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# Strategic Plan for Public Transportation in Wayne County



**Wayne County  
Board of Supervisors**

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**Rochester-Genesee  
Regional Transportation  
Authority**

**Adopted by the R-GRTA Board of Directors: February 6, 2003**

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## Steering Committee Members

The following representatives of WATS, RGRTA, and Wayne County government and human service agencies served on the Steering Committee that was responsible for preparing the Strategic Plan:

- Sharon Lilla, Director, Wayne County Planning Dept.
- Daniel Kane, Wayne County Administrator
- Penny Shockley, Director, Wayne Co. Dept. of Aging & Youth
- Josh McCrossen, Commissioner, Wayne County Dept. of Social Services
- Richard Hoyt, PhD., Director, Wayne County Mental Health Dept.
- Margaret Haroff, Administrator, Wayne County Nursing Home
- Ange Dirksen, Transportation Planner, Wayne Co. Rural Health Network
- Janelle Cooper, Executive Director, Wayne County Action Program
- Debbie Woodworth-Fiori, Substance Abuse Services
- Deborah Ball, Children & Youth Services
- Donna Granger, Wayne ARC

## Introduction

The Strategic Plan for Public Transportation in Wayne County contains general goals and key initiatives that have been developed to address public transportation needs. The Strategic Plan describes the proposed initiatives, including estimated costs, and recommends specific actions needed to implement the initiatives.

## Goals

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

- A. Improve the public transportation services available to Wayne County residents. Design services to meet the specific needs of people who do not have access to cars, of people with disabilities, and of seniors who do not drive.
- B. Improve access to employment.
- C. Improve access to medical services, both within and outside of Wayne County.
- D. Improve access to public transportation among human service agency clients and consumers.
- E. Improve coordination among the transportation services offered by WATS, human service agencies, and private transportation providers.
- F. Increase public awareness of WATS services.

## Proposed Initiatives

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

- I. Consider adding service during early morning hours to improve access to employment.
- II. Consider adding fixed route service during evening hours to improve access to shopping for people who work during the day.
- III. Maintain and expand the medical shuttle and grocery shuttle services.
- IV. Create a centralized system to provide information about transportation options and to connect potential riders with transportation providers.
- V. Maintain and expand partnerships with human service agencies, retail businesses, health care providers, senior citizen housing complexes, and employers.
- VI. Increase public awareness of public transportation services through publicity and promotional efforts.
- VII. Increase use and awareness among public riders of subscription and demand-responsive services currently offered by WATS.
- VIII. Explore additional connections to RTS service in Monroe County, focusing on the western portion of Wayne County, in particular Walworth and the Route 441 corridor.

### Steering Committee Members (continued)

- Debby Van Housen, Eastern Wayne Even Start
- Vicky Daly, Mayor, Village of Palmyra
- Lynne Green, Town of Palmyra
- Lisa Smith, Genesee Transportation Council
- Robert Jordan, Manager, Wayne Area Transportation Service (WATS)
- Commissioner William Bishop, R-GRTA
- Donald J. Riley, CEO, R-GRTA
- Debie Himmelsbach, Director of Regional Operations, R-GRTA
- David Cook, Vice President, Project Mgmt. & Procurement, R-GRTA

## Methodology

The Strategic Plan is based on the following research and public involvement conducted between April and November 2002:

- Survey of current WATS riders
- Written surveys of and personal interviews with transportation providers, human service agencies, and community leaders with an interest in transportation issues
- "State of Public Transportation Report," prepared in November 2002
- Public forums held August 13, 2002

## I. Consider adding service during early morning hours to improve access to employment.

### Background

Existing fixed-route service provided by RTS #92, the Route 31 Shuttle, and the Loop Service, currently provide extensive regular service along Route 31. These services are documented in the State of Public Transportation Report. Approximately 44% of Wayne County's employed residents age 16 and older reside in towns and villages within the Route 31 corridor.

Numerous employment sites are located in communities along Route 31, including the Villages of Newark, Lyons, Clyde, Palmyra and Macdon. As documented in the State of Public Transportation Report, many of these employers' shift times begin earlier than the existing route service.

Additional fixed-route service early in the day would improve access to employment sites in communities along Route 31. In addition, the fixed-routes may be modified to bring workers directly to the work-sites. Partnerships with major employers should be explored as part of the route modifications. The service may be offered either on RTS Route 92, or on the Route 31 Shuttle operated by WATS.

### Recommended Actions

- A. Work with employers to survey employees. Determine the level of interest among employees in using bus service.
- B. Develop a schedule of service that brings as many employees as possible to work sites prior to the beginning of the early shift.
- C. Work with Job Development, human service agencies and employers to publicize the bus service.
- D. Modify routes and schedules to bring employees directly to work sites at the beginning of shifts.

### Potential cost

Based on an estimated cost of \$38.00 per hour of operation, the additional route service between 6:00 am and 8:00 am, five days per week, 52 weeks per year, would cost approximately \$19,760 per year.

## **II. Consider adding fixed-route service during evening hours and/or weekends to improve access to shopping for people who work during the day.**

### Background

Many Wayne County residents work during the day and need to shop in the evening or on weekends. People who do not drive or do not have access to cars have no public transportation available to them in the evening, as WATS fixed-route loop services end at 6:00 pm.

The locations of the major supermarkets are depicted in Figure 1. WATS' fixed-route service currently provides access to most of the major supermarkets and shopping centers.

Extending hours of service until 9:00 p.m. along the loop services would require one additional clockwise loop and one additional counter-clockwise loop per day. Weekday evening service could be offered one or two evenings a week. Service on Saturdays may require two complete loops in six hours.

### Recommended Actions

- A. Seek partnerships with retail centers and other funding sources to support expanded service.
- B. Add one clockwise and one counter-clockwise loop weekday evenings, two days per week.
- C. Advertise the availability of service to shopping destinations and offer promotions in conjunction with retailers along the loop.

### Potential cost

Based on an estimated cost of \$38.00 per hour of operation, the additional loop service between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., would cost approximately \$228 per day. Providing six hours of service on Saturdays would cost \$456 per day. Three hours of weekday service two days per week, or six hours of Saturday service, 52 weeks a year, would cost \$23,712. Evening service five days a week would cost would cost approximately \$59,280 per year.

### **Current Initiatives**

- Wayne County residents can link with RTS service in Monroe County through WATS' Route 104 Connector service to Webster.
- The medical shuttle service operated by WATS connects Wayne County residents to medical facilities in Geneva, Clifton Springs, and Canadawigua in Ontario County.
- Demand-responsive, curb-to-curb service is available in designated areas.
- WATS currently has an on-going program to install additional bus shelters and signposts.





## Research Findings

### Existing transportation services



#### WATS

WATS, a subsidiary of the Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority (RGRTA), operates fixed-route service along Route 31, in a clockwise and counter-clockwise loop around the County, and with morning and evening service to Webster that links to a RTS Park & Ride service.

WATS also provides demand-responsive service to persons with disabilities and to the general public. WATS contracts with several not-for-profit agencies to provide transportation to clients and consumers. These contracted routes are also open to the public.

A survey of riders, conducted in June 2002, indicated that current riders are satisfied with the quality of WATS service. Figure 1 summarizes the responses of the riders surveyed.

#### RTS

RTS operates morning and evening fixed route service along Route 31 to Lyons during the morning and evening.

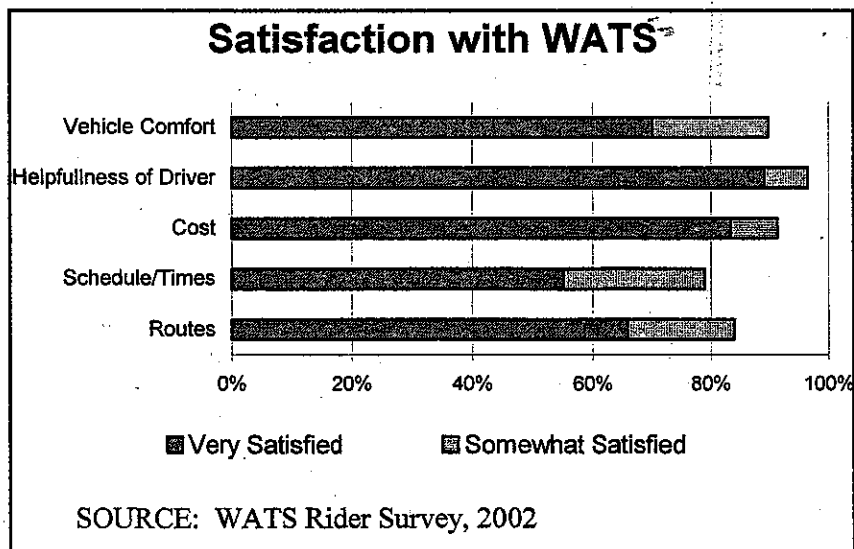
## III. Maintain and expand the medical shuttle and grocery shuttle services.

### Background

WATS currently operates a grocery shuttle to the Newark Wegmans within Newark on Tuesdays, and from the Villages of Palmyra and Macedon on Thursdays. Wegmans pays for the route and provides a staff person on the bus to assist riders with their groceries.

There may be opportunities to expand the service or to work with Tops to arrange for an additional route.

WATS also provides shuttle services to medical facilities in Ontario County. The shuttle service operates three days per week (Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday) to medical facilities in Victor and Geneva/Clifton Springs. This service was originally designed for dialysis patients in cooperation with the Wayne County Rural Health Network and is funded by a grant through 2003. An additional shuttle operates five days per week to medical facilities in Canandaigua. The medical shuttle services are open to the public at a cost of \$13 for a round trip.



### Recommended Actions

- A. Maintain the arrangement with Wegmans, and explore expanding the shuttle to additional areas or days of the week.
- B. Contact representatives from Tops to explore creating a shuttle service to Tops.
- C. Seek additional funding for continued operation of the medical shuttle service to Geneva and Clifton Springs.
- D. Work with ViaHealth, the Wayne County Rural Health Network, Wayne County Department of Social Services, and other human service organizations to establish a medical shuttle service to Rochester General and other affiliated hospitals.

### Potential cost

As private sponsors subsidize the cost of these shuttle services, no additional cost is anticipated.

## **IV. Create a centralized system to provide information about transportation options and to connect potential riders with transportation providers.**

### Background

Several human service agencies in Wayne County provide transportation services for their clients and customers. Many other agencies do not provide transportation, but work with people who are frequently in need of transportation. It is difficult for the general public to obtain information about transportation services unless they are clients or consumers of agencies that provide them with transportation.

A referral service would require knowledgeable staff to maintain contact with all of the public, not-for-profit and private transportation providers in Wayne County. The staff would need to maintain up-to-date information about services offered by each of these providers, as well as information about the cost of the service and eligibility requirements.

The referral service could be housed either within WATS or within another human service or health-related agency.

### Recommended Actions

- A. Organize human service agencies into a network and determine the appropriate agency to house the service.
- B. Prepare and maintain a database of information about transportation

(Continued on page 10)

### Government and not-for-profit agencies

Several government and not-for-profit agencies provide transportation to their own clients and consumers. Wayne County agencies which provide transportation directly to clients include the Department of Social Services, Behavioral Health Network, Department for Aging and Youth, Veterans Services, and the Wayne County Nursing Home. Wayne ARC operates a fleet of vehicles to transport consumers to day treatment, work sites, and appointments. Many of these agencies contract with WATS to provide a portion of their regular transportation services.

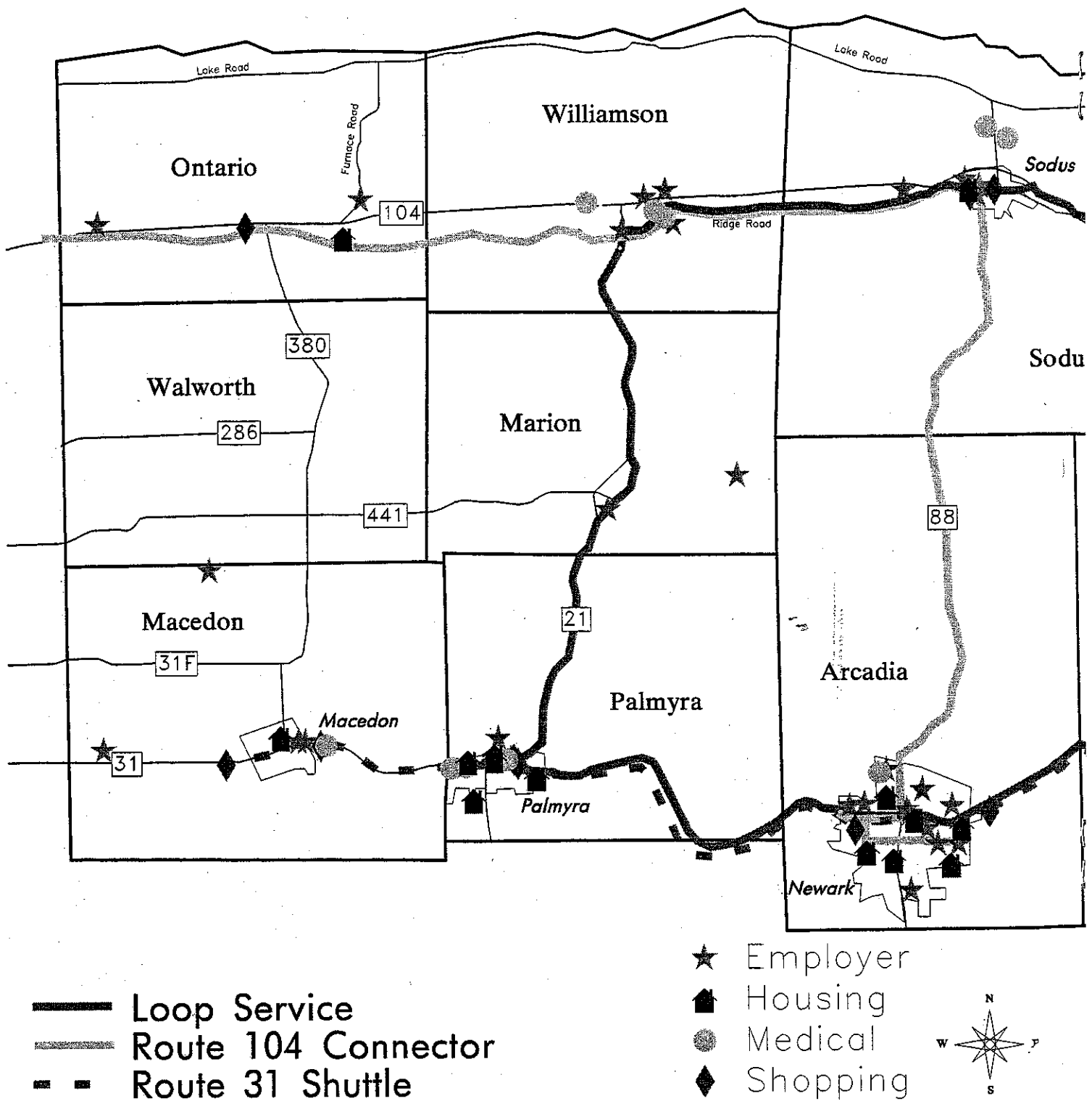
### Volunteer services

Several volunteer transportation services (i.e. WE-CARE, Rotary Cancer Drivers, FISH) transport people to medical appointments. A volunteer serves as the coordinator, and helps arrange for rides with volunteer drivers who typically use their own vehicles.

### Private for-profit services

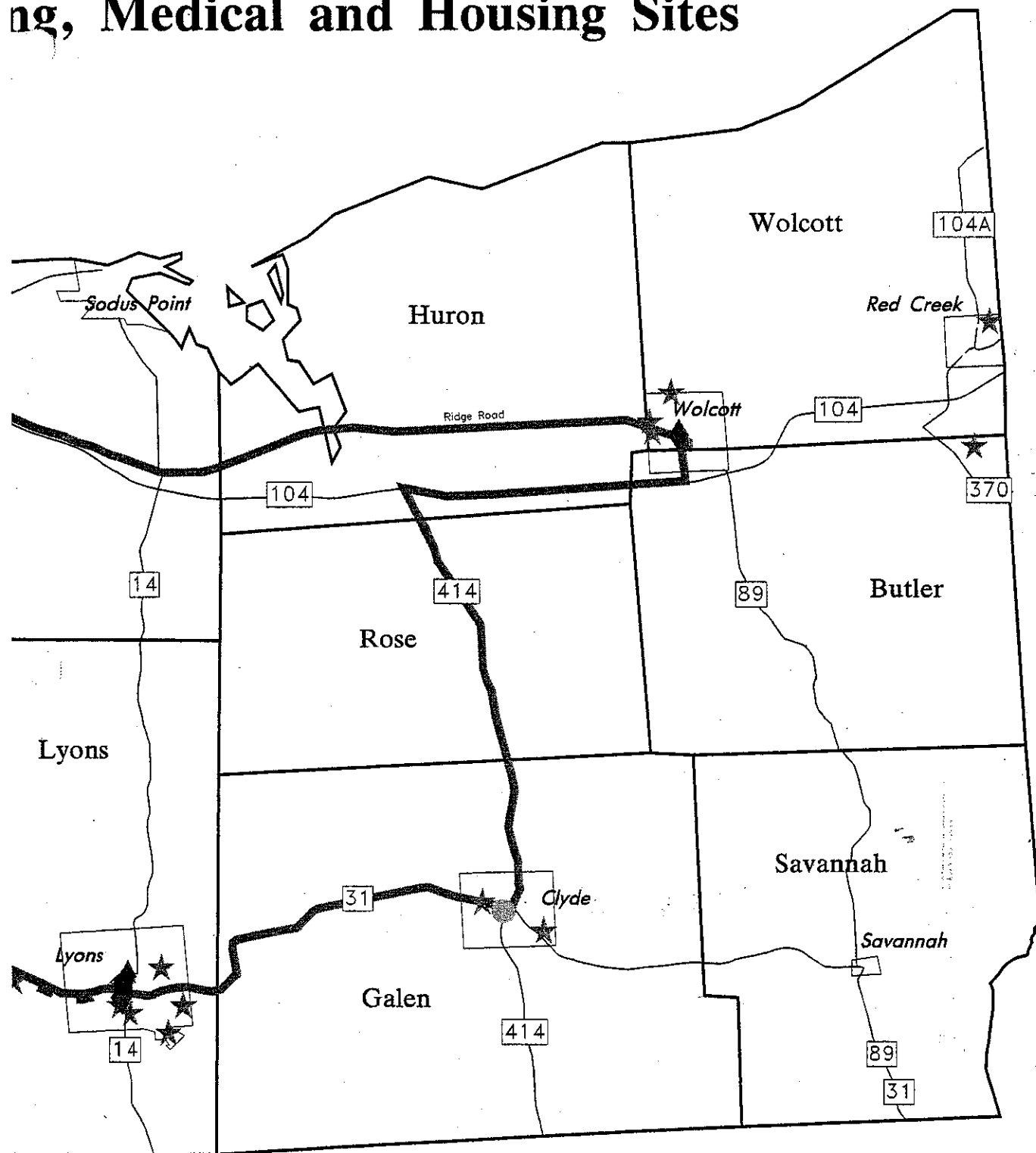
Private for-profit transportation companies, including Arcadia Transportation and several small taxi companies, provide transportation to individuals and organizations.

# WATS Routes and Key Employment, Shopping



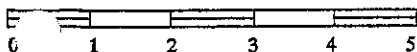


# ng, Medical and Housing Sites



SOURCE: Wayne Area Transportation Service  
Stuart I. Brown Associates

Miles



WATSD-BW  
04/22/03



Stuart I. Brown Associates, Inc.



## Research Findings

### Customer base and unmet needs

Although WATS is a public transportation service that is available to all Wayne County residents, its primary customer base includes persons who cannot drive due to a disability, seniors who do not drive, and persons who cannot afford to maintain a vehicle.

The following statistics offer some indication of the extent of need for public transportation in Wayne County:

- Approximately 2,218 households (6.4% of all households) in Wayne County do not have access to a vehicle.
- A total of 8,372 Wayne County residents (15.8%) have a disability. Of the 26,901 Wayne County residents aged 21 through 64, approximately 4,291 (16%) have a disability and only 48% of these persons were employed in 1989.
- 15,094 Wayne County residents (16.1%) were age 60 or older in 1990.

tation services, including cost and eligibility.

- Develop a cost-sharing arrangement to support the referral service.
- Establish the referral service and develop a record keeping system to monitor requests for transportation services and the ability of transportation providers to accommodate these requests.

### Potential cost

As shown in the following table, the potential annual cost, including staff salary and office expenses, is estimated at \$34,420.

Salary (\$15/ hour; 30 hours/ week)	\$23,400
Benefits (30%)	\$7,020
Annual office expenses	\$4,000
<b>Estimated annual cost:</b>	<b>\$34,420</b>
<b>Office set-up (first year)</b>	<b>\$8,000 - \$10,000</b>

Start-up costs are estimated at \$8,000 to \$10,000, depending on the complexity of software to be purchased.

## V. Maintain and expand partnerships with human service agencies, health care providers, senior citizen housing complexes, and employers.

### Background

WATS currently provides transportation services to programs operated by several public and not-for-profit human service agencies in Wayne County, including Wayne County ARC, Wayne County Department of Social Services, Wayne County Department of Aging and Youth, and the Wayne County Behavioral Health Network. These transportation services are customized routes that are supported financially by the agencies. The routes are open to the public.

The Wayne County Transportation Committee meets regularly under the direction of County Administrator Daniel Kane. This Committee provides an opportunity for representatives of County departments and not-for-profit organizations to identify concerns with transportation services and to work out ways to address these concerns.

Government and not-for-profit organizations also meet regularly as part of a network. These meetings offer an opportunity for agencies to share information about transportation and other issues, and to identify resources to assist in serving their constituencies.

The Rural Health Network has provided information about transportation resources to health care providers and senior citizen housing complexes throughout Wayne County. This organization also supports the dialysis medical transport service operated by WATS.

#### Recommended Actions

- A. Continue to convene the transportation committee
- B. WATS should maintain contact with human service agencies, health care providers, and senior citizen housing complexes. Such contact serves both to provide information to these entities about the transportation services that are available from WATS, as well as to identify changing needs and demand for services.

#### Potential cost

The cost to implement this recommendation would be minimal, as coordination efforts are ongoing and involve existing staff.

## **VI. Increase public awareness of public transportation services through publicity and promotional efforts.**

#### Background

Publicizing transportation services in Wayne County is difficult. There is no single newspaper that is commonly read throughout the County. The western portion of Wayne County is oriented toward Rochester and its eastern suburbs. The northern corridor (Williamson, Sodus, Huron and Wolcott) is geographically separated from the southern corridor (Macedon, Palmyra, Newark/ Arcadia, Clyde, and Savannah). Much of the County is quite rural. People who live outside of the villages and do not drive are particularly isolated.

Outreach to individual organizations is an effective way to expand the awareness of public transportation services and promote the use of WATS. Robert Jordan, the manager of WATS, frequently addresses organizations in the County to discuss public transportation. Organizations to target include the Advisory Board on the Aging, and senior citizen clubs.

Advertising in local Pennysavers is an effective way to reach a majority of the population. The Pennysavers are free and are distributed to vir-

## **Origins and destinations**

Based on the Rider Survey, common destinations for users of public transportation include supermarkets and shopping centers, hospitals and medical clinics, government and human service agency offices. Figure 1 depicts the locations of major shopping centers, hospitals, nursing homes, and government and human service agency offices and other employment sites.

Many people who reside in senior citizen housing complexes do not drive. The locations of these complexes are also depicted in Figure 1.

tually every household in the County.

Signposts and shelters at regular stops along the WATS routes also help to increase the visibility of WATS. WATS currently has an on-going program to install additional shelters and signposts.

#### Recommended Actions

- A. Continue to meet with community organizations to present information about WATS services.
- B. Increase advertising in local PennySavers.
- C. Increase the number of signposts and shelters along WATS routes.

#### Potential cost

- A. No additional cost
- B. A small (4" x 4") ad in the local PennySavers would cost approximately \$330 per week. A quarterly program would cost approximately \$1,320/ year. Weekly ads would cost \$17,160/ year.
- C. Costs include materials and installation expenses.

### **VII. Increase use and awareness among public riders of subscription and demand-responsive services currently offered by WATS.**

#### Background

In addition to its fixed route service, WATS offers countywide demand-responsive service to persons with disabilities.

WATS also offers demand-responsive service that is open to the general public throughout Macedon, Palmyra, Newark, Lyons, Clyde, Rose, Wolcott and Sodus, from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Rides must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance. This service was developed in conjunction with curb-to-curb service for DSS clients who need transportation to employment or job training..

WATS buses travel throughout the County on subscription "Special Services" routes to Key Industries/ Wayne ARC in Newark and to Senior Citizen Nutrition Sites in Newark, Lyons, and at the Wayne Community Service Center. Public riders are accepted on these routes by advance reservation, or by "flagging down" a WATS bus.

#### Recommended Actions

- A. Publicize the availability of demand-responsive service and Special Services routes among human service agencies. (See Initiative VI.)
- B. Document the number of riders served by the existing demand-responsive services to demonstrate that these services are effective and reliable.
- C. Revise the brochure that advertises the demand-responsive service to clarify the fact that it is curb-to-curb service and is available to the general public within specified areas.

Potential Cost

- A. See publicity costs under Initiative VI.
- B. Marginal increase in costs for fuel as drivers provide additional demand-responsive service. Scheduling demand-responsive service would be carried out by existing staff.
- C. Printing costs to revise the brochure.

**VIII. Explore additional connections to RTS service in Monroe County, focusing on the western portion of Wayne County, in particular Walworth and the Route 441 corridor.**

Background

Commuters from Wayne County may use the RTS bus #92 along Route 31, or the Route 104 Connector Service. Currently, it is not possible to take public transportation from other western Wayne County communities, such as Walworth, into Monroe County. WATS loop service does not travel through the westernmost towns in Wayne County, and demand-responsive service is limited in this portion of the County.

Potential connections include extension of Park & Ride service, which is currently available from Penfield into downtown Rochester, or a new WATS service to bring commuters from western Wayne County to the Park & Ride lot in Penfield.

Recommended Actions

- A. Identify feasible means of providing public transportation to the western towns in Wayne County.
- B. Establish regular public transportation service in western Wayne County.
- C. Publicize the availability of service and identify partners to help support the service.

**Other recommendations**

- Consider adding a shuttle service along Route 88 between Newark and Sodus, and along Route 14 between Alton and Lyons.
- Install bicycle racks on all new buses.

## Summary of Actions and Implementation Guidelines

	Recommended Action	Responsible Agency	Timeframe	Potential Cost
<b>I. Consider adding service during early morning hours to improve access to employment.</b>				
A.	Survey employees	WATS	Within 1 year	Within existing budget
B.	Develop 2 hours of additional shuttle service	WATS	1-3 years	\$19,760/ year
C.	Publicize service	WATS	On-going	\$4,000
D.	Modify routes and schedules	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
<b>II. Consider adding fixed route service during evening hours to improve access to shopping for people who work during the day.</b>				
A.	Seek partnerships and funding sources	WATS	Within 1 year	
B.	Add evening loop service	WATS	1-3 years	\$23,712/ year
C.	Advertise service and offer promotions.	WATS, retailers	On-going	Within existing budget
<b>III. Maintain and expand the medical shuttle and grocery shuttle services.</b>				
A.	Maintain/ expand Wegmans shuttle	WATS, Wegmans	On-going	Within existing budget
B.	Explore creating a shuttle service to Tops or other stores.	WATS, retailers	Within 1 year	Within existing budget
C.	Seek funding to continue medical shuttle service	WATS, Rural Health Network, Wayne County	Within 1 year	Within existing budget.
D.	Establish a medical shuttle service to Rochester General and other affiliated hospitals.	DSS, RHN, health providers, WATS	1-3 years	TBD
<b>IV. Create a centralized system to provide information about transportation options and to connect potential riders with transportation providers.</b>				
A.	Organize network and determine host for service.	WATS, RHN, service agencies	Within 1 year	Within existing budgets
B.	Prepare and maintain database	WATS, RHN, service agencies	1-3 years	\$8,000 - \$10,000 (start-up costs)
C.	Develop a cost-sharing arrangement	WATS, RHN, service agencies	Within 1 year	Within existing budgets
D.	Establish service and develop monitoring system.	WATS, RHN, service agencies	1-3 years	\$34,420/ year



<b>V. Maintain and expand partnerships with human service agencies, retail businesses, health care providers, senior citizen housing complexes, and employers.</b>				
A.	Continue to convene the transportation committee	Wayne County	On-going	Within existing budgets
B.	Maintain contact between WATS and these entities	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
<b>VI. Increase public awareness of public transportation services through publicity and promotional efforts.</b>				
A.	Continue to meet with community organizations	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
B.	Increase advertising in local PennySavers.	WATS	1-3 years	\$1,320 - \$17,160/ year
C.	Increase the number of signposts and shelters along WATS routes.	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
<b>VII. Increase use and awareness among public riders of subscription and demand-responsive services currently offered by WATS.</b>				
A.	Publicize the availability of these services and Special Services routes among human service agencies. (See VI)	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
B.	Document the number of riders served by the existing demand-responsive services, to demonstrate that these services are effective and reliable.	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
C.	Revise brochures as needed.	WATS	On-going	Within existing budget
<b>VIII. Explore additional connections to RTS service in Monroe County, focusing on the western portion of Wayne County, in particular Walworth and the Route 441 corridor.</b>				
A.	Seek to identify feasible means of providing public transportation to the western towns in Wayne County.	WATS, R-GRTA	1-3 years	Within existing budget
B.	Establish regular public transportation service in western Wayne County.	WATS, R-GRTA	1-3 years	To be determined
C.	Publicize the availability of service and identify partners to help support the service.	WATS human service agencies	On-going	See Initiative VI.

## **Next Steps**

WATS and Wayne County will continue to work together to implement the recommendations of the Strategic Plan. The Steering Committee will continue to meet under the direction of the Wayne County Planning Department. Members of the Committee will identify specific actions for early implementation, obtain the necessary funding, and identify strategic partners who will assist in implementing the Plan.