	6
Revenues.....	7
Vehicles used in Transportation Services.....	8

Evaluation of Opportunities, Constraints, and Unmet Needs	10
---	----

Geographic Coverage.....	10
Groups in need of public transportation service.....	10
Coordination among agencies.....	13
Transportation to agency appointments.....	13
Transportation to employment	13
Medical transportation	14
Shopping.....	14
Transportation outside Seneca County	14
Summary of opportunities, constraints, and unmet needs.....	14

Evaluation of Alternative Strategies	15
Service Criteria.....	15
Cost to riders	15
Seneca County subsidy	15
Access	15
Destinations	16
Service Designs.....	16
Fixed Route Service	17
Demand Responsive Service	18
Flexible/ Subscription Routes	18
Integration of existing services	19
Office for the Aging	19
Mental Health.....	20
Division of Human Services - Medical Transportation.....	20
Summary of Existing Services to be Integrated	20
Evaluation of Four Potential Scenarios.....	21
Financial Analysis	28
Capital Needs and Start-up costs.....	28
Operating Expenses.....	28
Operating Revenues.....	28
Fares and donations.....	29
Summary of Operating Revenue	29
Operating Assistance and other Subsidies	29
Join R-GRTA	30
Create a County-sponsored Service.....	31
Comparison of Institutional Options.....	31
Next Steps.....	38

Index of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1: Expenses for Transportation Services.....	6
Table 2: Comparison of Transportation Costs per Trip and Per Mile	7
Table 3: Revenues for Transportation Services	8
Table 4: Vehicles Used for Client/ Consumer Transportation.....	9
Table 5: Household Data	11
Table 6: Summary of Alternative Services	27
Table 7: Potential Operating Budget: Service Operated by the County	32
Table 8: Potential Operating Budget for Service Provided by RGRTA.....	35
Table 9: Comparison of Institutional Options.....	36

Figures

Figure 1: DHS Medical Trips - 2000	4
Figure 2: Households with No Vehicles Available: Seneca County	12

Introduction

The objectives of the Seneca County Public Transportation Study were to:

- Inventory and evaluate existing transportation resources and services
- Assess existing and projected needs for transportation services
- Identify criteria for designing an improved transportation system
- Evaluate alternative service designs for public transportation; and
- Recommend a course of action to implement an improved public transportation system.

This report has four major sections:

- 1) Assessment of existing transportation services
- 2) Evaluation of opportunities, constraints and unmet needs
- 3) Evaluation of alternative strategies
- 4) Recommended course of action

Methodology

The study was funded by the Genesee Transportation Council (GTC) in 2001. GTC retained Stuart I. Brown Associates to prepare the Study. A Steering Committee worked with the consultants to prepare the study. Members of the Steering Committee included:

- Glenn Cooke, Director, Seneca County Department of Development and Planning
- Harriet Haynes, Planner, Seneca County Department of Development and Planning
- Charles Schillaci, Commissioner, Division of Human Services
- Dale Wagner, Transportation Coordinator, Division of Human Services
- Angela Reardon, Director, Office for the Aging
- Chuck Valder, Transportation Director, Seneca-Cayuga Arc
- Rose Rathbone, Seneca Director, Cayuga/ Seneca Community Action Agency
- David Hekel, Director of Community Services, Seneca County Department of Mental Health
- James Stack, Genesee Transportation Council

The Steering Committee met on a regular basis between July 2001 and February 2002 to guide the preparation of the study.

In January 2001, a survey was distributed to agencies and organizations that offer transportation services, or represent clients, customers or consumers who are dependent upon transportation services. The survey results have been incorporated into this report.

Assessment of Existing Transportation Services

The following narrative presents a description of existing transportation providers, the costs and revenues associated with providing transportation services in the County, and the vehicles used in providing these services. Information was obtained from the survey of agencies and transportation providers, interviews with representatives of agencies and organizations involved in or interested in transportation services, and discussions with the Steering Committee and representatives of the New York State Department of Transportation.

Existing Transportation Providers

ARC

Seneca-Cayuga Counties Chapter of NYSARC, Inc. is the largest transportation provider in Seneca County. The organization provided 48,606 trips during 2000 using its fleet of 89 vehicles. ARC provides transportation services to 500 consumers who reside in Seneca County. An additional 500 County residents are eligible for services. All but 35 of the organization's current consumers reside in the northern portion of the County.

Approximately 50% of the trips are to the main facility in Waterloo. This facility includes a sheltered workshop, and health clinic, and houses the pre-K and early intervention program.

Consumers are transported to approximately 50 employment locations throughout the County, as well as four small (15-person) day treatment facilities. Recreational trips are provided on 42 Saturdays per year.

Three vehicles in the fleet are inspected by the NYS Department of Transportation and authorized for use as public transportation, including charter service. ARC provides an average of 51 trips per month to non-ARC customers, including medical transportation by arrangement with the Seneca County Division of Human Services. Most of these trips are for persons in wheelchairs or those with other disabilities.

Office for the Aging/ Seneca County Senior Center

The Seneca County Office for the Aging contracts with the non-profit organization, Seneca County Senior Center, to transport seniors to nutrition sites, medical appointments, and shopping destinations within Seneca County. Seniors who receive Medicaid are referred to DHS for transportation to medical appointments.

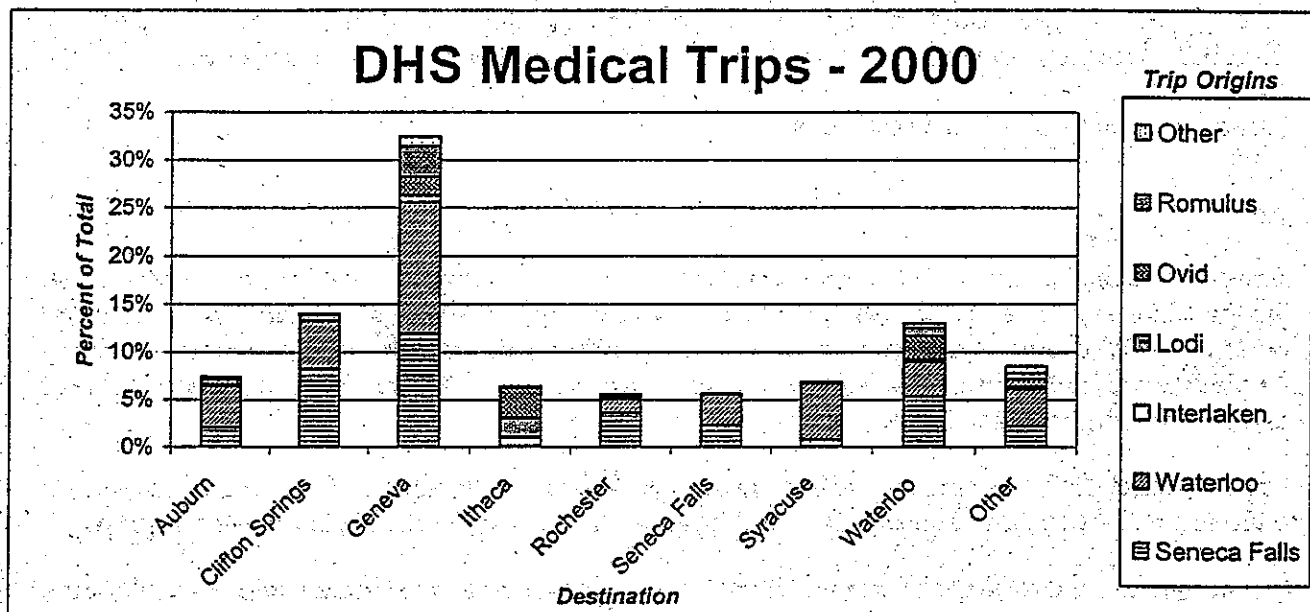
During 2000, OFA and the Senior Center, Inc. provided approximately 5,640 trips to Nutrition Centers, and 1,200 trips to medical appointments and shopping. The Senior Center operates two 12-passenger buses, and one 4-passenger car.

Division of Human Services

The Seneca County Division of Human Services operates a fleet of 17 vehicles. These vehicles are used to transport clients to medical and other appointments, to employment sites on a temporary basis, and occasionally to job training. DHS provided 7,800 trips to clients during 2000. Approximately 85% of these trips were to medical appointments.

As shown in Figure 1, approximately one-third of all medical trips provided by DHS staff were to Geneva.

Figure 1



SOURCE: Seneca County Division of Human Services

DHS also contracts with private transportation providers for medical transportation, as needed. During 2000, DHS arranged for 662 trips by ambulance, 4,018 trips for people in wheelchairs, and 135 trips by taxi. Approximately 65% of the wheelchair trips were provided by Seneca County Chapter of Arc.

Contracted Medicaid Transportation - 2000

Type	Number of Trips	Total Cost	Cost per Trip
Ambulance	662	\$ 38,322	\$ 57.89
"Invalid Coach"	4,018	121,282	30.18
Taxi	135	944	6.99
Total	4,815	\$ 160,548	

SOURCE: Seneca County Division of Human Services

In April 2001, DHS began a shuttle van service for persons who receive or are eligible for TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.) The van operates along a fixed route throughout Seneca County. The route takes between 2 1/2 and 3 hours to complete.

Seneca County Mental Health

Seneca County Mental Health operates two vans, one station wagon and a 4-passenger car. Staff provide free transportation to counseling and treatment appointments for clients who have no other transportation options.

The cost of the transportation service is not reimbursed by Medicaid. The existing service meets existing needs. However, the high cost reduces the funds available for other important services. Approximately 2,660 passenger trips were provided during 2000. Mental Health spends approximately \$35,000 per year on in-house transportation services. In addition, case managers sometimes transport clients to appointments.

Mental Health also contracts with Lakeview Mental Health, a private case management service provider, for transportation services. As part of its case management work, Lakeview transports clients to day treatment, and to the psycho-social club in Seneca Falls. Persons with a diagnosed mental illness are eligible for the service. Approximately 1,000 trips are provided to day treatment each month, and approximately 250 trips per month to the psycho-social club. Medicaid paid \$6,543 for 398 trips provided by Lakeview Mental Health Services to day treatment programs during 2000.

Beginning in January 2001, Mental Health contracted with Lakeview to operate a "non-medical" transportation service. This service took clients to grocery stores, Wal-Mart, and to the drop-in center in Seneca Falls. The service operated two days per week, between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. The service operated on a scheduled route, with deviations to pick up passengers. Clients could call in advance for a ride, or meet the bus at designated times and locations. Lakeview had a one-year contract to operate this service, at a cost of \$10,000. The service is free to clients. Mental Health did not continue this service in 2002.

Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency

The Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency is a private not-for-profit organization based in Clifton Springs. The organization operates three 7-passenger vans, one 18-passenger van, and one 4-passenger car to transport clients to treatment and training.

Private for-profit transportation providers

Private, for-profit transportation providers operating in Seneca County include a taxi service based in Waterloo, and two private bus companies — A & E and Oaks. Transportation services are available to the public and to agencies on a fee basis.

School bus service

School bus service is provided to public school students throughout Seneca County. Most school districts contract with private companies, such as Waterloo Bus Company, to provide school bus service.

Financial Assessment of Transportation Services

This section summarizes the cost of providing transportation services, revenues for transportation, and the comparative costs per trip and per mile.

Expenses

Transportation comprises a significant portion of the total budget for several human service agencies. As shown in Table 1, the total expenditures for transportation among these organizations ranged from \$35,200 (OFA) to \$354,000 (ARC) in 2000. Mental Health expended approximately \$35,000 per year to operate its transportation service for consumers.

The Division of Human Services has established a Transportation Director to coordinate transportation within the Division. DHS expended \$182,000 on transportation during 2000, not including the cost of services provided by outside agencies.

Table 1
Expenses for Transportation Services: Seneca County, 2000

Agency	Amount Spent on Transportation - 2000				
	Total Expenses	Direct costs	Cost of purchased/ arranged transportation	Payments to volunteers to transport clients	Reimbursements to clients
ARC	\$ 354,000	354,000			
Division of Human Services	\$ 304,226	179,000	122,226		3,000
Seneca County Dept. of Community Services/ Mental Health	\$ 45,000	35,000	10,000		
Office for the Aging/ Senior Center	\$ 35,200	-	35,200		
Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency	\$ 86,000	65,000	1,000	20,000	-
American Red Cross in the Finger Lakes	\$ 500				500
	\$ 824,926	\$ 633,000	\$ 168,426	\$ 20,000	\$ 3,500

SOURCE: Transportation Provider Survey, 2001. Stuart I. Brown Associations

Cost per Trip and per Mile

As shown in Table 2, costs per one-way trip for the three major transportation providers were \$4.38 (OFA), \$7.28 (ARC), and \$23.33 (DHS). Costs per mile were \$1.00 for OFA, \$0.51 for DHS, and \$0.49 for ARC.

DHS and Mental Health medical trips take riders from their homes to medical appointments at designated times. Costs were higher for these trips, as they are highly customized. Arc and OFA rides consist primarily of trips to treatment centers and workshops (Arc) and Nutrition sites. Many riders are picked up using a single vehicle and taken to one destination. Costs for these trips were lower, as they were made as part of regular routes and shared ride systems.

Table 2

Comparison of Transportation Costs per Trip and Per Mile: Seneca County, 2000

Agency	Number of Trips	Total Mileage	Cost per trip	Cost per mile
ARC	48,606	729,367	\$ 7.28	\$ 0.49
Division of Human Services (in-house)	7,800	353,580	\$ 23.33	\$ 0.51
Division of Human Services (contracted - non-ambulance)	4,153		\$ 29.43	
Seneca County Mental Health	2,200		\$ 20.45	
Office for the Aging/ Senior Center	8,041	35,102	\$ 4.38	\$ 1.00
Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency	3,100	115,000	\$ 27.74	\$ 0.75
American Red Cross in the Finger Lakes	20		\$ 25.00	

SOURCE: Transportation Provider Survey, 2001. Stuart I. Brown Associations

Revenues

As shown in Table 3, the primary source of revenue for transportation services is Medicaid (estimated at \$200,670 during 2000.) All of the DHS transportation and 90% of ARC's transportation revenues during 2000 were from Medicaid. Medicaid provides reimbursement for the cost of transportation to most covered medical appointments and treatments. The source of funding for Medicaid reimbursement is approximately 25% County, 25% State, and 50% Federal.

Some organizations received funding for transportation from State agencies and grants.

- ARC receives funding from the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD);
- OFA received \$9,000 from New York State,

Assessment of Existing Transportation Services

- Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency received funds from the NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services.
- DHS received a grant in 2001 from the State Community Solutions for Transportation Program, to establish a route service for TANF clients.

A total of \$22,200 from Seneca County was used by OFA to provide transportation for seniors to nutrition sites.

Table 3
Revenues for Transportation Services: Seneca County, 2000

Agency	Revenues from Transportation - 2000				Comments
	Total	Fares collected from passengers	Voluntary donations received from passengers	Other government sources of revenue	
ARC	\$ 17,610	17,610			
Division of Human Services (in-house)	\$ 109,000			(1) 109,000	(1) \$87,000: Federal; \$22,000 State medical/services reimbursement
Division of Human Services (contracted - non-ambulance)	\$ 91,670			91,670	Medicaid (50% Federal; 25% State)
Office for the Aging/ Senior Center	\$ 35,200		4,000	(2) 31,200	(2) New York State : \$9,000 Seneca County: \$22,200
Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Agency	\$ 50,000			(3) 50,000	(3) NYS Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse
American Red Cross in the Finger Lakes	\$ -				
	\$ 303,480	\$ 17,610	\$ 4,000	\$ 281,870	

SOURCE: Transportation Provider Survey, 2001. Stuart I. Brown Associations

Vehicles used in Transportation Services

The Seneca-Cayuga Counties ARC has a fleet of 89 vehicles. Three of the vans are DOT-inspected and available for Medicaid transportation or charter service. The vehicle fleets for other agencies surveyed are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Vehicles Used for Client/ Consumer Transportation: Seneca County, 2000

Agency/ Organization	Total Vehicles	Description
Seneca-Cayuga ARC	89	Mix of buses, vans and cars
Seneca County Division of Human Services	17	12 vans and mini-vans; 5 cars
Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling & Referral Agency	5	4 vans; 1 car
Seneca County Mental Health	4	2 vans; 2 cars
Seneca County Senior Center	3	2 vans; 1 car

SOURCE: Transportation Provider Survey, 2001. Stuart I. Brown Associates

Evaluation of Opportunities, Constraints, and Unmet Needs

Surveys and discussions with agency representatives demonstrate that there are unmet needs for transportation services in Seneca County. Opportunities to provide transportation services and constraints to meeting the needs are related to:

- The geographic composition of Seneca County
- The need for transportation among specific demographic groups
- The potential for coordination among human service agencies
- Frequent destinations, such as agency appointments, medical appointments, employment, and shopping, including destinations outside of Seneca County.

Geographic Coverage

The major transportation providers serve residents of Seneca County from their homes. More than one-half the population of Seneca County is concentrated in the Towns and Villages of Waterloo and Seneca Falls.

The southern half of the County is much less densely populated. Although the number of residents without access to private transportation is lower, these residents are much more isolated than residents in the northern part of the County.

Groups in need of public transportation service

The segments of the population that would benefit most from public transportation service include persons with disabilities, senior citizens who are not able to drive, and low income persons who do not have access to a vehicle.

Based on data from the 1990 Census (these data from the 2000 Census will be available in mid-2002), approximately 1,092 individuals, or 4.4% of the County's population age 16 and older, have a disability that limits their mobility. Approximately one-half of these persons reside in the Towns of Seneca Falls and Waterloo. As shown in Table 5, approximately 20% of the County's population is age 60 or older.

A total of 927 households have no vehicles available. As depicted in Figure 2, 76% of these households are located in the Towns of Waterloo and Seneca Falls.

Human service agencies such as ARC, OFA, Mental Health and DHS have established transportation services specifically to meet the needs of these populations. According to interviews with representatives of these agencies, the existing transportation services do not meet all of the transportation needs of these groups.

Seneca County Transportation Coordination Study

Municipality (1)	Households	Percent of County Total	Households w/ No Vehicles Available	Percent without Vehicles	Total Population (1990)	Percent of Total	Population Age 60+	Percent of Total Population
Covert	587	4.8%	23	3.9%	1,566	4.6%	299	19.1%
Village of Interlaken	249	2.0%	15	6.0%	680	2.0%	160	23.5%
Fayette	967	7.9%	18	1.9%	2,856	8.5%	432	15.1%
Junius	458	3.7%	11	2.4%	1,354	4.0%	181	13.4%
Town of Lodi	398	3.2%	17	4.3%	1,065	3.2%	152	14.3%
Village of Lodi	132	1.1%	14	10.6%	364	1.1%	64	17.6%
Town of Ovid	582	4.7%	23	4.0%	1,671	5.0%	426	25.5%
Village of Ovid	275	2.2%	43	15.6%	660	2.0%	132	20.0%
Romulus	752	6.1%	30	4.0%	2,507	7.4%	498	19.9%
Town of Seneca Falls	752	6.1%	27	3.6%	2,014	6.0%	396	19.7%
Village of Seneca Falls	2,991	24.3%	369	12.3%	7,370	21.9%	1,636	22.2%
Tyre	330	2.7%	9	2.7%	870	2.6%	157	18.0%
Varick	636	5.2%	17	2.7%	2,161	6.4%	305	14.1%
Town of Waterloo	1,361	11.0%	98	7.2%	3,429	10.2%	645	18.8%
Village of Waterloo	1,848	15.0%	213	11.5%	5,116	15.2%	1,144	22.4%
Total	12,318	100.0%	927	7.5%	33,683	100.0%	6,627	19.7%

Waterloo and Seneca Falls

Municipality (1)	Total Households	Percent of County Total	Households w/ No Vehicle Available	Percent of County Total	Total Population (1990)	Percent of County Total	Population Age 60+	Percent of County Total
Town of Seneca Falls	752	6.1%	27	2.9%	2,014	6.0%	396	6.0%
Village of Seneca Falls	2,991	24.3%	369	39.8%	7,370	21.9%	1,636	24.7%
Town of Waterloo	1,361	11.0%	98	10.6%	3,429	10.2%	645	9.7%
Village of Waterloo	1,848	15.0%	213	23.0%	5,116	15.2%	1,144	17.3%
Total	6,952	56.4%	707	76.3%	17,929	53.2%	3,821	57.7%

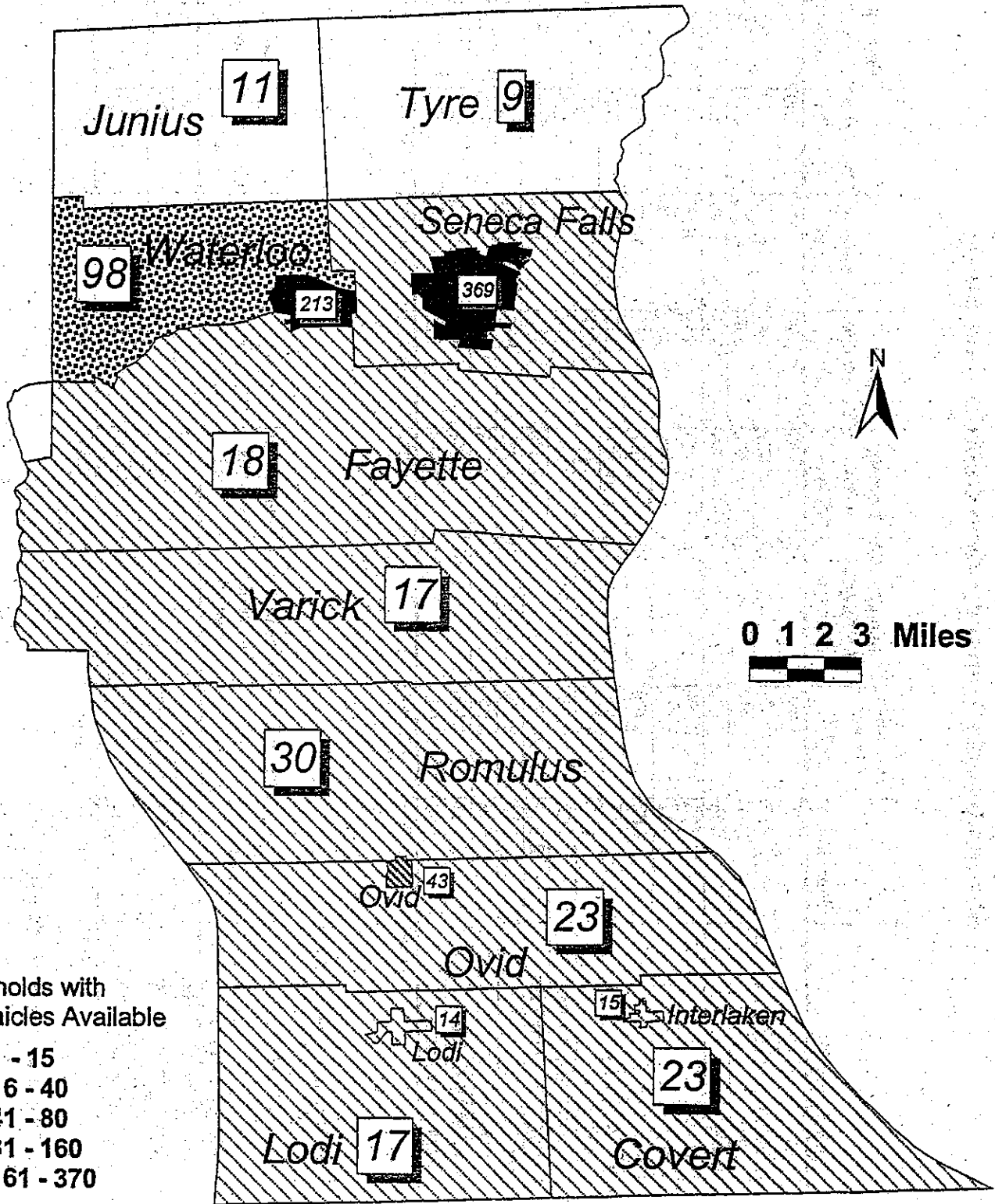
(1) Town figures exclude Villages

SOURCE: 1990 Census

Note: Detailed data from the 2000 Census will be available in mid-2002

Figure 2

Households with No Vehicles Available Seneca County



Note: Town totals exclude Village data

SOURCE: 1990 Census

NOTE: 2000 Census data will be available in mid-2002

Low income, elderly and disabled residents of the southern part of the County are particularly isolated. As a result of the very sparse population and the long north-south distances between destinations, the resources needed to serve the southern part of the County are much greater than those required to serve the northern part of the County.

Coordination among agencies

Human service agencies in Seneca County currently coordinate with each other in providing transportation services.

- DHS contacts ARC to provide medical transportation that is reimbursed through Medicaid to persons in wheelchairs.
- Many agencies, including the DHS, OFA and Mental Health, have the same clients. Referrals are made to the appropriate source of assistance, both for transportation and for other services.
- ARC has good working relationships with school transportation services. This is helpful in transporting ARC consumers to after school programs.

However, each agency is limited, by funding source restrictions or other regulations, from providing rides to clients and consumers of other agencies. This results in considerable duplication of services, with vehicles from different agencies literally "following each other down the highway" to drop off clients at the same locations.

Transportation to agency appointments

Transportation to agency appointments is a significant need in the County.

- DHS offices are located in Waterloo.
- Substance abuse counseling services are offered in Waterloo. Most of the County residents who rely on these services are not able to drive.
- Mental Health has established a counseling service facility in Ovid to serve the southern portion of the County. Clients who live in the Village of Ovid are able to walk; others must find transportation.

Transportation to employment

Most major employers are located in the northern part of the County. These include

- Goulds Pumps
- Seneca County offices
- Outlet Mall

People who do not have access to cars have a difficult time finding and keeping jobs.

One of the challenges in creating a transportation system that serves the working population is the need to accommodate non-traditional hours. Many entry-level and service jobs require employees to work evening or overnight shifts.

Medical transportation

Most doctors' offices are located in the Seneca Falls/ Waterloo area, including one large medical complex is located in Seneca Falls and a smaller medical office complex I in Waterloo. Most hospital visits are to Geneva, several medical office complexes are located in Geneva. Many residents of the southern portion of the County use the hospital in Ithaca for dialysis and other treatments.

There are virtually no doctors in the southern part of the County. However, a new medical complex in Ovid will provide services.

Shopping

The major grocery stores are located in Ovid (Big M) and Seneca Falls (P & C). Some people shop at Wegman's in Auburn. Other shopping destinations include the Wal-Mart in Seneca Falls.

Transportation outside Seneca County

Destinations outside Seneca County include:

- Hospitals in Geneva and Ithaca;
- Employment in the Rochester, Syracuse and Ithaca areas

Summary of opportunities, constraints, and unmet needs

- OFA cannot meet the demand for transportation to medical appointments
- Mental Health is able to meet the current demand, but the cost is high. A high level of flexibility is required in the services; often rides must be scheduled with only two hours advance notice.
- DSS meets the demand for medical transportation. However, low income residents lack transportation for employment and other daily needs.
- Arc is available to assist with transportation, particularly between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
- Duplication of services represents an inefficient use of transportation resources.

Evaluation of Alternative Strategies

This section establishes service criteria and alternative designs for an effective and efficient public transportation system for Seneca County. It explores the potential for establishing a new public transportation service as well as improving coordination among existing transportation providers.

Service Criteria

Any new transportation service in Seneca County would have to meet minimum criteria regarding:

- Cost
- Access
- Amount of County subsidy required
- Destinations served

Cost to riders

The fare needs to be affordable. Fares between \$1.00 and \$3.00, depending on distance traveled, would be acceptable.

Agency clients and consumers who currently receive free service from their agency would continue to receive such service. The agency would pay the transportation provider in advance for the service.

Seneca County subsidy

The total amount of funding provided by Seneca County for transportation services should not increase significantly beyond current levels. Seneca County currently pays a portion of the cost for Medicaid transportation, and supports the transportation services provided by the Office for the Aging and the Office of Mental Health. Cost savings for these programs could justify spending to support a public transportation service.

Access

Rides should be provided at the time required, and not more than 45 minutes to one hour before or after a scheduled appointment.

Riders who currently receive assistance getting off and onto the vehicle (such as Office for the Aging customers currently served by Senior Center buses) should continue to receive a similar level of service.

Flexibility in scheduling service is necessary. Advance notice of no more than 24 hours for demand responsive service would be reasonable.

More frequent service may be provided in the northern portion of the County. However, transportation service should be made available at least 2-3 days per week in the southern two-thirds of the County.

Destinations

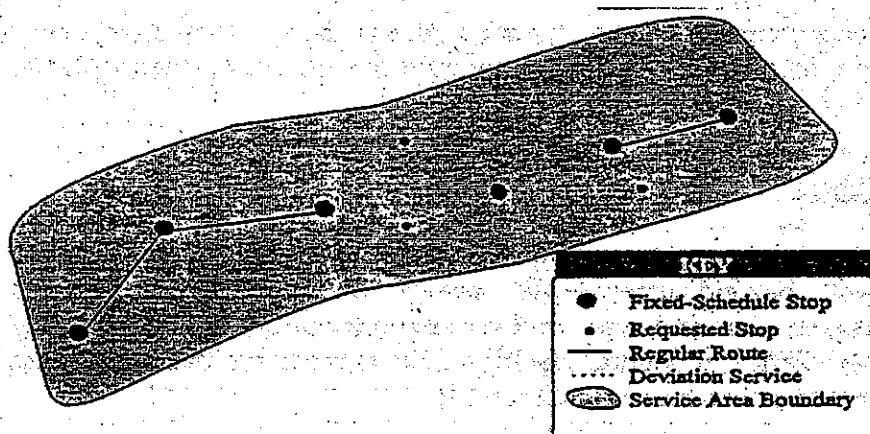
Service must be provided to medical facilities in Geneva, as well as to shopping, service, government, human service and medical facilities within Seneca County. Medicaid clients must continue to receive transportation to medical appointments as needed.

Service Designs

The following service designs were evaluated:

- Fixed route with point deviation;
- Demand responsive service.
- Flexible or customized routes designed around human service agency needs

Fixed route service with point deviation operates on a fixed schedule between designated points. Between points, drivers may pick up passengers who had made reservations in advance and return to the schedule at the next point.



Demand responsive service operates like a shared taxi service. Riders typically make reservations at least 24 hours in advance. A dispatcher pools the requests and accommodates as many riders as possible.

Fixed route services work best in areas of relatively dense population, such as within the northern portion of Seneca County. Approximately 75% of the households in the County with no vehicles available County are located in the Towns of Seneca Falls and Waterloo. In areas where both origins and destinations are scattered, demand responsive service is required.

Fixed route service also works well in conjunction with a demand-responsive "feeder" or "collector service." For example, a collector service picks up riders from rural areas and brings them to a central point. A "shuttle" service operates on a fixed schedule between designated hubs. A facility in the Village of Ovid could function as a "hub," where passengers can ride a shuttle to Waterloo.

The advantage of a fixed route system is that riders can plan their appointments around the bus schedule. With demand responsive service, riders must make their appointments, and then arrange for transportation.

Flexible or subscription routes are designed to accommodate the needs of human service agency clients or consumers, but are open to the public by advance reservation. For example, the Office for the Aging/ Senior Center picks up seniors at their homes and transports them to the Nutrition Sites in Waterloo. The route changes depending on the advance reservations received by the Senior Center.

Fixed Route Service

Fixed route service is recommended in the northern corridor, between Seneca Falls, Waterloo and Geneva, and between Ovid and Waterloo. Both services would operate as "point deviation" service, and pick up passengers between scheduled stops.

In the northern corridor, up to four round trips per day, Monday through Friday, could be accommodated. A sample route schedule follows:

Northern Corridor Route			
Morning Service		Afternoon Service	
Waterloo	8:00 AM	Seneca Falls	12:45 PM
Seneca Falls	8:15 AM	Waterloo	1:00 PM
Waterloo	8:30 AM	Geneva	1:30 PM
Geneva	9:00 AM	Waterloo	2:00 PM
Waterloo	9:30 AM	Seneca Falls	2:15 PM
Seneca Falls	9:45 AM	Waterloo	2:30 PM
Waterloo	10:00 AM		
Waterloo	10:30 AM	Waterloo	3:00 PM
Seneca Falls	10:45 AM	Seneca Falls	3:15 PM
Waterloo	11:00 AM	Waterloo	3:30 PM
Geneva	11:30 AM	Geneva	4:00 PM
Waterloo	12:00 PM	Waterloo	4:30 PM
Seneca Falls	12:15 PM	Seneca Falls	4:45 PM
		Waterloo	5:00 PM

Deviations from the route would allow drivers to pick up passengers in front of their homes, provided that the vehicle can arrive at the next point on schedule. Riders would need to make advance reservations for a pick-up. An additional fee for off-route pickups is recommended.

This schedule would accommodate most medical appointments in Seneca Falls, Waterloo and Geneva that are scheduled for between 9:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., provided that riders are able to travel without assistance.

This schedule would also accommodate a large portion of the trips needed by Mental Health consumers to grocery stores, medical appointments, and other destinations in the northern corridor.

The Ovid-Waterloo route would operate in conjunction with demand responsive service in the southern portion of the County. Passengers would be taken to the "hub" at Ovid for transport to Waterloo. Passengers may then transfer to the northern corridor service for destinations such as Geneva and Seneca Falls. The Ovid-Waterloo service would take approximately 30 minutes each way.

Demand Responsive Service

Demand-responsive service operates within a defined service area. Demand responsive service is recommended for the southern portion of the County. It is expected that riders with destinations in Waterloo, Seneca Falls or Geneva will be transported to Ovid for the Ovid-Waterloo shuttle service and transfer to the Northern Corridor service.

Demand responsive service in the northern part of the County would bring riders from their homes to points along the fixed route, or to points within the same municipality (such as from a home in Seneca Falls to a destination within Seneca Falls.)

In order to minimize travel times and accommodate the greatest number of riders, demand responsive service in the southern portion of the County should provide service to different areas on different days of the week. For example, serve Lodi, Covert and Interlaken on Mondays and Wednesdays, and Varick, Romulus and Ovid on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

It is recommended that the fare for demand-responsive service be higher than that for fixed route service.

Flexible/ Subscription Routes

An example of a flexible route with a fixed destination is the service provided by the Senior Center to Nutrition Sites in Waterloo and Ovid. If these routes were operated by a public service, additional riders could be accommodated and taken to the County office building in Waterloo or to the Nutrition Site in Ovid. The public riders would need to call in advance and request a pick-up.

Human service agencies that arrange with a public transportation service for flexible routes to serve their customers typically pay for a significant portion of the cost of the route. In designing the route, the public service must ensure that spaces are available each day for additional public riders.

The OFA Nutrition Site Service would require a dedicated vehicle between 10:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Integration of existing services

A new public transportation service should integrate, as much as possible, the transportation needs of County human service agencies such as the Office for the Aging, Office of Mental Health, and Division of Human Services, as well as private human service agencies such as the Finger Lakes Addictions Counseling and Referral Service.

Benefits of integration include:

- reduced cost for transportation within these agencies,
- eliminating duplication of services, and
- increasing self-sufficiency among these agencies' clients.

Concerns relating to the integration of existing service include:

- Change in the quality or character of service (such as the ability to wait for passengers at the destination, assisting with errands, or assisting in getting on and off the bus)
- Elimination of existing jobs

Office for the Aging

A public transportation system would incorporate service to the Office for the Aging Nutrition Sites through flexible, subscription routes.

Currently, the Senior Center provides transportation to the OFA Nutrition Sites in Waterloo and Ovid, demand responsive transportation to medical and other appointments, and recreational programs. The OFA proposes to retain the Senior Center as the provider of demand responsive transportation to medical and other appointments, and to offer Nutrition Site transportation service as a separate contract.

Service to the Waterloo Nutrition Site service consists of approximately 1,300 passenger-trips annually. Service to the Ovid Nutrition Site involves approximately 500 trips per year. Service to Nutrition Sites would be configured as flexible, subscription routes.

The OFA Nutrition Site service would take the form of a flexible, customized route. Riders would reserve a ride in advance, and the route would be drawn to pick up all riders who have advance reservations.

If these routes were operated as a public service, additional riders could be accommodated and taken to the County office building in Waterloo, or to the Nutrition site in Ovid. The public riders would need to call in advance and request a pick-up.

Mental Health

The Office of Mental Health currently transports consumers to medical and other appointments. Some of these rides could be accommodated by the fixed route service in the northern corridor. Others could be accommodated by the demand responsive service in the southern portion of the County and the proposed Ovid-Waterloo shuttle service.

Alternatively, Mental Health could work with the public transportation service to set up a flexible, subscription route. The Office of Mental Health estimates that approximately 900 trips per year could be accommodated by a public service (1/3 of the rides currently provided by directly by the Office of Mental Health.)

However, Mental Health would need to retain capacity to provide transportation services for rides needed on short notice. Many of the rides need to be scheduled with only two hours advance notice.

Division of Human Services - Medical Transportation

The Division of Human Services (DHS) provides transportation to medical appointments for persons receiving Medicaid who have no other means of transportation. During 2000, DHS provided approximately 1,700 round trips. Currently, transportation is provided on an individual or shared ride basis utilizing DHS vehicles and staff drivers. An additional 4,153 rides, including all rides requiring wheelchair access, are contracted to other providers such as Arc, A & E, and Oaks.

Approximately 63% of all trips provided by DHS staff originate in Seneca Falls or Waterloo and end either in Seneca Falls, Waterloo or Geneva (approximately 1,070 round trips per year). The proposed fixed route service in the northern corridor could accommodate approximately 75% of these DHS medical trips, or approximately 750 passenger trips per year.

Summary of Existing Services to be Integrated

Service	Days per week	Time of day	Annual One-way Passenger Trips
OFA Nutrition Site Service (Waterloo)	M-F	10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	4,110
OFA Nutrition Site Service (Ovid)		10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.	1,530
DHS Medical	M-F	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	750
Mental Health	M-F	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	900

A new transportation service should incorporate these services as through fixed route service, demand-responsive service, or with flexible, customized routes on a subscription basis. Providing these transportation services through a new public transportation system is expected to cost each agency the same or less than is currently being expended.

Evaluation of Four Potential Scenarios

Four alternative scenarios were evaluated in detail. These alternatives incorporate various combinations of fixed route service in the northern corridor, fixed route shuttle service between Ovid and Waterloo, demand responsive service, and flexible, customized route service to OFA Nutrition Sites.

The evaluation of alternatives:

- projects the number of passengers,
- determines the number of vehicles and drivers required to operate the route,
- estimates the cost of fuel and other operating expenses,
- indicates whether service incorporates OFA Nutrition site service, and
- projects the amount of operating assistance based on vehicle-miles and passengers.

A summary of these four alternatives is presented in Table 6.

ALTERNATIVE #1

- 3 Northern Corridor routes per day; One round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttle; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; No integration of Nutrition Site Service
- 2 buses; 2 full time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 - 2:30 Demand-responsive service in northern corridor
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 8-9:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 9:30-10:00 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 10:30 a.m.- 12: 15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - Gen - Wat.- SF- Wat.)
- 12:45 - 1:15 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 1:15 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern portion of County and from Ovid

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 10:00 a.m. and returns at 1:00 p.m.
- Two vehicles
- Two full-time drivers
- No integration of OFA Nutrition site service.

ALTERNATIVE #2

- 4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Two round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttles; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; No integration of OFA Nutrition Site service
- 2 buses; 2 full time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF.)
- 12:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 7:00-8:00 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in northern corridor
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 11:00 - 2:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area
- 2:00 - 2:30 p.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and returns at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Two vehicles
- Two full-time drivers
- No integration of OFA Nutrition site service

ALTERNATIVE #3

- 4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Two round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttle; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; Integrate OFA Nutrition Site service to Waterloo and Ovid
- 3 buses; 2 full time and one part-time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF.)
- 12:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 7:00-8:00 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in northern corridor
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area and Nutrition Site service to Ovid
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 3:30 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area

Bus C (Based in Waterloo)

- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. OFA Nutrition site and demand responsive service to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 6:00 p.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in Northern Corridor

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and returns at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Three vehicles
- Two full-time and one part-time drivers
- Integration of OFA Nutrition site service to Waterloo and Ovid.

ALTERNATIVE #4

- 4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Two round-trip Ovid-Waterloo shuttles; Demand responsive service and collector service in southern area and northern corridor; Integrate OFA Nutrition Site service to Waterloo and to Ovid
- 4 buses; 2 full time and 2 part-time drivers

Bus A (Based in Waterloo)

- 8-10:00 a.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF.)
- 12:45 - 2:30 p.m. Northern Corridor Route (SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)
- 3-5:00 pm. Northern Corridor Route (Wat. - SF - Wat. - Gen. - Wat. - SF - Wat.)

Bus B (Based in Ovid)

- 8:00-8:30 a.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in northern corridor
- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 11:00 - 2:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area
- 2:00 - 2:30 p.m. Shuttle from Ovid to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Shuttle from Waterloo to Ovid
- 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Demand responsive service in southern area

Bus C (Based in Waterloo)

- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. OFA Nutrition site and demand responsive service to Waterloo
- 2:30 - 6:00 p.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in Northern Corridor

Bus D (Based in Ovid)

- 7:00 - 10:30 a.m. Demand responsive and feeder service in southern area
- 10:30 - 2:30 p.m. OFA Nutrition site and demand responsive service to Ovid

Summary:

- Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.
- Shuttle from Ovid arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and returns at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

- Four vehicles
- Two full-time and two part-time drivers
- Integration of OFA Nutrition site service in Waterloo and Ovid

Summary of Alternative Services

February 2002

Alter- native	Northern Corridor Fixed Route Service (with point deviation)	Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle	Vehicles/ Drivers	Demand Responsive/		Integration of OFA Nutrition Site Service	Cost to County	
				Southern Area	Northern Corridor		Annual Opera- ting (1)	Start- up
1	3 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.	One round-trip per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 10:00 a.m. Returns to Ovid at 1:00 p.m.	2 vehicles 2 full-time drivers	4 hours per day	3 1/2 hours per day	None	45,040	15,600
2	4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.	2 round-trips per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Returns to Ovid at 11:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.	2 vehicles 2 full-time drivers	4 1/2 hours per day	2 hours per day	None	25,235	15,600
3	4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva arrive at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.	2 round-trips per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Returns to Ovid at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.	3 buses 2 full time and one part-time drivers	2 hours per day	5 1/2 hours per day	Waterloo and Ovid	30,258	19,300
4	4 Northern Corridor routes per day; Trips to Geneva at 9:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.	2 round-trips per day; Arrives in Waterloo at 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Returns to Ovid at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.	4 buses; 2 full time and 2 part-time drivers	7 hours per day	5 1/2 hours per day	Waterloo and Ovid	53,248	26,100

(1) Based on the assumption that the County would operate the service using its own employees.
As shown in Tables 7 and 8, the potential County costs for a service operated by R-GRTA are comparable.

Financial Analysis

Capital Needs and Start-up costs

Capital and start-up costs include vehicles and expenses associated with setting up an office. Software to assist in scheduling may also be required.

Vehicles

- One 8-passenger vehicle w/ 2 wheelchair slots: Approximately \$34,000, including lift, air-conditioning, and diesel engine
- 16 passengers w/ 2 wheelchair slots: Approximately \$42,000, including lift, air-conditioning, and diesel engine
- Vehicle replacement should be planned after 5 years or 150,000 miles.
- Need to find place to house vehicles; make arrangements for maintenance.

Office Setup

Other start-up costs would include establishing an office for the administrator/ dispatcher and support staff.

Operating Expenses

Operating expenses include personnel costs and fringe benefits for drivers, dispatcher, administrator and office assistance, as well as driver training, fuel and maintenance, insurance, publicity. Office expenses will include rent, utilities, computers, telephone and other equipment.

Operating Revenues

Operating revenue would accrue from the fare box, from customized routes, and from subsidies from human service agencies. Agencies such as Mental Health and DHS may buy passes for public transportation and distribute them to their clients. No subsidies from human service agencies are anticipated. However, these agencies may realize cost savings. Office for the Aging may contract with the public transportation service to provide transportation to Nutrition Sites.

Customers of these services would not pay fares, as the agency they are affiliated with would subsidize their rides. However, donations would be accepted.

Fares and donations

OFA riders are welcome to make donations toward the cost of transportation. Revenue from donations is expected to be between \$2,500 per year for service to the Waterloo and Ovid sites.

Fares for riders who are not associated with the OFA Nutrition Site service, Mental Health, or DHS would pay fares ranging from \$1.00 to \$3.00, depending on distance traveled and whether the ride is along a fixed route or from demand-responsive service. Revenue from fares is anticipated to be between \$8,000 and \$16,000 per year.

Summary of Operating Revenue

Subscription Services:	
OFA:	\$12,200
Fares:	
OFA donations:	\$2,500
Public fares:	\$7,500 - \$11,000
Fares paid by County agencies (DHS and Mental Health)	\$2,500

The remaining revenue would need to be raised through operating assistance from Federal, State, and County sources.

Operating Assistance and other Subsidies

New York State Operating Assistance (STOA) helps to subsidize public transportation systems. The amount of assistance is based on a formula tied to the number of passenger-trips and vehicle-miles. Vehicle miles must not include "deadhead" miles, where vehicles are not available to carry passengers (such as from the garage to the beginning of a route, or from the garage to pick up a passenger on a demand-responsive basis.)

STOA must be matched by the County. For public systems operated by a County outside of an authority such as R-GRTA, the match is 20% of the amount provided by STOA.

"Section 5311," a Federal public transportation assistance program, helps to subsidize public transportation by funding either the "unfunded deficit" or one-half of the operating deficit, whichever is less. However, the total amount available to Seneca County is expected to be no greater than \$30,000.

Section 5311 also provides capital assistance for the purchase of vehicles and other capital improvements. Section 5311 pays 90% (80% Federal and 10% State) toward the cost of vehicles. The remaining cost must be paid by the County.

Institutional Alternatives

The type of institutional sponsorship selected for the service has a significant bearing on the amount and source of revenues available to operate the service.

Two main institutional options are available to Seneca County:

- 1) Join the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (R-GRTA)
- 2) Establish a County-sponsored public transportation service operated by County employees.
- 3) Contract for public transportation services to a private (commercial or not-for-profit) operator.

Join R-GRTA

The Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (R-GRTA) was created by the NY State Legislature and is authorized to provide transportation services to member counties within a six-county region. Currently, Monroe, Livingston, Genesee, Wayne and Wyoming are members of R-GRTA. Ontario, Orleans and Seneca Counties are eligible to join R-GRTA but have not done so. Wyoming County is the most recent County to join R-GRTA. The Seneca County Board of Supervisors may join R-GRTA by resolution.

If Seneca County joined R-GRTA, the mortgage recording tax would be increased by an additional 1/4 of 1%. This additional amount cannot be added for any other purpose. The increase in the mortgage tax is expected to raise between \$85,000 and \$100,000 annually. This amount would go directly to R-GRTA.

R-GRTA would create a subsidiary and develop a budget for operating the Seneca County system. The subsidiary would have full-time staff based in the County, and operate a fleet of vehicles that are housed within the County.

R-GRTA would receive operating assistance from New York State under the State Operating Assistance program. The amount is determined by formula, based on the number of passengers and vehicle miles operated. R-GRTA also is eligible for capital assistance in the financing of vehicles.

Seneca County would nominate a Commissioner to be appointed by the Governor to serve on R-GRTA's Board of Directors. The Commissioner would be able to vote on all activities of R-GRTA.

R-GRTA would manage all of the reporting to New York State, as well as driver training and certifications, budgeting, and administration. Seneca County would be required to contribute the required match to NYS Operating Assistance (STOA).

Create a County-sponsored Service

Seneca County may establish a public transportation system on its own. The County may either operate the service using its own employees, or contract with a private company to operate the service. With either option, the County would be eligible for State and Federal financial assistance for the purchase of vehicles and operating costs.

Comparison of Institutional Options

The main benefits of using R-GRTA to provide public transportation services are:

- Funding stream from mortgage recording tax of \$80-100,000 per year.
- Expertise in operating public transportation systems in other rural counties
- Ease of administration, as R-GRTA would be responsible for all reporting, training and other regulatory requirements.
- With the revenue stream available to R-GRTA, the service would be able to use higher quality vehicles, pay drivers higher wages, and employ full time staff to administer the service.

The main benefit of operating the public transportation service by County employees is:

- Direct local control in the design and operation of the system.
- Easier integration of agency needs, such as DHS medical transportation, into the public transportation system.

The following sample budgets (Tables 7 and 8) illustrate the potential differences in financing the service.

Table 9 compares the three institutional alternatives with regard to their respective impact on County staffing needs, financial support required from the County, local control/ oversight, efficiency of the management and operation of the service, and interactions with other human service agencies.

Public Transportation Service Operated by the County

Potential Operating Budget

February 2002

	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4	NOTES
Operating Costs					
Driver Salaries	31,200	31,200	44,850	58,500	\$7.50/hour
Administrator's Salary	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	Half of salary for current county employee
Secretary/ Bookkeeper/ Dispatcher Salary	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	New County employee
Fringe Benefits	24,220	24,220	28,998	33,775	35% of salary
Total Salary & Benefits	93,420	93,420	111,848	130,275	
Driver Certifications/ Drug & Alcohol testing	2,000	2,000	3,000	4,000	
Fuel & Oil	7,725	13,073	15,242	16,602	\$0.171 mile
Vehicle Maintenance, Parts & Supplies	7,200	7,200	10,800	14,400	
Advertising, Insurance and Other Expenses	6,000	6,000	9,000	12,000	
Vehicle Depreciation	1,931	1,931	3,165	4,136	5-year life for 16-pass. bus; 7-years for 24-pass bus; 3-year for 8-pass. bus; only local contribution is depreciated
Total Operating Costs	118,276	123,624	153,054	181,413	
Operating Income					
Fares	10,100	12,700	13,000	13,750	\$1.50 per passenger trip for demand-responsive service;
Donations from Seniors	0	0	2,500	2,500	\$1.00 for fixed route service. DHS and Mental Health may buy passes for their clients)
Subscription Services	0	0	12,200	12,200	Office for the Aging (OFA) Nutrition Site service
Total Operating Income:	10,100	12,700	27,700	28,450	
Deficit (Operating expenses minus income)	108,176	110,924	125,354	152,963	
Operating Assistance					
NYS TOA	33,137	55,689	65,097	69,715	\$0.405/ passenger trip plus \$0.69 per vehicle mile; Adjusted for deadhead miles (80% of total for non-route service)
County match for STOA	6,627	11,138	13,019	13,943	20% of State contribution
Total:	39,764	66,827	78,116	83,658	
Unfunded Deficit	68,412	44,098	47,238	69,305	
Section 5311	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	Maximum County allotment
Additional County Contribution	38,412	14,098	17,238	39,305	
Total County Support	45,040	25,235	30,258	53,248	This cost would be partially offset by local cost savings of approximately \$5,000 for DHS medical trips and \$10,000 for Mental Health

Public Transportation Service Operated by the County

Potential Operating Budget

February 2002

	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4
Anticipated Ridership (One-way Trips)				
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	4,120	4,120
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	1,520	1,520
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	5,200	7,400	7,400	7,400
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	1,100	1,000	1,300	1,300
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	1,300	1,200	1,100	1,600
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	1,300	2,000	2,000	2,000
	8,900	11,600	17,440	17,940
Total Mileage				
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	7,058	7,058
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	7,700	7,700
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	19,760	36,940	36,940	36,940
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	3,200	3,000	5,000	5,000
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	10,000	12,000	8,000	16,000
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	12,480	24,960	24,960	24,960
	45,440	76,900	89,658	97,658
Demand-responsive and flexible route mileage	13,200	15,000	27,758	35,758
Adjusted for deadhead miles (80%)	10,560	12,000	22,206	28,606
Fixed route mileage	32,240	61,900	61,900	61,900
Total mileage minus deadhead	42,800	73,900	84,106	90,506

Public Transportation Service Operated by the County

Potential Start-up Costs

February 2002

Description	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4
Expenses				
16-passenger bus w/ 2 wheelchair slots	48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000
24 passenger bus w/ 2 wheelchair slots	68,000	68,000	68,000	136,000
8-passenger bus w/ 2 wheelchair slots			37,000	37,000
	116,000	116,000	153,000	221,000
Office setup	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
Total:	120,000	120,000	157,000	225,000
Revenues				
Section 5311 assistance: (90% of vehicle cost)	104,400	104,400	137,700	198,900
County contribution (10% of vehicles plus office setup):	15,600	15,600	19,300	26,100

Potential Operating Budget Service Provided by RGRTA

February 2002

	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4	NOTES
Operating Costs					
Driver Salaries	35,360	35,360	50,830	66,300	\$8.50/hour
Administrator's Salary	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	Full-time local manager; RGRTA employee
Secretary/ Bookkeeper/ Dispatcher Salary	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000	Full-time assistant; RGRTA employee
Fringe Benefits	28,826	28,826	34,241	39,655	35% of salary
Total Salary & Benefits	111,186	111,186	132,071	152,955	
Driver Certifications/ Drug & Alcohol testing	2,000	2,000	3,000	4,000	
Fuel & Oil	7,725	13,073	15,242	16,602	\$0.17/ mile
Vehicle Maintenance, Parts & Supplies	7,200	7,200	10,800	14,400	
Advertising, Insurance and Other Expenses	6,000	6,000	9,000	12,000	
Vehicle Depreciation	2,320	2,320	3,060	4,020	5-year life; only local contribution is depreciated
Total Operating Costs	136,431	141,779	173,172	203,977	
Operating Income					
Fares	10,100	12,700	13,000	13,750	\$1.50 per passenger trip for demand-responsive service; \$1.00 for fixed route service. DHS and Mental Health may pay fares for their clients)
Donations from Seniors	0	0	2,500	2,500	
Subscription Services	0	0	12,200	12,200	Office for the Aging (OFA) Nutrition Site service
Total Operating Income:	10,100	12,700	27,700	28,450	
Deficit (Operating expenses minus income)	126,331	129,079	145,472	175,527	
Operating Assistance					
RGRTA	46,194	13,390	13,376	32,812	Indirectly supported by mortgage tax revenue
NYS TOA	33,137	55,689	65,097	69,715	\$0.405/ passenger trip plus \$0.69 per vehicle mile; Adjusted for deadhead miles (80% of total for non-route service)
County match for STOA	22,000	30,000	35,000	38,000	Estimates
Section 5311	25,000	30,000	32,000	35,000	Estimates
Total:	126,331	129,079	145,472	175,527	
Total County Support (In addition to approximately \$85,000 from mortgage tax)	22,000	30,000	35,000	38,000	This estimated would be partially offset by local cost savings of approximately \$5,000 for DHS medical trips and \$10,000 for Mental Health.

Potential Operating Budget for Service Provided by RGRTA

February 2002

Table 8

Anticipated Ridership (One-way Trips)				
	Alt #1	Alt #2	Alt #3	Alt #4
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	4,120	4,120
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	1,520	1,520
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	5,200	7,400	7,400	7,400
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	1,100	1,000	1,300	1,300
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	1,300	1,200	1,100	1,600
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	1,300	2,000	2,000	2,000
	8,900	11,600	17,440	17,940
Total Mileage				
Nutrition Site Service - Waterloo	0	0	7,058	7,058
Nutrition Site Service - Ovid	0	0	7,700	7,700
Fixed Route Service - Northern corridor	19,760	36,940	36,940	36,940
Demand Responsive Service - northern area	3,200	3,000	5,000	5,000
Demand Responsive Service - southern area	10,000	12,000	8,000	16,000
Ovid-Waterloo Shuttle Service	12,480	24,960	24,960	24,960
	45,440	76,900	89,658	97,658

Comparison of Institutional Options

	Join RGRTA	Operate System with County Employees	Contract with Private Operator (commercial or not-for-profit)
County Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal staff involvement. Appointed commissioner would act as liaison to County staff and Board of Supervisors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing or new staff, possibly within DHS, would operate system and report to NYS DOT. Current DSS proposal suggests that 50% of the Transportation Director's time, plus one full-time assistant, would be sufficient to operate system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County staff would be assigned to oversee contractor and report to NYS DOT. Oversight would require 20% to 50% of one County employee's time. (\$15-25,000)
County financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required match to STOA to be determined by NYS DOT. Other Counties affiliated with RGRTA contribute between \$20,000 and \$50,000 annually. Additional 1/4 of 1% of the mortgage tax (approximately \$85,000/year) would go to RGRTA and indirectly support the service. RGRTA would maintain service levels according to annual budget, even if revenues are less than expected. RGRTA would pay all start-up costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required match to STOA established by formula (20% of State contribution) Additional County funds would be required Including STOA, a total of \$25,000 - \$45,000 annually would be required, depending on level of service and revenues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operator may be able to pay County match. An RFP would be required to determine need for County subsidy.
Local control/oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RGRTA operates independently, with input from local commissioner and officials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System would be designed and operated by County staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight by County staff needed to influence service changes.
Efficiency of service and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in operating systems would minimize "learning curve." Professional support for driver training, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff has some experience with the current "loop" system. However, "learning curve" will apply, especially with regard to driver certifications and other requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced operator would provide professional quality service.
Interaction with other County agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full-time staff and central support would help build partnerships with human service agencies and businesses. Additional customized routes would provide revenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seamless interaction with DHS. Additional contracted services with other human service agencies would increase revenues; however, part-time director may find it difficult to pursue these arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor may pursue additional contract routes as revenue source. If the operator is a local not-for-profit, existing partnerships could be expanded.

Next Steps

In order to establish a public transportation service in Seneca County, the Board of Supervisors needs to take one of the following steps:

- 1) Pass a resolution to join the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority, and work with Authority staff to develop a service plan and budget.

This option provides the easiest way to bring public transportation to Seneca County, as R-GRTA would do all of the work to prepare a service plan, coordinate with NYS DOT, and hire and train employees, and purchase vehicles. No County labor would be required. With this option, public transportation could be instituted sometime in 2003.

- 2) Authorize County staff to submit a service plan to the NYS Department of Transportation, Passenger Transportation Division and obtain the authority to participate in State and Federal funding programs.

This option would require considerable staff time and training before the service could be implemented. A staff person would need to be identified to finalize a service plan and to work with NYS DOT staff to learn all of the requirements involved with participating in the State/ Federal funding program (Section 5311.) With this option, public transportation could be available within 2-3 years.

- 3) Prepare a Request for Proposals for the private operation of public transportation services.

This option requires all of the same requirements of County staff as Option 2. Once NYS DOT approves the service plan and the County becomes a participant in the 5311 program, County staff will need to prepare an RFP. Upon receiving proposals with private operators, County staff will need to negotiate a contract. With this option, public transportation could be available in approximately 3 years.

Cool



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

March 27, 2003

Mr. Donald J. Riley, Chief Executive Officer
Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority
1372 East Main Street
Rochester, NY 14609

Dear Mr. Riley:

Please find enclosed a copy of the final report for the Seneca County Public Transportation Study. Mr. Ashby, Seneca County Manager, requested that I forward this on to you.

Sincerely,

Harriet A. Haynes

Harriet A. Haynes
Planner

HAH/md

enclosure