FINAL Cortland County
Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services
Transportation Plan
2020

2019-2020 Review Committee: Dan Dineen, Director, Cortland County Planning Department; Kevin Pagini, County Planner, Cortland County Planning Department; Catherine Wilde, Mobility Management Coordinator, Seven Valleys Health Coalition; Jackie Leaf, Executive Director, Seven Valleys Health Coalition; Adam Palmer, Seven Valleys Health Coalition; Deb Mohlenhoff, TC3 Director of Community Relations; Doug Bentley, Cortland County Legislator; Zachariah Newswanger, AVP Facilities Management, SUNY Cortland; Lenore Schwager, community member; Diane Wheaton; retired director of Cortland Career Works office/ community member; Bob Haight, Executive Director Cortland County Chamber of Commerce; Ally McCabe, Education Advocacy Coordinator, Access to Independence; Marisa Zogg, JM Murray; Kurt Warner, Community Housing Manager, Catholic Charities of Cortland County; Ryan Oakley, First Transit; Brian Moore, DSS; Pamela Winn, Aging Services Coordinator, Area Agency on Aging

Adopted April 2021

Prepared by Seven Valleys Health Coalition

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FOR CORTLAND COUNTY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

TARGET POPULATIONS

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

13% of Cortland County residents have a disability. Disability rates rise sharply with age and those who are differently-abled want to see the fixed-route service offer more destinations and to have evening hours of operation. This would would help with commuting options for work, social events, and obtaining groceries and prescriptions.

13%

ADD ROUTE STOPS

EVENING ROUTE HOURS

OLDER ADULTS

15% of Cortland County residents are aged 65 or older. Out of the percentage who answered, 20-23% stated that transportation to medical appointments and increased transportation options for those unable to drive are a main concern.

15%

MORE MEDICAL STOPS

MORE SUPPORT OPTIONS

LIMITED INCOME

15% of Cortland County residents live in poverty (higher than New York State and the United States). For many, the cost of owning a personal vehicle exceed annual earnings.

15%

LIMITED OPTIONS

NO PERSONAL VEHICLE

WAY2 GO CORTLAND

seven valleys HEALTH COALITION

This report was created by Way2Go Cortland, a program of Seven Valleys Health Coalition.
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COMMUNITY SURVEY FEEDBACK

EMPLOYER SURVEY FEEDBACK

PRIMARY MODE OF TRANSPORTATION FOR CORTLAND COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

- **85%** VEHICLE
- **7%** WALKING
- **3%** BIKING
- **3%** BUS
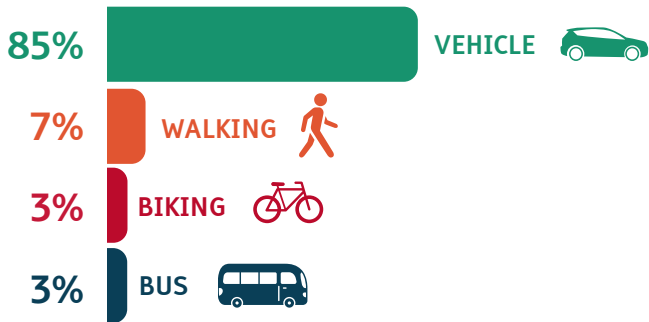
WHY COMMUNITY MEMBERS RIDE THE COUNTY BUS SYSTEM:

- **44%** WORK + EDUCATION
- **32%** SHOPPING
- **16%** MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS
- **7%** OTHER ?
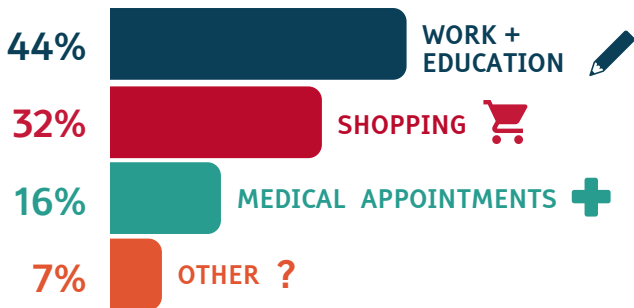
44% of Cortland community members who ride the bus state that it is for work or educational purposes.

69% of County residents surveyed desire better alternative modes of transportation and more of a biking/walking culture in Cortland County.

73% of Cortland community members have never rode the county bus system.

53% of employers stated that Cortland Transit is accessible to their worksite.

21% of employers stated that they have lost 1-5 employees per year due to transportation issues.

WHAT TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT ARE COMPANIES OF CORTLAND COUNTY WILLING TO FUND OR ACCOMODATE?

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS SURVEYED WHO ARE ALREADY PROVIDING		PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS SURVEYED WHO WOULD CONSIDER PROVIDING
17%	GUARANTEED RIDE HOME FOR EMERGENCIES	36%
47%	BIKE STORAGE AREA	42%
10%	INCENTIVES FOR CARPOOLS	35%

RECOMMENDATIONS

MOBILITY MANAGAMENT PROGAM

A Mobility Management Program addresses the transportation needs of the general population as well as special populations such as the elderly, low income, and persons with disabilities. The Mobility Management Program should be administered by a Mobility Management Coordinator to act as an advocate for the consumers of transportation services, and to facilitate implementation and coordination the various programs and projects recommended herein.

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

1

Cortland County should seek additional funding to improve sidewalks and to expand upon the number of transit hubs currently available. Improved sidewalk infrastructure addresses accessibility and safety concerns among individuals with disabilities, especially among those who travel far distances to utilize public transportation. Expansions to transit hubs, signage, and bus access points enables more remote and rural residents to have greater access to existing transit services.

INCREASE INTER-COUNTY TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES

2

Increasing inter-county travel opportunities includes exploring opportunities for Cortland County's public transit system to work cooperatively with the public transit systems in adjacent counties to expand maximum travel distance and increase ridership. Inter-county travel opportunities can also be improved by participating in regional transit planning discussions. An improved transportation system across counties provides additional economic opportunities to low-income and mobility limited families.

IMPROVE BROADBAND AND INTERNET ACCESS

3

Cortland County should seek to improve broadband and internet access by applying for broadband improvement grants through the FCC, USDA, and Appalachian Regional Commission. Broadband speeds in Cortland County lag behind national and NYS average internet speeds. Grant funding to improve broadband infrastructure will increase county-wide internet speeds, and subsequently improve access to telemedicine, tele-learning, and remote workplace opportunities. The need for access to online resources has proven to be crucial to the community due to social distancing guidelines related to the spread of COVID-19.

VOLUNTEER DRIVER PROGRAM

4

A robust volunteer driver program would recruit and deploy volunteer drivers to address several gaps in services that are existent in our current transit system. This program would increase inter-county travel opportunities, as well as be a resource that is accessible for several organizations and departments within Cortland County. This strategy would service individuals who lack access to medical services, household needs, and would act as a support to a future First Mile/Last Mile initiative for rural and disabled populations.

FIRST MILE/LAST MILE PROGRAM

5

A First Mile/Last Mile program expands upon existing transit services to make it easier to access transit hubs and bus stops from one's household. This program would introduce additional on-demand transit routes to and from bus stations, explore alternative forms of transportation to access bus routes, such as through a bikeshare program, and utilize a robust volunteer driver program to transport individuals to the nearest transit line.

BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

6

A bike share program loans or provides low or no-cost bicycles for residents within Cortland County. Bicycles and bike racks would be placed strategically around Cortland County's highest need areas, and provide short distance transportation to workplace opportunities, supermarkets, and local healthcare facilities. A bike-share program would additionally serve as a First Mile/ Last Mile initiative to nearby transit stops.

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I.   Introduction

Cortland County's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) has prepared the following plan to provide a summary of previous and current public transit-human service coordination efforts and to provide an outline for future efforts to improve transportation services for the residents of Cortland County. The Cortland County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan (CPTP) is prepared to address federal mobility management goals that were first established under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU) and continued under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) which was passed in 2012, and were reaffirmed through the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act, P.L. 114-94) signed into law December 4, 2015. The FAST Act is intended to support and continue previously established program structures and funding shares between highways and transit.

The Federal Transit Administration programs currently being utilized in Cortland County include:

1) Section 5311 – Formula Grants for Rural Areas
2) Section 5310 – Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities
3) Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act

II.   Plan Goals

The goals of the 2020 CPTP seek to address the transportation needs of all county residents, especially among individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes. Cortland County plans to address the needs of the community and the disadvantaged populations by:

1) Encouraging coordination efforts between transportation providers, employers, health and human service agencies, educational institutions, and municipalities.

2) Ensuring quality public transportation services for the community, with a specific focus on persons who are elderly, those with disabilities, and the economically disadvantaged.

3) Educating the public and health and human service providers about available transportation services.

4) Working with other counties in the region to create a transportation network not constrained by county borders.

5) Using available federal and state funding to further coordinate efforts and to create new services to address unmet transportation needs.

6) Collaborate with local entities to develop a more sustainable funding structure for the public transportation system.

7) Explore and encourage the use of expanded, sustainable practices in transportation like promoting greater use of public transit, ridesharing, Uber, Lyft, bicycles, and alternative modes like car sharing and bike sharing, etc.

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III. Background Information

This 2020 CPTP will update the "Cortland County Transportation Needs Assessment," which was adopted by Cortland County as the coordinated plan in 2009 and last revised in 2013. Coordinated transportation planning plays a critical role in the future of the county, region, and state. This 2020 CPTP adheres to federal and state guidelines by incorporating the following components:

1. An assessment of transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes;

2. An inventory of available services that identifies areas of redundant services and gaps in services;

3. Proposed and supported best-practice strategies to address the identified gaps in services;

4. Identification of coordinated actions to eliminate or reduce duplication of services and strategies for more efficient utilization of resources;

5. Prioritization of implementation strategies.

A. Federal Transit Programs

Section 5311 Rural Area Formula Program Grants

Under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, Section 5311, as reauthorized under the FAST Act, the Formula Grants for Rural Areas program provides capital, planning, and operating assistance to states and federally recognized Indian tribes to support public transportation in rural areas with populations less than 50,000. Under the FAST ACT, Mobility Management initiatives will be eligible activities funded under Section 5311. This is an important source of funding for the continuation of Mobility Management.

Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

Section 5310 funding is administered in New York State by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). Capital assistance, which is used to purchase transit buses for the county, is provided on an 80 percent federal basis with the remaining 20 percent provided by a local match. Section 5310 will continue to be an important source for funding public transit capital improvements.

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)

CARES Act funding is administered for both urban and rural communities at a 100% federal government share. The provision of CARES Act funding is purposed for municipalities to maintain existing transit services, as well as paying for administrative leave for transit personnel, due to reduced operations and streams of revenue because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Expenses covered by the CARES Act include the removal of potential health hazards, purchase of personal protective equipment and sanitation products, and other unanticipated costs related to shutting down or reducing operational services.[1]

B. Funding Allocations

Cortland County could receive a total of $1,245,479 in CARES Act funding. This amount was allocated for standard operation assistance, Appalachian Development Funding, and Mobility Management Funding, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding

Project Description	Amount Awarded
Standard Operation Assistance	$1,083,253
Appalachian Development Funding	$13,757
Mobility Management Funding	$148,469
Total Federal Funding	**$1,245,479**

C. Mobility Management

In response to needs that were identified in the Nelson Nygaard report in 2009, Cortland County created the position of Mobility Management Coordinator (MMC) in 2010. Through a subcontract with the County Planning Department, Cortland County contracts with Seven Valleys Health Coalition to provide Mobility Management services. A permanent MMC was first hired in November 2010.

The duties of the MMC, as outlined in the 2019-2020 5311 contracts with the County, are as follows:

1) Ensure that the 2013 Cortland County Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan is updated.
2) Develop a countywide rideshare system.
3) Continue the efforts to coordinate agency transportation with public transit, including sustaining the First Transit/JM Murray center contract.
4) Explore the feasibility of maintaining a one-call center to coordinate and schedule transportation for multiple entities, including potentially working with the statewide Medicaid broker.
5) Work with transit to improve their image and increase public utilization of transit systems.
6) Improve efficiency and avoid duplication of services.
7) Continue to explore options to coordinate services with State University of New York (SUNY) Cortland and Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) and pursue additional funding streams for transit as well as alternative transportation modes.
8) Continue to explore ways to make walking, bicycling, and public transit more accessible, safer, and efficient.
9) Ensure rider complaints regarding public transportation are communicated to the transportation provider, and work with transportation provider to develop solutions and monitor progress/implementation of any solution.
10) Work with the Cortland County Planning Department and the TAC to develop a plan for an expansion of services and apply for funding to implement service expansion via operating assistance funding.
11) Work with other local agencies to provide public transportation for special events in the county.
12) Work with neighboring counties to develop more efficient connections between transportation providers.

To this end, the Mobility Management program has coordinated several initiatives that aim to increase collaboration between entities.

Ongoing Initiatives
- Three bus stops were added to the SUNY Cortland campus in the fall of 2019. These stops are at Corey Union, 281 Bus Stop and Park Center, and discussions about SUNY-specific routes are ongoing.

- A county-wide rideshare platform was created on the state's NY511 Rideshare system, which is being advertised through local employers.

- A 2019 agreement between Tompkins County Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) and First Transit (Cortland Transit) allowed for First Transit to pick up passengers in Tompkins County to take them to shopping destinations in Cortland County.

- In September 2019, the Agriculture, Planning and Environment (APE) Committee took the first steps in formalizing the TAC as a citizen's advisory committee to the Legislature. The APE committee voted unanimously to formalize TAC; however, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the APE meetings in early 2020, pausing the next step of the process, which would be review and approval of the TAC bylaws.

- Cortland County is actively working on soliciting and installing a real-time GPS bus tracking system on all Cortland Transit vessels.

- The MMC is the point person for transportation-related inquiries and acts as a bus buddy to familiarize people with the system as needed. The MMC maintains a call log of all concerns, issues, and needs. Most often the calls are from people needing information with reference to which bus to take to get to certain locations. However, all complaints or issues with the bus system are relayed to Cortland Transit.

A bike share program is an alternative form of transportation that is widely recognized as being a healthy and economically friendly option. Lime Bikes were hosted in Cortland, Cortlandville and the Village of Homer in 2019. The Lime Bikes were discontinued in the winter because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Research into a suitable alternative form of transportation has since continued.

Carshare programs are also popular in many rural communities. SUNY Cortland hosted a Zipcar on campus until the reduced utilization and safety concerns of the COVID-19 pandemic led to their discontinuation.

The design of the county busses is also periodically reviewed. A new bus design appeared on five new buses in Spring of 2020, with a darker green wrap on the cab and a small swish-type design on the body of the buses. The MMC also oversees the bus advertising program, which brings revenue that acts as the local match for the 5311 grant.

Volunteer driver programs are also widely utilized in rural communities. Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO) established a volunteer driver program in April 2019, and serves Medicaid, Nascentia, and ICIRCLE clients. There is an aim to expand this program to serve more individuals outside the Medicaid population and to further expand a volunteer driver program locally.

Route Changes
Expanding bus services to evenings and weekends was a prominent unmet need first identified in the Nelson Nygaard study in 2009 and remains a point of advocacy by members of the public and ridership populations. This was indicated in surveys that were distributed as part of the 2020 County Transportation Plan.

Routes are periodically reviewed to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the public. The most recent route changes occurred in September 2019, at which time Routes 1-4 were changed to 45-minute cycles and the areas serviced was expanded. Areas now being served include Luker Road and a portion of Route 281 that Cortland Transit officials hope will increase ridership due to the existence of many car dealerships, a hotel, and the entrance to SUNY Cortland along that stretch.

The response to the 45-minute cycles has been mostly positive because it has helped the buses stay on schedule.

D. Considerations for COVID-19 Pandemic
The creation of this CPTP comes against the backdrop of the COVID-19 global health pandemic. To our knowledge, Cortland is the first county in New York having to factor the unprecedented public health emergency into its planning. This section reflects our understanding about COVID-19's impact on Cortland County as of December 2020. Our research incorporates government guidelines, where applicable. Without the luxury of hindsight, it is not feasible to identify shortcomings in the measures Cortland County takes in adapting to the "new normal." It is not known how long the pandemic will last. As of December 14, 2020, the United States began distributing a COVID-19 vaccine in all 50 states.

While the national unemployment rate soared from 3.8% in February to 14.7% in April (the highest rate since the Great Depression), Congress passed a $2.1 trillion relief packaged called the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.[2][3][4][5] Two subcomponents of the CARES Act were the United States Department of the Treasury and Internal Revenue Service distributing a one-time economic impact payment ("stimulus check") to most Americans;[6] and the Federal Transit Administration distributing funds to help public transportation systems respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on community public transportation.

As of December 13, 2020, Cortland County has experienced 1,513 cumulative positive cases and 6 deaths relating to COVID-19.[7][8][9] Cortland County experienced fewer deaths than Chenango and Tioga – two contiguous counties with similar total populations (see Table 2). Figure 1 shows the cumulative positive cases for COVID-19 within Cortland County through December 13, 2020. Positive cases increased at an accelerated rate between early July and early August before plateauing until approximately mid-September, when positive cases again increased at an accelerated rate.

Table 2: Cumulative COVID-19 Totals: Cortland, Chenango, Tioga Counties (December 13,2020)

Source: New York State Department of Health

Group	Population	Cumulative Cases	Cumulative Deaths
Cortland County	48,123	1,513	6
Chenango County	48,348	880	14
Tioga County	49,045	1,379	64

Figure 1: Cumulative Coronavirus Cases: Cortland County

Source: New York State Department of Health

Cortland County: Cumulative Positive COVID-19 Cases
3/1/2020 - 12/13/2020
Source: New York State Department of Health
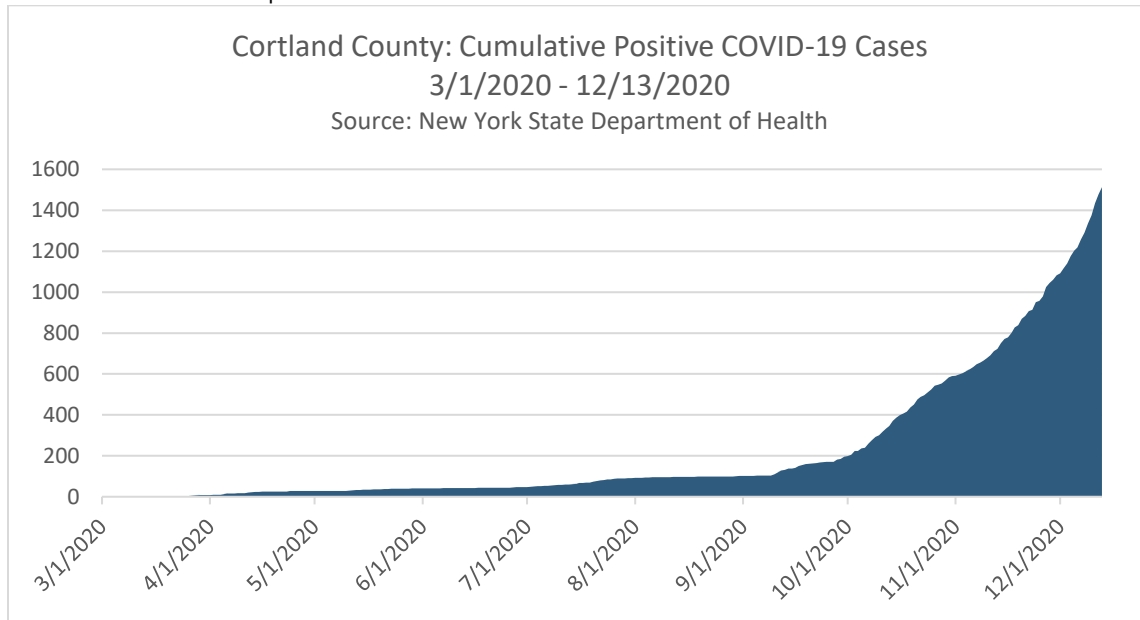
E. Profile of Cortland County
Population
Cortland County is a micropolitan area located in the central region of New York State with seven contiguous counties: Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Madison, Onondaga, Tioga, and Tompkins.[10][11] Predominantly rural, Cortland County is approximately 501.5 square miles in size (498.8 square miles of land and 2.8 square miles of water).[12][13] According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Cortland County has a total population of 48,123.[14] As shown in Figure 2, Cortland County has 16 county subdivisions, which includes one city (Cortland), three villages (Homer, McGraw, Marathon), and 15 towns (Cincinnatus, Cortlandville, Cuyler, Freetown, Harford, Homer, Lapeer, Marathon, Preble, Scott, Solon, Taylor, Truxton, Virgil, Willet).[15]

Figure 2: Map of Cortland County Total Population, by County Subdivision
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [Table ID: S0101].

Cortland County

Total Population (Estimated) 2018

| 496 - 1000 |
| 1001 - 2500 |
| 2501 - 6500 |
| 6501 - 8500 |
| 8501 - 18828 |
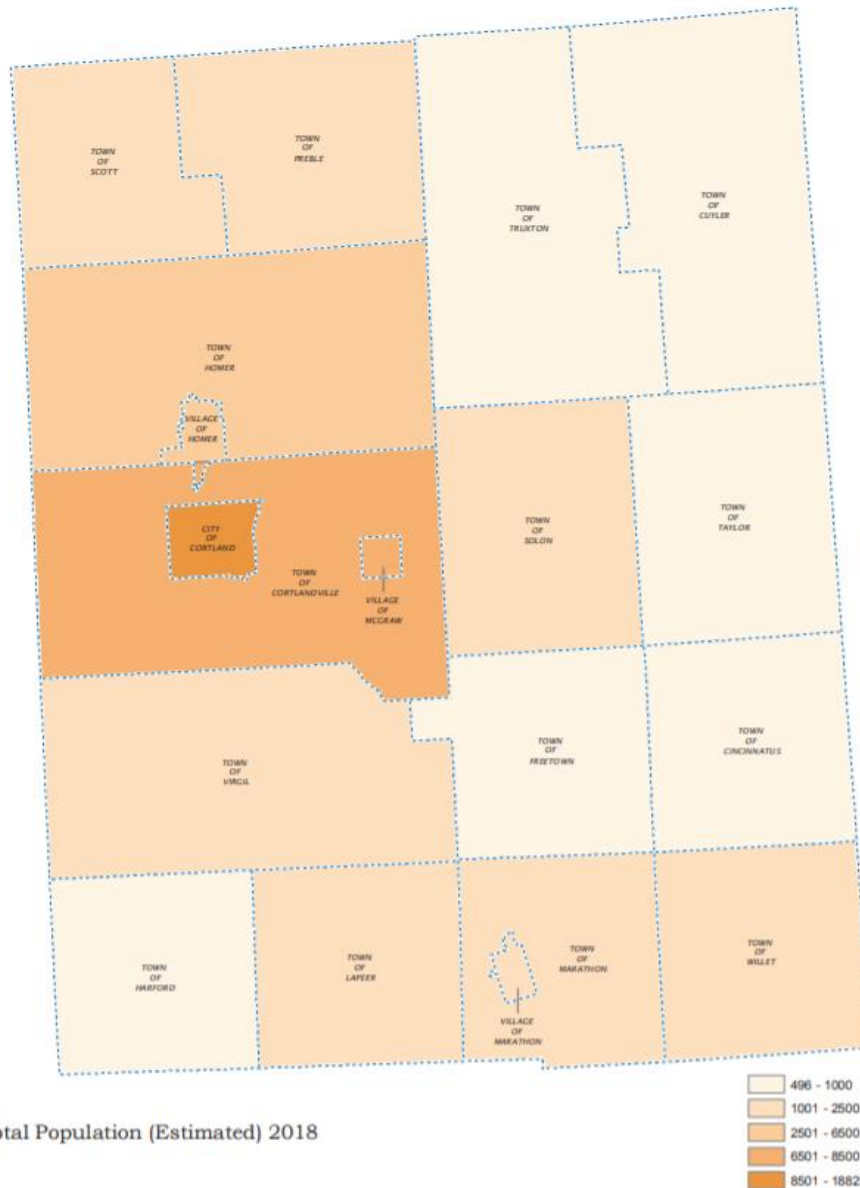
Given the square mileage of land and total population, Cortland County's population density equals 96.48 persons/sq. mile, which is considerably lower than New York State's 421.19 persons/sq. mile.[16] As shown in Figure 3, most residents are geographically concentrated west-of-center around Cortlandville and the City of Cortland.[17]

Race/Ethnicity

Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Cortland County residents are predominantly White/Caucasian. Figure 4 displays the racial/ethnic composition in descending order: White/Caucasian (94.80%), Two or more races (2.2%), Black or African American (1.5%), Asian (0.8%), Other (0.5%), American Indian and Alaska Native (0.2%), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.02%). An estimated 2.7% of residents have Hispanic/Latino heritage.[18]

Figure 3: Map of Cortland County Total Population, by County Subdivision
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [Table ID: S0101].

Cortland County

TOWN OF SCOTT

TOWN OF PREBLE

TOWN OF TRUXTON

TOWN OF CUYLER

TOWN OF HOMER

VILLAGE OF HOMER

CITY OF CORTLAND

TOWN OF CORTLANDVILLE

VILLAGE OF MCGRAW

TOWN OF SOLON

TOWN OF TAYLOR

TOWN OF VIRGIL

TOWN OF FREETOWN

TOWN OF CINCINNATUS

TOWN OF HARFORD

TOWN OF LAPEER

VILLAGE OF MARATHON

TOWN OF MARATHON

TOWN OF WILLET
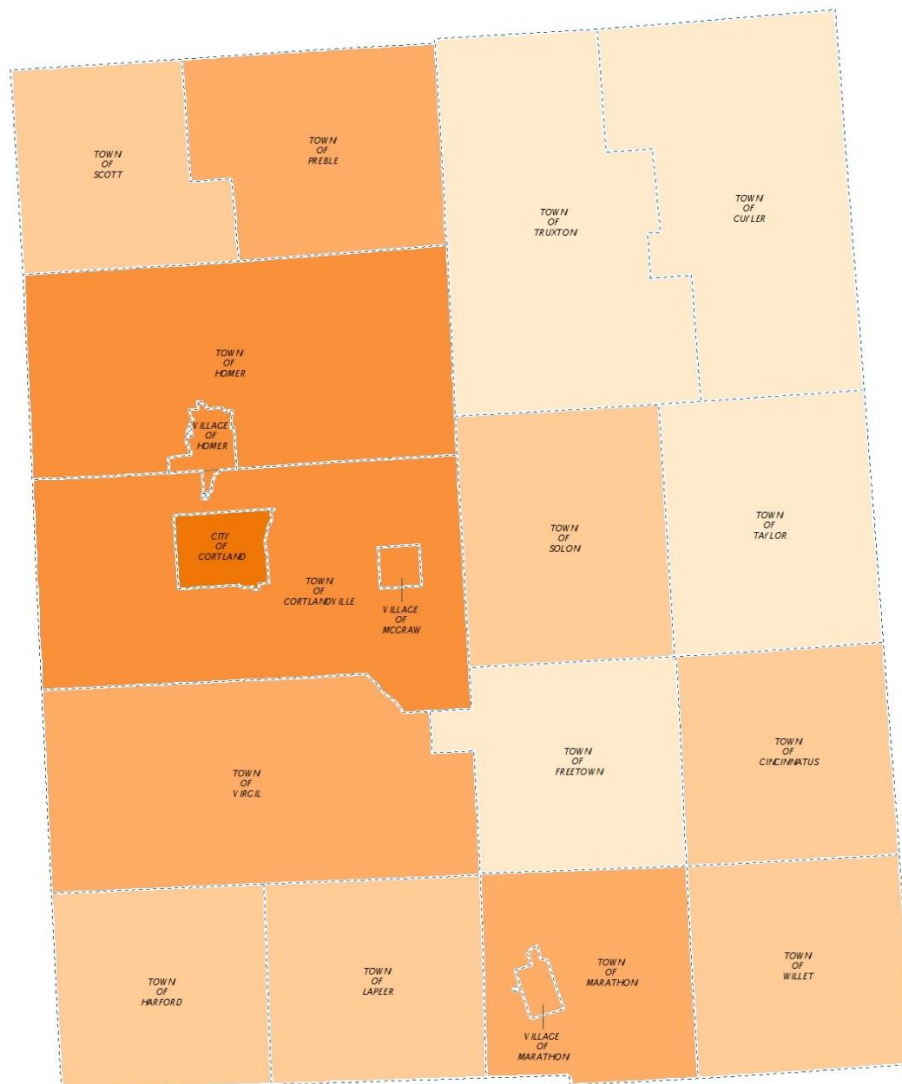
Population Density 2018
People per Square Mile

16-30
31-50
51-90
91-170
171-4884
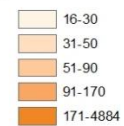
Figure 4: Cortland County, Racial Composition
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [Table ID: DP05].

Racial Composition of Cortland County, NY
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
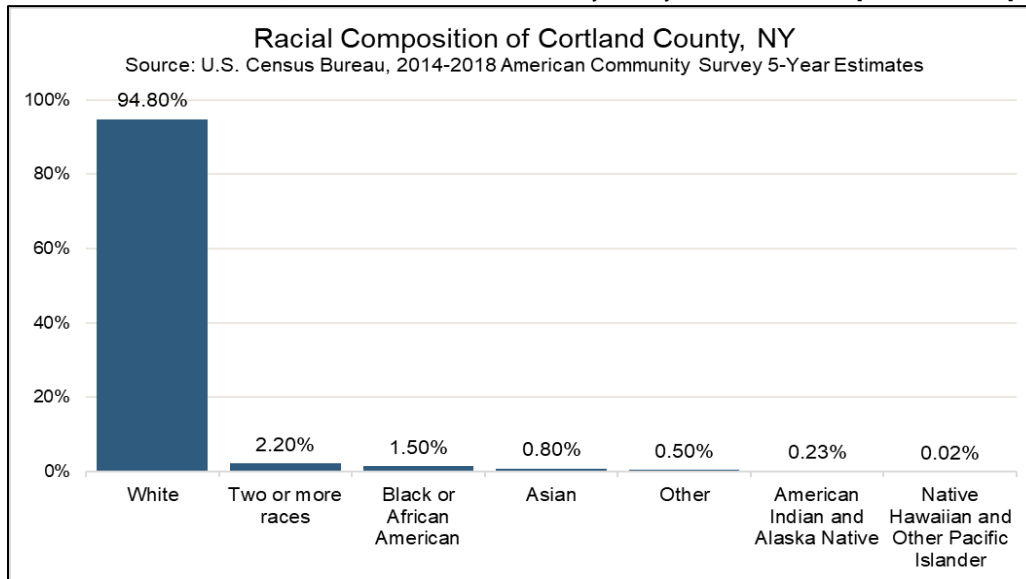
Cortland County's racial composition is less diverse than New York State and the United States. Specifically, the percentage of White/Caucasian residents in Cortland County (94.8%) greatly exceeds percentages for New York State (63.80%) and the United States (72.70%).[19] The percentage of Black/African American residents in Cortland County (1.50%) is considerably lower than percentages for New York State (15.60%) and the United States (12.70%).

Age

The median age in Cortland County (36.4) is lower than New York State (38.7) and the United States (37.9).[20] Figure 5 displays the age distributions of Cortland County and New York State. The shapes of the two distributions are different. However, both distributions have similar percentages for the "45-54 years" age-band and onward. Cortland County has a larger percentage of residents in the "15-19 years" and "20-24 years" age-bands than New York State (+2.9% and +5.1%, respectively). New York State has a larger percentage of residents in the "25-34 years" and "35-44 years" age-bands than Cortland County (+3.2% and +2.3%, respectively).

Commuter Residency and Traffic Flow

As a preface to this section, it is important to acknowledge the complexities of calculating labor commuter information. We rely upon population surveys administered by government agencies as the primary sources for reputable statistics.[21]

Table 3 includes data from the U.S Census Bureau's 2011-2015 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) Commuting Flows. Approximately 16,662 laborers aged 16 years and older live and work within Cortland County. It is critical to point out more laborers aged 16 years and older leave Cortland County for work (6,832) than enter (5,513).[22] [23] This net-loss of 1,319 individuals, referred to as *negative net flow* or *net out-commuting*, signals "there are more workers living in the county than there are jobs."[24]

Among the 22,175 laborers aged 16 years and older who work within Cortland County, 75.14% are county residents, 21.69% are residents of a contiguous county, and 3.17% reside elsewhere. Meanwhile, of the 23,494 laborers aged 16 years and older who live in Cortland County, 70.92% work within the county, 27.13% work in a contiguous county, and 1.95% work elsewhere.[25]

Figure 5: Age Distribution: Cortland County vs New York State

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. [Table ID: DP05].
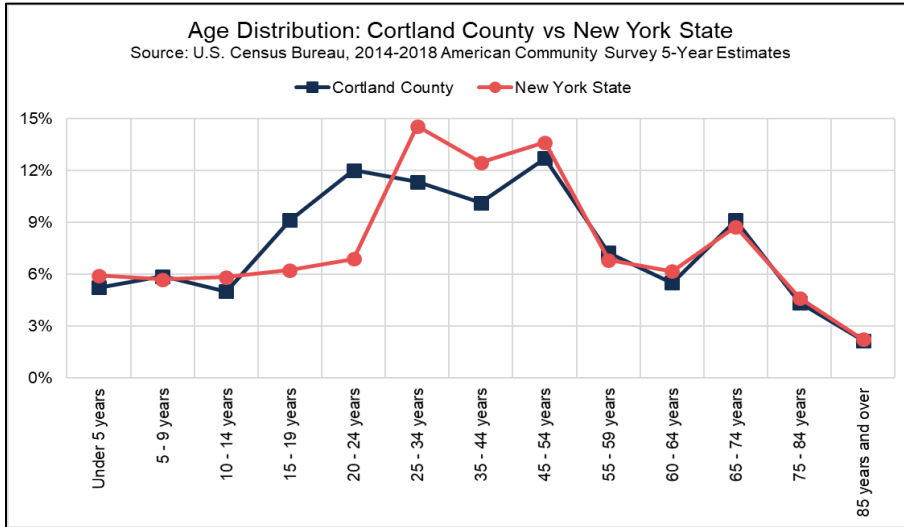
Table 3: Distribution of Laborers Aged 16 and Older: Cortland County, NY

Source: 2011-2015 5-Year ACS Commuting Flows. Data within Table 1: Residence County to Workplace County Commuting Flows for the United States and Puerto Rico Sorted by Residence Geography: 5-Year ACS, 2011-2015 & Table 2: Residence County to Workplace County Commuting Flows for the United States and Puerto Rico Sorted by Workplace Geography: 5-Year ACS, 2011-2015

Group	Number	Percentage
Laborers Working in Cortland County	**22,175**	**100.00%**
Reside in Cortland County	16,662	75.14%
Reside in Contiguous County	4,809	21.69%
Reside Elsewhere	704	3.17%
Laborers Residing in Cortland County	**23,494**	**100.00%**
Work in Cortland County	16,662	70.92%
Work in Contiguous County	6,373	27.13%
Work Elsewhere	459	1.95%

The New York State Department of Transportation provided documented traffic flow data for Cortland County, which is shown in Figures 6 and 7.

Among all documented roadways, traffic is highest along NY-Rt. 81 north of Exit 11 (shown in red). The City of Cortland and its immediate surroundings contain most of the county's high-volume roads (shown in orange).[26] Noteworthy roadways with high volume include NY-281/West Rd, NY-13/Tompkins St, Port Watson Ave, and Groton Ave.

Figure 6: Traffic Flow for Cortland County: City of Cortland

Source: New York State Department of Transportation
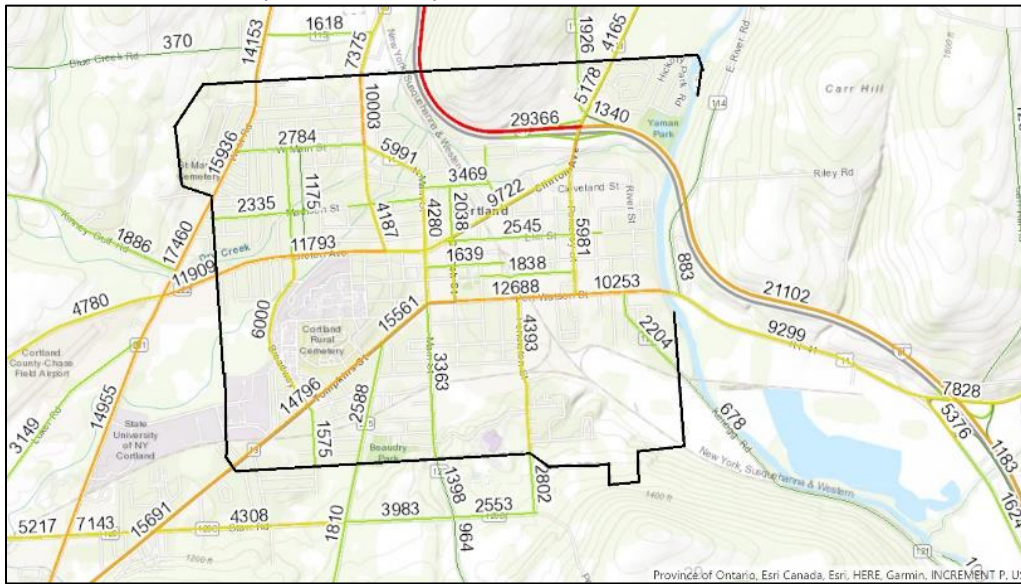
Figure 7: Traffic Flow for Cortland County

Source: New York State Department of Transportation
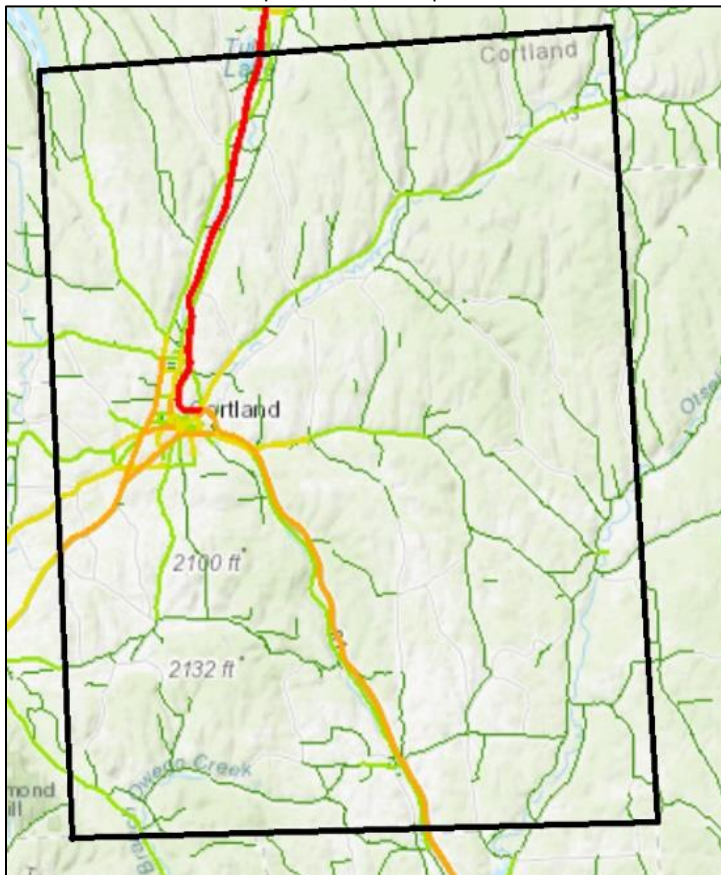
IV. Inventory of Available Transportation Services and Resources

A. Introduction

Transportation services in Cortland County are offered by a variety of nonprofit, public, and private agencies. Some agencies provide transportation services directly, some contract service, and some make arrangements with other providers. Additionally, some services are subject to eligibility requirements from various entities, and others are open to the public. Cortland Transit is the largest transportation provider in the area and is open to the public. The SUNY Cortland campus operates the longest hours of service in the region, but this service is only available for students. Private contract service providers have a key role in client transportation in Cortland County. These operators offer a combination of subscription and demand-response services typically sponsored by a human service agency or unit of local government.

## B. Inventory of Resources and Services

Cortland County Public Transit

The public transit service for Cortland County is Cortland Transit. It covers 114.0 sq. miles of the county's 501.5 total sq. miles.[27] Cortland Transit is operated by First Transit Inc. and provides public transportation for Cortland County. Cortland Transit offers fixed-route services throughout the City of Cortland. Services are also offered to Marathon, Cincinnatus, Willet, TC3, and Cornell University.[28]

Cortland Transit operates 17 buses for both fixed-route and demand-response transportation. Cortland Transit uses the fleet according to demand, either for fixed routes or for demand-response. Fixed-route buses depart from the Cortland County office building and operate on a flag-down system, where riders can stand anywhere along the route and signal the bus for pickup.

Cortland Transit's fixed-route transportation runs on seven different routes. Routes 1-4 run on 45-minute intervals beginning with the first run at 6am and last run at 5:15pm and includes demand-response trips. Route 5 runs at 6am, 7:30am, 2:30pm, and 4pm. Route 6 runs at 8am, 12pm, 2:50pm, and 4:45pm. Finally, Route 7 runs at 6:20am (combined with Route 6) and 4pm.[29] The designated bus routes are depicted in Figures 8 and 9.

Intercity Bus Services

Greyhound Bus Service

Greyhound intercity bus service connects Cortland with Syracuse to the north and Binghamton to the south. Connections to other western New York cities can be made in Syracuse and Binghamton. Greyhound stops at the County Office Building (60 Central Avenue), which is also the transfer point for Cortland Transit and a stop for the Trailways service.

Trailways Bus Service

Trailways intercity bus service connects several cities in western New York through limited service at this time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Trailways stops in Cortland at the County Office Building (also the transfer point for Cortland Transit and a stop for Greyhound service). Trailways does not have designated service for this trip but rather operates a pool trip, meaning passengers could either get a Trailways or Greyhound bus. Trailways operates between Cortland and Syracuse. Connections to cities to the west and east can be made in Syracuse.

Taxi Services

A + Taxi

A + Taxi operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service focuses on the City of Ithaca but also serves Cortland.

A&D Transport Services

A&D Transport Services operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The company is based in Oneonta but travels to Cortland regularly. A&D Transport Services offers wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Figure 8: Cortland Transit Routes 1-5
Source: Cortland County Planning Department
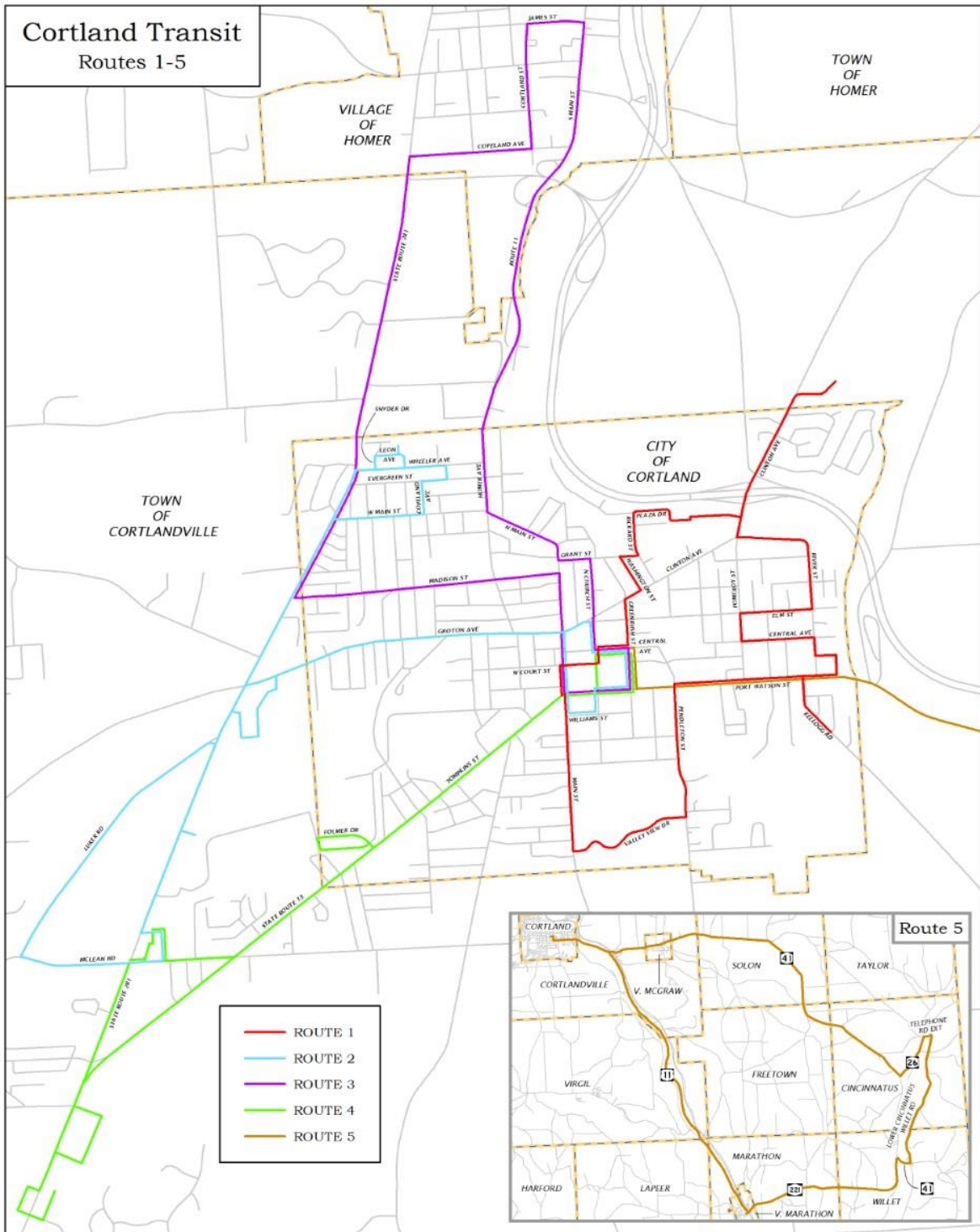
Figure 9: Cortland Transit Routes 6 and 7
Source: Cortland County Planning Department
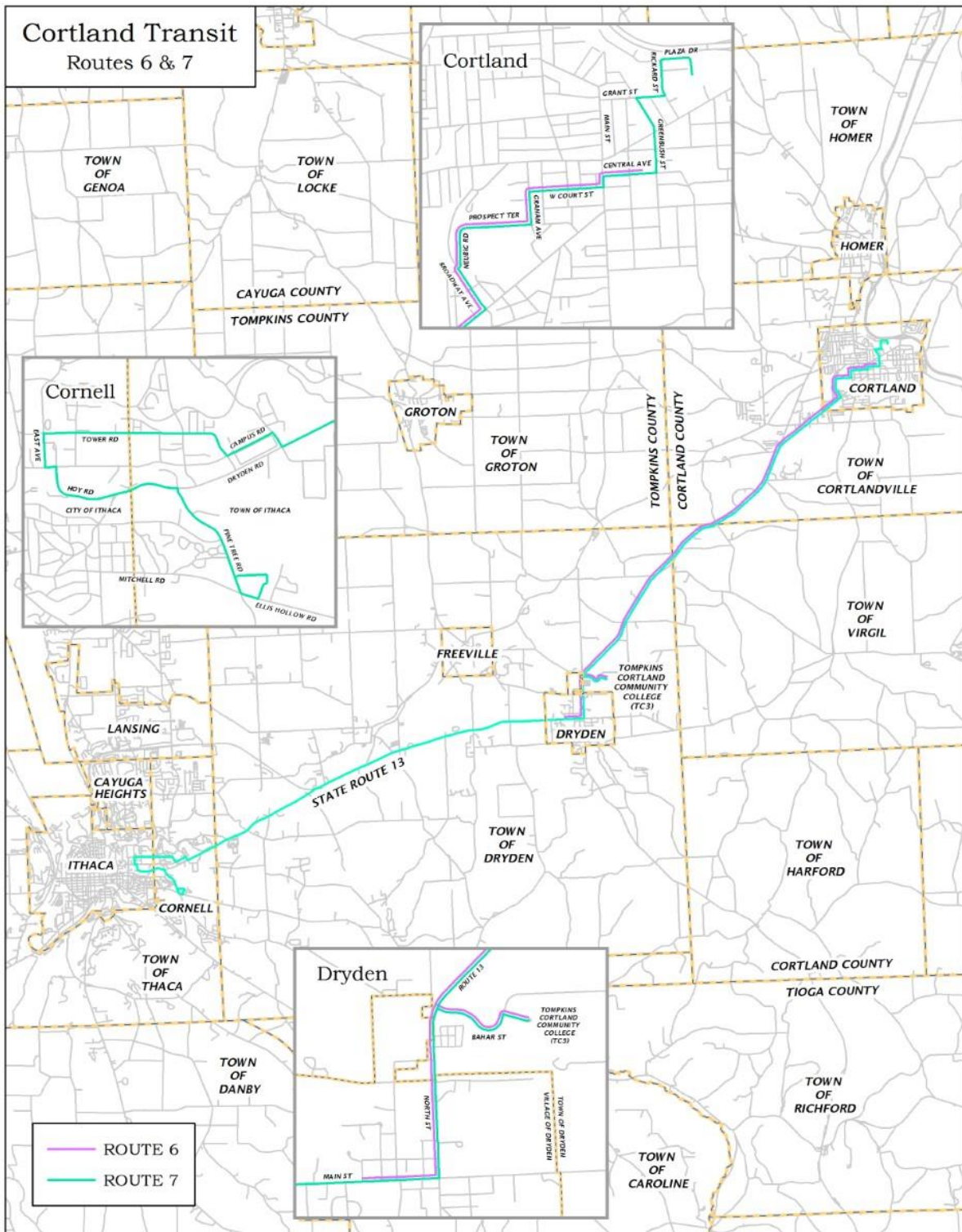
American Taxi
American Taxi operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service focuses on the City of Cortland but will travel wherever there is a need.

ASAP Taxi
ASAP Taxi operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The company is based in Ithaca but has cars stationed in Cortland. By the end of 2020, the company expects to provide wheelchair accessible trips.

Collegetown Cab Inc.
Collegetown Cab Inc. operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The service is based in Ithaca and Cortland and transports anywhere in the region. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available but must be booked a day in advance.

Cortland Taxi-Silver Star Taxi
Cortland Taxi-Silver Star Taxi operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The company is based in Cortland but will travel wherever there is a need.

Dave's Taxi
Dave's Taxi contracts through Cortland Taxi and operates from 5:30 am to 6:00 pm Dave's Taxi primarily operates in the City of Cortland but will travel wherever there is a need.

Gene's Taxi
Gene's Taxi contracts through Cortland Taxi and operates from 5:30 am to 6:00 pm

Horizon Transport
Horizon Transport operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The company is based in Syracuse but has cars stationed in Cortland. The company expects to have wheelchair accessible vehicles by the end of 2020. Horizon Transport provides non-emergency medical transportation for passengers who are ambulatory and offers door-to-door and curb-to-curb services.

MTS Express
MTS Express operates Monday to Wednesday from 8 am - 1 am and Thursday to Saturday from 10 am - 2:30 am The company is based in Cortland and will provide transportation for trips up to 2 hours away.

University Taxi
University Taxi operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. University Taxi is based in Ithaca and Elmira and will also provide transportation to Cortland.

Uber/Lyft
Uber/Lyft operate within Cortland County. Rides are arranged through a software application that passengers download on their phones.

Agency Service Providers
Cortland County Department of Social Services
The Cortland County Department of Social Services (DSS) administers key social service programs in Cortland County, including the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, Medicaid, child and adult protective services, foster care, and preventive services.

Department employees use a fleet of 16 vehicles owned by Cortland County for travel associated with visiting clients, accessing service providers, and other department business. In addition, DSS purchases Cortland Transit bus tokens/passes or gas cards for individuals on a case-by-case basis. DSS also coordinates with Greyhound and Trailways intercity bus services for client-specific needs.

The annual transportation budget for DSS is $78,000 for their leased fleet of 16 vehicles. Leasing costs total $59,000, fuel costs are approximately $12,000, and maintenance costs are approximately $7,000. DSS also purchases bus passes each month from Cortland Transit. In 2019, the agency paid $8,550 for 190 passes. DSS notes that enhanced bus service, including operating the bus service in the evening hours and on weekends, would benefit their clients for employment and other trip purposes, particularly those living in the rural areas.

Catholic Charities of Cortland

Catholic Charities of Cortland is a private, nonprofit organization that provides social services to nearly 2,200 Cortland County residents with specialized programs designed for teens, families, and individuals with mental health concerns, substance use disorders, and complex health care needs. Teen programs include services for at-risk adolescents. Emergency assistance services, such as food pantry, prescription drug assistance, utility payment supports, homelessness prevention, and support services for those who have experienced incarceration are available. In addition, various residential and housing programs provide 138 units of supported housing. Catholic Charities owns ten vehicles, eight of which are used for program and consumer transportation. Their fleet consists of four vans and four sedans.

Two of the agency vans are dedicated to residential sites in the community. None of the agency vehicles are wheelchair-accessible and outside resources are arranged for those requiring this accommodation. Many consumers are aging and/or frail and these clients are accommodated by using a lower-floor vehicle or requesting Medicaid transportation services. Although Catholic Charities does provide some client transportation services, this is minimal and program specific. Most program staff at Catholic Charities are authorized to operate agency vehicles.

Of its nearly 2,200 consumers, Catholic Charities estimates that at least 1,500 use public transportation and 250 use agency-provided transportation. The transportation supports provided by agency programs include helping clients attend important meetings, appointments, and services with providers and other supports. Catholic Charities also purchases cab fares, as well as bus tokens and passes for clients that can use Cortland Transit. Catholic Charities does not receive federal funding to support transportation services. In 2019, the agency estimated that it spent approximately $18,500 on gas for vehicles. This cost includes trips for programs, meetings, and conferences for staff. The agency also reports $22,000 was spent on wages for staff members who spend some of their time providing transportation.

Elizabeth Brewster House

The Elizabeth Brewster House is an adult care facility located at 41 South Main Street in Homer, NY. The Elizabeth Brewster House owns and operates a 14-passenger handicap-accessible bus used to take residents to doctors' appointments, recreational activities, and shopping. Residents are referred to Cortland Transit if the Elizabeth Brewster House bus is not available. The Elizabeth Brewster House has identified a need for affordable transportation on evenings and weekends, specifically for when patients are discharged from the hospital after hours.

Cortland County Health Department (CCHD) - Children with Special Needs

CCHD, together with the Cortland County Board of Health, addresses community health needs in Cortland County through a wide variety of programs, services, and facilities. CCHD serves over 5,000 individuals through its different programs and services. CCHD does not directly operate or provide transportation services for most of its programming. An exception to this rule is the Children with Special Needs program, which provides special services to help diagnose, treat, and support children with special health care concerns. This includes addressing developmental, physical, behavioral, or emotional needs. The program also supports people enrolling in the Child Health Plus and Family Health Plus programs. The Children with Special Needs program contracts with a bus company to transport children participating in the Pre-K programs and special education preschool programs available at the Racker Center. CCHD spends between $80,000 to $110,000 per year on this transportation contract. The contract period, for which Cortland Transit is the current service provider, is active for two years.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County
Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Cortland County provides a variety of informal, family-oriented education programs and resources. This includes classes and information on financial management, commercial and consumer agriculture, food and nutrition, farm to gardens, child and family development, health, safety, youth development programs, housing, and sustainable natural resources and energy efficiency. The extension matches university resources with community needs to improve the lives of individuals, families, and businesses throughout Cortland County.

In 2019, CCE of Cortland County was awarded the New York State Agriculture and Markets Farm-to-School Grant. Farm-to-School (F2S) is a sustainable food system that focuses on increasing schools' access to local food, increasing nutrition and agriculture education to improve children's health, strengthen local family farms, and foster vibrant communities with strong economies. CCE educators have been very successful in implementing various aspects of the F2S program throughout the past year.

CCE can transport 4H youth to 4H functions using volunteers or the agency's vehicles of two vans and a car. The agency also contracts with Cortland City School district to provide daily transportation in the summer for day campers to Camp Owahta in McGraw.

JM Murray Center
The JM Murray Center provides vocational training and community services for persons with disabilities at its main facility located on NY-13 in the Town of Cortlandville. Individuals living within a 90-minute service area—including Cortland, Tompkins, Madison, and Chenango Counties—are served.

JM Murray contracts with Cortland Transit to provide subscription transportation services for clients unable to use public transportation. Cortland Transit operates on weekdays from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm Cortland Transit provides approximately 1,500 trips for the JM Murray Center annually, but that number varies. The JM Murray Center notes that there is a need for transportation services in the evenings and on weekends to get their clients to employment. Cortland Transit is paid a contracted amount of $515,300 for providing the service. The company uses their own vehicles to provide the service. JM Murray maintains a combined 25 vans and cars for transportation purposes and currently has a contract with First Transit.

Community Action Program of Cortland County
The Community Action Program of Cortland County (CAPCO) is the Community Action Agency serving Cortland County since 1974. Resources and programs include Head Start/Early Head Start, serving children aged newborn to five years old and their families; Women Infants and Children (WIC), Healthy Families, for families with newborns and young children; and an Energy Services/Weatherization Assistance Program to upgrade housing with insulation, energy saving appliances, heating, etc. CAPCO also has a Family Development component dealing with adult literacy including supports for earning a High School Equivalency diploma, tutoring, and test preparation. A Family Support Center in Marathon provides access to emergency assistance, personal development, and supports to people in Marathon. Community Action Angels provides several supports for families including emergency assistance, clothing, and housing needs. Consumer Directed Services includes a Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program designed to support disabled Medicaid recipients with personal care aides for in-home care and support. The Volunteer Driver Program provides transportation to Medicaid recipients for non-emergency medical appointments. Volunteer drivers are reimbursed for miles driven based on current federal rate.

Racker Center
The Racker Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving people with disabilities and their families through a wide range of individualized programs, services, and opportunities. Programs are available for individuals at every stage of life from early childhood, to school age, and finally to adulthood. Racker is in Tompkins, Cortland, and Tioga Counties.

In Cortland County, there are approximately 120 individuals receiving services from Racker. Of these 120 individuals, about 40 people have frequent and ongoing needs for transportation services and another 40 have an occasional need for transportation. The Cortland County facility has one vehicle driven by agency staff that can be used to transport clients. The agency estimates it provides about 75 one-way trips per year taking people to medical appointments, grocery stores, and other shopping trips. They also provide bus tokens and passes to eligible clients and reimburse staff for use of personal vehicles. The costs for transportation are estimated at $40,000.

SUNY Cortland
SUNY Cortland is a 4-year, comprehensive, residential college that employs approximately 1,300 people and provides educational opportunities for 7,000 students. The campus uses 8 buses/vans to provide transportation to students seven days a week and shopping trips on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Vehicles are used from morning through the evening. The buses stay mainly on the SUNY Campus, but do drive to West Campus throughout the day. On Wednesday nights, Saturday nights, and Sunday nights the buses drive as far as Walmart in Cortlandville. Students pay a fee each semester for transportation and the entire fee is used to fund campus bus transportation. SUNY Cortland estimates its annual cost of providing transportation is $1 million.

Seven Valleys Health Coalition
Seven Valleys Health Coalition (SVHC) is Cortland County's Rural Health Network. Their programs are specifically targeted to addressing social determinants of health, including access to transportation. One of SVHC's transportation programs, Supports for Health, is funded through a contract with HealtheConnections via their grant from the Mother Cabrini Foundation to offer low-income residents with qualifying conditions assistance with transportation. Supports for Health can provide transportation for health-related needs, assistance with accessing or renewing critical benefits, chronic disease self-management and prevention programs, as well as healthy foods for a new dietary requirement, among other health maintenance needs.

Individuals are referred to the program (among the agencies that make referrals are Family Health Network and Guthrie Cortland Medical Center). SVHC staff set up rides for qualifying individuals through Cortland Transit or local taxi companies or other participating partners such as CAPCO or Access to Independence. Grant funds cover the transportation and there is no cost to participants. From about December 2019 to November 2020, 36 individuals were given rides (a total of 196 individual rides). Trips were provided for individuals to get groceries and prescriptions, attend support groups, receive social security benefits, and access the Department of Social Services for a variety of needs. Individuals who did not qualify for the program were given alternative transportation options either through Medicaid or through the MMC.

TLC Medical Transportation Services, Inc.
TLC provides both emergency and non-emergency ambulance transportation for residents in the City of Cortland and towns of Cortlandville, Homer, Preble, Scott, Solon, Truxton, and Virgil. TLC has a staff of more than 100 professional paramedics and EMTs who provide emergency medical care to patients.

TLC accommodates patients who require a range of pre-hospital medical assistance up to and including critical life-saving care. TLC also transports pediatric and bariatric patients. It is certified by the New York State Department of Health and meets or exceeds all required standards established by the Department of Health. TLC also installs and repairs wheelchair lifts in its Syracuse office located at 638 Burnet Ave. TLC maintains six ambulances.

Local School Districts
City of Cortland School District
The City of Cortland provides transportation for students living in the City of Cortland and unincorporated Cortland County. For City of Cortland residents, transportation is provided for elementary school children who live more than 0.9 mile from their nearest elementary school, for junior high school students living more than 1.5 miles from school, and for high school students living more than 2.0 miles from the school. For the 2020-2021 school year, there are 13 high school bus routes and 13 elementary school bus routes.

Cortland City School District also provides specialized transportation for children with special education needs, including to educational facilities outside of Cortland County and to local regional centers, such as Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). These services may include daily trips to the Syracuse area, as well as drop-offs and pick-ups for students participating in residential programs.

Student transportation is provided with a staff of 20 drivers (17 full-time and 3 part-time) and a fleet of 27 vehicles, plus approximately another 10 vehicles used for staff, buildings and grounds, and other school district, non-student-oriented use. Of the 27 student transportation vehicles, 22 are school buses with seating for 44 adults, 3 are lift-equipped vehicles, and 5 are vans. All vehicles used for student transportation, including specialized transportation, must meet Department of Transportation (DOT) certification standards.

Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES
Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES provides alternative education programs including career and technical education, special education, alternative education, and workforce preparation for residents of the three counties. In Cortland, there is an alternative school for high school students located at 250 Port Watson Street.

Homer School District
The Homer School District provides school transportation for all students. The school district employs 32 full time and 4 part time drivers to operate student transportation vehicles. There are a total of 36 student transportation vehicles that seat 44 adults. Among these vehicles, 3 are equipped with a lift system, and 8 are vans. In addition to student use vehicles, Homer School District also maintains 1 equipment bus, 4 vans, and 4 trucks.

Students are transported if they are located at least 0.5 mile away and are in high school or elementary school, or are in a designated safe zone. Specialized transportation routes are established at BOCES, George Junior Republic School, Cortland Christian Academy, and St. Mary's School.

McGraw School District
The McGraw Central School District provides student transportation using seven bus routes.

Marathon School District
The Marathon School District provides school transportation for most of its students. All students in grades kindergarten through 6 receive transportation services. Only children in grades 7 through 12 who live more than 1.5 miles from the school or on a road without sidewalks or a speed limit receive school transportation service. There are 15 regular routes operated in the district. Marathon Schools also transport children with special needs to Tully, Homer, and Cortland. They operate three routes for children with special needs and coordinates transportation services with Homer, Tully, and Cortland for those students.

Cincinnatus School District
The Cincinnatus School District provides school transportation for all its students using approximately 18 buses.

BOCES (Cortland Alternative School)
This is a regional alternative school for high school students. The students are transported by school buses from each participating district (Cortland, Homer, Cincinnatus, Marathon, McGraw, DeRuyter, Tully, and Fabius-Pompey).

Incidental Service Providers
Access to Independence
Access to Independence (ATI) is a private, nonprofit organization that provides a variety of services and programs to people with disabilities, their families, and caregivers. These services cover all ages and include peer mentoring, NY Connects, nursing facility transition services, housing subsidies, home and vehicle modifications, assistive technology, employment and work readiness, youth transition, advocacy services, and independent living skills training.

Less than 2 percent of ATI's annual operating budget goes to providing transportation, in the form of a van with a lift that transports individuals as needed. ATI estimates the organization spends about $15,000 a year on transportation, with about 50 passenger trips taken yearly, and has one vehicle with a wheelchair lift

Aid to Victims of Violence (A program of the Cortland County YWCA)
The program provides safe housing, advocacy, and assistance services for victims of crime. The program has one SUV which is used for daily trips for clients as needed. The estimated annual budget for transportation is $13,338.

Cortland County Probation Department
The Probation Department is part of the County's law enforcement function that provides a range of services associated with Family Court, including investigations, information, and referral assistance relative to juvenile delinquency, persons- in-need of supervision, custody/visitation, child neglect/abuse, and family offense programs. Community-based supervision of persons sentenced to terms of probation is also provided by the department, as is the collection and disbursement of court-ordered restitution to crime victims.

The Probation Department has four vehicles used by staff on County business. The Department does not provide transportation for clients, except when a client has no other means of transportation and the need is serious (e.g., client needs to get to a rehabilitation center or critical appointment).

Cortland Eye Center
The Cortland Eye Center provides routine eye care as well as medical/surgical care and other optical services. Their Surgical Center in Syracuse provides transportation through 1 Apple Transit out of Syracuse for surgery patients who are picked up in the parking lot of the Cortland Eye Center, located at 1160 Tompkins St. The center estimates about 200 passenger trips a year are provided.

Cortland Works Career Center
Cortland County employment and training programs are provided, in part, through the Cortland Works Career Center located at 99 Main St in downtown Cortland. The Center offers youth programs that provide career guidance, pre-employment training, work experiences, and support for occupational training for eligible participants 14-24 years of age, as well as programs for unemployed/underemployed adults and dislocated workers. The Career Center is currently offering services for job seekers by appointment, including resume writing assistance, career counseling and job search assistance, and information regarding training for in-demand occupations. The computer resource room is available for online job searches and applications. In the average year, Career Center serves approximately 3,000 individuals.

Cortland Works Career Center staff indicates that many clients have transportation issues, including those unable to get to the Center and those who cannot accept a job placement because they cannot get to the job site. The Center does not typically provide transportation services for clients, although there are certain eligibility factors that may make it possible for the Center to provide support for public transportation services or mileage reimbursement for training. Staff travelling for work-related purposes are reimbursed mileage when driving their personal vehicles or provided with a rental vehicle. On average, the Center spends approximately $2,000 annually on transportation.

Family & Children's Counseling Services
Family & Children's Counseling Services is a private, nonprofit professional counseling agency that offers comprehensive treatment to individuals, couples, and families experiencing emotional, personal, and alcohol or drug-related problems. The agency operates on a fee-for-service basis and offers sliding-scale fees based on income to ensure that no one is ever denied services because of an inability to pay. Clients are usually covered by government or private insurance. About 1,400 individuals use Family Counseling Services per year.

Family Counseling Services does not directly operate transportation services, but it does reimburse staff for use of personal vehicles for agency activities. About 20 percent (80 or so individuals) of the clientele have transportation issues associated with affordability and court- imposed driving restrictions. Whenever possible, the Agency provides bus tokens or taxi fare to help clients access treatment.

Veterans Service Agency
The Cortland County Veterans Service Agency (VSA) assists veterans and their family members with filing claims for all county, state, and federal veterans' benefits, including registering veterans for health services, obtaining high school diplomas, and applying for New York State medals if eligible. There are some 8,000 individuals associated with the VSA. The VSA does not provide transportation services but will direct clients to the Disabled American Veterans organization.

Disabled American Veterans Organization
The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) organization is a private, nonprofit agency that provides a variety of services to veterans, including transportation. The DAV has two vans based at the Cortland DAV Club on Owego Street in Cortland. With 48 hours advance notice, one DAV van driven by a volunteer driver will transport disabled veterans to the Syracuse VA Hospital free of charge. The Syracuse VA Hospital pays all the operational expenses associated with this transportation. The second van, also driven by a volunteer, will take veterans to their medical appointments at the Tompkins/Cortland County VA clinic in Freeville.

City of Cortland Youth Bureau
The City of Cortland Youth Bureau provides the community the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of recreational and educational programs. The Youth Bureau offers over 120 programs and 6 different parks to provide the highest quality programs and facilities that meet the needs of the community it serves. The bureau embraces healthy and active lifestyles while connecting more people to parks, programs, and youth services. Cortland City Youth Bureau uses a city-owned van to take youth participants on field trips. The City of Cortland Youth Bureau is located at 35 Port Watson St in Cortland and is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am-4:30pm.

Cortland County Area Agency on Aging
The Cortland County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) provides a wide range of programs and services for older adults living in Cortland County. These include direct services and other programs where the AAA acts a resource to help individuals and families deal with a range of issues concerning older adults. Between 3,000 and 4,000 individuals are associated with one or more of the AAA's ongoing programs.

The AAA helps clients with transportation in several ways. First, it offers free bus tokens to clients who are 60 years of age or older. Each client is eligible for up to 18 tokens per month. Approximately 3,120 bus tokens were distributed in 2019, which were used on Cortland Transit fixed routes. AAA estimates that about 74 (unduplicated) individuals make use of this program.

The AAA also sponsors demand-response services to transport members of the vision support group to/from their monthly meeting. Finally, AAA will reimburse agency staff that help clients get to and from agency programming and services. In total, an estimated $3,800 per year is spent on transportation.

Walden Place
Walden Place is an assisted living facility located at 839 Bennie Rd in Cortland. They own and operate a 13-passenger handicap-accessible van used to take residents to doctors' appointments and to recreational activities and shopping centers. Residents are referred to Cortland Transit if the Walden Place bus is not available. Walden Place has identified a need for affordable transportation on evenings and weekends, specifically for when patients are discharged from the hospital after hours.

Guthrie Cortland Regional Medical Center
Guthrie Cortland Regional Medical Center provides transportation only for its Adult Day Care program. The Medical Center transports program participants from their homes to the Adult Day Care facility. They own two vehicles to support the program, each with 12 seats and two spaces for wheelchairs. Transportation services are provided Monday through Saturday from 8:00 to 10:00 am and from 2:00 to 4:00 pm The annual operating budget for providing transportation services for the Adult Day Care program is $138,000. The program transports approximately 30 individuals daily.

Cortland Care Center/Cortland Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center
Cortland Park Rehabilitation & Nursing Center is a rehabilitation and nursing care facility with beds for 120 residents and located at 193 Clinton Ave in Cortland. The Center provides transportation to medical appointments and recreational activities for residents when weather permits. The Center shares a van with a wheelchair lift and has access to a shared driver. Trips are made weekdays during daytime hours. The Center coordinates necessary trips with family member participation for their residents.

Crown Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation
The Crown Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation is a 200-bed facility located on Kellogg Rd in Cortland. The Center is a place for patients to recuperate from joint replacement surgery, a cardiac episode, or other types of hospital stays. The Crown Center arranges for transportation services for their patients primarily through TLC Medical Transportation Services, Inc. and occasionally through Cortland Transit. The Crown Center pays for most of the transportation provided for their patients.

Other Service Providers
Limousine service – Located on Luker Rd in Cortland

Hope Lake Lodge at Greek Peak – A shuttle provides transportation between Hope Lake Lodge and the Greek Peak attractions; however, this was interrupted due to COVID.

Madison/Cortland ARC – Transportation for ARC programs (vans owned by ARC can transport clients but not the public)

Red Jug Pub – Provides limited transportation to/from downtown bars

Creamery Hills Apartments – Provides transportation for residents

Cortland County Mental Health Department – Two county-leased cars are used to transport children to and from respite sessions for family support services Monday-Friday.

V.   Transit Needs Analysis

A. Introduction

Coordinating transportation services requires a careful analysis of the mobility needs of various segments of the population and the potential ridership of transit services. There are several factors that affect demand, not all of which can be forecasted. Among factors that cannot be forecasted are the effects that COVID-19 will have on transit demand in the months and years ahead. However, as demand estimation is an important task in developing any transportation plan, several methods of estimation have been developed in the transit field. This section presents an analysis of the demand for transit services in Cortland County based on standard estimation techniques using the demographic data and trends discussed previously. The transit demand identified in this section is used for the identification of potential coordination opportunities and the evaluation of the various service improvements. This chapter uses numerous models and formulas to help quantify different segments of transit need and demand, such as:

- Mobility Gap Methodology
- General Public Demand
- Greatest Transit Needs

Each of these approaches helps to show the patterns that are likely to arise regarding transit needs within the area. Estimating demand for services is not an exact science and therefore must be carefully judged for reasonableness. Surveys, focus groups, and interviews conducted with agency executives supplement the quantitative data with a qualitative approach. This qualitative approach highlights specific examples of deficiencies in transit operations, infrastructure, and capacity from an informed point of view, as well as provides insights regarding the feasibility of the strategies listed in Section VI.

B. Demographic Data

This section presents a brief overview of the important demographic characteristics of the Cortland County area. There are several national criteria which are used in determining where, and even how frequently, transit services should be provided. For transit to be both effective and efficient, it must serve those areas with the highest propensity for ridership. These areas often include older adult populations (who because of age may be unable to drive themselves), those with disabilities, households with limited or no access to a personal automobile, and low-income residents. This data was then used to assess transit need and demand addressed further in this chapter.

Baseline demographic data were compiled from the 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates. Households Below Poverty Line is measured against slightly adjusted Total Number of Households that were presented in the 2014-2018 ACS five-year estimates. The mobility-limited population was estimated using mobility limited population-proportion estimates from the 2013 Cortland County CPTP. Table 4 presents Cortland County's most recent information available for zero-vehicle households, older adult populations, mobility limited populations, and the low-income population. As mentioned before, these types of data were important to the various methods of demand estimation.

C. Access to Health Care within Cortland County

As stated within the 2019-2024 Cortland County Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan, "transportation significantly impacts one's access to health resources."[30] This idea is consistent with statements from the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (2017) and the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (2020) about inconvenient or inconsistent transportation interfering with consistent access to health care.[31] [32]

Table 4: Cortland County Demographic Data

Census Track	Census Block Group	Land Area (Sq. Miles)	Total Population (2014-2018 ACS)	Total Number of Households (2014-2018 ACS)	Zero-Vehicle Occupied Households (2014-2018 ACS) #	%	Total Number of Older Adults 65 & Older (2014-2018 ACS) #	%	Mobility Limited Population (2014-2018 ACS) #	%	Households Below Poverty Line #	%*
9701	1	42.1637	746	385	4	1.3%	130	17%	36	4.8%	26	8.7%
9701	2	32.6766	698	304	18	6.5%	123	18%	17	2.5%	24	8.6%
9701	3	29.7253	1134	448	9	2.3%	155	14%	41	3.6%	32	8.3%
9701	4	43.5065	836	403	13	4.3%	162	19%	33	4.0%	41	13.5%
9702	1	15.8046	621	270	29	12.0%	91	15%	19	3.1%	17	7.0%
9702	2	11.7522	834	432	12	3.4%	160	19%	18	2.2%	21	5.9%
9702	3	22.4112	1059	517	13	3.2%	179	17%	19	1.8%	30	7.4%
9702	4	24.7819	1231	410	14	3.4%	212	17%	14	1.1%	46	11.2%
9702	5	24.5285	1959	741	28	4.4%	308	16%	33	1.7%	76	11.8%
9703	1	0.3014	1090	471	12	2.8%	203	19%	23	2.1%	12	2.8%
9703	2	0.4852	760	286	10	0.0%	182	24%	2	0.3%	17	5.9%
9703	3	0.3024	704	328	0	0.0%	138	20%	4	0.6%	0	0.0%
9703	4	0.2521	517	274	0	0.0%	121	23%	17	3.3%	79	31.1%
9704	1	11.7953	1113	559	52	11.3%	239	21%	30	2.7%	77	16.7%
9704	2	9.8186	1105	469	41	10.2%	162	15%	22	2.0%	26	6.5%
9704	3	8.5716	476	220	6	0.0%	73	15%	8	1.7%	6	2.7%
9705	1	0.5041	1652	652	42	7.0%	413	25%	41	2.5%	78	13.0%
9705	2	0.1589	680	371	43	14.1%	162	24%	18	2.7%	39	12.7%
9705	3	0.0731	550	411	56	18.3%	28	5%	18	3.2%	134	43.8%
9705	4	0.4117	887	418	22	7.1%	79	9%	59	6.6%	118	38.1%
9706	1	0.1637	1024	482	103	22.4%	224	22%	56	5.5%	145	31.6%
9706	2	0.1111	614	607	139	0.0%	48	8%	31	5.0%	103	30.1%
9706	3	0.1728	666	409	68	20.2%	154	23%	7	1.0%	56	16.7%
9706	4	0.0667	582	259	33	0.0%	40	7%	16	2.8%	38	18.4%
9707	1	0.0966	777	292	42	0.0%	39	5%	13	1.7%	114	62.3%
9707	2	0.1773	726	319	0	0.0%	163	22%	7	0.9%	43	13.5%
9707	3	0.2577	1249	498	0	0.0%	233	19%	10	0.8%	0	0.0%
9707	4	0.0974	932	457	25	0.0%	137	15%	21	2.2%	100	25.6%
9707	5	0.1748	1222	492	58	12.3%	185	15%	42	3.4%	101	21.4%
9708	1	0.2584	2518	90	8	12.1%	23	1%	30	1.2%	16	24.2%
9709	1	0.5	1742	533	72	13.6%	268	15%	162	9.3%	122	23.1%
9709	2	0.3128	887	565	74	0.0%	203	23%	36	4.1%	23	5.1%
9709	3	0.1923	1328	558	65	0.0%	17	1%	69	5.2%	202	41.5%
9709	4	0.1842	792	462	7	0.0%	110	14%	58	7.3%	34	10.5%
9710	1	7.0266	702	302	7	0.0%	109	16%	6	0.9%	7	2.4%
9710	2	3.7496	895	355	0	0.0%	255	28%	99	11.1%	48	15.2%
9710	3	6.7054	945	459	30	6.5%	234	25%	16	1.7%	0	0.0%
9710	4	1.7184	1754	761	123	18.2%	242	14%	58	3.3%	242	35.8%
9710	5	0.5099	1244	432	54	0.0%	149	12%	0	0.0%	66	15.3%
9711	1	42.774	1440	639	20	3.6%	199	14%	50	3.5%	68	12.1%
9711	2	26.0531	1090	574	10	2.4%	137	13%	27	2.5%	58	14.2%
9711	3	7.9199	1168	547	8	0.0%	221	19%	53	4.5%	26	5.7%
9711	4	25.4842	878	519	17	4.6%	160	18%	9	1.0%	57	15.4%
9712	1	25.3408	959	366	36	11.0%	108	11%	27	2.8%	61	18.7%
9712	2	30.672	1343	578	27	6.0%	240	18%	32	2.4%	53	11.8%
9712	3	24.1723	867	411	10	3.1%	143	16%	18	2.1%	14	4.3%
9712	4	16.5615	1127	431	15	3.6%	186	17%	20	1.8%	19	4.6%
Study Area Total		501.4784	48123	20766	1475		7547		1447		2715	

* Percentage of Households Below the Poverty Line are based on "POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER" count, which contains an adjusted number of households.

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau. (2018)

Transportation is recognized as an area to improve health behaviors within Cortland County. The 2019-2024 Cortland County Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan identifies improving community environments that support active transportation and recreational physical activity for people of all ages and abilities as one of its program goals.[33] In addition, Cortland County's Community Services Board 2019-2020 County Plan identifies transportation as one of its priority outcomes.[34] This CPTP seeks to identify gaps within groups and between groups that are at risk of being overlooked as Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) improvements are implemented. Understanding the broadly ranging needs/services of select populations is necessary to achieve this goal.[35]

Several metrics measuring health care infrastructure show Cortland County underperforms in comparison to state averages. In 2016, the percentage of Cortland County's adult population with a usual source of health care (79.8%) was lower than New York State (82.6%).[36] [37] The percentage of Cortland County's adult population who visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past 12 months (57.8%) was also lower than New York State (68.4%).[38] Declining for a third consecutive year in 2017, Cortland County's rate of primary care providers (42.0 per 100,000 residents) was nearly half the state average (82.0 per 100,000 residents).[39] [40] The rate for 2017 marks the lowest rate of primary care providers in the dataset.[41] In 2019, Cortland County's ratio of population to primary care providers other than physicians (956:1) was higher than New York State (847:1).[42] A higher ratio means one doctor is responsible for managing more patients.

Various health care providers and specialists operate within Cortland County. Guthrie Cortland Regional Medical Center, Family Health Network of CNY, and Cayuga Medical Group are the three major firms with facilities in the county. Most health care facilities are located within Homer, Cortlandville, and the City of Cortland. Guthrie Cortland Regional Medical Center, the county's only hospital, is in the City of Cortland.[43] Guthrie is currently constructing a new Guthrie Cortland Cancer Treatment Center within the City of Cortland.[44]

D. Access to Public Transit Services

Table 5 compares fleet size information for Cortland County to the 2015 average within the Rural National Transit Database (RNTD; 2017). The comparison indicates that Cortland County's public transit fleet maintains 18 vehicles, or 33.8%, less than the average rural public transit organizer. Cortland County, which is 44.3% rural according to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, has a population that is 5.0% larger than other counties that are comparatively +/- 5% rural. Therefore, Cortland County's population size likely has little effect on the decreased fleet size in Cortland County's public transit system when compared to other rural counties.

Table 5: Rural National Transit Database Average Fleet Size vs Cortland County Public Transit

Sources: First Transit - Cortland County, NY & [Table 21: Fleet Size by Mode, 2015] within North Dakota State University, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute Small Urban and Rural Transit Center. (2017). Rural Transit Fact Book [2017 edition]

Group	Fleet for Fixed Routes	Fleet for Demand Response	Total Fleet Size
Cortland Transit	No Designated Fixed-Route Fleet	No Designated Demand-Response Fleet	17
Rural National Transit Database, Average	11.0	16.2	27.2

Table 6 ranks Cortland County's annual fixed-route and demand-response mileage against 2015 percentiles from the RNTD (2017). Cortland County's primary public transit system traveled 72 times further on a fixed route when compared to its demand-response system. The heavy reliance on fixed route is further reflected in the RNTD comparison, as it falls in the 75th-90th percentile range, while the demand-response mileage is below the 10th percentile.

Table 6: Rural National Transit Database Percentile Rankings of Vehicle Mileage for Fixed-Route and Demand-Response: Cortland County Public Transit

Sources: First Transit - Cortland County, NY & [Table 18: Rural Transit Operating Statistics, Median and Percentile Rankings per Agency, 2015] within North Dakota State University, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute Small Urban and Rural Transit Center. (2017). Rural Transit Fact Book [2017 edition]

Year	Mileage: Fixed-Route	RNTD Percentile	Mileage: Demand Response	RNTD Percentile
2018	368,355	Between 75th – 90th	8,103	Below 10th
2019	380,671	Between 75th – 90th	5,277	Below 10th

Cortland Transit's demand-response system is dependent on being assigned to and fulfilling MAS transportation requests and is often utilized for transportation to various medical facilities, doctor appointments, or health-related service locations. During periods of time where ridership of MAS clients was high, Cortland Transit cited being unable to expand on-demand services due to a lack of certified drivers, partially because of recent NYS CDL-license requirements for drivers, and a lack of available vessels. The effects of the COVID-19 outbreak exacerbated this issue and First Transit laid off ten drivers. Also, during this time, First Transit has experienced delays in acquiring vessel registration.

Following the COVID-19 outbreak, all Cortland Transit fares have been waived. It is not known how long Cortland Transit will be fare free. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, a one-way trip for Routes 1-4 was $1.50, $2.00 for a trip on routes 5 and 6, and $5.00 for a trip on Route 7. Reduced fares are provided to the elderly and for individuals with disabilities. Those fares are $0.75, $1.00, and $2.50, respectively. Monthly passes are $45 except for route 7, for which a monthly pass is $85.00.

Demand-response service ridership has fluctuated considerably and was often the direct result of changes in MAS transportation assignment policy. Because of the COVID-19 outbreak there was a decrease in ridership between March 2020 and May 2020, compared to the same period in 2019. As of June 2020, ridership was improving and may improve further should additional operational capacity be added. However, it is unknown what effects COVID-19 has on this trend, which cannot be speculated on for future demand-response expectations. On March 31, 2020, Cortland Transit was only receiving 5-9 demand-response calls per day, increasing to 15-20 calls per day as of July 2020.

Complaint calls made to Cortland Transit regarding servicing issues indicated potential gaps in service and areas for improvement. A report from 2019 indicated that elderly individuals and populations outside the MAS-eligible populations needed services when they could not rely on family members for transportation. Additionally, riders expressed an interest in expanded bus services in the evenings and weekends, and in more rural parts of Cortland County.

COVID-19 Impact on Cortland County Public Transit
The Federal Transit Administration allocated $2.2 billion to support public transportation in rural areas of the United States.[45] First Transit received over $1 million to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the impacts of COVID-19 on its transportation services.

Data provided by First Transit reveal several underlying trends about ridership. First, total revenue passengers (revenue passengers are riders who have paid a transport operator for his/her trip, and excludes non-paying passengers such as transit operators) were on a downward trend prior to COVID-19. Figure 10 displays total revenue passengers for Cortland County's public transit system between 2017 and 2019, showing a decrease of 12.71%.

Figure 10: Total Revenue Passengers, Cortland County Public Transit: 2017-2019 (Annual)

Source: First Transit - Cortland County, NY
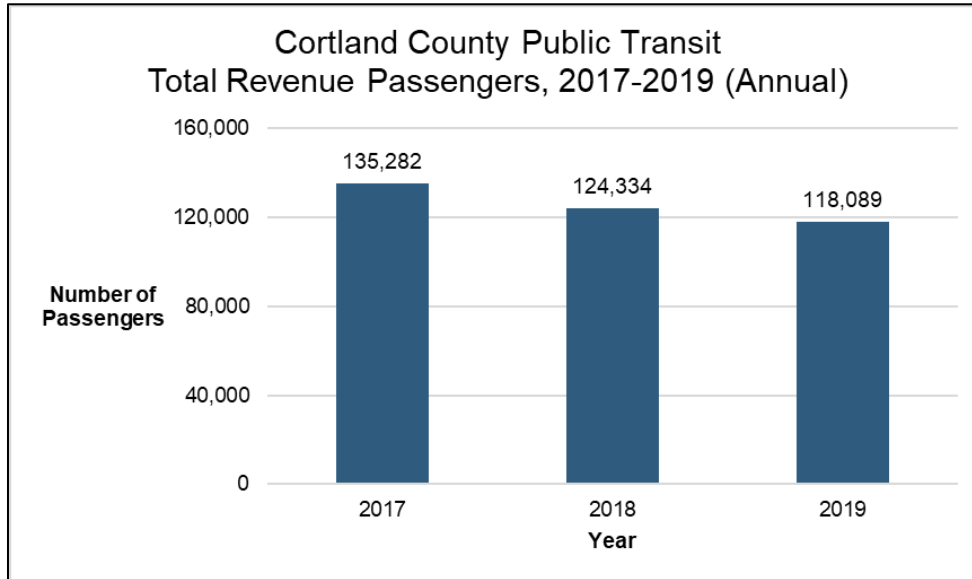
Total revenue passengers decreased during the first seven months of each year between 2017 and 2019. In 2020, a sharp drop in ridership began in March, which aligns with New York Governor Andrew Cuomo's response to COVID-19. Executive orders and the NY Forward Plan with their associated shut-down orders and social-distancing recommendations directly impacted local business operations and closed schools. Cornell University shifted to remote (online) instruction while the JM Murray Center ceased site-based services and stopped its transit line during March.[46] [47] [48] Table 7 shows the total number of revenue passengers for January through July during the years 2017-2020, and Table 8 shows total dial-a-ride passengers for that same period of time.

Trends within the data for total demand-response (Dial-A-Ride) passengers contrast patterns of other Cortland County public transit services. Unlike total revenue passengers, seven-month totals for Dial-A-Ride passengers fluctuate year-over-year (increasing and decreasing every other year). Also contrasting total revenue passengers, January and February 2020 (pre-COVID-19) totals for Dial-A-Ride were increasing year-over-year. While total revenue passengers plummeted in March, ridership for Dial-A-Ride began to decline in April. While other services experienced lower ridership totals across June and July, Dial-A-Ride totals sharply rebounded. Despite the emergence of COVID-19, June 2020 outperformed the previous three years. As of the publication of this document, we do not know the full reasoning behind Dial-A-Ride's swift rebound and outperformance and cannot know whether this momentum will sustain itself over the long term.

Table 7: Total Revenue Passengers, Cortland County Public Transit: 2017-2020 (Jan – July Only)

Source: First Transit - Cortland County, NY

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	11,732	10,880	9,203	9,377
February	12,320	10,439	8,942	8,545
March	13,247	10,660	10,490	6,228*
April	13,149	10,723	11,263	2,207*
May	12,320	10,392	10,861	2,929*
June	11,903	10,614	9,610	3,860*
July	10,535	10,200	9,704	4,332*
7 Month Total	**85,206**	**73,908**	**70,073**	**37,478**

*months directly impacted by COVID-19-related shutdowns, executive orders, and changes to service.

Table 8: Total Dial-A-Ride Passengers, Cortland County Public Transit: 2017-2020 (Jan – July Only)

Source: First Transit - Cortland County, NY

Month	2017	2018	2019	2020
January	269	241	108	155
February	280	227	176	179
March	317	224	242	237*
April	17	352	198	133*
May	280	329	187	144*
June	265	287	194	297*
July	312	257	159	239*
7 Month Total	**1,740**	**1,917**	**1,264**	**1,384***

*months directly impacted by COVID-19-related shutdowns, executive orders, and changes to service.

The distribution of revenue passengers across Cortland County's public transit services noticeably changed in 2020. Figure 11 shows the percentage of passengers using each public transit service line. Because we are examining percent distributions, it is possible to compare annual figures from 2017, 2018, and 2019 with partial-year data from 2020.

Across all years, fixed routes and the JM Murray Center line account for 84-89% of revenue passengers. The largest shift in the distribution between 2017 and 2019 was the JM Murray Center line increasing its share from 26% of all passengers to 34%.

As discussed previously, COVID-19 significantly disrupted select service lines. Through July, fixed routes account for 67% of all revenue passengers in 2020. Despite having zero riders since March, the JM Murray Center line still accounts for 22% of passengers. Meanwhile, Dial-A-Ride doubled its share year-over-year to 4%. TC3 shrunk year-over-year from 3% to 1%. Route 5 and the Cornell line each shrunk by 1%. The 2020 distribution is one of the only concrete measurements we have in gauging shifts in transportation for Cortland County due to COVID-19. Given the uncertainty of the pandemic, we will not speculate about future passenger distributions.

Impact on Alternate Modes of Transportation: Telecommuting and Telehealth

Table 9 displays the percentage of residents who commute to work using alternate modes of transportation.[49] The 2019-2024 Cortland County Community Health Assessment and Improvement Plan discusses the benefits of decreasing vehicle usage and driving alone. Reducing vehicle usage would reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which is beneficial to one's overall health. Specifically, past studies measuring traffic related air pollution (TRAP) found that among the several emissions that are produced by vehicle traffic, nitrogen dioxide poses a specific threat to lung function, increases risks for cardiovascular disease, and increases premature mortality rates.[50][51] The effects of TRAP are more apparent in urbanized communities. However, the lack of access to primary care facilities, proximity to major highways such as State Route 281 and Interstate 81, and additional considerations of cardiovascular and respiratory health in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic increase the risks associated with TRAP in Cortland County. Additional sources connect transportation-based greenhouse gas emissions with negative health outcomes including but not limited to asthma and shorter life expectancy.[52][53][54][55][56]

Based on data from the New York State Department of Health, Cortland County has a lower percentage of commuters using alternative modes of transportation (22.5%) than New York State (22.9%). Additionally, sizeable discrepancy also exists between the county's rate and the New York State Prevention Agenda's 2017 objective (45.6%).[57]

Figure 11: Revenue Passengers by Public Transit Service: 2017-2020

Source: First Transit - Cortland County, NY

Cortland County Public Transit
Revenue Passengers by Subgroup: 2017 (Annual)

- Fixed Routes (1-4)
- Route 5
- TC3
- Cornell
- JM Murray Center
- Dial-A-Ride

Cortland County Public Transit
Revenue Passengers by Subgroup: 2018 (Annual)

- Fixed Routes (1-4)
- Route 5
- TC3
- Cornell
- JM Murray Center
- Dial-A-Ride

Cortland County Public Transit
Revenue Passengers by Subgroup: 2019 (Annual)

- Fixed Routes (1-4)
- Route 5
- TC3
- Cornell
- JM Murray Center
- Dial-A-Ride

Cortland County Public Transit
Revenue Passengers by Subgroup: 2020
(Jan. - July Only)

- Fixed Routes (1-4)
- Route 5
- TC3
- Cornell
- JM Murray Center
- Dial-A-Ride

Table 9: Commuting Using Alternative Modes of Transportation

Source: New York State Department of Health (2020). New York State Prevention Agenda Dashboard - County Level: Cortland County.

Promote a Healthy and Safe Environment	Data Years	Cortland County	New York State (Excluding NYC)	New York State Prevention Agenda Objective
Percentage of people who commute to work using alternate modes of transportation (e.g., public transportation, carpool, bike/walk) or who telecommute	2013-2017	22.5%	22.9%	47.9%

Alternate modes of transportation, like telecommuting and telehealth, became increasingly relevant due to COVID-19. At the creation of this document, a work-from-home culture appears to be part of the "new normal" for many Americans.[58][59][60][61][62][63] Telehealth is defined as "the use of electronic information and telecommunications technologies to support clinical health care, health assessment, diagnosis, intervention, consultation, supervision, patient and professional health-related education, and health administration at a distance (i.e.; without direct physical contact)."[64][65][66][67] According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, telehealth helps communities access healthcare while implementing social-distancing measures.[68] As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth also includes Medicare beneficiaries receiving prescription refills, managing chronic conditions, and obtaining mental health counseling.[69]

Increased reliance on telecommuting and telehealth reveals a glaring problem within Cortland County: the lack of high-speed Internet for all residents, especially those in rural areas. Several studies have noted significant disparities between the quality and accessibility of the Internet between rural and urban communities, specifically noting a lack of quality Internet usage in rural areas.[70][71] In the City of Cortland, the average download speed is

47.39 Mbps. This is 62.0% slower than the average in New York and 72.9% slower than the national average. [72] Variations in Internet speeds are often the direct effect of broadband coverage availability in each area. Broadband is the mechanism required to transfer data at high capacity or bandwidth.[73] For further information about Internet availability within municipalities, refer to broadbandnow.com.

Several studies have shown negative associations of limited Internet capabilities on education and health in rural counties. Lack of Internet access for rural students has been associated with decreased academic performance, a decreased performance on standardized testing platforms, and a decreased likelihood of pursuing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.[74][75] The COVID-19 outbreak has forced many K-12 classrooms to go virtual, increasing the urgency for Internet access for students. While the effects of large-scale online learning remain to be studied, there are indications that without proper broadband access and Internet capabilities, there is likely to be an anticipated increase in educational losses, economic loss, dropout rates, and in achievement gaps among students of color and students from low-income families. [76][77]

Internet accessibility can also improve access to healthcare, especially within rural areas and amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, by allowing patients to participate in telehealth. Telehealth uses technology as a substitute for physically going to a medical facility. This includes both the use of medical technology within the home or creation of an online appointment with a physician. [78] In Cortland County, there are fewer physicians available as a percentage of the population, which contributes to longer distances that need to be travelled to access healthcare and generates higher costs for healthcare in rural areas. Telehealth is safer, more convenient, and a lower-cost alternative to in-person healthcare while the risks of contracting COVID-19 continue to be present. [79][80][81][82][83] While certain aspects of telehealth are restricted, typically regarding in-patient testing and procedures, there is evidence to suggest that telehealth is just as effective as a healthcare solution when compared to face-to-face interactions. [84] Furthermore, high-quality broadband infrastructure can position rural communities to expand telehealth services to address a broader range of medical issues. [85]

Jeffrey Penoyer, Chief Operating Officer at Cayuga Medical Associates, based in Ithaca, New York, stated that telehealth video visits had peaked at about 40% in April 2020, but hover around 10% to 20% as of early December 2020. He further reported that telemedicine is used most frequently for primary care, but that other specialized fields, such as neurology, have had the opportunity to adopt telemedicine practices. The most likely gaps in services would be found among individuals who are technologically illiterate or lack access to the Internet.

E. Individuals with Disabilities

As a preface to this section, we acknowledge the word *disability* is a complex and ever-evolving term.[86][87][88] We rely upon population surveys administered by government agencies as the primary sources for reputable statistics.[89][90]

Based on data from the 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Cortland County's percentage of civilian noninstitutionalized residents with a disability was 13.11%.[91][92] The estimated percentage is higher in Cortland County than New York State (11.47%) and the United States (12.60%).[93] However, rural America has a higher percentage (15.1%).[94][95] The U.S. Census Bureau reports the most common disability within Cortland County is ambulatory difficulty (having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs).[96]

Breaking down prevalence rates for adults aged 18 and over places Cortland County (14.95%) between New York State (13.51%) and the United States (15.13%). When examining prevalence rates by age group, Cortland County has a lower percentage of residents with a disability in the "under 5 years," "18-34," and "75 and over" age-bands than New York State or the United States.[97] As shown in Table 10, disability rates rise precipitously with age. The estimated percentage of residents with a disability aged 65-74 (27.7%) is greater than the cumulative percentage of residents 64 and under (27.6%).[98]

Table 10: Individuals with Disabilities by Age Subgroup, Cortland County
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Age Group	Total (Estimated)	Percent with a Disability (Estimated)
Under 5 years	2,527	0.6%
5 to 17 years	6,906	7.6%
18 to 34 years	13,929	4.5%
35 to 64 years	17,036	14.9%
65 to 74 years	4,311	27.7%
75 years and over	2,943	45.8%

Anecdotal transportation concerns from advocacy groups for individuals with disabilities in Cortland County echoed concerns that are similarly noted in nationwide surveys and literature, such as the Strategy Guide to Enable and Promote the Use of Fixed-Route Transit by People with Disabilities (2014).[99] For example, the desire to use the county's fixed-route public transit service more frequently conflicts with its limited hours of operation. Concerns were also raised about the overall accessibility and service-area coverage of fixed-route public transit service.

Multiple discussions with disability self-advocacy groups in October and November 2020 have highlighted several transportation accessibility concerns. Specifically, poor sidewalk infrastructure throughout Cortland County and downtown Cortland has been identified as a barrier to individuals who use a wheelchair or mobilized scooter. Poor sidewalk infrastructure doubles as a safety concern due to it forcing individuals with disabilities to travel on the sides of busy roadways. Repairing damaged sidewalks has also been cited as a high-importance topic in the General Population Survey and the Individuals with Disabilities and Low-Income Population Focus Groups (see Appendix A, Table A-1 and Appendix B) Additionally, a need for more accessible crosswalks for individuals who are sight-impaired has been identified. There is need for additional crossing signs that flash and that emit noise commands.

There also exists a need for additional disability-related training for Cortland Transit drivers and the need to introduce vessel modifications. Specifically, individuals who use wheelchairs on Cortland Transit vessels indicated that at times they have not been properly secured and must hold on to a nearby object throughout the duration of their trip. Furthermore, it had been mentioned that inadequate space due to social-distancing guidelines does not allow for personal assistants to be seated near their clients at times throughout a trip and can be a source of anxiety for individuals who rely on personal assistants.[100]

F. Older Adults within Cortland County

For the purpose of the CPTP, the term older adults refers to residents 65 years of age or older. Older adults represent a growing percentage of America's total population. By 2029, the baby boomer cohort will be between the ages of 66-83 and may experience problems with driving.[101] The number of individuals aged 65 and older is projected to surpass 72 million by 2030.[102] Likewise, the number of adults aged 70 and older are projected to reach 53 million by 2030.[103]

Paralleling the national trend, the population of older adults within Cortland County appears to be increasing over time. In 2000, only 12.46% of Cortland County's population was aged 65 and over. By 2010, older adults accounted for 13.09% of the population.[104] According to data from the 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, older adults were 15.68% of Cortland County's population during 2018. Table 11 shows the geographic breakdown of this percentage.[105] The percentage of older adults within Cortland County during 2018 was marginally higher than the percentage for New York State (15.64%).[106] During 2018, the racial/ethnic composition of Cortland County's older adult population was 97.5% White/Caucasian.[107]

Older adults face reduced mobility when navigating around the community. The reduced mobility and travel limitations are the result of physical, mental, social, legal, and economic hurdles, including poor visibility or reduced income to fund transportation costs. [108] In Cortland County, 27.7% of individuals aged 65 to 74 are estimated to have a disability, while an estimated 45.8% of those 75 and older have a disability (Table 10). While having a disability does not necessarily prevent someone from driving, medical-related disabilities are the main reason for adults to stop driving. [109] [110]

The 2019 Cortland County AAA Needs Assessment Survey reflects the elderly community's concern regarding reduced mobility. A total of 23.93% of respondents stated that transportation options for those who cannot drive is important and a concern. The percentage of those concerned who also cannot drive a personal vehicle, is higher than the 14.39% that indicated that driving their own car is important and a concern. (Table 12) As displayed on Figure 12, the geographic concentration of individuals aged 65 and over appears highest in Cuyler (19.4%), Homer (18.6%), and Truxton (18.2%).

Table 11: Cortland County Population of Individuals Aged 65+ by County Subdivision

Source: Cortland County Area Agency on Aging

County Subdivision	Percent Estimate of Subdivision with Population Aged 65+	County Subdivision	Percent Estimate of Subdivision with Population Aged 65+
Cincinnatus	18.2	Marathon	17.6
City of Cortland	13.4	Preble	17.3
Cortlandville	17.8	Scott	16.9
Cuyler	19.4	Solon	13.7
Freetown	12.4	Taylor	16.1
Harford	16.5	Truxton	18.2
Homer	18.6	Virgil	17.7

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Table 12: Needs Assessment Survey Questions within AAA 2019 Needs Assessment

Source: Cortland County Area Agency on Aging

Question	Important and is a concern
Transportation options for those unable to drive	23.93%
Transportation to medical appointments	20.47%
Transportation to out of county medical appointments	19.83%
Transportation to the grocery store and other errands	17.67%
Driving my own car	14.39%

Data from the Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research's New York State Traffic Safety Statistical Repository reveal microtrends within Cortland County's older adult population. Between 2016-2019, the 65-69 age-band had the highest percentage of automobile crashes among older adults within Cortland County.[111] During the same years, male drivers accounted for 61% of automobile crashes among older adults.[112]

The needs of the elderly population within Cortland County are primarily addressed through programs and initiatives created by the Cortland County AAA. The AAA maintains a Meals on Wheels program that serviced 368 individuals in 2019 and provides home assessments and updates on elderly individuals. The AAA also provides funding for Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP), which provides case management, in-home services, non-institutional respite, and ancillary services to dependent elderly persons. EISEP operations in Cortland County are supported by CAPCO, who serves as the fiscal intermediary and clerical support organization.[113] The AAA aims to reduce the expected costs of elderly populations through the implementation of food stamp assistance, Farmers' Market coupons, Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), and provision of technical support for home-improvement grants.

The AAA uses a worker exchange list to recruit and provide services to the elderly population. The AAA does not do a background check on these individuals, and the responsibility to do so falls on the individual being serviced. The workers do tasks ranging from laundry, transport patients to appointments, or yardwork. A worker is also available to assist individuals who use oxygen tanks to change out the tank when required.

Figure 12: Population aged 65 and over (percent estimate) - Cortland County by County Subdivision

Cortland County

TOWN OF SCOTT

TOWN OF PREBLE

TOWN OF TRUXTON

TOWN OF CUYLER

TOWN OF HOMER

VILLAGE OF HOMER

CITY OF CORTLAND

TOWN OF CORTLANDVILLE

VILLAGE OF MCGRAW

TOWN OF SOLON

TOWN OF TAYLOR

TOWN OF VIRGIL

TOWN OF FREETOWN

TOWN OF CINCINNATUS

TOWN OF HARFORD

TOWN OF LAPEER

TOWN OF MARATHON

VILLAGE OF MARATHON

TOWN OF WILLET

Percent of Population Aged 65 and Over

	10.4-13.0
	13.1-14.0
	14.1-16.0
	16.1-18.0
	18.1-19.4
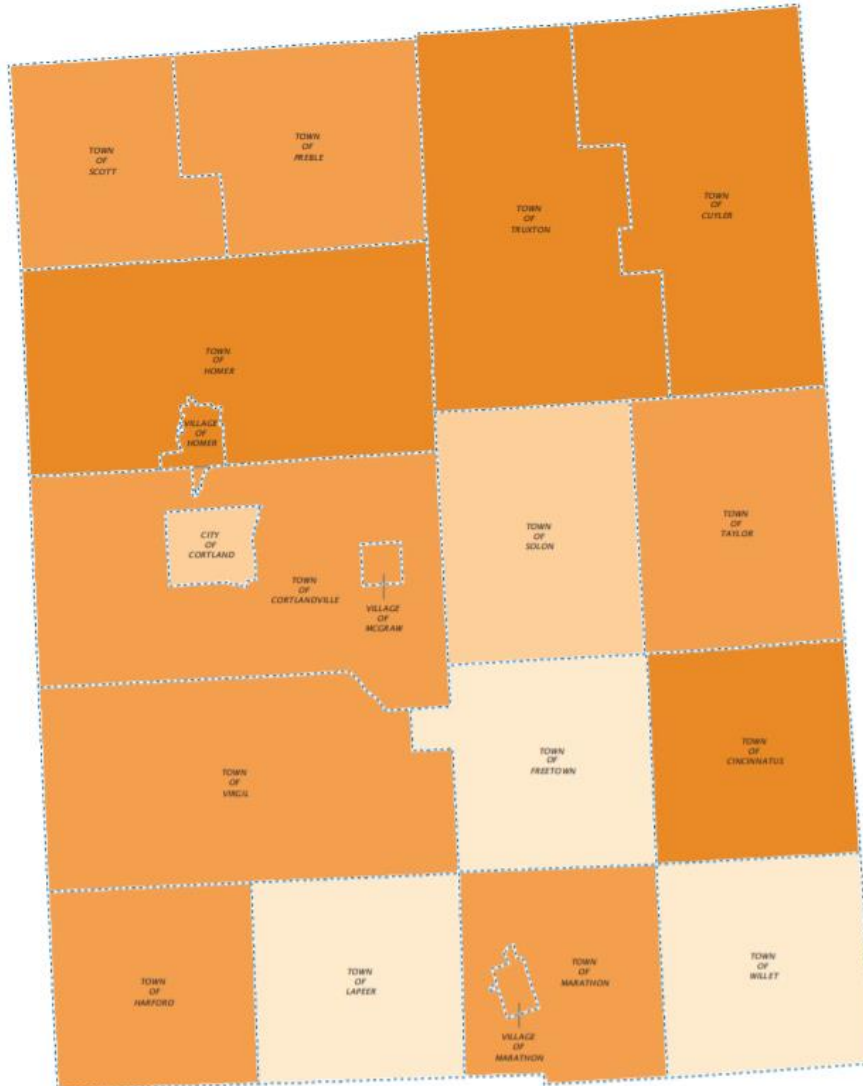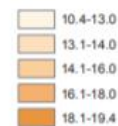
There are several circumstantial gaps in services for elderly individuals. Individuals who claim a single income of over $875 per month, or $1,284 per month if married, do not qualify for Medicaid benefits and must pay for services, taxis, and other forms of transportation out of pocket. [114] Pamela Winn, the AAA Aging Services Coordinator, indicated that those just marginally above this income threshold struggle the most with these payments. Additionally, there are certain transportation services that are limited due to a given health-related circumstance. For example, a patient with dementia cannot be transported in their own vehicle by an AAA assistant, with the accompaniment of their spouse, because of liability reasons. Therefore, individuals who may be deemed unfit to drive, but still legally retain a driver's license, may choose to drive themselves to appointments.

COVID-19 has impacted the services that AAA has provided, the quality of life for the elderly population, and the means through which to provide certain resources. Meals that are delivered through the Meals on Wheels program are now delivered without the component of face-to-face contact whenever possible, and workers are supplied with masks and hand sanitizer. Health assessments of elderly individuals are now conducted over the phone, which prevents AAA specialists from conducting assessments of their client's living conditions. The AAA has also stopped doing home visits and many of the seniors have cancelled their personal home aides to prevent the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Finally, seniors who have a spouse or partner that is in the hospital or nursing home are unable to visit due to current NYS guidelines that seek to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in areas where patients are especially vulnerable.

The COVID-19 outbreak has caused concern for the effects of loneliness on one's wellbeing.[115] There is special consideration for the effect of loneliness on older populations that might be separated from friends, family, or their spouse. The risk of loneliness for older adults appears to be present during the initial stages of separation and is typically an acute concern.[116] Some effects of loneliness include an increased risk of anxiety, depression, cognitive disfunction, heart disease, and increased mortality.[117] [118] Given the policy restrictions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within nursing homes and service agencies, there is existing evidence that suggests that similarly negative effects could also be present within the Cortland County population.

G. Persons with Limited Income

As a preface to this section, we acknowledge financial figures and methodologies vary from source to source. For this reason, number ranges may be used instead of exact figures.

As shown in Figure 13, the median household income for Cortland County during 2018 ranged between $51,700-$54,500.[119] [120] [121] [122] Among reported figures, Cortland County had a lower median household income than New York State ($65,300-$67,600) and the United States ($60,200-$63,200).[123] [124] [125] [126] It is important to recognize statewide financial figures such as median household income are distorted by the New York City metropolitan area, due to a higher cost of living.[127] [128] An official median household income for New York State excluding the higher cost of living "Downstate" and "Mid-Hudson" regions was unavailable.

Figure 13: Median Household Incomes and Average Median Values for Household Income, 2018
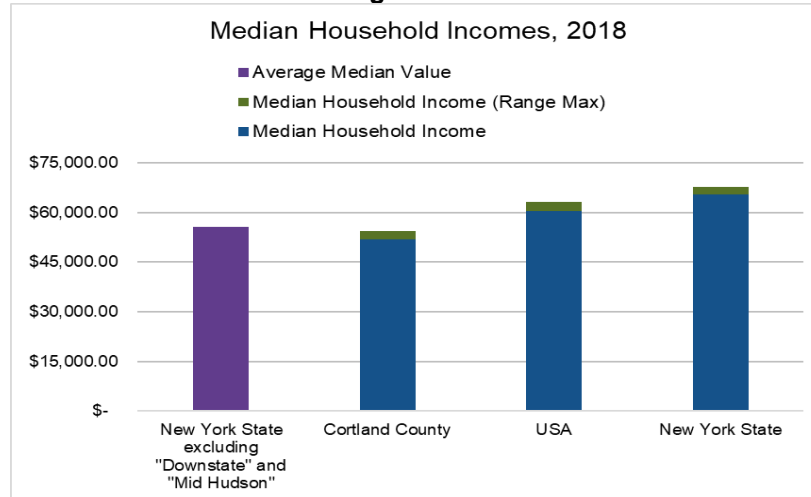
Poverty

In 2018, 15.5% of Cortland County's population lived in poverty (Figure 15).[129] [130] [131] Cortland County's rate of poverty was greater in 2018 than New York State (14.6%), national levels (14.1%), and the 2014-2018 average for nonmetro regions in the American northeast (13.1%).[132] [133]

Vehicle Ownership

Owning a vehicle directly impacts barriers to accessing health care, obtaining groceries/prescriptions, and attending employment. It is important to acknowledge a handful of counties including and surrounding New York City distort figures for car ownership, given the area's robust mass transit system. For this reason, it is more realistic to compare Cortland County to national or regional rates. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average rural household has 2.4 vehicles. Approximately 7.0% of rural households lack owning a vehicle altogether.[134]

Based on the 2014-2018 American Community Survey Estimates, approximately 8.3% of Cortland County's occupied housing units do not have a vehicle.[135][136] Cortland County's rate of occupied housing units without a vehicle (8.3%) is lower than other counties in Central New York except Madison (5.6%).[137] As shown in Figure 15, county subdivisions with the highest percentage of zero-vehicle ownership include Lapeer (18.8%), City of Cortland (13.3%), and Cortlandville (9.6%).[138]

Anecdotal information from stakeholders helped identify the need to further examine households with one vehicle. As expressed by stakeholders, it is not uncommon for one household member to commute back and forth to work using the household automobile, leaving remaining members to resort to walking. During colder months, walking is not always practical. As shown on Figure 16, the highest percentage of zero- and single-vehicle ownership households are in Cincinnatus, Cuyler, and the City of Cortland.[139] As a point of reference, the national average for occupied housing with one or fewer vehicles is 41.7%.[140]

Cost of Owning a Personal Vehicle

This section examines the feasibility of vehicle ownership among persons with limited income in Cortland County. The total costs of owning a vehicle vary from person to person, which includes vehicle transaction price, depreciation, financing, fuel, insurance, fees, taxes, repairs, and maintenance.[141][142][143] Therefore, we used aggregate data at the national and county levels for reference figures and calculations.

Reports continue to emerge about average Americans, not just those with limited incomes, being increasingly unable to afford personal vehicles.[144][145][146][147][148] Across the United States, the average transaction price (amount customers spend to purchase a vehicle) sharply rose between 2009 and 2019. The rate prices rose exceeded the rate of inflation for the period.[149][150][151][152][153][154] As shown in Table 13, average transaction prices for new vehicled ranged between $26,200-$28,600 in 2009. The average ranged between $34,600-$39,000 by 2019.[155][156][157][158][159][160][161] Similarly, average transaction prices for used vehicle prices grew from ~$8,400 in 2009 to ~$20,600 during 2019.[162][163]

Table 13: Average Transaction Prices for New and Used Vehicles, 2009-2019.

Sources: Compilation of data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Edmunds, New York Times, Kelley Blue Book, LendingTree, J.D. Power, and Reuters.

Average Transaction Price	New Vehicle	Used Vehicle
2009	$26,200-$28,600	~$8,400
2019	$34,600-$39,000	~$20,600

As shown in Table 14, the prevalence of auto loans rose sharply in recent years. The percentage of "current model year + eight previous model year" vehicles on the road with financing increased from 6.46% in 2001 to 82.11% in 2019.[164] Haughwout et al. (2019) supports a similar trend: ~20.0% of Americans had an auto loan in 1999 compared to ~33.3% in 2018.[165]

Figure 14: Percentage of Families and Individuals Below the Poverty Line

Source: Cortland County Planning Department
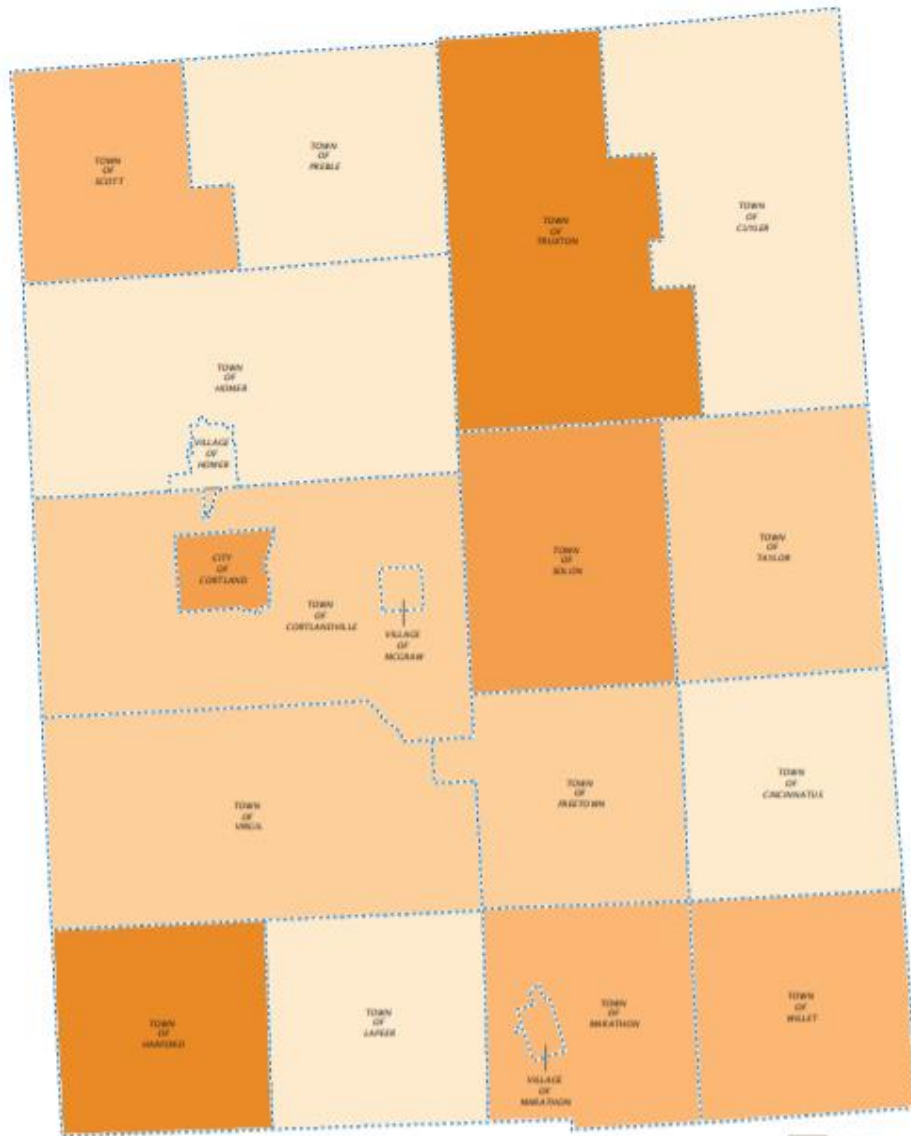
Percentage of Families and People Whose Income
in the Past 12 Months is Below the Poverty Level

3.9-8.0
8.1-12.0
12.1-16.0
16.1-20.0
20.1-24.0
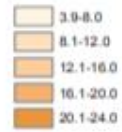
Cortland County

Percent Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicles Available

	2.0-5.0
	5.1-8.0
	8.1-11.0
	11.1-13.0
	13.1-18.8
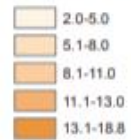
Figure 16: Cortland County Households With One or No Vehicle, 2014-2018
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Percent of Occupied Housing Units with One or No Vehicle,
Cortland County by County Subdivision
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018
American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Subdivision	Percent
NYS Average	61.8%
City of Cortland	54.2%
Cincinnatus	48.3%
Cuyler	43.2%
USA Average	41.7%
Freetown	36.9%
Truxton	36.3%
Preble	35.1%
Harford	35.0%
Cortlandville	34.3%
Scott	34.1%
Lapeer	33.1%
Homer	31.3%
Virgil	30.4%
Willet	30.3%
Marathon	27.4%
Solon	23.1%
Taylor	22.4%

Table 14: Percentage of Vehicles on Road with Financing, 2001 and 2019

Experian reported annual numbers for the percentage of "current model year" plus "previous 8 model years" with remaining financing on the road. Data within Zabritski, M. (2020). State of the automotive finance market [Q1 2020 Report].

Year	2001	2019
Percent of Vehicles on Road with Financing *Current Model Year + 8 Previous Model Years	6.46%	82.11%

The increase in the amount financed for auto loans during the past decade is displayed in Table 15. Between the first quarter of 2009 and the fourth quarter of 2019, the average amount financed for a new vehicle increased from $25,088 to $31,692 (+26%). The average amount financed for a used vehicle increased from $15,980 to $18,877 (+18%).[166]

Table 15: Average Amount of Money Financed to Purchase New Personal Vehicle

Source: Graph created using data from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2020). Average amount financed for used car loans at finance companies (DTCTLVEUANQ) and Average amount financed for new car loans at finance companies (DTCTLVENANM).

Average Amount Financed	New Vehicle	Used Vehicle
Q1 2009	$25,088	$15,980
Q4 2019	$31,692	$18,877
Percent Change	+26%	+18%

We were able to access county-level vehicle financing data for the first quarter of 2020 from Experian.[167] For the sake of generating baseline numbers, we assume Cortland County residents purchase a vehicle within Cortland or its seven contiguous counties. As shown in Table 16, the average amount financed for a new vehicle ranged between $29,115-$32,402.[168] The average amount financed for a used vehicle ranged between $19,098-$20,254.[169] Average amounts financed for new vehicles in the first quarter of 2020 are lower than fourth quarter 2019 national rates reported by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis ($31,692).[170]

Table 16: January – March (Q1) 2020 New and Used Vehicle Loan Data: Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Tioga, Tompkins Counties

Source: Experian - Franchise and Independent Dealers. New and Used Vehicles. Loan Only

Q1 2020 Vehicle Financing Data	Cortland County	Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Madison, Onondaga, Tioga, Tompkins Counties [Range]
Average Amount Financed: New Vehicles	$29,669	$29,115 - $32,402
Average Loan Length: New Vehicles	66 months	65-68 months
Average Amount Financed: Used Vehicles	$19,156	$19,098 - $20,254
Average Loan Length: Used Vehicles	65 months	64-65 months

We estimated average annual costs for vehicle ownership in Cortland County through the first 5 years based on statistics and formulas from multiple sources. The calculated costs for a new vehicle with financing average between $10,600-$11,400 annually. Costs for a used vehicle with financing averaged between $8,800-$9,300 annually.[171] [172] [173] [174] [175] [176] [177] [178] Our numbers bookend averages from the American Automobile Association's *Your Driving Costs* (2019), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Consumer Expenditure Survey - purchasing, operating, and maintaining private vehicles* (2017), and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Household Expenditures in Urban and Rural Areas* (2020).[179] [180] [181] We calculated ownership costs excluding the vehicle itself (i.e.; the vehicle was gifted or paid off) to be ~$4,700 annually. Our estimate is marginally lower than U.S Bureau of Transportation Statistics' (2018) *Transportation Expenditures for Personal Vehicles, 2017.* [182]

The four lowest income brackets from the U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for Cortland County are shown in Table 17.

Table 17: Select Income Brackets for Cortland County, NY

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2018). Selected Economic Characteristics. All counties within New York state - [Table ID: DP03].

Income and Benefits (in 2018 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)	Estimate	Percent Estimate
Total households	17,685	100.00%
Less than $10,000	812	4.60%
$10,000 to $14,999	1,148	6.50%
$15,000 to $24,999	1,702	9.60%
$25,000 to $34,999	1,703	9.60%

When considering after-tax income against the estimated costs of vehicle ownership shown in Tables 18 and 19, it is apparent vehicle ownership is simply not feasible for every income bracket.[183] [184] For example, a household earning $10,000 or less annually would likely prioritize essential expenses such as food and rent instead of a vehicle. Following the same logic, a household earning ~$26,000 annually would need to spend most of its after-tax income to purchase and/or maintain a vehicle.[185] Unless a vehicle was acquired for considerably less than our estimated average, even the highest household income within Table 18 ($34,999) would need to stretch their budget considerably to afford a vehicle.

Table 18: Total Vehicle Ownership Cost Breakdown

Costs	New	Used
NYS insurance (2020)	$1,582	$1,582
Average Annual New Car Payments (Cortland County incl. NYS tax and fees)	$5,904 - $6,552/yr	$4,118 - $4,560/yr
AAA's gas total (2019) for NYS average 11,132.50 miles/yr	$2,828	$2,828
Total	$10,701.35 - $11,349.35	$8,831.25 - $9,273.25

Table 19: Vehicle Ownership Cost Breakdown (AAA Estimates)

Ownership Costs Per Year, 2019 Weighted Avg., All Vehicles	$6201
Cost Per Mile, 2019 Weighted Avg. Fuel, All Vehicles ($0.2540/mile) @ 11,132.50 miles/yr.	$2,828
Total	**$9,029**

.
Finance costs on new car purchases have jumped 24% in 2019, according to new AAA research, pushing the average annual cost of vehicle ownership to $9,282, or $773.50 a month. That is the highest cost associated with new vehicle ownership since AAA began tracking expenses in 1950 and a reminder that the true costs of owning a vehicle extend far beyond maintenance and fuel.[186]

During 2019, AAA found the average annual cost of vehicle ownership equaled $9,282.[187] As shown in Figure 17, the total cost for owning a vehicle is rising year-over-year.

Figure 17: American Automotive Association - Annual Costs of Ownership, Select Statistics from "Your Driving Costs" 2017, 2018, 2019.
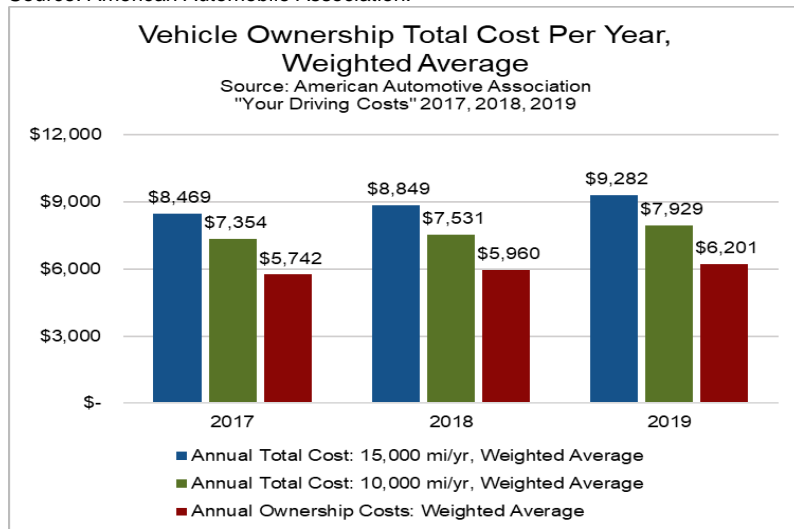
Among the lowest 30% of household incomes in Cortland County, owning a personal vehicle may not be a realistic option. Aside from a house, a personal vehicle is one of the largest financial assets that there is for an individual, and the cost of owning a vehicle as a percentage of total income increases as the amount of household income decreases. (Table 20) [188] [189] The total cost of vehicle ownership increases as individuals drive longer distances, which is often the case in rural areas. [190] Having less purchasing power for a vehicle that is well-maintained and reliable at the point of purchase means that unanticipated repair costs will occur at a higher frequency, thus burdening low-income families even more. This is troublesome considering that in rural America, 30% of jobs in 2016 required the use of a vehicle. [191] [192] Thus, access to a vehicle is often necessary to participate in the economy.

Table 20: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Average Household Transportation Expenditures in Urban and Rural Areas (current dollars)

	Average after tax income (dollars)	Transportation spending per household (dollars)	Transportation spending as percent of after-tax income	Households with no vehicles (percent)
Rural (2018)	$49,701	$9,871	19.9%	7.0%
Rural (2017)	$49,823	$10,293	20.7%	5.0%
Rural (2016)	$57,871	$10,047	17.4%	8.0%
Rural (2015)	$45,689	$10,294	22.5%	9.0%

H. Mobility Gap Methodology

The mobility gap methodology is used to identify the amount of service required to provide an equal amount of service to households that have access to vehicles and those that do not. The National Household Travel Survey (NHTS) provides data that allows for calculations to be made relating to trip rates. Separate trip rates are generated for various regions throughout the United States to help account for any locational inequities. Trip rates are also separated by general density and other factors such as age. This methodology was updated using the available 2019 NHTS data.

The data was stratified by indicating "New York State" and "Rural" as characteristics of the analysis. The trip rate for zero-vehicle households in rural areas of New York State was determined to be 4.0 daily trips. For rural households with at least one vehicle, the trip rate was 4.7 daily trips. The mobility gap is calculated by subtracting the daily trip rate of zero vehicle households from the daily trip rate of households with at least one vehicle. Thus, the mobility gap is represented as .7 household trips per day. This mobility gap is nearly half that of the national average of 1.3 for rural households. To calculate the transit need for each census block group, the number of zero vehicle households is multiplied by the mobility gap number. Table 22 shows this information broken out by census block group. In total, 1,032 daily trips need to be provided via transit to make up for the gap in mobility.

I. General Public Demand

Based on the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) B-36 project, a technique for estimating demand for public, or nonprogram, passenger transportation in rural areas can be calculated based on demographic characteristics using the following formula: Non-Program Demand (trips per year) = (2.20 x Population age 60+) + (5.21 x Mobility-Limited Population age 18 to 64) + (1.52 x Residents of Households having No Vehicle). The results may have a heightened margin of error due to the estimation of the mobility-limited population and residents of households having no vehicles. Mobility-limited populations were estimated by multiplying the population of individuals with disabilities in Cortland County by the national percentage of individuals who have mobility issues because of their disability. Residents of households having no vehicles were estimated by multiplying the average household size of Cortland County by the number of zero-vehicle households in Cortland County indicated in the 2014-2018 ACS Survey. The model estimates a public demand of 33,842 annual trips.

J. Greatest Needs Index

"Greatest transit need" is defined as those areas in Cortland County with the highest density of zero-vehicle households, elderly population, mobility limited, and low-income populations. These populations are generally considered to be the individuals that have the greatest need for public transit services.

Methodology

The US Census and the ACS data were used to calculate the greatest transit need index. The categories used for the calculation were zero vehicle households, elderly population, mobility-limited populations, and low-income populations. Using these categories, a "transit need index" was developed to determine the areas with the greatest transit need. The density of the population for each census block group within each category was

calculated, and six scoring segments were chosen to represent a reasonable range. The data was collected via the U.S. Census Bureau 2014-2018 5-year estimates data, while the mobility-limited population was estimated using mobility-limited population-proportion estimates from the 2013 Cortland County CPTP.

The census block groups in the segment with the lowest densities were given a score of 1. The census block groups in the segment with the next lowest densities were given a score of 2. This process continued for the remainder of the block groups. The block groups in the segment with the highest densities were given a score of 6. This scoring was completed for each of the categories (zero-vehicle households, elderly population, mobility limited population, and low-income population). After each census block group was scored for the four categories, the four scores were added to achieve an overall score.

Table 21 presents the rank for each block group in Cortland County. The scores range from 4 (lowest need) to 24 (highest need).

K. Community Perspectives

Surveys, focus groups, and personal interviews provided qualitative feedback about residents' perceptions and behaviors relating to transportation, with the following respondents:

General Public Surveys: 186
Agency Surveys: 23
Employer Surveys: 65
Ridership Surveys: 59 (58 submitted in March pre-COVID19 + 1 submitted in August post-COVID19)
Focus Groups and Calls: 12 (6 groups, 6 calls)
Key Informant Interviews: 10

Focus Groups

A total of six focus groups and follow-up phone calls were conducted with members from the target populations (summaries included in Appendix B). Individuals across all groups believe the City of Cortland is more connected by way of public transit compared to rural areas of the county. They desired to be independent and admitted a reluctance to ask others for a ride. It is worth mentioning that individuals within the older adult demographic were willing to retake their driver's license examination after a certain age, noting driving ability and/or confidence declines with age.

Improved sidewalks, more thorough snow-clearing during winter months, and improved road conditions were identified as areas of improvement for their mobility needs. Many said better communication between the transit system and the public would go a long way in terms of increasing satisfaction with the bus service. The COVID-19 pandemic has deepened feelings of isolation, which highlights the need for strong social bonds and technological capabilities to stay in touch with family/friends who are out of town.

Interestingly, many participants from all groups were willing to use alternative modes of transportation, aside from their personal vehicle, if doing so was pleasant, convenient, cost-effective, and got them to their destination in a timely fashion. However, parents with young children felt that modes of transportation besides their personal automobile were not feasible.

Stakeholder Interviews

A total of 12 interviews with key stakeholders were conducted throughout various dates in August (summaries included in Appendix B). Stakeholders commonly expressed a need to expand the public transit system into evening hours, and to include weekend services. Several stakeholders also expressed the need for the bus company to provide more frequent trips to rural parts of the county and cited the COVID-19 pandemic as a financial barrier that for the foreseeable future would stand in the way of their municipality or company being able to subsidize the bus system.

Table 21: Greatest Transit Need Model, Cortland County

Census Track	Census Block Group	Land Area (Sq. Miles)	Total Population (2014-2018 ACS)	Total Number of Households (2014-2018 ACS)	Zero-Vehicle Occupied Households #	Density (Hhlds Per Sq. Mile)	Rank	Older Adults 65 & Older #	Density (Persons Per Sq. Mile)	Rank	Mobility Limited Populations #	Density (Persons Per Sq. Mile)	Rank	Households Below Poverty Line #	Density (Persons Per Sq. Mile)	Rank	Overall Score (4-24)	Final (1-6)
9701	1	42.1637	746	385	4	0.1	1	130	3.1	1	36	0.8	1	26	0.6	1	4	1
9701	2	32.6766	698	304	18	0.6	2	123	3.8	2	17	0.5	1	24	0.7	1	5	1
9701	3	29.7253	1134	448	9	0.3	1	155	5.2	1	41	1.4	1	32	1.1	2	7	1
9701	4	43.5065	836	403	13	0.3	1	162	3.7	1	33	0.8	1	41	0.9	1	4	1
9702	1	15.8046	621	270	29	1.8	3	91	5.8	1	19	1.2	1	17	1.1	2	8	2
9702	2	11.7522	834	432	12	1.0	3	160	13.6	3	18	1.6	3	21	1.8	3	11	3
9702	3	22.4112	1059	517	13	0.6	2	179	8.0	2	19	0.9	1	30	1.3	1	7	1
9702	4	24.7819	1231	410	14	0.6	2	212	8.6	2	14	0.5	2	46	1.9	3	8	2
9702	5	24.5285	1959	741	28	1.1	3	308	12.6	3	33	1.4	2	76	3.1	3	11	3
9703	1	0.3014	1090	471	12	39.8	4	203	673.5	4	23	75.9	5	12	39.8	4	17	4
9703	2	0.4852	760	286	10	20.6	4	182	375.1	4	2	4.7	3	17	35.0	4	15	4
9703	3	0.3024	704	328	0	0.0	1	138	456.3	1	4	14.0	4	0	0.0	1	11	3
9703	4	0.2521	517	274	0	0.0	1	121	480.0	1	17	67.7	4	79	313.4	5	15	4
9704	1	11.7953	1113	559	52	4.4	4	239	20.3	4	30	2.5	3	77	6.5	3	13	3
9704	2	9.8186	1105	469	41	4.2	4	162	16.5	4	22	2.3	3	26	2.6	3	13	3
9704	3	8.5716	476	220	6	0.7	2	73	8.5	2	8	0.9	2	6	0.7	2	7	1
9705	1	0.5041	1652	652	42	83.3	5	413	819.3	5	41	81.9	5	78	154.7	5	19	5
9705	2	0.1589	680	371	43	270.6	5	162	1019.5	5	18	115.5	5	39	245.4	5	21	5
9705	3	0.0731	550	411	56	766.1	6	28	383.0	6	18	240.8	6	134	1833.1	6	22	6
9705	4	0.4117	887	418	22	53.4	4	79	191.9	4	59	142.2	5	118	286.6	5	18	5
9706	1	0.1637	1024	482	103	629.2	6	224	1368.4	6	56	344.0	6	145	885.8	6	24	6
9706	2	0.1111	614	607	139	1251.1	6	48	432.0	6	31	276.3	6	103	927.1	6	22	6
9706	3	0.1728	666	409	68	393.5	6	154	891.2	6	7	38.5	4	56	324.1	5	21	5
9706	4	0.0667	582	259	33	494.8	5	40	599.7	6	16	244.3	6	38	569.7	5	22	6
9707	1	0.0966	777	292	42	434.8	6	39	403.7	4	13	136.7	5	114	1180.1	6	21	5
9707	2	0.1773	726	319	0	0.0	1	163	919.3	6	7	36.9	4	43	242.5	5	16	4
9707	3	0.2577	1249	498	0	0.0	1	233	904.2	6	10	38.8	4	0	0.0	1	12	3
9707	4	0.0974	932	457	25	256.7	5	137	1406.6	6	21	210.5	5	100	1026.7	6	22	6
9707	5	0.1748	1222	492	58	331.8	5	185	1058.4	5	42	237.7	6	101	577.8	6	22	6
9708	1	0.2584	2518	90	8	31.0	4	23	89.0	4	30	116.9	4	16	61.9	4	17	4
9709	1	0.5	1742	533	72	144.0	5	268	536.0	5	162	324.0	6	122	244.0	6	21	5
9709	2	0.3128	887	565	74	236.6	5	203	649.0	5	36	116.3	5	23	73.5	4	19	5
9709	3	0.1923	1328	558	65	338.0	6	17	88.4	3	69	359.1	6	202	1050.4	6	21	5
9709	4	0.1842	792	462	7	38.0	4	110	597.2	5	58	313.9	6	34	184.6	5	20	5
9710	1	7.0266	702	302	7	1.0	3	109	15.5	3	6	0.9	2	7	1.0	2	10	2
9710	2	3.7496	895	355	0	0.0	1	255	68.0	3	99	26.5	3	48	12.8	4	12	3
9710	3	6.7054	945	459	30	4.5	4	234	34.9	3	16	2.4	3	0	0.0	1	11	3
9710	4	1.7184	1754	761	123	71.6	5	242	140.8	4	58	33.7	4	242	140.8	4	17	4
9710	5	0.5099	1244	432	54	105.9	5	149	292.2	5	0	0.0	1	66	129.4	4	14	4
9711	1	42.774	1440	639	20	0.5	2	199	4.7	2	50	1.2	2	68	1.6	2	7	1
9711	2	26.0531	1090	574	10	0.4	2	137	5.3	2	27	1.0	1	58	2.2	2	8	2
9711	3	7.9199	1168	547	8	1.0	3	221	27.9	3	53	6.6	3	26	3.3	3	12	3
9711	4	25.4842	878	519	17	0.7	2	160	6.3	2	9	0.3	1	57	2.2	2	8	2
9712	1	25.3408	959	366	36	1.4	3	108	4.3	3	27	1.1	2	61	2.4	2	10	2
9712	2	30.672	1343	578	27	0.9	3	240	7.8	3	32	1.1	3	53	1.7	4	12	3
9712	3	24.1723	867	411	10	0.4	2	143	5.9	1	18	0.8	1	14	0.6	1	6	1
9712	4	16.5615	1127	431	15	0.9	2	186	11.2	3	20	1.2	2	19	1.1	2	9	2
Study Area Total		501.4784	48123	20766	1475			7547			1447			2715				

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates. U.S. Census Bureau. (2018)

Surveys

Multiple voluntary-response surveys were administered to Cortland County public transit riders, agency providers with transportation options, employers, and the public from January through August 2020. Seven Valleys Health Coalition contacted 28 agency providers and 192 employers for their respective surveys. The General Population Survey was initially distributed in hardcopy at the City of Cortland's Chillibration event (02/29/2020) and the Cortland Counts Forum event (03/04/2020). Using suggestions from National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's (2015) *Use of Web-Based Rider Feedback to Improve Public Transit Services*, additional responses were solicited electronically using county agency listservs, email blasts, the Way2Go Cortland Facebook page, as well as the Way2Go Cortland website.[193]

Survey response rates were lower than the previous CPTP due to the lack of funding for incentives (i.e., no gift cards to award randomly to respondents) and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Survey responses were primarily submitted electronically.

Cortland Transit Ridership Survey

Among responses from 59 individuals who use Cortland County's First Transit system, 82.75% indicated that they travel to the bus pickup area from their home, 56.90% indicated that they get access to the bus stop by walking, followed by 12.07% who get access through transferring busses. The three most common purposes for using the bus system are to get to work (64.29%), to go shopping (57.14%), and to travel to medical or dental appointments (42.86%). A total of 70.91% indicated they make a round trip to access these services, and the majority (73.21%) use this service daily. Some 57.14% of riders indicated that they have been late to work or school due to the bus transit system. See Appendix A, Table A-1.

Additional comments that have been left by Cortland Transit riders indicated that reoccurring lateness of busses on established bus routes are common and problematic. Riders also indicated that extending bus hours, specifically by starting the bus routes earlier or extending it to later hours, would provide better access to the workplace. Finally, respondents indicated that bus drivers should receive additional training in customer service skills.

Agency Provider Survey

Among responses from 23 county agency providers with transportation options, 65.22% said they provide transportation services. Those who offer transportation do so for a variety of reasons including but not limited to contracting as a service provider for another company, providing agency services for clients, emergency medical purposes, non-emergency medical purposes, and transporting students. Nearly half of surveyed agency providers (47.82%) report clients' lack of transportation interfering in the participation of services on a daily or weekly basis. See Appendix A, Table A-2.

Only a handful of agency providers responded to a question asking about budget allocations for transportation. Of those that responded, transportation did not exceed 5% of the agency provider's budget. Similarly, only a handful of agency providers responded to a question asking whether they had any plans in the foreseeable future to provide or expand transportation services. One agency provider said yes while three said they would like to be contacted for more information to [make such a plan] possible. Few responses were collected about barriers to providing transportation services to clients. The two most reported barriers were costs and liability.

Employer Survey

A total of 65 firms in Cortland County responded to a dedicated employer survey. It is important to acknowledge 61.54% of responses came from firms with 0-25 employees (small businesses). Based on survey responses, potential blind-spots in assessing the transportation needs of employees may exist. See Appendix A, Table A-3.

While 53.13% of employers said their work site was accessible from Cortland Transit, 32.81% were unsure. Approximately 43.08% of employers felt transportation issues never caused their staff to miss work, arrive late, or leave work early. However, 10.77% stated such issues happened 1-5 times per week. Another 16.92% were unsure/did not know. For a separate question, 64.62% of employers felt lateness/tardiness due to difficulty finding transportation to work did not apply to any of their staff's shifts. Meanwhile, 13.85% said they did not know.

Employers appear more certain about providing transportation supports. The most popular type of support, a bike storage area for employees provided by the company, already exists among 47.62% of respondents. Another 42.86% said they would consider providing such an accommodation. The second-most popular support, assistance with planning trips, is already provided by 21.31% of employers. An additional 24.59% said they would consider providing such an accommodation. The least-popular type of support, subsidizing the local transit system so it can expand the local hours, is already provided by 3.33% of respondents. Only 6.67% of employers said they would consider providing such an accommodation.

General Population Survey

A total of 186 individuals responded to the General Population Survey. It is important to acknowledge the age distribution among survey respondents differs from the estimated age distribution reported by the U.S. Census Bureau.[194] A larger percentage of survey respondents identified as being between the ages of 25-55. Meanwhile, a lower percentage of respondents identified as being aged 65 and above. A significantly lower percentage of respondents identified as being aged 18 and under.

Survey responses highlight several noteworthy trends. Approximately 71.20% of respondents agreed having a public transit system contributed to quality of life for area residents. However, few respondents identified public transit as their primary or secondary mode of local transportation. See Appendix A, Table A-4.

Using a personal vehicle ("My Own Car/Truck") was overwhelmingly the most popular primary mode of local transportation. Only 28.11% of General Population Survey respondents ever used the Cortland County public transit system. Those who stated that they ride the public bus on a daily or weekly basis almost exclusively do so for work or social purposes.[195]

VI. Recommended Programs, Services, and Strategies

As stated on page 1 of this document, the goals of the 2020 CPTP seek to address the transportation needs of all county residents, especially among individuals with disabilities, older adults, and persons with limited incomes. Cortland County plans to address the needs of the community and the disadvantaged populations by:

1) Encouraging coordination efforts between transportation providers, employers, health and human service agencies, educational institutions, and municipalities.

2) Ensuring quality public transportation services for the community, with a specific focus on persons who are elderly, those with disabilities, and the economically disadvantaged.

3) Educating the public and health and human service providers about available transportation services.

4) Working with other counties in the region to create a transportation network not constrained by county borders.

5) Using available federal and state funding to further coordinate efforts and to create new services to address unmet transportation needs.

6) Collaborate with local entities to develop a more sustainable funding structure for the public transportation system.

7) Explore and encourage the use of expanded, sustainable practices in transportation like promoting greater use of public transit, ridesharing, Uber, Lyft, bicycles, and alternative modes like car sharing and bike sharing, etc.

The following objectives and their associated strategies should be used as a roadmap for meeting the needs of the Cortland County community and to address the identified gaps in transportation services.

A. Objective 1: Maintain a Mobility Management Program

Strategy 1.1: A Mobility Management Program (MMP) seeks to address the transportation needs of the general population as well as special populations such as the elderly, low income, and persons with disabilities. The MMP includes staffing with a minimum of a 1.0 FTE Mobility Management Coordinator (MMC).

Duties of the MMC should include:

- Facilitate the implementation of the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan 2020.

- Personal outreach to the public using events, workshops, talks, and displays to promote transportation options.

- Marketing of Way2Go Cortland using the website, print, radio, social media, video, and any other resources that become available.

- Manage, advocate, and track transportation-related complaints and questions that come to the MMC.

- Assist the public transit agency in the design and printing of new schedules and maps keeping in mind universal design to accommodate those riders with disabilities.

- Continue the bus advertising program and partnerships with local businesses.

- Increase awareness and use of the 2-1-1 service to include marketing the call center to those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

B. Objective 2: Improve Community Environment and Public Transportation Infrastructure

Improvements to the environment and infrastructure will help to address the needs of individuals with differing abilities and increase the use of public transportation.

Strategy 2.1: Improve existing sidewalk infrastructure within Cortland County to be more accessible, especially in immediate areas surrounding transit stop locations.

Strategy 2.2: Expand the number of bus shelters currently in place in Cortland County to encourage additional use of public transit operations.

Strategy 2.3: Continue to support the placement of additional wayfinding signage.

Strategy 2.4: Identify geographical gaps in services of Cortland County's public transit system through the utilization of a technology-based tracking system or alternative method.

Strategy 2.5: Establish a coordinated and sustainable system of transportation to/from areas adjacent to Cortland County (e.g., Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Madison, Onondaga, and Tompkins counties).

Strategy 2.6: Identify and quantify the demand for evening and weekend transit services among the target populations as well as businesses, employers, and tourism.

Strategy 2.7: Establish reoccurring educational refreshment courses on safely transporting individuals with mobility-related disabilities for publicly funded transit operations in collaboration with community advocacy partners.

Strategy 2.8: Cortland County should seek RFIs and RFPs from transportation providers at least every 10 years.

C. Objective 3: Improve Access to Safe Alternatives to Driving for Target Populations to Address Issues Prior To and In Consideration of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Strategy 3.1: Improve access to technology that allows for improved access to telehealth, as well as to offset the effects of restricted in-person access to nursing homes and personal aids via alternative communication mediums.

Strategy 3.2: Seek funding opportunities from the FCC to expand bandwidth and Internet provider access in designated locations to allow for improved telehealth access and at-home educational opportunities.

Strategy 3.3: Seek funding to provide travel vouchers for medical appointments to elderly individuals above the Medicaid income threshold.

D. Objective 4: Enable and Promote Human-Powered, Public Transportation, and Alternative Forms of Connectivity to Employment, Healthcare, Socialization

Strategy 4.1: Continue to contract with Tompkins Cortland 2-1-1 to act as an information and referral source to consumers seeking transportation options and services. The 2-1-1 call center is often the first contact for individuals, who are then directed to Way2Go Cortland (MMC) for more in-depth assistance.

Strategy 4.2: Establish a centralized Volunteer Driver Program (VDP) and pursue NYSDOT-5310 funding to support anticipated volunteer operations.

Strategy 4.3: Establish a First Mile/Last Mile (FMLM) program through which to promote greater access to county transit hubs and services. A VDP is often used as the provider of this service.

Strategy 4.4: Establish a bicycle-friendly community through a comprehensive package of reforms aimed at making streets safer and more people able to access and enjoy the benefits of bicycling.

    4.4.1   Develop a lease-to-own bike ownership program. (Price set as a percentage of monthly transportation costs for low-income patrons).

    4.4.2:   Develop a bike-share program that is accompanied by signage, designated riding routes, and prioritized snow removal areas during periods of inclement weather.

    4.4.3:   Work with the business community to create additional at-work bike storage.

Strategy 4.5: Prioritize transportation expansion initiatives into areas with highest indicated zero-vehicle household locations, areas with high rates of poverty, and areas with highest scores on the needs analysis index.

VII. Implementation Guidance on the Recommended Programs, Services, and Strategies

Implementation of the strategies mentioned in Section VI must be done with full consideration for the risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Maintaining the safety of the community continues to be the highest priority, and thus strategies allowing for adequate social distancing and remote discussion should be prioritized until the COVID-19 pandemic is no longer deemed a risk by the CDC, and other federal, state, and local decision makers. Strategies requiring long-term communication with various stakeholders should prioritize virtual options when there is the capacity to do so until the risks of COVID-19 have been effectively eliminated. Additionally, strategies that unavoidably necessitate in-person contact with volunteers, consumers, stakeholders, and additional service providers should also have clearly established and enforced safety guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19, as well as have the protective personal equipment (PPE) resources necessary to do so.

This section expands on the recommendations of various strategies listed in Section VI, including suggested organizations and coordinated actions that would contribute to a smoother and more successful implementation. The recommended strategies and the implementation guidance below require Cortland County to attempt to seek out and draw upon all possible funding sources to make implementation of these strategies feasible, including but not limited to federal, state, and private funds.

The County will also provide all County Department heads and relevant employees with suitable policy guidelines regarding implementation of the strategies herein to the maximum extent feasible and provide a copy of this plan to the County Department heads.

Following the implementation plan for the strategies listed herein is not required if the County determines that one or more of the following situations exist in relation to a particular strategy:

A) The cost or impacts of implementing the strategy are excessively disproportionate to the need for the strategy and the benefits derived from the implementation; and/or
B) The strategy implementation would have an adverse impact on or be contrary to public safety; and/or
C) Funds cannot be made available to adequately implement the strategy.

A. Objective 1: Maintain a Mobility Management Program

The MMP should be guided by a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which should be a formal sub-committee of the Cortland County Legislature as that will bring legislators to the table and will enhance TAC's legitimacy. A MMP requires staffing with a minimum of a 1.0 FTE Mobility Management Coordinator (MMC). The MMC is a strategic position that warrants continued funding to assist with implementing and coordinating many of the various programs and projects discussed herein. A MMC is also vital to be the face of mobility management and to act as an advocate for the consumers of transportation services in the county. The MMC is also a liaison between the public and municipal leaders to ensure transportation remains at the forefront of the public consciousness as an invaluable community resource**.** Currently 5311 funds are the source of funding for MMPs in rural communities, including Cortland County.

Objective 1 Implementation Tasks

- Formalize the TAC as a subcommittee of the Legislature (County Planning; A/P/E Committee)

- Require a RFP for the MMP contract at least every 4 years in coordination with the 5311 grant application (County Planning; County Administrator)

- Continue applying for 5311 Capital, Mobility Management funds (County Planning)

B. Objective 2: Improve Community Environment and Public Transportation Infrastructure

Improvements to sidewalks, bus shelters, curb cuts, and signage increases access to, as well as boarding and exiting public transit buses easier. Expansions to public transit services (routes, days of the week, and hours of operation) should be based upon need. Evening and weekend service has long been a need of the public, identified through surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder discussions. However, funding to cover the cost of expanded services continues to be a barrier. Identifying the demographics interested in expanded services, as well as nature of the anticipated trip (work, school, recreation, medical, social), will help guide the exploration of appropriate funding sources.

Inter-county transit requires broad operational coordination between Cortland County, and its contiguous counties of Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Madison, Onondaga, and Tompkins, in addition to the transit system that operates in each of those counties. Coordination of inter-county transit will provide opportunities for long distance travel utilizing multiple transit systems, increasing service opportunities for individuals who seek to travel longer distances. Ideally, this would also contribute to an increase in overall ridership.

This strategic approach addresses gaps in services to those seeking out-of-county medical services, low-income individuals seeking out-of-county job opportunities, and individuals seeking broader recreational opportunities. SUNY Cortland and TC3 have both expressed an interest in expanding inter-county transit services. Cortland County would need to take the lead on this strategy.

Objective 2 Implementation Tasks

- Encourage drafting and adoption of Complete Streets policies in all Cortland County municipalities, including a Cortland County policy (Mobility Management; County Planning)
- Pursue funding to improve sidewalk infrastructure to be accessible, especially in areas surrounding frequent transit stop locations. (County Planning; Mobility Management; municipalities).
- Facilitate planned inter-county communication to improve operational cooperation via outreach to transit operators in adjacent counties (Mobility Management; Cortland Transit; County Planning)
- Continue work with SUNY Cortland and TC3 on inter-county transit by facilitating communication with appropriate transit partners (Mobility Management; Cortland Transit)
- Pursue increased revenue through grant applications or other more creative funding streams to expand route service to evenings and weekends (County Planning; Mobility Management; Cortland Transit)
- Require the public transit provider to provide ADA trainings for its drivers and dispatchers. (County Planning; Mobility Management; Access to Independence).
- Require a RFP from the County's public transit provider at least once every 10 years in coordination with the dates of the 5311 grant application (County Planning, County Administrator)

C. Objective 3: Improve Access to Safe Alternatives to Driving for Target Populations to Address Issues Prior To and In Consideration of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Broadband, Internet, and access to technology will help to improve access to safe alternatives to driving, through telehealth, telecommuting, and tele-education access. The acquisition of technology for telehealth access for elderly individuals can address concerns related to COVID-19 exposure, transportation needs of individuals with low mobility, and could potentially decrease the number of unfit drivers on the road in Cortland County. Some organizations have previously designated rooms to facilitate access to telemedicine for individuals who otherwise would not have access to it. Such a strategy could be replicated to provide necessary and secure access to telehealth technology.

The FCC, USDA, and Appalachian Regional Commission provide funding for rural locations that desire an increase in broadband access for their community. Specifically, community health centers and local health departments are eligible and would be encouraged to seek funding via the HHS HRSA. The expansion of broadband access would address Internet-related gaps in services to rural and low-income families in Cortland County. Such gaps in services have shown to further deepen social isolation and stand in the way of access to care at a critical time when telehealth is being used more often.

Objective 3 Implementation Tasks

- Consult with Southern Tier 8 Regional Planning and Development Board on best methods to address local broad-brand constraints (County Planning)

- Facilitate discussions with healthcare providers in Cortland County and other stakeholders on how to support improved broadband services in the County (Mobility Management).

D. Objective 4: Enable and Promote Human-Powered, Public Transportation, and Alternative Forms of Connectivity to Employment, Healthcare, Socialization.

Volunteer Driver Program

A comprehensive volunteer driver program (VDP) would require a centralized approach that includes the cooperation and buy-in from a broad base of community organizations, municipalities, and public entities, as well as various service organizations that do not offer transportation services but have a need and/or require access to such a service.

The success of a VDP would depend on a reliable source of funding to cover the cost of charitable rides (those not covered by Medicaid). Establishing contracted agreements with a variety of organizations/payors, such as the Cortland County DSS, Access to Independence, Area Agency on Aging, substance abuse treatment providers, CCOCC, YWCA, YMCA, AVV and probation, along with potential sources of driver recruiters like churches, and Cortland AAA will provide for a more sustainable VDP. The provision of services to seniors and persons with disabilities via accessible vehicles would create a strong case for Cortland County or its community partners to seek funding from NYSDOT Section 5310 to offset these anticipated costs. This strategy would address the gaps in services related to elderly and low-income individuals above the Medicaid cutoff line who require transportation for medical services.

A single, coordinated VDP will be more sustainable than multiple limited volunteer driver programs throughout the County. Currently CAPCO offers a limited VDP and they have indicated an interest in expanding their program.

A First Mile/Last Mile (FMLM) program, provides additional accessibility to public transit services in areas where transit is limited or requires an individual to travel short distances to a transit point. First Mile/Last Mile is an expansion of services to rural and vulnerable populations by using on demand services to transport individuals to primary transit points.

FMLM programs vary considerably, and sometimes include a variety of initiatives to act as a conduit between a person's home, and a given transit point. VDP and FMLM are supportive of one another. A VDP can be used as the source of transport for a FMLM, as the VDP could be used to drive patrons to and from a nearby transit point instead of the volunteer driver program providing a full-length trip. The VDP can identify drivers who prefer shorter trips such as the FMLM. In addition, the establishment of a bicycle friendly community would also support first mile/last mile programs since all the public transit buses have bicycle racks. For some commuters with longer travel distance a combination of bicycle and public transit is a low-cost alternative to vehicle ownership.

Bicycle-friendly Community

A bicycle friendly community initiates policies and practices to help people feel more comfortable traveling by bicycle with other traffic. The level of bicycle-friendliness is influenced by many factors, including town planning and cycling infrastructure decisions. The benefits of a bicycle friendly community include a reduction in

greenhouse gas emissions, air pollutants (walking and biking emit no greenhouse gases), noise pollution and congestion, as well as improvements in public health and economic outcomes as communities become more sustainable and connected through foot traffic. Bicycle friendly communities also see a reduction in traffic congestion along with a reduced need for new parking lots and roadways.

The implementation of bike sharing and/or bike lease programs could be supported by NYSDOT funding, as sections 5310, 5311, and 5307 all provide funding for additional bicycle racks, shelters, and bicycle route development.

A lease-to-own bike program would be best offered at a monthly cost to patrons that is calculated as a given percentage of the estimated monthly public transit costs in Cortland County for low-income families.

There are some instances where non-profits or private businesses in Central New York have offered bicycles to low-income and vulnerable communities and could serve as a source of conceptual assistance if a similar program were to be enacted in Cortland County.

Alternatively, Cortland County could submit an RFP for community bikeshare providers. However, this may create a limited area in which rideshare bikes could be operated. Many bike share companies, like Lime Bike, prefer to launch e-scooters because they are more profitable than traditional bicycles, however, e-scooters carry safety and legality concerns.

The Cortland County Health Department, Cortland County Planning Department, the City of Cortland, and health-related community organizations would be ideal participants in the planning and implementation of this strategy.

Objective 4 Implementation Tasks

- Maintain the contract with the Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County to operate the Cortland 2-1-1 Information and Referral call center and on-line platform. (Cortland County; Mobility Management).

- Continue planning efforts with existing community partners already meeting to create a VDP to meet the needs outlined above (Mobility Management; CAPCO; Volunteer Transportation Center).

- Pursue additional funding to execute the First Mile/Last mile plan crafted by the VDP partners (Mobility Management; County Planning).

- Research bicycle friendly communities to identify needed infrastructure, legislation and initiatives that could be modeled in Cortland County (Mobility Management).

- Encourage drafting and adoption of Complete Streets policies in all Cortland County municipalities, including a Cortland County policy (Mobility Management; County Planning)

- Identify community leads to bring lease-to-own and bikeshare programs to Cortland County (Transportation Advisory Committee; Mobility Management; municipalities)

Appendix A—Surveys

Cortland Transit Ridership Survey

Table A-1: Cortland Transit Ridership Survey Responses

Source: SurveyMonkey: SVHC Ridership Survey

Where are you coming from to access the bus? (n=58)	Percentage of all responses
Home	82.76%
Work	17.24%
Shopping	8.62%
Medical	5.17%
Other	3.45%

How did you get to the bus stop to board the bus? (n=58)	Percentage of all responses
Transferred from another bus	12.07%
Walked	56.90%
Biked	0%
Drove alone and parked	10.34%
Dropped off	8.62%

Where are you going to? (n=53)	Percentage of all responses
Home	18.87%
Work	54.72%
Recreational Activities	0%
School/College	3.77%
Shopping	37.74%
Medical and/or Dental	11.32%

Are you making a round-trip using Cortland Transit? (n=55)	Percentage of all responses
Yes	70.91%
No	29.09%

If Cortland Transit were not available, how would you make this trip? (n=56)	Percentage of all responses
Drive Alone	8.93%
Uber/Lyft/Taxi	42.86%
Someone would drive me	28.57%
Walk or Bike	25.00%
Carpool/Vanpool	5.36%
Would not make this trip	12.50%
Other	10.71%

What do you generally use Cortland Transit for? (n=56)	Percentage of all responses
To get to or from work	64.29%
To go shopping	57.14%
To get to medical appointments	42.86%
To get to or from school	1.79%
To visit friends or family	10.71%
Other	7.14%

How often do you ride the bus? (N=56)	Percentage of all responses
Daily	73.21%
Weekly	25.00%

Have you ever been late to work, school, or a doctor's appointment, etc. because the bus was late? (n=56)	Percentage of all responses
Yes	57.14%
No	42.86%

Agency Provider Survey

Table A-2: Agency Provider Survey Responses
Source: SurveyMonkey: SVHC Agency Provider Survey

How frequently does a lack of transportation prevent client participation in agency programs and services? (n=23)	Percentage of all responses
Daily	17.39%
Weekly	30.43%
Monthly	17.39%
Remaining	34.79%

Do you currently provide transportation services? (n=23)	Percentage of all responses
Yes	65.22
No	34.78

Employer Survey

Table A-3: Employer Response Survey Responses
SurveyMonkey: SVHC Employer Survey

Question	Did Not Know (Percent of All Responses)
Is Cortland Transit accessible for your work site?	32.81%
How many times do employees miss work, arrive late, or leave work early because of transportation issues?	16.92%
Indicate which workdays/shifts employees are most often late or tardy for because they have difficulty finding transportation to work. (select all that apply)	13.85%
What percentage of your current employees commute to work using Cortland Transit?	10.77%

How many employees work at your location? (n=67)	Percentage of all responses
0-25	61.19%
26-50	14.93%
51-99	4.48%
100-199	11.94%
200-399	4.48%
400+	2.99%

Is Cortland Transit accessible for your workplace? (n=66)	Percentage of all responses
Yes	54.55%
No	7.58%
I do not know	31.82%
Other	6.06%

Approximately what percentage of your current employees commute to work using Cortland Transit? (n=67)	Percentage of all responses
0-25%	88.06%
26-50%	1.49%
I do not know	10.45%

How many times do employees miss work, arrive late, or leave work early because of transportation issues? (n=67)	Percentage of all responses
1-5 times/ week	10.45%
More than 5 times / week	1.49%
1-5 times / month	1.49%
1-5 times / quarter	2.99%
1-5 times / year	22.39%
Never	43.28%
I do not know	17.91%

Workdays/Shifts employees are most often late because of transportation related difficulties (n=67)	Percentage of all responses
First Shift	20.90%
Second Shift	4.48%
Third Shift	2.99%
Weekends	5.97%
Does not apply to any shifts	64.18%
I do not know	14.93%

How often have employees lost/left their job because they lacked dependable transportation? (n=67)	Percentage of all responses
1-5	20.90%
6-10	4.48%
More than 20 employees/year	1.49%
Never	55.22%
I do not know	17.91%

General Population Survey

Table A-4: General Population Survey Responses
Source: SurveyMonkey: SVHC General Population Survey

Modes of Transportation	Primary Mode of Local Transportation (n=191)	Secondary Mode of Local Transportation (n=186)
My Own Car/Truck	82.80%	21.43%
Walking	8.60%	41.21%
Biking	2.69%	7.14%
Bus	2.69%	6.59%
Taxi/Uber/Lyft	0.54%	7.69%
Carpool	1.08%	10.99%
Other	1.61%	4.95%

How old are you? (n=191)	Percentage of all responses
18 years or under	1.57%
19-24 years	5.76%
25-40 years	37.17%
41-55 years	27.75%
56-64 years	16.23%
65+ years	11.52%

In your opinion, does having a public transit system contribute to quality of life for area residents? (n=189)	Percentage of all responses
Yes	71.43%
Somewhat	20.63%
No	2.65%
No opinion	5.29%

What would make you more likely to use alternative forms of transportation to get around such as biking, walking, scooters, etc.? (n=189)	Percentage of all responses
I already use alternative modes of transportation to get around	19.05%
More of a biking/walking culture in the county	20.11%
My physical condition prevents me from biking/walking more	10.58%
Incentives (ex. Giveaways)	10.05%
Sense of Security	0%
Better infrastructure related to alternative modes of transportation	50.26%
Other	22.22%

Appendix B—Focus Groups and Interviews

General Public Focus Group
Date: 08/13/2020
Format: Zoom meeting hosted by SVHC
Group size 5

1. General purposes for personal transportation include work, groceries, school, social, medical appt. Are there any other points of interest you need to travel to?

   a. Hard to get to outdoor recreational activities and or shopping/leisure without access to a car-Lime Hollow, Dwyer Park, Lime Hollow, Finger Lakes Trail, Destiny Mall in Syracuse
   b. Would like easier access to other bus systems like in Syracuse, Ithaca

2. What challenges/limitations exist for traveling to work, getting groceries, school, social, medical appt.?

   a. No challenges with own car
   b. Notice people walking on roads in potentially dangerous situations
   c. Poor condition on sidewalks, icy (not cleared in winter) or uneven can be hazardous/ Sidewalks need to be better maintained
   d. Challenging to bike because of other cyclists not following rules and drivers not knowing what to expect as a result

3. How did COVID change where you need to travel to and the challenges/limitations you experience?
   a. People stopped going places-UBER driver was busy moving food orders around/Around June people started moving around more
   b. Inability to travel out of town because of COVID-lots of questions upon re-entry
   c. Concerns about visiting family in other parts of state if cases were higher/COVID made me question safety of places I may want to travel to
   d. Traveling much less, less going to see family in other places, cut down on car usage and number of trips taken-Has NOT changed walking habits to office downtown
   e. Pandemic opened new opportunities to learn how to do things virtually/ learned different ways to navigate the new world

4. Do you use Cortland County's public transit at least once per month (raise your hand)? If you use public transit, can you identify 2 problems that exist with current services? If you do not use public transit, can you identify why?
   a. No-not convenient for where I live, and routes do not go by my house at times that are helpful
   b. Not convenient for working schedule
   c. Dial a Ride not convenient
   d. Do not need to use it since I have my own car
   e. Not familiar with the operations of the bus/would use it if I had to and understood operations
   f. Timing of runs inconvenient, walking was faster/more direct
   g. County Office Building now shut to visitors because of COVID, very inconvenient for travelers of the buses who stop there / need a bus hub where people can go and get information about the bus schedules/routes and times
   h. Fare-free routes are convenient people should know more about them

5. Cortland County has an overwhelming reliance on using a personal vehicle alone as the primary means of transportation. What would motivate you to use an alternative mode for primary transportation (i.e., walk, bike, public transit, ride-share, carpool)?
    a. If my car broke down, I would consider alternative modes like biking
    b. Would walk more because of environmental reasons
    c. Would like to see more bicycle-friendly infrastructure (bike lanes) and education making it safer, then I would bike more /more people biking would make drivers more familiar with having them on the road
    d. Will not bike in winter, carpooling is an option-need a local network of fellow riders/carpooling saves time and effort and gas money
    e. I would prefer not to use my own car but need to know more about public transportation
    f. Nature of public transit has changed/used to be high quality private service, but socioeconomic character of community changed, businesses shut, school became more centralized/ character of public transit changed, if it were viable would use it
    g. I have chosen where to live based on the accessibility of what I need to get to, so I do not have to get another car both for economic, health and environmental reasons
    h. Economic (money savings) and environmental sustainability are big reasons why to choose modes other than personal vehicle

Accessibility Advocates Focus Group
Date: 08/14/2020
Format: Zoom meeting hosted by Access to Independence, questions delivered by SVHC
Group size: 5

1. General purposes for personal transportation include work, groceries, school, social, medical appt. Are there any other points of interest you need to travel to?
    - No knowledge of local transit
    - Need to access recreation/hiking opportunities, nature trails in Ithaca-inaccessible without car

2. What challenges/limitations exist for traveling to work, getting groceries, school, social, medical appt.?
    - Cortland Transit hours are limited/ending at 6 pm limits some shopping/work options
    - The routes do not go as far as needed, especially for those with mobility limitations not able to walk extra distance on foot
    - Questioned general accessibility of transit, will driver make announcements or help as needed
    - Understanding the bus schedules can be a barrier- colored bus routes could help make it easier
    - Lack of shelters in areas that need it/cold months make it hard to wait outside
    - Number of grocery bag limit hard when making a grocery trip once a week
    - Must clearly tell passengers what the limits are, what counts (bags on back of wheelchair do they count, etc.)

3. How did COVID change where you need to travel to and the challenges/limitations you experience?
    - People hesitant about travel, sense of unease and fear about COVID and need to wear a mask, media messages confusing and frightening
    - Lack of knowledge of precautions being taken on bus without access to social media/need for more written messages around town
    - Not had anyone outside family members in car since March-saved miles on car
    - Limit trips to grocery store, now make sure each trip I get what I need to last the week
    - Stopped travel around the state supporting self-advocates-miss that/ lack of human interaction and increased isolation is a big drag for folks with disabilities and for everyone

Spinoff question: Abandonment? The tragedy of deaths in nursing homes because staff was reluctant to report to work amid COVID-19, has there been that experience among the population of individuals with disabilities?
    - Deaths in state run and other group homes but difficult to track numbers
    - Anecdotal knowledge of people moving back in with families
    - Heightens desire for independent living
    - Truth is the nature of congregate settings -COVID spreads faster, individuals with disabilities are 2x as likely to develop COVID

- Residents in Guthrie not seen family since March, recent plans to reopen to visitors shut down when staff got COVID
- Sad and confusing time for elderly
- One ATI staff member at very high risk for COVID was put into medical quarantine until 2021-this individual would usually drive her own vehicle or take public transit but she cannot go out. There is a feeling of being 'left behind' as everyone else starts to slowly go out shopping and to appointments again.

4. Cortland County has an overwhelming reliance on using a personal vehicle alone as the primary means of transportation. What would motivate you to use an alternative mode for primary transportation (i.e., walk, bike, public transit, ride-share, carpool)?
   - If it were not for the pandemic, I would prefer carpooling. Greater advertisement of carpool options or public transit would motivate people to use it more.
   - Lack of internet may need word of mouth or newsletter to advertise
   - A fun contest with incentives like SVHC's past bike/walk week challenge motivates
   - If sidewalks were safer to navigate would be more motivation to walk / Sidewalks are often uneven, or they suddenly end into gravel or a rut-dangerous for walking impossible for wheelchairs
   - Would love to get rid of car but need a bus that goes where I need it to go and a consistent schedule
   - More bike-friendly streets would be incentive to bicycle more

5. What should we keep in mind for next steps given accessibility limits?
   - Cost factor- a sliding scale for bus passes
   - Travel training
   - Small transit authority serving outer villages-bus/van making trips to outlying villages taking people into city for appointments- could reduce reliance on car to get into city for day even if it is just a few times a week

Individuals with Disabilities Focus Group
Date: 08/21/2020
Format: Telephone interviews

1. General purposes for personal transportation include work, groceries, school, social, medical appt. Are there any other points of interest you need to travel to?
   - Out of county travel/ advocacy work in Albany
   - Weekend activities/Pumpkinfest/ sporting events/ spiritual opportunities
   - Agree with mall/gym/hiking opportunities

2. What challenges/limitations exist for traveling to work, getting groceries, school, social, medical appt.?
   - Turning radius with large wheelchair on buses is challenging
   - Hard to travel on sidewalks from home at 42 Church to sister at Regina Drive
   - Time limitations. Planning a trip from Cortland to Albany for example, if using a train, will take up most of the day. More seamless connections for intercounty travel would help.
   - Poor experiences on local cabs or cramped environment on bus. Do not feel like they are there to provide quality service/ feel like they are doing a job and do not care about us.
   - Would like to know where the bus is on the route/ a tracking ap
   - Hard to walk a distance when joints are aching or when carrying a bunch of things
   - Timing of the bus-cannot take the bus to get to work and go home because of its hours, would have to leave work early and I need to work an 8-hour day
   - Communication-bus company needs to communicate if a bus is broken down and send replacement bus if it happens- was stranded in McGraw one day and no replacement came along when a bus broke down in Willet

3. How did COVID change where you need to travel to and the challenges/limitations you experience?
   - Must get tested routinely at doctor more/ MAS is very difficult must call 3 days before

- Bus driver does not let me sit near my caregiver, do not always feel safe on the bus because of where driver has me sit in the back
- Limited travel/ fewer and longer shopping trips
- In quarantine from March to January- vulnerable group/not allowed to drive in car with anyone I have not quarantined with (lives alone)
- Not been to grocery store/pharmacy since first week in March
- Not able to ride bus- went to doctor once in July first time anyone touched me was for doctor to draw blood
- Car broke down, got it towed, will have to walk five miles to get it
- Cannot drive more than ten miles because of disability/ would have no transport to get to provider in Syracuse and they will not see me anyway because too high risk
- Because of disability low vision requires yearly eye exam, they waived it this year gave me contacts for a year, but license expires in March- hoping for paperwork to keep license otherwise lose license and cannot drive anywhere
- Getting to a point where increasingly relying on public transit, one day I will not be able to drive so I need public transit that serves my needs
- Pandemic is affecting me, my disability and ability to be in the world
- Quarantined people in McGraw have coolers outside their home for food deliveries
- I get a wellness check Wednesdays, through Catholic Charities or informally through lawn caretakers who check on me
- Have multiple food allergies so difficult to get food, lost 10 lbs. over course of pandemic
- Will visit in-laws from porch, 12 feet away
- Hard to communicate with family via Zoom if they are not familiar with technology
- Cannot use public restrooms, travel with a coffee can

4. Do you use Cortland County's public transit at least once per month (raise your hand)?
   a. If you use public transit, can you identify 2 problems that exist with current services?
      - Drivers need better training with ADA compliance and need to treat individuals with disabilities respectfully
      - Drivers need training in locking down wheelchairs and transit needs to be safe/ lockdown mechanisms need to be high quality
   b. If you do not use public transit, can you identify why?
      - **Skipped**
   c. No, live in town so do not need to use the bus. Can get a ride or walk where I need to go, and bus does not operate within hours that suit my needs.

5. Cortland County has an overwhelming reliance on using a personal vehicle alone as the primary means of transportation. What would motivate you to use an alternative mode for primary transportation (i.e., walk, bike, public transit, ride-share, carpool)?
- Weekend service even if it was 10-4
- If it felt convenient and if it was enjoyable-a pleasant experience. For example, will take a train even though it takes longer than taking a bus from Cortland to Albany, but I will do it because of the comfort and the atmosphere on the train versus on the bus.
- If there is nowhere to park that would disincentivize driving and make it easier to take alternative modes
- If it was easier to get around Cortland (Main Street one way and makes it awkward to bike to work at other end of Main Street)
- If buses ran later, I could take them for my needs
- If the transfers to out-of-town travel were easier, less complicated, ways to track them
- Would feel better if bus windows opened so more ventilation
- Because of balance issues cannot bicycle, would use tricycle if those were staged as part of a bike share program
- Scooters were a nice option in Europe to get around quickly

Spinoff question about accessibility throughout Cortland:
- Lucky to live close to bus stop and drivers friendly and buses accessible

- Can get what I need from Main Street Cortland when get off in Cortland
- When bike share was in Cortland, they would not operate out of bounds of host communities, inconvenient for people who needed them
- Steps to the gymnasium of the Cortland County Office Building pose a problem for visitors to ring bell to be let in for appointment
- Main Street being one way is challenging to get somewhere on other end of it going the wrong direction of one-way travel
- Having more options for people to choose from would be good.
- One main thing that would make a big difference is just a slight expansion of service/does not have to be 7 days a week but if transit would maybe just do a few hours on the weekends or a few days of the week where they run later it would be a permanent step in the right direction.

Spinoff Question about telecommute/telehealth, shortcomings, or challenges:
- Telephone phone telehealth is critical. for the OMH and OASIS may be cut off in a few weeks which will make it more challenging to be seen. It will mean zoom only and the provider needs to be in a certified site.
- Lucky to live in city of Cortland decent internet, challenging to connect to coworkers without internet
- Visits to people in rural areas challenging, if run into trouble no signal or way to call, stuck in a ditch in Cincinnatus
- Safety risks and problem for workforce
- In McGraw, dead zone both internet and cellphone service-cell service only enough to allow texts, need phone calls on landline, get a hotspot through work but takes 40 minutes to load a webpage
- Internet up and down all day makes working from home challenging
- Newspaper highlight of my day because of isolation
- Write letters and get phone calls as ways to communicate
- Afraid of furlough because of difficulty remote working/workplace has accommodated my hours to allow me to go on Saturdays when no-one else is there to work
- A doctor visit can only accomplish so much on phone, had to go into office in July, blood draw was first human touch since March
- Primary care doctor frustrated by neurologist appointment cancellations/primary trying to cover everything
- Local high school and library talked about expanding internet for community to access (for students) no word yet on whether community can also tap in or where this stands
- If 911 system allows texts would be great help in terms of safety issue for some
- Provider had been charging $5 for internet I did not have-they waived the $5 monthly fee

Spinoff Question: If you could fix one thing what it would be?
- Sidewalks are top priority/ all need an endcap, not safe to navigate, low depth perception, can drop off abruptly or end completely

Older Adults Focus Group/ Individual Interviews
Date: 8/24/2020
1. General purposes for personal transportation include work, groceries, school, social, medical appt. Are there any other points of interest you need to travel to? (Other focus groups discussed outdoor recreation opportunities, the gym, the mall, leaving Cortland County, or going to church and other houses of worship)
    - Doctor's appointments out of the county, blindness prevents me from driving and winter months are especially challenging for getting around

2. What challenges/limitations exist for traveling to work, getting groceries, school, social, medical appt.?
    - No restrictions other than COVID, drive car to Dryden Lake to socialize and visit with people
    - No challenges because have own vehicle
    - Not used to taking bus, cannot read print on schedules/ materials not user friendly
    - Weather conditions a concern and will become more so
    - Find myself feeling less secure as I age- could make an honest mistake and hurt myself or someone else
    - Will eventually take bus as I age more

- Legally blind/ ride scooter but slowly, cannot carry many groceries on it or take it in bad weather
- Challenging to navigate bus transfers
- Need someone to help me shop because I must take breaks and cannot pushcart and scooter

3. How did COVID change where you need to travel to and the challenges/limitations you experience?
   - COVID-19 restricted socializing/eliminated trips to FI
   - It has impacted visiting friends and family in other parts of the state or in North Carolina
   - Burial of father was put off for months, could not get full military funeral because of travel through VA
   - Tele-med has worked out well for primary care and specialist visits
   - Make fewer trips to the store and shop locally versus farther afield
   - Since March only been to two stores, will not visit family or friends who do not social distance, limit visitors to small circle of trusted friends/family
   - Family has Instacart which I use/family will help get places if I could not
   - Had a doctor's visit through telehealth/doctor was very thorough
   - Cortland County has very low cases, no issues for me
   - Telehealth needs to improve in Cortland County
   - I was a shut in before has not changed my life
   - Volunteerism/socialization opportunities have lessened
   - Must get up energy to walk
   - Must force myself out of apartment to socialize/ communal picnic tables where I live and central location helps

4. Do you use Cortland County's public transit at least once per month (raise your hand)? If you use public transit, can you identify 2 problems that exist with current services?
   - If you do not use public transit, can you identify why?
   - No, Cortland Transit does not come to where I live besides Dial-A-Ride
   - The people who have a positive view of public transit do not use it-more people need to ride it
   - The system does not get the support it needs – suggestion: Set up phony routes and see what people think, get feedback and design routes accordingly
   - Not on the normal transit schedule but would use it when it would come out to me to take me to low vision support groups monthly
   - Do not know the system very well, do not avail myself of it because of chronic pain I am not out and about as much
   - Problems: New driver may not know where my unit is at Greek Peak, a run that served Greek Peak was not well utilized, I was only rider and it probably cost the system to do that
   - Drivers are respectful and do a good job
   - No, do not need to with own car

5. Cortland County has an overwhelming reliance on using a personal vehicle alone as the primary means of transportation. What would motivate you to use an alternative mode for primary transportation (i.e., walk, bike, public transit, ride-share, carpool)?
   - Used to carpool more pre-COVID-19, now with masks will sometimes drive others
   - Nothing at this point, live in an area walking is not feasible and not on bus line
   - Partnerships, buddies/ someone to share a ride with/ a sense of community/ tap into faith groups to disseminate initiatives
   - Have a person-to-person interaction on the bus, have fun, sense of caring
   - I do not want to burden my son who takes me places, he has health concerns I try to coordinate my appointments around his schedule from work
   - If I were on the bus line, I would use it but do not want to be a burden or inconvenience anyone/ I like my independence
   - A bus station that you could call to get the tickets and an understanding of where the buses go would be helpful
   - Have not been to a doctor since February, getting to a point if I do not have to go I won't/ mindset if it kills me it kills me
   - If the appointment would trouble others, I will not make it

- Walk a few times a week for exercise, would walk to village to get groceries if I needed to

Spinoff question: What is one thing older adults need assistance within Cortland County, transportation related?
- Make sure there are transportation options for seniors to get where they need to go, at times they need to go
- Senior groups help each other/ sad to lose meeting space in COB-looking for a new outdoor space going forward
- More transportation options, weekend service/ transportation to exercise
- Buses could be flexible, providing grocery trips for seniors in Harford for example perhaps a couple of times a week
- I like my independence, do not want to feel like a burden; if you are going to expand service to the area that is great but do not do it just for me
- Communication: Loneliness is damaging to older people; bus driver can be caring and make the bus a fun place to be / human-to-human connection

Spinoff question: Willingness to renew driver's license after a certain age?
- In agreement, had cataract surgery now there is a change in how light hits the optic nerve; get more glare
- Difficulty reading signs far away, can make you a more cautious driver and a dangerous driver
- Taking a driver's license exam after a certain age could be a rule like any other and perhaps paired with a driver partner service; give people a sense of controlling their own health
- Do not self-restrict driving, to me transportation has a social element. Cars can become a safe way to visit others in COVID-People can sit in their cars despite the weather and visit each other safely

Low-Income Population Focus Group
Date: 08/28/2020
Format: Zoom meeting hosted by SVHC

1. General purposes for personal transportation include work, groceries, school, social, medical appt. Are there any other points of interest you need to travel to? Other focus groups have mentioned out of county/recreation/faith- based travel.
   a. What challenges/limitations exist for traveling to work, getting groceries, school, social, medical appt.? leaving cc, leaving NYS, going to faith
      - Limitations with going to work/transportation to doctors
      - Multiple kids make it hard to go to store/cannot take bus or carry groceries with kids in tow
      - Bus times do not run late enough to accommodate after hour shopping trips
   b. How did COVID change where you need to travel to and the challenges/limitations you experience?
      - Recreation opportunities shut down
      - Taking kids to school will be an adjustment, used to bus now will not
      - Shopping after work got harder, want to go early when few people
      - Volunteer work scaled back
      - Hard to take advantage of social programs, must mail forms back, time consuming
      - Phone counseling for kids was a change

2. Do you use Cortland County's public transit at least once per month (raise your hand)?
   a. If you use public transit, can you identify 2 problems that exist with current services?
      - They need to make dispatch available, frustrating to get a busy signal or have it ring and ring when need to be picked up from a deviation like a medical appointment
      - Would be nice if it worked on weekends
      - Crowding to get on the bus can be hard
   b. If you do not use public transit, can you identify why?
      - Daunting with kids and groceries

Spinoff question: How many of you do not own a personal vehicle and why?
- Five participants do not. Many for financial reasons or lack of license

Spinoff question: Has transportation or lack of transportation has made people late going anywhere?
- Yes **-** Sometimes when routes were combined it was late
- Sometimes late getting to appointments on bus
- When sharing a vehicle in the household can be late waiting for it
- Taxis take about a half hour to show up

3. Cortland County has an overwhelming reliance on using a personal vehicle alone as the primary means of transportation. What would motivate you to use an alternative mode for primary transportation (i.e., walk, bike, public transit, ride-share, carpool)?
- Ease of use/ convenience
- Do not want it to take an hour before something comes by
- Walking a distance with kids is not feasible
- Sidewalks need to be even and taken care of

Spinoff question: Has weather interfered with the places you go or cancelled appointments?
- YES
- Hard when it is snowing can feel like I will slip
- Do not mind walking/ dress for it
- Cannot get in out of the weather, especially since COVID closed things down and people do not want you to come in to wait/ will be an issue in fall and winter

Spinoff question: What is main thing transportation related you would fix if you could based on your own personal experiences?
* Communication with bus company/dispatch
    *Potholes/quality of road
    *Car repairs are costly
    * Sidewalks need to be maintained year-round and cared for in the winter

Cornell Ridership Group Focus Group
Format: Zoom meeting hosted by SVHC

1. General purposes for personal transportation include work, groceries, school, social, medical appt. Are there any other points of interest you need to travel to?
- Main purpose to and from work-mid-day service would be helpful to allow people to commute for a half day without driving

2. What challenges/limitations exist for traveling to work, getting groceries, school, social, medical appt.?
- Hairy getting to work on time sometimes especially if driver makes deviation or picks up TC3 students and bus runs behind
- Dangerous standing on a full bus going on Route 13 where speed limit is 55-mph (could happen a few times a week in busy academic season and it was only an issue with the smaller bus)

3. How did COVID change where you need to travel to and the challenges/limitations you experience?
- Working from home since March 16-have not needed any transportation to campus. No timeframe for return to campus and unsure how payment arrangement with Cornell will work if we return just a few days a week
- Have driven to work because occasionally had to go in for half a day but would not wait all day for return trip, would rather drive in and out

Spinoff question about location:
- One lives 3 minutes from where bus picks them up at Applebee's Park and Ride, other one four miles out of town. Both like safety of bus driver driving in bad weather, social nature of the bus, savings on wear and tear of personal vehicle and convenience (bus lets them right out by their building where they work, if they drove parking would be far away requiring a long walk or a bus ride)

4. Do you use Cortland County's public transit at least once per month (raise your hand)?
   - If you use public transit, can you identify 2 problems that exist with current services?
   - If you do not use public transit, can you identify why?

   Only first part of question pertained to them:
   - When main driver (Kevin) was out, substitutes filling in did not know route, there was lack of communication or they were not good drivers.
   - Anecdotally, both riders reported erratic bus driver behavior or having to wait 45 minutes uncertain if bus would show up at the end of a workday because of a substitute driver
   - They appreciated Kevin's message (Facebook or text) that would tell them if he were running late and they would tell the rest of the group they ride with what to expect
   - Close knit group could also watch out for each other, tell the driver not to leave if one was running late
   - If a bus breaks down, there needs to be communication about lateness

5. Cortland County has an overwhelming reliance on using a personal vehicle alone as the primary means of transportation. What would motivate you to use an alternative mode for primary transportation (i.e., walk, bike, public transit, ride-share, carpool)?
   - Convenience-Because of where both respondents live it was not convenient or safe for either of them to walk to a bus or use alternative modes of transportation more

Spinoff question: Why not carpool?
   - Tried carpool in the past-Cornell only offers incentive for a car with 4 people or more. That is a lot of personalities to mesh well with and coordinate well with/could result in hassles like running late because of someone else's schedule or someone getting sick having to find a replacement driver. "Would rather take my chances with a broken-down bus"
   - Love the convenience of having the bus.
   - It is a great service would hate to see it go away
   - Even if post COVID, rides resumed at same rate and they had to take fewer trips in per week, they would pay same rate to support the service (Was hypothetical question)
   - Still a savings, able to lease a car because of not commuting
   - Would still ride even if Cornell gave up subsidy
   - Can drive to Dryden use TCAT for free because Cornell pass allows that
   - Given COVID, they mentioned a sense of safety with known fellow passengers, would trust people they know on their route to travel again post COVID, but would feel less safe with TC3 students or public unknown riders sharing bus or a luck of the draw carpool whom they could not carefully pick fellow passengers
   - They feel like they get leftover buses-it feels unfair because they pay into the system, subsidize transit through a withdrawal from their wages regardless of whether they are on vacation or home sick-yet they often got a bus that was breaking down, cold in the winter, overheating going up a hill, or just unreliable. They felt like for the money they are paying they deserved something better.

Stakeholder Interviews
Questions Asked:
   - What do you see as your community/client's biggest transportation needs?
   - How well served are they by public transportation (Cortland Transit)?
   - To expand public transit, it needs to be funded. Do you see your town/city/Village/company willing to contribute monetarily to supporting public transit?

Tammy Timmerman, Cortland County Restaurant and Tavern Association President
   - There should be evening/weekend hours. There is currently no transportation from hotels to the downtown restaurants. The bus service is Monday-Friday and basically done at 5 pm, just when nightlife is starting. She would especially like to see service for big weekends/parents, alumni weekends.
   - Tammy says there would be no willingness to fund the transit system from the Association, especially considering the pandemic shutting down establishments for four months and only being allowed to reopen at 50 percent capacity. She thinks fares paid by hotel guests could help support the system. She thinks

that with expanded hours, the ridership would be diversified and that would help address the perception that public transit is only for lower income individuals.

Aaron Baier, Executive Director of Access to Independence
- Biggest transportation needs would be more frequent public transportation.
- ATI facility on Main Street is served by public transit and the city population is primary population served by its services. There are blind spots and underserved areas in rural areas.
- ATI personally cannot fund but can-do outreach and lobbying to get statewide association behind efforts to improve transit.

Aaron Baier said that having a myriad of options to choose from would help individuals with disabilities in the community.
He would also like to see the transit and local cabs provide a more customer-oriented approach so the experience of using alternative modes of transportation is more enjoyable. He thinks it boils down to a lack of quality oversight of those businesses. These are priorities that the county and municipalities need to figure out a strategy to address if they want our community to be a more complete, accessible place where everybody feels like they can do the things they want and need to do.

Aaron says it is also hard for people in rural areas to learn about and access the services that ATI provides. ATI does work with the Rural Services in Cincinnatus but other than that there is no ongoing physical presence in the rural areas. He thinks even areas just off the route the buses serve, could feel very inaccessible to individuals with disabilities if they cannot walk a mile to get to the bus. He would like to see improved public transit to more rural routes or an expansion of routes. ATI can advocate for improved funding for transit. If there was a good plan for the county, municipalities and businesses that could afford it, ATI could get its state association behind the effort and they can rally resources and pull in other networks. "We are able to pull that grassroots advocacy in and through the statewide association get some lobbying involved."

Zachariah Newswanger. SUNY Cortland Associate Vice President of Facilities Management
- SUNY Cortland needs a way to transport students from off-campus housing and from campus residences to other locations on campus
- The college also wants greater level of transportation for students both on and off campus to get to and from local establishments within the county on nights and weekends
- Since the addition in 2019, of three stops on campus where Cortland Transit buses pull through, Zach Newswanger says SUNY Cortland is better served by public transit and those who need it can avail themselves of it. However, he still wants Cortland Transit to develop a route that would serve SUNY faculty, staff, and students, eliminating parking congestion and getting off campus students onto campus as well as furthering shopping and commuting opportunities for all.
- Zach Newswanger feels the absence of a digital fare pass purchase option is a deterrent to the SUNY faculty and students who would otherwise utilize the public transit system.
- SUNY Cortland would likely support an investment in the public transit system at a time when the college is better off financially, said Newswanger, citing the financial pressures the pandemic has put upon the college. He thinks any investment would be a temporary one, with the hopes that any new routes would at one point become self-sustaining through their fare structure. Given SUNY Cortland's emphasis on alleviating parking congestion on campus and more sustainable initiatives, Newswanger thinks that packaging a presentation in that context, could have success.

SUNY Cortland employs about 1300 people and serves about 7,000 students each year. Through a semesterly fee for transportation that students pay for, SUNY has its own fleet of 8 buses and provides transportation Monday through Sunday for all of campus including West Campus. There is also a shopping bus that runs a loop from campus out to Walmart in Cortlandville on Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays. There is also a Friday and Saturday late night shuttle that runs a one-way trip from downtown back up to campus. Newswanger envisions an expansion of public transit to better serve the college as a good supplement to the existing transportation on campus, providing more options for people to get to and from campus.

As of this writing, conversations are ongoing between SUNY Cortland, Seven Valleys Health Coalition and First Transit, to try to develop more of a SUNY Cortland-centered route that would run a loop serving areas where off-

campus housing is located, onto campus and out to shopping opportunities. The development of a virtual platform where people could purchase bus passes online, is also in the early stages of being investigated.

Hal McCabe, Homer Mayor

Question 1: What do you see as your community/client's biggest transportation needs?

Regular, frequent, dependable service with more early morning and late-night coverage.   More routes, more buses, more stops.

Question 2: How well served are they by public transportation (Cortland Transit)?

Cortland Transit does as good a job as they can given the financial realities of how we have gutted public transportation funding in NY.

Question 3: To expand public transit, it needs to be funded. Do you see your town/city/Village/company willing to contribute monetarily to supporting public transit?

Somewhat. Depends on the amount, really. We would need to know exactly what we were getting for the money we were putting in to make the case to our residents that it was a good use of their money.

Brian Tobin, City of Cortland Mayor
- Sidewalks – fix sidewalks that are cracked, broken and trip hazards
- Cortland Transit does the job they were hired to do. They make changes, like to routes, when asked. All the buses come into and leave from the City, so the City is well served by public transit.
- Brian Tobin does not see the City subsidizing public transit in the foreseeable future as it is operating at a deficit in 2020 and he said next year will not be any better.

Brian Tobin thinks a community that relies on more active transportation, and a myriad of options, such as a public - private partnerships with Uber and Lyft to fill in gaps, would be ideal. He does not think more funding for public transit is the answer since he thinks it would be more cost effective to instead promote ridesharing, partnering with Uber and Lyft and then in turn requiring those drivers to register with the city for accountability purposes. He suggests diverting some state mobility funds from public transit to subsidize these alternative options.

Mayor Tobin thinks visitors or people going out to eat would be more likely to call a cab for a ride home than rely on public transit, so they do not have to worry about the schedule of the bus system and can just be picked up when they are done. He mentioned the Clinton Avenue redevelopment project in Cortland and the plans for the Peace Trail to run through the city and village of Homer as being steps in the right direction towards a more walkable, bikeable community but he said the city is already very easily navigated by bike or foot for those who are physically able to get around that way. He said hopefully people are choosing where they live based on where they go and what they do. He thinks the more people that have the opportunity for biking and walking, the better off the community is.

He thinks that to enhance the need for public transit there must be more obstacles, noting that the population in Cortland is not so dense and people can easily get to where they want to go within the bounds of the city. He does not think there is a one-fix solution, but rather a myriad of options or piecemeal approach should be the answer.

Danielle Brown, Square Deal Machining HR Manager
- Transportation used as an excuse not to show up for work and people unwilling to use other forms
- Bus comes through as needed, no current employees using it
- Would have to discuss and review any call to fund the transit system

Danielle Brown said that in general she finds employees may say their car broke down or their ride did not show up but that seems an excuse to miss work and these employees are not willing to use other forms of transportation like the bus. She said some employees carpool and she always offers the bus schedule to employees if they indicate during an interview that they lack transportation.

She speculates that maybe employees are uncertain of the cost savings involved with taking the bus or not close enough to a bus stop for it to be convenient to use but she said she had not done research on the topic so could not say for sure.

She said the bus will come through the Square Deal parking lot if it is requested, as the company is about 2 miles out of town, and that is appreciated.

Jordan Lilley, Cortland Enlarged City School District Transportation Supervisor
- Biggest need more qualified bus drivers
- Students do not utilize public transit at all as the district's transportation serves their needs
- One option, because of COVID, is for the school district to contract with local public transit providers to provide supplemental services to transport students, said Lilley. As of this writing it was not expected to exercise that option, but it is still on the table.

The Cortland Enlarged City School District serves about 2,500 students and prior to COVID-19 the district transported about 1,500 students. The district has a fleet of 24 buses of different sizes, 66-passenger, 43 passenger and 34-passenger. The district also has 7 minivans and 2 Suburbans used to transport special needs students and students attending out-of-district placements in more distant areas.
Given the pandemic, the district has seen a significant reduction in the number of students that would be utilizing the district's transportation, said Lilley.

As of this writing, about 400 students were expected to require busing when school reopens in the fall amid the pandemic. This was both because many families chose the remote learning option or to transport their own children. This number should be able to be accommodated by the district's new rules to social distance on buses, which reduced the capacity of the 66-passenger buses to about 22.

John Wisniewski, OCM BOCES Director of Facilities
- BOCES does not transport kids, instead districts bring students to BOCES
- John has limited knowledge of Cortland public transit or how it serves campuses. He could make no determination of whether BOCES would financially support a public transit system.

Bob Haight, Chamber of Commerce
- Businesses cannot hire otherwise qualified employees who lack transportation. Bob Haight knew of a couple of businesses for whom applicants were eliminated immediately once the question came up about their ability to access reliable transportation. And if the bus routes do not run at the right hours, public transportation is not an option for those individuals.
- Haight thinks the business community is partly served by public transit. Without evening/weekend runs or regular runs throughout the rural parts of the county, it makes for gaps in transportation.
- Haight thinks some businesses would and others would not contribute to the public transit system. Businesses that are already willing to help cover transportation expenses for employees in some way (for example, a stipend until the employee gets a regular paycheck) would likely be willing to substitute that stipend for some other type of subsidy into the transit system, said Haight.

Luann King, Cincinnatus Town Supervisor
- The community could use a weekend bus. Medical appointments can be made during the week because there is a facility right in town, but she thinks her constituents would be served by a bus that could do shopping trips on weekends.
- She thinks her community is well served by the bus coming through twice a day Monday-Friday. King said she knew of a core group of riders a few years ago, whom the bus service would work with. They would make sure the bus stops were according to their needs and she thinks it is fantastic they would accommodate the riders that way.
- King said at this point the town would be unable to contribute monetarily to the bus system. She said the town will be so fiscally stressed for the next two years she is "scared to look at our small-town budget."

CAPCO Family Development Director Brandy Strauf
- Brandy Strauf said she sees many clients who lack the financial ability to take on the costs of owning a vehicle, such as purchasing a car, paying for insurance and registration, etc. That leaves people relying on public transit and the help of family and friends to give them rides to places they need to go.
- Expansion of hours/routes would help better serve clients
- CAPCO could not subsidize the bus system but does offer some emergency assistance on a case-by-case basis to people in need of transportation
- Public transportation is not always reliable. Brandy has seen clients experience inconsistencies with public transit, resulting in missed appointments or the bus not serving areas they need to go to. Strauf said more flexibility in routes or routes running later into the evenings or on weekends would help.
- Strauf stressed that she does think Cortland Transit is meeting many needs that people have. She added she thinks an expansion would just help more people get their needs met.
- CAPCO sometimes provides assistance on an emergency case-by-case basis to people who may need help buying a bus pass or token for the month. This is done sparingly, however, and the organization ensures such donations are reserved for cases that are true emergencies

Greg Lyons, Tompkins Cortland Community College Director of Enrollment, Operations and Auxiliary Services
- Reliable public transportation schedules and service
- Pretty well served at this point-hard to tell with COVID
- Not a possibility to fund at this point

Greg Lyons says the biggest need facing TC3, is for the college to have a public transit system that gets students to campus on time. He said last year the bus service was more reliable than it has historically been and given the COVID-19 pandemic it is difficult to tell how service has been because he does not think he is sold any bus passes to date for 2020.

Lyons said TC3 has reduced campus density and decreased the number of times in-person classes meet. For example, a class that typically meets twice a week now meets only once a week. Additionally, residence halls are also operating at about half capacity-approximately 250 students in residence halls compared to the usual 500. Lyons said if the college were to resume "normal" operations post-COVID, he thinks a Saturday morning run would be beneficial, as there are some Saturday morning classes on campus. However, currently he does not see any possibility for TC3 to help fund or subsidize any expansion of services.

TC3 subsidizes the semesterly transit passes that students buy. Students pay $120 for the bus pass and the institution pays an additional $30 per student. Lyons said he does not expect that to expand or increase given the current state of state funding.

Kevin Fitch, Cortland County Legislature LD-8 (Preble, Scott, part of Homer)
- Fitch says his base is lacking a scheduled route
- Not well served by public transportation
- Fitch suggests sending a questionnaire to municipalities regarding the interest in supporting public transit.

Kevin Fitch thinks that there are limited transportation options for seniors in the towns he represents. Fitch said this makes it hard for the older generation to age in place, they often are forced to find housing closer to the city of Cortland where they can easily get places. He also knows of senior constituents who have gone on to live in Skaneateles, citing the availability of the public transportation through Centro as a determining factor.

He thinks that to be better served there must be a demonstrated need for the transportation services, yet if it is not readily available then people will not seek it out, so it is a catch 22. He also would not rule out the possibility of some municipality support for public transit. He likened it to the shared boat launch in the town of Scott for Skaneateles Lake. He says people pay to use that service and he thinks that public transit would function similarly: that if it was apparent that public transit was serving the area and used, then the communities would

support it. Fitch says the only times he sees transit out in the areas he represents, are the Dial-A-Ride buses, which passengers must arrange 48-hours in advance.

Sandy Price, Cortland County Legislator (Representing Harford & Virgil)

- There is no bus service in Virgil or Harford
- No municipalities are in a position financially to support public transit amid difficult COVID times

Sandy Price said her constituents are out of luck if they do not have their own vehicle. Without the means to afford taxis, they must rely on friends, relatives, or neighbors to get them where they need to be, or they are forced to relocate to the City of Cortland to be closer to services. This is difficult for people whose hearts may be in their towns they have lived all their lives.

Sandy would like to see weekend service, even if it starts out as limited hours to gain popularity over time before expanding hours. She says she has heard about the demand for weekend service for a long time.

Michele Gravel JM Murray, Senior Director of Employment and Rehab Services
Gravel oversees three types of services: Individuals who work in the JM Murray building on Route 13, helping people get jobs in the community, and the pre-employment division for people with disabilities. JM Murray has a contract with First Transit/Cortland Transit to provide clients with transportation Monday-Friday. From March 18-Aug. 3 this contracted service did not run due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A major transportation need that staff identified is reliable public transportation services. The service provided under contract to JM Murray is not an issue. It is the Cortland Transit fixed route public transportation services that are not reliable.

On this service, Gravel said staff reports that clients are late to scheduled appointments due to buses running late, which results in appointments needing to be rescheduled. Alternatively, clients may have to take an early route and experience a long wait time to be on time for an appointment

She said lack of communication between dispatch and the driver has reportedly also been a problem. Staff would also like to see increased service to rural areas because the limited routes mean that individuals need to plan to spend a day in Cortland if they are taking the early run in, because there are limited routes serving those areas.

The division that deals with placing individuals in jobs in the community, would like weekend and evening service, said Gravel. The hours of public transit mean that certain jobs are just not possible for people who rely on public transportation to get around. For example, she said, housekeeping staff at a hotel that needs to be at work by 6 am, is eliminated as an option when the first bus does not leave until 6 am

Transportation therefore limits their opportunities for employment. Cabs are too expensive for low wage earners, and the public buses do not run at the hours that could serve these jobs, she said.

Gravel noted the timing of the routes which went from 30-minutes to 45-minutes in 2019, saying that Cortland Transit is willing to make changes to benefit the riders. She thinks that the schedules should make it clearer when each run reaches its destinations, because the 45-minute cycle can make it hard to figure that out.

Tiffanie Parker, Director of Program Development, Cortland County Department of Social Services
Tiffanie identified some key barriers that DSS clients face, including:

- Hours of transportation and limited out of city stops. This is for appointments, working, pick up/drop off for childcare, and shopping.
- Clients are having difficulty setting up medical transportation and there have been instances where people have not made it to their appointments because of this. Medicaid transportation must be made

through MAS. You must call them 3 days in advance, and then there is a whole online process. The process appeared to confuse a disabled individual when he was trying to set it up for himself and it was a barrier for him. I have also heard some of the MAS transports cannot take people in wheelchairs, or do not arrive on time/ are unreliable from some of our Long-Term Care clients. As for clients we are the representative payee for, they often complain about having to pay for a taxi to take them back and forth when they have appointments out of county and cannot use MAS transport for whatever reason.

- The difficulty attending appointments or canceling appts may be an issue in rural areas, for example, a bus stop in Marathon does not help if you are 2 miles from the stop.
- Also, for MAS transports, the individual gets a call the day ahead to verify the appointment, and if the person does not get/answer that call, the ride gets canceled, which is what happened with a disabled adult we work with. A colleague is also having problems getting transports for people at Cedarwood in Homer.

Tiffanie said that through her work she sees many clients who have difficulties getting their basic needs met because of lack of access to reliable transportation. Additionally, the clients she serves often have a disability which can make it even harder for them to navigate these difficulties without help. Because of lower income, clients often cannot afford to own their own vehicle, leaving them to rely on the help of friends or public transportation and Medicaid clients face additional challenges navigating the difficulties of arranging rides through MAS (long wait times on the phone, bureaucratic regulations that end up in missed rides and cancelled appointments and as a result provider can drop the patient.)

Tiffanie said many clients live in rural areas that are not served by public transit and in certain cases caseworkers just must take their clients to the appointments themselves, using the fleet of county vehicles to do so. The department also helps people buy bus passes. DSS is often the representative payee for individuals who need help managing finances. This means the department can be the financial backing institution through which individuals buy things like bus passes.

Tiffanie thinks that people who can access the public transit system are well served and the system works well for them with friendly and accommodating drivers. However, when people live out of the coverage area or have appointments at times that extend beyond the hours of public transportation, then there are limited options.

She suggested looking to public transit systems in other areas for examples of how to fund robust systems, mentioning Steamboat Springs Colorado in particular.

Appendix C—Existing Taxi and Transportation Services

Taxi Services (non-MAS Affiliated)

Taxi Name	Phone #	Hours
A + Taxi	607-533-(TAXI) 8294	24/7
Cortland/Silver Star	607-756-5460	24/7
MTS Express	607-261-0497	Midnight, Thursday-Saturday 10 am-3 am
University Taxi	607-272-3333 or 607-277-7777	24/7

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Taxi Services within and adjacent to Cortland County (MAS Affiliated)

NAME	PHONE 1	PHONE 2
1 ASAP Transfer	(315) 925-2038	
A Professional Transport	(315) 481-5509	
A&D Transport Service	(607) 386-4778	(607) 432-8294
All Around Transport of CNY	(315) 455-5146	(315) 876-5490
Alpha Medical Transportation	(315) 870-8200	(315) 870-8200
American Taxi	(607) 753-3030	(607) 423-6554
Amma Transportation LLC	(315) 329-1396	
Apollo 13	(315) 708-9283	(315) 708-9283
ASAP 2 Cab Company	(607) 272-7222	(607) 738-9613
Care Cars of Central NY	(315) 870-5117	
Care Fare	(315) 751-3273	(315) 935-7446
Clear Choice Transport	(315) 458-4059	
Collegetown Cab Inc	(607) 588-8888	
Cortland Transit/First Transit	(607) 758-3383	(607) 758-3383
Divine Companion Care	(315) 991-8664	(315) 991-8664
Easy Motion Cab Co	(607) 316-0318	
Elder ride Transport	(315) 794-4975	(315) 794-4975
Endicott Union Inc	(607) 444-3098	(347) 421-3154
Erie Medical Transportation	(315) 800-3404	(585) 743-0098
Garo Transportation	(315) 416-4764	
Hade Medical Transportation	(716) 292-7800	
Horizon Transport	(315) 679-6779	(315) 706-4243
Ithaca Dispatch/Cayuga Taxi	(607) 277-7777	(607) 272-3333
Lembo's/Absolute Delivery	(315) 415-8595	
Lifeline Medical Transport	(315) 730-7839	(315) 730-5906
M&A Mobility LLC	(315) 440-3957	(315) 247-1717
Medvan	(716) 685-1550	(716) 685-2550
Metro Taxi/Wheelchair	(315) 437-2000	(315) 437-7000
Mikes Taxi	(607) 343-1398	(607) 621-8030
Moms Transport Service Taxi	(315) 450-6363	(315) 876-2414
Nuba Taxi	(680) 207-0370	(315) 412-7559
Optimal Transportation	(315) 409-7343	(315) 876-1230
Regional Health Transportation DBA Southern Tier	(607) 772-8500	(607) 772-8500
Rolling V Bus Corp	(845) 428-3966	(845) 428-3966
Safe Care Transportation LLC	(315) 491-4693	(917) 645-7990
Speedy Medical Transport	(315) 463-7504	(315) 463-7504
Tisko Taxi	(315) 807-1757	(315) 807-1757
Top Flight Medical Transportation	(315) 640-1201	(315) 640-1201
Waris Transportation LLC	(716) 544-4062	(716) 603-8390

.

Ambulatory (MAS affiliated)

NAME	PHONE 1	PHONE 2
A&D Transport Service	(607) 386-4778	(607) 432-8294
Care Fare	(315) 751-3273	(315) 935-7446
Donson Transportation Service	(607) 786-4444	
Endicott Union Inc	(607) 444-3098	(347) 421-3154
Metro Taxi/Wheelchair	(315) 437-2000	(315) 437-7000
Regional Health Transportation DBA Southern Tier	(607) 772-8500	(607) 772-8500
Rolling V Bus Corp	(845) 428-3966	(845) 428-3966
Safe Care Transportation LLC	(315) 491-4693	(917) 645-7990
Speedy Medical Transport	(315) 463-7504	(315) 463-7504
Suburban Transport/Syracuse	(315) 437-0058	(315) 431-8020

Wheelchair (MAS affiliated)

NAME	PHONE 1	PHONE 2
A&D Transport Service	(607) 386-4778	(607) 432-8294
Care Fare	(315) 751-3273	(315) 935-7446
Collegetown Cab Inc	(607) 588-8888	247365
Cortland Transit/First Transit	(607) 758-3383	(607) 758-3383
Donson Transportation Service	(607) 786-4444	
Endicott Union Inc	(607) 444-3098	(347) 421-3154
Greater Valley EMS/W/C	(570) 888-0958	(570) 888-0958
M&A Mobility LLC	(315) 440-3957	(315) 247-1717
Metro Taxi/Wheelchair	(315) 437-2000	(315) 437-7000
Regional Health Transportation DBA Southern Tier	(607) 772-8500	(607) 772-8500
Rolling V Bus Corp	(845) 428-3966	(845) 428-3966
Safe Care Transportation LLC	(315) 491-4693	(917) 645-7990
Speedy Medical Transport	(315) 463-7504	(315) 463-7504
Suburban Transport/Syracuse	(315) 437-0058	(315) 431-8020

.

Stretcher (MAS affiliated)

NAME	PHONE 1	PHONE 2
Metro Taxi/Wheelchair	(315) 437-2000	(315) 437-7000
Regional Health Transportation DBA Southern Tier	(607) 772-8500	(607) 772-8500
Safe Care Transportation LLC	(315) 491-4693	(917) 645-7990
Speedy Medical Transport	(315) 463-7504	(315) 463-7504
Suburban Transport/Syracuse	(315) 437-0058	(315) 431-8020

.

Ambulance (MAS affiliated)

NAME	PHONE 1	PHONE 2
Greater Valley EMS/AMB	(570) 888-0958	(570) 888-6099
TLC Emergency Med Services	(607) 756-7564	(607) 756-2777

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