CHAPTER V MOBILITY AND INNOVATION IN NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

1. INTRODUCTION

The mobility of New York's residents, businesses and visitors depends on three major infrastructure systems. These systems include rails, highways and bridges; vehicles such as automobiles, trucks and buses that use the physical infrastructure to convey people to their destinations; and information about both the infrastructure and the use of those systems by vehicles. The last system in this equation is becoming extremely important as people respond to the faster pace of life in the early 21st century. Public Transportation Agencies, which use all three of these ways to move people in New York State, is meeting the challenge of attracting new riders as well as keeping current ones by improving their services, marketing the benefits of public transit, and offering a wider array of solutions to how people move in the State.

This ongoing evolution of new operating practices depends on innovative funding, innovative services, both on the road and through information services, and supportive actions that help make the connection between transit and the places of interest the public needs to access. While the actual built infrastructure doesn't change that often, access to it and the way services are bundled with information does.

The traveling public has an increasing degree of choice in their travel options. Population and employment destinations are becoming more dispersed. Travel increasingly involves multiple stops for daycare, shopping, medical appointments, etc. The autonomy offered by the automobile is very attractive, even in congested areas. This is particularly true where the absence of transfer facilities and pedestrian facilities presents an obstacle to accessing transit service. Increasing public expectations for customer service, current and accurate service information, and door to door convenience present challenges to the traditional model of urban public transit.

Policy mandates and expectations, such as providing access to the elderly and disabled, access to employment opportunities for former welfare recipients, and congestion reduction in areas that are in nonattainment of federal air quality standards additionally require transit operators to stretch scarce resources and test new service types in non-traditional markets. These efforts to meet important policy goals often compete for funding with the need to provide a guaranteed level of traditional transit service.

Providing a baseline of traditional service, including fixed route, commuter, student, elderly, disabled and community mobility, and operating these policy-driven services makes the introduction of new and innovative services difficult. Sustaining an ongoing financial commitment to new services is also challenging, as ridership is typically low at the beginning of a new service, growing over time as the public becomes aware of service availability and reliability.

This chapter presents examples of different types of mobility projects initiated throughout the state. Expanding personal mobility within a region can take on many forms. The combination of services that are necessary to provide a product that moves people is as varied as the communities in the state. Upstate, with the urban areas offering suburban real estate with easy commute times have resulted in an expanded service area requirement for public transit systems. Relatively lower parking costs in downtown areas where real estate is not in high demand has offered steep competition to the traditional wheel and spoke transit service. Rural areas face a completely different set of issues with dispersed population and services that are often spread out. Rural population densities make it difficult to provide adequate traditional service at a reasonable cost in outlying upstate New York counties. Downstate transit, on the other hand, flourishes with the attraction of downtown Manhattan as a focus for many commuters. In addition, the density of the landscape limits auto flexibility, making transit a viable choice for many trip purposes. These factors, plus the well-developed transit infrastructure, have allowed transit to play a major role in a variety of trip purposes in the downstate areas. These varied issues across the State force public transportation agencies into new and varied service plans.

Despite this array of challenges, New York State's transit operators, in cooperation with local municipalities and the NYSDOT, have endeavored to respond to changing markets and expectations with innovative new services, supportive investments and customer convenience initiatives. These initiatives are helping to sustain and enhance the viability of transit as an important travel option for New Yorkers.

This Chapter describes the range of initiatives that

represent the response of New York's transit operators to the changing demands of the evolving transit market and highlights some of the trends in 2003. The two broad categories of transit industry response described are:

- New and innovative transit services and funding, including urban and suburban mobility, rural and statewide Welfare-to-Work services, human service coordination, and;
- **Transit supportive actions** taken by public transit operators, with the support of the NYSDOT, such as customer-oriented Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), innovative fare policies, and pedestrian, bicycle and intermodal facility investments that are improving the customer environment of transit.

2. INNOVATIVE FUNDING AND MOBILITY PROJECTS:

This section describes initiatives around the state that maximize the existing infrastructure, add appropriate service vehicles at useful times, and provide the necessary information in a useable and timely manner to the traveling public. The following services are innovative in that they serve non-traditional transit markets. Typically these services serve an area where competition from the private automobile is very high. See Figure V-1 for a 5 year data review of many of these services.

2.1 STATEWIDE MOBILITY FUNDING

The Statewide Mass Transportation Operating Assistance (STOA) Program, as noted earlier, is the predominant source of operating subsidy for New York State transit services. However, supplemental funding has been crucial in underwriting many of these newer, non-traditional, services. Fund sources that have been used to support these services include the following:

The Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program provides federal funding for surface transportation and other related projects that contribute to air quality improvements and reduce congestion. Transit operating expenses for services that further these goals are eligible for CMAQ for a three-year demonstration period. In Long Island, \$300,000 in CMAQ funds is made available annually for innovative mobility projects. The New York City and Lower Hudson Valley Regional Transportation Coordinating Committees have similarly set aside CMAQ funds annually for NYSDOT Regions to support travel demand management activities or innovative transit services.

The Surface Transportation (STP) Program provides federal funding for State and local projects on any Federal-aid highway including the National Highway System, bridge projects, on any Federal-Aid public road, transit capital projects, and public bus terminals and facilities. NYSDOT has pioneered, with the "capital cost of contracting" concept, the use of STP funds to support ongoing operations of innovative transit services, following the completion of the three year demonstration period of CMAQ eligibility.

The State Innovative Mobility Demonstration (IMD) Program, established through two State appropriations in SFY 1993-94 and SFY 1994-95 totaling \$1.5 million, supported up to two years of supplemental operating funding for innovative services that increase mobility by providing viable alternatives to automobile travel. Thirteen projects were chosen for funding over the life of the appropriation, including a number of services that continue to operate and are described later in this chapter.

Community Solutions for Transportation (CST) Program, formally Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), **Welfare-to-Work**, is a State Department of Labor program initiated in 1998 in response to the Welfare Reform Act of 1996, and broadened in 2000. The program funds transportation services to provide eligible persons with the means to secure and maintain employment at locations previously inaccessible due to a lack of affordable transportation. NYSDOT administers the TANF/CST program in cooperation with the State Department of Labor. Program dollars are generated by cost allocating services based on the percentage of TANF eligible usage. The program will fund up to 100% of the actual service cost using this method.

The Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) Program, established in TEA-21 and administered by the FTA, funds new transportation services to support the transition from Welfare- to- Work. The vast majority of program funds are Congressionally earmarked to designated localities. New York State has received a total of \$11.5 million through 2002, and \$3.17 million in 2003 funding. JARC funded projects often use CST funding to fulfil JARC's 50% match requirement.

2.2 UPSTATE MOBILITY

Upstate transit service providers are faced with an everincreasing service area while still serving the core downtown central cities. Antiquated route structures, diminishing return for the transportation dollar due to rising costs, and negative publicity associated with changing or decreasing service often force systems to provide services to areas that no longer warrant the level of service. It is a constant struggle to provide the public with the best possible coverage and route service and at the same time, maintain the most economical routes possible.

2.2.1 REGIONAL SERVICES

Most of the public transportation services in the upstate counties are run by the counties or small cities and rely on the intercity bus network described in Chapter IV to move people between major urban centers. However, the Transportation Authorities in each of the four major urban areas face the challenge of regional services and each works to address these issues through a variety of programs and tools.

CDTA Shuttle Program & Commuter Services: Recognizing that major employment growth in the Capital District has shifted to suburban areas, CDTA established a network of shuttle services.

The Shuttle Bug originally replaced a portion of a traditional fixed route with smaller vehicles in a circulator network that serves a large cluster of employment along Washington Avenue Extension in Albany, extending west to Route 155. The Shuttle Bug service has since been extended to Route 155/ New Karner Road. The Shuttle Fly provides service along the Wolf Road commercial corridor and into the Albany International Airport, extending north to Route 7 in Niskayuna.

In Rensselaer County, the Shuttle Bee operates along Route 4, from RPI and Hudson Valley Community College. Ridership has shown consistent growth on all three services as their identity has become established with travelers in these areas.

There are a variety of rural and ex-urban commuter

services in the capital District that bring commuters to downtown's and other central locations for work trips. These services reduce the Single Occupant Vehicles (SOV) on the road and reduce emissions. In 2003, with the recognition of Saratoga as an urban area, Upstate Transit became sponsored by CDTA for the Saratoga to Albany Commute to alleviate congestion on the I-87 Northway Corridor. Ridership continues at a significant pace.

RGRTA regional services serve the Authority in 5 counties including the major urban center of Monroe County, and continues to provide services to bring commuters to economic centers for working, shopping and medical appointments. Coordination of these services with existing suburban Monroe County routes makes the connections that are necessary to move people and commuters from outlying regions to the central city.

NFTA's HUBLINK program has identified ways to improve bringing people into the Buffalo area from outlying regions and has improved services along the southern towns' corridors and from the growing areas east of Buffalo in Clarence and Depew.

CNYRTA continues to provide service from suburban areas to central cities service through the CENTRO of Cayuga and Oswego services. In addition, the service planning study REMAP has provided strategies to improve suburban to suburban routes and has identified improvements to improve regional service.

2.2.2 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Several counties have programs in place that provide transportation services to low income riders for employment purposes. There are various services which are available to meet the needs of employees as well as the employers. Some of the options include guaranteed ride home or after hours taxi service, shuttle buses. They are further explained below.

The Niagara Frontier Transit Authority, in cooperative efforts with the Erie and Niagara County Departments of Social Services, has extended fixed route services in support of low income employment needs. The Authority also initiated fixed route service linking several communities to its existing fixed service in both Erie and Niagara Counties. A separate program is providing demand response Taxi service to low income home healthcare workers. Additional funding is used to provide transit passes to low income employees within the two counties.

In 2003, NFTA reestablished additional fixed route service in Lockport, Niagara County. Utilizing low income employment transportation funding, the authority and local stakeholders revised the path of a low use fixed route to better serve students, elderly and employment needs without increasing cost. The Project Coordinator, funded by Community Solutions for Transportation, spread the word about transportation options in Niagara County.

Working closely with the Erie County Department of Social Services, the Authority continued to receive CST grants throughout 2003. Monthly transit pass distribution to low income individuals attempting to maintain employment has increased to over 1,000 per month. Eligible NFTA pass recipients can use all transit services at no charge within Erie and Niagara Counties.

The Capital District Transportation Authority has initiated a variety of services in support of low income employees within its operating area. The services include new fixed routes, shuttle services, a guaranteed ride home program, transit ambassadors and a transit pass program. The transit ambassadors work within each County Department of Social Service (DSS) as a direct link between low income employees and transit opportunities. CDTA is providing new service to Saratoga County, in cooperation with the Saratoga County Department of Social Services. Modifications have also been made to existing fixed route service to reach developing employment sites within the county.

Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority enhanced their pass program in 2003 which has proven to be a successful venture. RGRTA makes buying the passes easy as they have instituted a userfriendly website in 2003 where customers can purchase the passes on line and have them sent directly to the customer residence. There are several types of passes, including daily, monthly and unlimited ride passes. In addition to the web pass program, RGRTA is also working with Monroe County Department of Social Services (MCDSS) and other local DSS agencies to provide passes through the CST program funded by Federal TANF dollars. These programs are specifically targeted at eligible DSS clients who are employed to ease their transition into the work force.

Central New York Regional Transportation Authority has improved its use of technology to improve employment services by merging several functions under a mobility management center to service both the ADA population and the Welfare-to-Work services in the Syracuse area. This center uses the dispatch services of the demand response system to improve the scheduling and billing services to enhance efficiency. In addition to getting clients into the bus system where feasible, CNYRTA provides contracts with taxi and other contracted services to augment existing fixed route services to improve mobility.

Other Areas with the assistance of FY 2003 JARC funding, Hornell Area Transit has added weekend service to its Hornell/Bath route initiated as a low income transportation service. The new service has consistently gained ridership since its initiation in 2001. Growth has been achieved by a strong partnership with local human services organizations and by linking service with other local transportation providers.

BC Transit in Broome County continues to provide 15 route enhancements to improve employment transportation. In addition, they have added a Transportation Coordinator who works within the County Department of Social Service to strengthen the link between the local transportation provider and human service staff and clients. This coordination resulted in steady growth in the Transit Pass program initiated in 2002 utilizing TANF/CST funding.

Sullivan County continues to provide a brokerage service through its county transportation office. Service is provided by contracted public transit, county operated vehicles and taxi service. All of the county's transportation needs are referred to the brokerage for scheduling. The brokerage funds the trips either by contract with the requesting agency or on a per trip basis.

Ulster County continues to provide four rural transportation routes initiated to provide work related transportation for the public.

2.2.3 RURAL MOBILITY

Essex and Franklin Counties: In 2003, Franklin County planned a second route in the northern portion of the county. The Malone vicinity was identified as a hub for new service to be operated by the Franklin County Association of Senior Citizens through the local Office for Aging. The county's transportation initiatives are centered

around the Transportation Coordinator, mainly funded through Welfare-to-Work funds. The coordinator manages all transportation support activites offered by the county. These include: fixed route and demand response public transit; taxi service when necessary; an auto loan program; assistance with insurance; licensing; registration and outreach to the community.

Essex County sponsored a trolley service in 2003 to relieve congestion and provide transportation to the Olympic Regional Development Authority (ORDA) and bus service from Lake Placid to Whiteface Mountain. The trolley service utilizes village parking lots as park and ride locations for tourists and other visitors with businesses in the village.

Regional Intercity Service: Regional intercity bus service between the counties of Clinton. Franklin, St. Lawrence and Jefferson entered its first full year of operation in 2003. The service, supported by the Governor's Office, Quality Communities Task Force, NYSDOT and New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL), connects the rural communities along the Route 11 corridor in the "North Country" with the cities of Plattsburgh and Watertown. Some of the rural communities served by the route include Gouverneur, Canton, Potsdam, Malone, Chateauguay and Ellenburg. Two daily round trips between Plattsburgh and Potsdam/Canton and between Watertown and Potsdam/Canton are provided. The service connects with local transit operations in Watertown and Plattsburgh, Greyhound/Trailways, and also serves the ferry terminal and Amtrak station in Plattsburgh. As a result of this bus route, residents of the communities served have enhanced mobility options to get to work, school, medical appointments and recreational opportunities.

Amsterdam Community Transit: In the Spring of 2003, a consultant assisted in evaluating the City of Amsterdam's transit system. This evaluation resulted in revamping routes to accommodate the public's need for transit services. After the evaluation was complete, the City Transit System had a "System Grand Reopening" marketing initiative ceremony to jumpstart the newly revised route system. The transit system provided free rides for the day to get new and regular transit riders accustomed to the new routes. The marketing initiative was a success. In the first week of operation, after the grand reopening, ridership increased by 20% while miles decreased by 16%. The result was greater efficiencies for the transit system.

Otsego County Transit: Otsego County underwent a transformation of its bus routes in 2003 in order to more efficiently accommodate Medicaid and other demand response customers. In working with the State Department of Health, the local Department of Social Services and the local operator, Birnie Bus, the county was "zoned" to make more feasible and flexible use of its services. Riders could now be accommodated by a more flexible system. It has greatly decreased the amount of single person or empty mile trips for that county.

2.3 DOWNSTATE MOBILITY

Downstate mobility is driven by very different factors than upstate. It has a higher volume serving the regional nature of trips because of the commuting distances people make to work. The infrastructure available to commuters allows for many more intermodal trips and connections to and from trains. This occurs through a variety of tools including park & rides, shuttles and commuter buses to get the riders to their various transportation modes. Some of these services meet all criteria but are grouped in the following sections by their predominant planning factors. The breadth of mobility services is outlined below.

2.3.1 REGIONAL SERVICES

Downstate regional services are driven by the large commuting patterns to NYC and the suburban patterns of development around the city as commuters move to less expensive housing costs but still need to commute to the employment centers in NYC. The regional nature of these required services strain the traditional county-based services and also have different outcomes depending on which side of New York they are on. Therefore new coordination activities are always evolving and are outlined below.

Region 8

Route 9W Bus Service (Rockland to Midtown Manhattan) - A CMAQ funded bus service operated by Red and Tan serves the Route 9W corridor from Rockland County to the W 41st Port Authority Bus Terminal. Previously, commuter bus service from this corridor went only to the George Washington Bridge Bus Terminal (GWBBT), from where commuters to midtown and downtown had to take a long subway ride. In the second year of operation, ridership on the new route averaged 24+ passengers per trip and was growing steadily. Further, the GWBBT service maintained a healthy ridership with survey results showing that a majority of new route

Figure V-1 Innovative Service Ridership Trends 1998-2003

							%Change	Annualized
Service	Market	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	02 to 03	% Change
TZExpress	Rockland to Tarrytown / White Plains	253,254	276,452	294,018	337,846	318,894	-5.6%	5.9%
OWL	Orange to Westchester Link	19,802	19,470	21,372	25,891	28,072	8.4%	9.1%
Leprechaun Bus Service	Poughkeepsie - White Plains	56,584	44,785	45,326	44,121	44,056	-0.1%	-6.1%
I-Bus	Stanford - White Plains	76,275	89,905	102,908	101,499	105,960	4.4%	8.6%
Route 9WBus Service	Orange Co Midtown Manhattan			28,877	43,344	63,750	47.1%	
JFK Flyer	Hempstead, Nassau County to JFK	97,588	122,510	135,253	119,997		-100.0%	-100.0%
Suffolk County Clipper	Route 110 Corridor, Mellville	19,000	17,971	15,562	12,301	11,150	-9.4%	-12.5%
Woodbury Shuttle	Woodbury to Woodbury CR station	28,792	30,263	36,194	35,653	42,499	19.2%	10.2%
Farmingdale Shuttle	Farmingdale to Farmindale CR station	35,135	44,838	49,137	51,341	54,563	6.3%	11.6%
Platinum Mile Loops	White Plains Transit Center to Suburban Office Parks	390,342	410,180	391,667			0.0%	-100.0%
CDTA Shuttles (Bug, Fly, Bee)	Shuttle Services to Employers and Airport	155,287	206,208	233,898			0.0%	-100.0%
Glen Cove	Circulator within the City of Glen Cove	18,038	16,799	15,924	15,400	10,376	-32.6%	-12.9%
Commute - Train-Connection	Dutchess County to MetroNorth stations	50,699	49,431	47,641	40,659	35,278	-13.2%	-8.7%
Danbury-Brewster Shuttle	Feeder Service to Brewster MNR Station	20,843	26,955	35,157	41,871	49,191	17.5%	23.9%
Newburgh-Beacon Shuttle	Route 17K P&R lot to City of Beacon MNR Station	14,028	25,292	33,591	37,591	50,717	34.9%	37.9%
Orange "Main Line" Trolley	Middletown to Woodbury Common		25,884	26,020	29,936	31,268	4.4%	

*Additional Routes (Shuttle Fly and Shuttle Bee) added in 1999

passengers were not converts from the old route but SOV conversions or new commuters.

Danbury-Brewster Shuttle - This service, operated by Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART) under separate agreements with NYSDOT & Connecticut Department of Transportation ConnDOT, serves the I-84/Route 6 corridor between three park & ride lots in the NY/CT border area and the Metro-North Railroad (MNR) Station in Brewster, NY. Ridership has more than doubled since the service began in late 1998. It has gone from 20,000 passengers in 1999 to close to 50,000 passengers in 2003. Most passengers are MNR commuters to Grand Central, although a growing number of shuttle users are local travelers who are making shopping, medical, and local employment trips. MNR provides Unitickets and a NYSDOT-funded Guaranteed Ride home Program.

Newburgh-Beacon Shuttle and Stewart Airport Link - This service is operated by Newburgh-Beacon Bus Corp. under contract with NYSDOT. The service began in 1997 as a bus shuttle between a 250 space park and ride lot in the town of Newburgh, Orange County and MNR's Beacon Train Station on the Hudson line. The service appealed to commuters who could not find parking at the Beacon station or were looking for an alternative to the SOV trip to New York City (NYC). During the 2003 reporting period, the service was expanded to provide a link to Stewart Airport in New Windsor. In addition, midday and late evening service were added. Ridership to and from the airport has been disappointing but is growing slowly and an overall new marketing campaign is scheduled for late 2003. Ridership remains strong, averaging just under 200 boardings per day.

Orange "Main Line" Trolley - This service is provided under a joint NYSDOT/Orange County contract with Hudson Transit Lines. The Trolley bus provides 5 round trips on weekdays and 2 round trips on each weekend day between the City of Middletown and the shopping complex at Woodbury Commons in the Town of Woodbury. The Trolley bus service also provides 1 daily round trip between Middletown and Montgomery as well as 2 round trips on weekend days between Woodbury Commons and Metro-North's Harriman railroad station. This service began as a CMAQ funded demonstration project. NYSDOT and Orange County have committed to ongoing funding based on a steady ridership growth. Since its inception in 2000, ridership has continually increased through each year of service.

Region 10

Suffolk Clipper - This service, initiated in 1994, provides express reverse commute access to employment destinations in the Melville-Route 110 corridor. The Long Island Expressway (I-495) HOV lane provides a travel savings advantage to this service in competing with single occupant vehicle auto travel. The Clipper services use the Park and Ride lots at I-495 at Exits 58 and 63 and will be expanded to the Mastic/Shirley area. Purchasing of 10 ticket swipe cards will soon be available, negating the need for exact bills and coins. Ridership in 2003 continued the decline since the inaugural year as the competition for SOV remains strong.

Glen Cove Commuter Bus Shuttle - This service, operated by the City of Glen Cove, provides shuttle service to local employment locations and feeds the Glen Cove LIRR station. Ridership built steadily until 1999 when it peaked.

MTA-Long Island Bus - In response to a request by the Nassau County Department of Social Services, Long Island Bus has extended the weekday and weekend operating hours of an existing route servicing employment sites in Nassau County. In addition, Long Island Bus has initiated three new routes which created service links to the Hempstead Transit Center, providing improved access to employment opportunities on Long Island and throughout the New York City Metropolitan area.

2.3.2 INTERMODAL SERVICES

Intermodal connections play a major role in the downstate region. Agency coordination is the key to recognizing the demand and working out the operational issues that are necessary to make the services work efficiently. Additionally, the physical constraints at the commuter rail stations make bus services to the train an important service option. Most stations are served well by the local bus agencies. New patterns of commuting, however, have highlighted the need for new services and variations on trunk line or shuttles depending on the range of commuters to the station and the type of development around the stations.

Region 8

Dutchess County Commuter Train Connection -Dutchess County Transit provides rail feeder bus routes serving the Metro North Commuter Rail stations at Poughkeepsie, Beacon and New Hamburg. This service has experienced steady growth. Although part of the LOOP service, this feeder service to the rail mode is essential to giving commuters an option to getting out of their cars and making the commute through efficient transfers.

Ridgefield-Katonah Shuttle - This is a new service operated by Housatonic Area Regional Transit (HART) under separate contract with NYSDOT & ConnDOT. Building on the success of the Danbury-Brewster Shuttle, beginning in April 2002, HART began providing transportation to commuters along the Route 35 corridor between park & ride lots in Ridgefield, CT and the Metro-North Railroad Station in Katonah, NY. Using vehicles provided by ConnDOT, HART is currently providing 12 trips per business day. Average ridership has grown to approximately 100 boardings per day and service increases are being considered for earlier in the morning as well as midday. Unitickets from MNR and a NYSDOT guaranteed ride home program are available.

Region 10

Woodbury Shuttle, N94 - MTA Long Island Bus began operating this Shuttle in January 1994, providing service between the Hicksville LIRR station and the Crossways and Gateways Commercial parks. Funding assistance is provided by MTA Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and LI Bus to supplement STOA. Woodbury ridership in 2003 soared to over 42,000, an increase of more than 19% from 2002.

Farmingdale Shuttle, N95- This shuttle began operations in 1991 providing service between the LIRR Farmingdale station and the Route 110 corridor, serving SUNY Farmingdale, Newsday and other area businesses. Funding assistance is provided by LIRR and LI Bus to supplement STOA. Farmingdale ridership in 2003 rose to over 54,500, for a 6.3 percent increase.

2.3.3 EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The NYMTC region identified gaps in service through a joint planning process initiated in 2001 in response to the requirement to attain Welfare-to-Work transportation financing. In 2003, NYMTC and its members updated the plan to reflect changes in the economy, in part as a result of the increased security at major airports from the terrorist attacks in 2001. Several new routes/services were added during the period operated by public and non-profit providers. The new services are in or through Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk Counties and the five boroughs. Additionally, commuting patterns for employment in major centers like Manhattan and White Plains drive agencies to provide regional services across traditional service borders. This often requires innovative funding to make it a reality.

The White Plains I-287 Employment Corridor - This is a major center of employment in the lower Hudson Valley. NYSDOT and a number of regional transit operators have developed a group of express bus services from surrounding counties into White Plains. These services provide access to this large employment cluster as well as to MetroNorth services, available at the White Plains Intermodal Transit Center. Funding has been provided from the STOA, IMD, CMAQ and STP programs. In 2000 NYSDOT initiated the "capital cost of contracting" concept in this corridor as the "I-287 Bus WRAP," linking these services together under contract with NYSDOT. Services funded within the I-287 WRAP include the following:

- The Tappan Zee Express provides service from various points in Rockland County to Tarrytown and White Plains.
- The OWL (Orange to Westchester Link) provides service between Middletown and White Plains with intermediate stops in Goshen, Monroe, and Central Valley.
- **Poughkeepsie to White Plains** provides service between Poughkeepsie and White Plains.
- I-Bus provides service that connects with Metro-North's New Haven and Harlem lines and the Westchester shuttle network in White Plains. ConnDot and NYSDOT contract with CT Transit to operate this service between Stamford and White Plains. Vehicles were provided by ConnDot. Operating costs are split between the two states.
 - White Plains Platinum Mile Loop Shuttles, run by Westchester County BeeLine, operates a series of shuttles between downtown White Plains and several suburban office parks along the I-287 Corridor. Funding for these shuttles includes CMAQ, contributions from MTA MetroNorth Railroad (MNR), and significant local support from Westchester County.

Welfare-to-Work Activities - Several non-profit organizations have received JARC funding and through 2003, they continued to provide services for lowincome job seekers and workers who needed the extra resources to continue to stay on the job. The Phipps Foundation provided transportation service information, and acted as a transportation ambassador for workers moving off welfare. Their expertise working with individuals enables workers to access the right services and continue their employment.

Project Renewal is funding a van service that operates

on a minimum rider philosophy to move homeless city welfare recipients to work. The commute is mostly from Manhattan to New Jersey and recognizes the range of shift times necessary to continue the employment. Suffolk County United Veterans provides van services for vets who are returning to the work force and do not have the ability or opportunity to use the public routes. This service is tailored to meet their needs to gain employment.

Westchester BeeLine, Nassau LIB and Suffolk County Transit continue to use JARC funding to lengthen routes schedules to meet shift times, to extend routes to meet new development, and to allow for employment based services. In 2003, the BeeLine service continued the extension of Route 7 to serve the employment corridor, and Long Island Bus continued their N8, N27 and N43 services.

2.3.4 FERRY SERVICE EXPANSION

Over the past decade there has been a major resurgence in the use of ferries in New York State. In the New York City area ferries carry approximately 125,000- 130,000 daily passengers and in October 2003 reached a peak at 131,500. The publicly operated Staten Island Ferry, the longest established of these services with the 100 year history of public operations, carries approximately 62,000 passengers per day. Newer private operators, all of which initiated service after 1986, carried approximately 56,000-68,000 daily commuters. Most importantly, the ferry ridership has grown over the last 10 years. For the first time since private ferries re-emerged in New York City harbor in 1986, its ridership surpassed the ridership of the Staten Island Ferry.

Ferry operations and ridership are largely dependant upon the seasons, with summer seeing the highest ridership and winter the lowest. This trend was especially noticeable during the winter of 2003-04 when carriers had to cancel daily operations because of unusual harbor freezing. Obviously, ferries are still playing an important role in the New York City harbor with reference to its irreplaceable role during September 2001 and the blackout of August 2003.

The dramatic increase in privately operated ferry ridership occurred after September 11, 2001. Ridership rose from slightly over 35,000 daily passengers before September 11 to almost 70,000 one year later and stayed at this level during 2003. The ferry provided important services to the areas effected by the September 11th loss in transportation network such as: the destroyed PATH lines to lower Manhattan.



Four companies (New York Waterway, Seastreak, Water Taxi at Liberty Landing Marina and NY Water Taxi) currently provide daily commuter services from twenty-eight terminals: seven in Manhattan, fifteen in New Jersey (four terminals in Monmouth County, NJ), three in Brooklyn, and one in Queens, Rockland County and Westchester County. Currently, the boat sizes of the ferry fleet around NYC harbor range from the 70+ passengers on Liberty Water Taxi and New York Water Taxi to the 6,000 passenger Barberi class of the Staten Island Ferry. As of the summer of 2003, NYWW by far is the largest firm in the private ferry commuter market. NYWW ridership contains 92.2% of the total market followed by 5.3% for Seastreak, 1.3% for Liberty Water Taxi and 1.2% for New York Water Taxi.

During the last ten years ferry services have expanded into a range of new markets including commuter services, tourism (excursions, events, recreations and dining cruises), and interstate connections. Excursion routes have been created around the New York City area to connect with popular tourist destinations (West Point, Tarrytown), shuttle services for special events (Yankee, Mets and West Point games) and seasonal recreational activities (Sandy Hook beaches, New Jersey, upstate New York foliage season tours). Among the providers, Circle Lines Downtown secured a contract with the National Parks Service to provide services to the most important New York City tourist destinations such as: Liberty Island and Ellis Island. Circle Lines Sightseeing & Cruises, New York Waterway and Spirit Cruises are major players in this sector of the ferry market.

The main developments in ferry services in 2003 are described below:

- Following 9/11, the service from Pier 4 Brooklyn Army Terminal to Pier 11 was originally awarded by NYCDOT to the NYWW to provide free service subsidized with FEMA money. However, after full restoration of the Brooklyn highway infrastructure, subsidies for the service were terminated in May 2003. New York Water Taxi took over this route from NYWW and began charging a \$4 fare for the trip. About 1,500-1,600 daily commuters used the free service and ridership then leveled off at about 60 passengers.
- In January 2003, NY Fast Ferry cancelled services and ceased operations after losing its competitive edge to the Seastreak in Monmouth County, New Jersey.
- In September 2003 New York Water Taxi took over services between Hunters Point and E34th St, and Hunters Point and Pier 11, from NYWW and extended the route to the upper East Side (E90th St. landing).
- In November 2003, Port Authority of NY&NJ (PANYNJ) restored PATH service across the Hudson River to downtown Manhattan. With the restoration of the last transportation link broken after the 9/11 tragedy, ridership on private ferries dropped in December to 42,800 riders. A major drop in ridership was accounted from Hoboken, Colgate, Pavonia and Harborside sites in NJ which are in close proximity to the restored PATH stations. At the same time all operations at the temporary Pier A terminal constructed in October 2001 were terminated and moved to Pier 11 and Battery Park (WFC).
- The most critical development for NYC harbor was the debut of the new operator NY Water Taxi. New operators provide additional room for future competition. This company provides an innovative small scale type of waterborne

transportation and utilizes small yellow catamarans with a seating capacity of 74 passengers. These vessels usually require easily accessible and maneuverable landing facilities (examples, Fulton ferry landing/ DUMBO and Red Hook ferry landing) because of less expensive operating costs, this business model promises to be efficient on some of the New York City routes. The growth of the company is noticeable and it already carries more than 800 riders daily.

Figure V-3 - FFY 2004 Ferry Boat Discretionary Awards



The re-emergence of ferry operations as a commuter service began with the initiation of service by NYWW in 1986 with their Trans-Hudson service from Weehawken, New Jersey to Midtown Manhattan. In recent years the ferry service expanded into Monmouth County, New Jersey, Queens, Brooklyn and the upper East Side of Manhattan. Ferry services are playing an increasingly important role in access to Manhattan.

It is important to mention the upstate New York Waterways service across the Hudson River (Haverstraw-to-Ossining) to connect passengers with Metro-North Rail Road. After improving service, ridership on this route surged to 450 in October. This has well surpassed its original projections. Based on this success, the NYSDOT, PANYNJ and MNRR are working together to expand the Hudson Valley services.

The most significant development and growth in private ferry services has been achieved without any public operating subsidies for their operations. However, in most instances the government has played an important role by funding capital infrastructure improvements and providing boat landing facilities. The Federal Ferry Boat Discretionary (FBD) Program, and other FHWA programs (CMAQ, STP) along with TEA-21 Flex funds, have been dedicated to developing land-side facilities to support this important and growing mode of public transportation. Over the years, New York City constructed or rehabilitated a number of landings in Manhattan, Queens, Brooklyn and Staten Island. Several major construction projects are currently underway, such as the Whitehall terminal. St. George terminal, and the Pier 79 West 38th Street Intermodal terminal. Some other smaller scale terminals and landings are under design and construction: Slip #5 at Battery Maritime Building, Slip #7 at St. George terminal, E 34th Street intermodal facility and other East/ Harlem River landings (E62nd street, E75th Street and E90th street.) In the Hudson Valley, several recent FBD awards have been used to develop ferry landings in Haverstraw, Ossining, Newburgh and Beacon.

3. COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Legislative and Executive Activities - Actions like the Welfare Reform in 1996 and the Executive order on *United We Ride* in early 2004 provide the industry an opportunity to expand services. Welfare-to-Work is through two Federal Programs, Job Access and Reverse Commute and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. The programs provided a mechanism to match one federally funded program with the other. A joint planning process issued by USDOT and Federal Health and Human Services (HSS) brought client based organizations and Human Service transportation providers to the planning table.

Through this process, transportation providers, as well as public, private and not-for-profit client based organizations began to learn each other's concepts of operation and began to break down barriers in communication. In those areas where this has taken well, transit systems have enjoyed success and have nurtured these relationships and expanded them to incorporate employers, other local transportation providers and user groups into those forums.

3.1 MOBILITY COORDINATORS

A number of communities and transit systems, including Franklin and Essex Counties, CDTA and CNYRTA have received TANF/JARC funding to employ "mobility coordinators." A mobility coordinator typically works closely with employers, case workers, job placement centers and new employees entering the job market to provide a link between local Department of Social Services offices and transit providers. This role produces results both for individuals seeking transportation solutions and also helps transit agencies reexamine existing service through closer contact with employers by gaining insights into commute patterns by shift times of workers.

3.2 TRANSPORTATION BROKERS

A Transportation Brokerage is a concept that has been used for non emergency medical transportation for several years and now is gaining momentum in the employment area. Transit systems are implementing new services with TANF/JARC funding, including CDTA, NFTA Sullivan, Franklin and Oneida Counties. The system allows new entrants to the job market, who do not have access to the existing fixed route transit system, the most cost effective form of transportation available to new job sites. The broker arranges for these services via taxi or other means to the job site or to an access point for the fixed route system. These services have made it possible for some participants to access employment opportunities at hours when traditional public transit is not available.

3.3 TRANSIT SERVICE RE-STRUCTURING STUDIES

A number of transit operators in New York State have responded to changing market conditions by undertaking ambitious efforts to study the potential for service restructuring to aid in better meeting changing travel needs in their service areas.

These efforts have been particularly active upstate, where shifting population within service areas has presented the greatest operational challenges. Studies undertaken by NFTA (Hublink) and CNYRTA (Re-Map) and ongoing service evaluation activities undertaken by CDTA and R-GRTA, have included expert route analysis, market research and public outreach to customers to help devise new responsive routes and route extensions, which are oriented to nontraditional markets, such as growing suburban employment centers. These studies have provided the foundation for designing and implementing new services in response to the Welfare-to-Work market. As an outgrowth of the JARC funding requirements, urban areas have worked through their MPOs to create a JARC Access-to-Jobs plan which highlights the major employment growth areas and the barriers to meeting those areas with public transportation.

Chemung County Transit finished a route analysis study that provided an assessment of options for route and service restructuring to more efficiently meet the changing conditions of its market area. As a result of the study, Chemung County Transit is working with JARC funding to improve weekend service in the Elmira area.

Downstate, the Long Island Bus Study, led by a multiagency working group, followed a similar methodology. This study led to the introduction of new services by both Long Island Bus and Suffolk County Transit, serving suburban employment locations and parking constrained LIRR stations.

NYSDOT Region 10 has led a broad ranging effort, Long Island Transportation Plan (LITP 2000), to look at multimodal mobility issues on Long Island over a 10 year horizon. Included in this study is an evaluation of a range of transit service strategies, including new services and Bus Rapid Transit concepts. Suffolk County Transit has several route expansions funded through CMAQ as a result of the LITP 2000 and the Long Island Bus study recommendations.

3.4 TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES

Travel Demand Management (TDM) efforts, including public and employer outreach and promotion of transit incentive programs can provide important marketing and public information support to transit systems. Specific TDM efforts that are supported by New York State transit operators and the Department include:

Transportation Management Associations (TMAs) are funded by NYSDOT in the three downstate regions: Metropool, Long Island Transportation Management (LITM) and CommuterLink, covering the lower Hudson Valley, Long Island and New York City Regions respectively. Their efforts are focused on promoting alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel. In addition to the promotion of car pooling, vanpooling, and telecommuting, these programs also provide substantial education and outreach efforts to market the extensive transit network in the metropolitan region. TMAs downstate manage public and employer outreach efforts such as the "It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air," "Ozone Action Days" and the "Commuter Assistance Program." These efforts are comprised of media campaigns and technical assistance to employers in implementing trip reduction programs.

Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) programs provide registered users with transportation home in the event that they are unable to access their usual means of shared transportation due to working overtime or that they need to leave work early to respond to a family emergency, etc. By reducing the mobility concern associated with being dependent on firmly scheduled service, GRH provides an effective remedy for a common obstacle to the use of transit. GRH programs in New York are administered by TMAs (downstate) or MPOs (upstate) and transit operators around the State.

Commuterlink, as an example, administers a GRH program that ensures that a participating employee who uses transit, car pools, or vanpools to get to work two days a week or more, and is unable to make use of his or her shared ride will be reimbursed up to \$25 per trip to get home by taxi.

Commuter Choice (Transit Check) is an employee/employer tax benefit that TMAs and transit operators promote as an incentive for using transit. The tax benefit allows employees to use up to \$65 a month of their gross income, before taxes, to purchase Commuter Choice to pay for commuting via public transit.

4. TRANSIT SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS

In addition to supporting the introduction of new and innovative transit services to improve mobility in the State, there are a number of supportive actions that New York State's transit operators, NYSDOT and other transportation stakeholders are taking to improve the quality and customer convenience of public transportation. With these new and innovative services, stakeholders are making public transportation a more viable travel option in changing markets.

4.1 INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS)

Sustaining and increasing high levels of ridership in New York State requires careful attention to the needs of transit riders as customers. Providing reliable service that is convenient, comfortable and easy to navigate is essential to sustaining ridership among customers with transportation choices.

New York State transit operators, supported by NYSDOT, have sought to improve the customer environment by applying emerging information technologies to improve service efficiency and reliability, as well as to better communicate travel options to the customer.

Transit Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are becoming increasingly important and prevalent among New York's transit systems. Transit ITS has three major emphasis areas:

- Increase the efficiency and reliability of transit service by managing the vehicle fleet based upon real time performance information;
- Improve the quality and availability of service information with applications, such as customized itineraries that help customers to navigate the transit system door to door and next bus arrival information at bus stops to improve the customer's sense of confidence in relying on transit;
- Improve the convenience of transit by providing more options and ease in fare payment.

Specific transit ITS projects being implemented in New York State include:

Automated Vehicle Location Systems - Many of New York State's transit operators have begun to deploy automated vehicle location systems (AVL's). These AVL systems provide dispatching and control centers with real time information on bus location, on time performance and support opportunities for improved dynamic dispatching, timing of transfers between routes, traffic signal priority for buses and real-time bus arrival information for customers at bus stops and on board the transit vehicle.

The investment in this AVL infrastructure permits ongoing improvements in the efficiency and customer friendliness of the transit network in New York State.

Figure V-4 shows a list of operators who are using this technology. These projects often accompany radio projects or mobile Data Terminal projects where the on-board electronics are upgraded in a package procurement and often take several years to fully implement.

Figure V-4

System AVL Installations							
System	First Install	Full Install					
MTA LIB	1998	1999					
NFTA	1998	1999					
TCAT	2001	2001					
R-GRTA	2001	2001					
CNYRTA	2002	2002					
CDTA	2002	2003					

TRIPS 123-Transit advisor: As a major project component of TRIPS 123, the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut federally funded ITS Model Deployment Initiative, Transit Advisor will provide an internet-based transit trip itinerary planning system for the public. Transit Advisor, will allow travelers, via the internet or at kiosks, to specify their travel origin, destination and time of travel preferences and receive a custom itinerary drawing from all of the transit services that are available in the New York Metropolitan region. This user-friendly one-stop Internet resource for customized schedule information is a major step forward in making the complex transit network in the New York Metropolitan area (with over 50 different carriers) understandable and customer friendly.

Automated Fare Collection - METROCARD Fare Policies and Incentives

In 1997, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) began implementing the MetroCard program on a combined basis for services operated by the MTA, private bus services sponsored by the New York City Department of Transportation (NYCDOT) and suburban bus service operated in Nassau County by MTA Long Island Bus.

The MetroCard program includes a series of fare discounts offered by MTA that have been remarkably successful in increasing transit ridership throughout the New York Metropolitan region. Fare discounts/incentives implemented under the MetroCard program since 1997 have included:

- Free bus to subway or subway to bus transfer, which effectively eliminated the two fare zone;
- Elimination of the fare for pedestrian passengers on the Staten Island Ferry;
- Establishment of an 11 for 10 discount program, whereby an individual who purchases 10 rides will automatically get the 11th ride for free;
- Reduction of express bus fares by 25% (from \$4.00 to \$3.00).
- Implementation of thirty-day, seven-day and one-day fun passes providing unlimited rides.

These fare incentives have greatly contributed to the

dramatic ridership increases experienced by participating systems.

In addition to the MetroCard system, the four upstate regional transportation authorities and some smaller urbanized areas have implemented automated fare collection systems. These systems will help to improve the speed and efficiency of customer boarding, add the capability to more easily introduce pricing incentives and more accurately measure and analyze ridership trends as an element of service improvement.

Transit ITS Standards - The Transit Communications Interface Profiles (TCIP) and other industry standards are an important resource in ensuring that the implementation of Transit ITS occurs in an integrated fashion. Multivendor information technology initiatives, in this integrated environment, can be implemented without the expensive ongoing need for custom integration of systems (for example AVL systems and scheduling systems that are developed by different vendors will be able to make use of common standardized data formats without having to build expensive custom interfaces).

NYSDOT has received funding for a regional schedule data integration project to develop a common schedule data profile for the New York Metropolitan region. Schedule data adhering to this profile will provide transit operators with the ability to exchange schedule data between software systems and equipment, regardless of the product vendor. It will also permit ease of data sharing among transit operators, fostering improved service coordination and multi-operator customer information. The schedule data profile, based on USDOT standards such as TCIP, will ensure that ITS applications using schedule data will be in compliance with the Federal requirements regarding conformity with the National ITS Architecture and Standards.

4.2 IMPROVEMENT AND INTEGRATION OF PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES WITH TRANSIT

Virtually every transit customer experiences a portion of their trip as a pedestrian. As a result, the viability of transit as a travel choice is, to a great extent, dependant on providing a safe and convenient pedestrian environment at transit access points. Suburban markets, the predominant growth areas in the state over the last several decades have not typically developed with an emphasis on pedestrianoriented design. A primary challenge faced by transit operators in providing effective transit service has been the need to serve markets that are increasingly less dense and less pedestrian oriented. Pedestrian or bicycle access to transit in suburban and rural areas is a formidable challenge for both transit operators and customers.

Maintaining and improving the pedestrian environment, particularly where it supports access to transit, is becoming a major emphasis area for both the NYSDOT and the transit operators in New York. In addition, bicycle access to transit is emerging as an important transit market, particularly in areas with substantial student, immigrant and minority populations. New ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), recently adopted into law, now requires transit operators to take the needs of the disabled into consideration when designing access to new transit facilities or when retrofitting older ones.

The NYSDOT began a series of initiatives that are explicitly leading to the integration of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and those with physical disabilities into its project and program development practices. Some of the Department's activities that are beginning to improve the pedestrian and bicycling environment include:

Integrating ADA Accessibility Guidance for Transit

The trend toward more integrated, multimodal transportation systems has improved transportation options for people with disabilities, especially those who do not drive automobiles. The additional requirement that all new construction must comply with the ADA to the fullest extent possible has brought about an overall increase in the number of accessible pedestrian and public transit facilities. Beginning in 2002, Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) required that a detectable warning surface consisting of a distinctive surface pattern of domes detectable by cane or underfoot be used to alert people with vision impairments of their approach to street and hazardous drop-offs. The ADAAG require these warnings on the surface of curb ramps, which remove a tactile cue otherwise provided by curb faces, and at other areas where pedestrian ways blend with vehicular ways. The Department, through its Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, supports the implementation of the new ADAAG as a means to increased access to transit for all New York State residents with a physical disability.

Highway Projects Designed to be Intermodal with Transit - The Department, through its Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, has long supported highway projects which promote the inter-connection between modes of transportation. This inter-connection of modes allows people to walk, bicycle or drive to access transit. In addition, it helps to promote choice, ensures equitable access to transportation, and reduces societal reliance on a single mode of transportation. A multimodal system benefits all New York residents by integrating all forms of transportation, such as highways, public transit systems, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities, into one seamless system.

In recent highway improvement projects in New York, Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program worked with local highway designers to provide improved access to public transit. Improvements included new bicycle racks at park and ride lots, and sidewalk and shared use pathways which connect adjoining land uses to transit.

Transit Oriented Development - The concept of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) aims to design pedestrian friendly communities that have good access to public transit. The Department of Transportation through its Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is encouraging local communities to include transit access with all new Planned Unit Developments (PUDS). The mixes of land use that should be included around a transit station to make it effective as a pedestrian and transit destination include high density residential developments, parks, government buildings, service centers, employment centers, education centers, commercial centers and entertainment centers. Transit Oriented Development is already being implemented on Long Island, the city of Buffalo and in the Lower Hudson Valley Region.

Design Training for Regional Engineers - Brought on by an overwhelming positive response from the first and second rounds of traffic calming training, the Department through its Bicycle and Pedestrian Program sponsored a third round of traffic calming training targeting local municipalities with an interest in creating more walkable communities. The third round of traffic calming training occurred during the summer of 2003.

For the third round a second supplemental contract was created permitting the consultant to conduct seven additional training sessions. The seven sites selected for the third round were in Long Island, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Poughkeepsie, Saratoga Springs and Ithaca. These seven sites trained another 300 municipal engineers and local elected officials on the benefits of traffic calming. A total of 850 attendees benefitted from the training. The Department, through its Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, plans to offer Traffic Calming training to individual communities or local elected officials and highway maintenance personnel interested in improving their communities' quality of life.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Chapter of Highway Design Manual - The Department's Highway Design Manual was last revised in 1996 to include the most recent information for the accommodation of bicyclists and pedestrians along the State's roadway system. This has led to routine consideration of these facilities and strategies in the design of Department projects. An effort is now underway to integrate guidance from AASHTO's Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, published in 1999, the soon to be published AASHTO Guide for the Planning, Design and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities and the Americans with Disability Act Accessibilities Guidelines (ADAAG) into a revision of this Chapter.

New 'Yield to Pedestrian in Crosswalk' Law - On January 19, 2003, the new "Yield to Pedestrian" legislation became law, changing Section 1151 of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law. The new law simplifies the 'old law', making it easier for the public to understand, and law enforcement to enforce. Under the 'old law', motor vehicles were required to yield only for pedestrians if they were in their half of the roadway. Under the new law, motor vehicles must now yield the right-of-way, slowing down and/or stopping for pedestrians crossing the roadway in a crosswalk at a mid-block location. Transit riders need to be able to cross the road safely at transit stops. This new law will help transit riders statewide when crossing the street at mid-block locations to cross with more confidence and safety.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Initiative - At the 2001 executive retreat, the Department instituted a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Initiative. The initiative was designed to promote bicycling and walking as a routine element in all Department sponsored highway design, construction, operations and maintenance activities, where permitted. Recent guidance developed by the Federal Highway Administration and adopted by the Department clearly intends for bicyclists and pedestrians to have safe, convenient access to the transportation system. The NYSDOT is committed to doing all it can to improve conditions for bicycling and walking and to make them a safer and more accessible means of travel.

Transit Operators around the State have similarly made

important efforts to improve the quality and accessibility of transit service for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Installing Bus Shelters - There has been a substantial investment by New York State transit operators in increasing the number and upgrading the condition of pedestrian shelters and waiting areas at transit stops. Transit operators recognize the direct relationship between the comfort and accessibility of transit stops and satisfied, returning customers. The NYSDOT through its Bicycle and Pedestrian Program has encouraged transit providers to expand access to transit for their customers, including those with physical disabilities. Expanding access to transit facilities is complementary to promoting walking as a transportation option. Improved transit facilities promote multi-modal communities that are less dependent upon automobiles, are generally healthier and are more socially interactive. New transit facilities and bus shelters are now designed to accommodate the needs of the disabled who rely on transit as their primary mode of transportation. Transit operators around the State recognize the importance of providing a secure and accessible shelter for their customers. Whether they arrive by foot, on bicycle, by automobile or in a wheelchair, all future bus shelters and transit facilities will be designed to meet the needs for all their customers.

Development of Intermodal Facilities - These facilities, described in greater detail in Chapter 2, improve the pedestrian environment at major transfer hubs and provide improved bicycle access and storage. The success of intermodal facilities as a center of transportation is highly dependent on pedestrian access, including those with physical disabilities. For this reason, transit operators seek to locate their intermodal facilities to optimize pedestrian access to major activity centers, such as education centers, employment centers, government centers and shopping and entertainment centers. The most important element of design for intermodal facilities is minimizing circulation conflicts between the various modes of transportation. The Department through its Bicycle and Pedestrian program will provide transit operators with technical guidance and assistance locating their intermodal facilities to best serve their customers.

Installation of Bike Racks on Buses - A number of transit operators have installed bike racks on their fleets. These have proven to be inexpensive and well utilized. These programs have been particularly successful in areas with large student populations including: R-GRTA, TCAT, Broome County Transit, CDTA and Greater Glens Falls Transit.

5. CONCLUSION

This Chapter has described many of the efforts under way throughout the State on the part of New York's transit operators, the NYSDOT and other public transportation stakeholders in response to the challenges of a changing transit market. These new services and supportive actions are strengthening the role transit plays in supporting Quality Communities and a strong economy. They have been favorably received by the traveling public as demonstrated by growing ridership.