Statewide Action Plan: 2020–2024

Investing in Communities Throughout New York State
VISION FOR NEW YORK’S PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEMS

Transformation in Transportation
Public transportation is adapting to rapid changes in consumer and economic demand, community needs and a desire for more travel options, while responding to shifts in employment locations and technology. Demands from commuters, seniors, millennials, and people with disabilities is growing. The emergence of travel options like bike sharing, car sharing, ride sharing, and microtransit are changing people's expectations of mobility. Technology provides opportunities for customers to choose multiple travel options for their trips and to simplify fare payment.

*The transformation of public transit provides a unique opportunity to invest in innovative technologies and mobility options.*

An Innovative Vision for Public Mobility
A well-funded transit system will promote economic and community growth across New York State by providing customers with frequent, reliable and safe transportation. New York's transit systems will continually reevaluate themselves to meet the changing demands and expectations of customers and communities.

Investment to Succeed
Investments in public transit have not kept pace with growing demands and other community investments. Adequate and predictable funding is critical for transit systems to be able to plan and implement services that support mobility and growth, improve aging infrastructure, and to achieve our vision and ensure that no community is left behind.

Investment in expanded service, new technology and aging infrastructure will achieve our vision and ensure no community is left behind.

This paper describes investments needed to improve New York’s transit systems and implement a vision for the future. It summarizes the 5-year (2020–2024) infrastructure needs of the transit systems other than the MTA, to complement the MTA's 5-year capital program and allow for a statewide assessment of transit funding needs.
STATEWIDE TRANSIT ACTION PLAN (2020-2024)

Multiyear Investment in Transit:

- **Invest in Service**: To provide transit services that meet the needs of customers and communities across the state;
- **Invest in Capital Assets**: To upgrade transit infrastructure, add new technology and fund strategic expansions.

*Investment in service and infrastructure is required for New York’s transit systems to support growth in communities and provide the systems needed for the future.*

A multiyear investment in transit operations is required to meet customer expectations for frequent, reliable service. The STOA increase provided in 2019–20 kickstarts this effort. Sustained increases over the next four years will maintain progress and provide resources to allow transit to be reimagined.

Similarly, a multiyear investment in transit infrastructure will build on the successful 2015–2019 state capital program and provide resources to improve transit assets, add customer-focused technology and expand service where needed. A commitment to increase funding for the 2020–2024 capital program will ensure that transit infrastructure is replaced and improved, and continues to provide safe, reliable service.

5-Year Program to Invest in Transit Operations and Infrastructure

- **STOA Investment**: Increase STOA by 10% annually for Upstate and Downstate Non-MTA transit systems as part of a 5-year operating investment plan begun in 2019-20.
- **Capital Investment**: Increase state capital funding to address the infrastructure needs of Non-MTA transit and make strategic investments that support transit services of the future.

The combined 5-year infrastructure need of Upstate and Suburban Downstate transit systems is $1.73 billion. Available resources (including continuation of the state’s previous Non-MTA capital plan commitment of $104.5 million per year), will fund $713 million over the period, leaving an unfunded gap of $1.02 billion.

**Total Non-MTA Capital Funding Needs and Resources (millions of dollars)**

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<th>Bus</th>
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Sustained operating and capital investment is critical to allow transit systems to provide the quality of service that New Yorkers deserve and is necessary to ensure mobility that supports a growing economy.

IMPACT OF PAST INVESTMENTS

Operating Investments

A multiyear commitment to increase transit operating assistance is a cornerstone of a Statewide Transit Action Plan. After years of little growth, state operating assistance was increased in 2019-20 by 9.6% for upstate systems and 7.3% for downstate suburban systems. A recurring revenue source for upstate transit was enacted to fund the increase — auto rental fee in upstate counties (matching the rental fee in the MTA region).

This investment allowed transit systems to stabilize operations and expand service to meet demands from businesses and communities. Examples of improvements include:

- NFTA is providing additional service along the Genesee Corridor, including limited stop service, more evening trips on the 26 Delavan and 32 Amherst routes and an increase in Paratransit service by 8% to meet record demand. They are expanding the bus shelter program and constructing a customer service center at the Metropolitan Transportation Center.

- CDTA is expanding service, including a new Bus Rapid Transit route along the River Corridor, strengthening frequencies on trunk routes, introducing 4 electric buses and expanding their popular Universal Access Program to area employers and colleges. They are also pursuing opportunities to expand services in adjoining counties while introducing bike sharing and micro-transit.

- RGRTA increased weekend frequencies on 4 high ridership routes and extended hours for On-Demand Zones as part of its Reimagine RTS redesign project. They expanded hours of discounted fares for seniors and people with disabilities and will offer free public transit for Veterans. With future increases in STOA they will add On-Demand Zones to cover more employment centers, increase the number of routes offering high frequency service, and increase the frequency of Saturday service.

- CNYRTA closed the projected $3.5 million operating deficit in 2019-20, canceled planned service reductions and continued to provide current levels of service to Central New York communities.

- Westchester County added trips on 7 Bee-Line routes and increased the span of service on several routes. This addressed growing demand on weekdays and weekends and during early morning timeframes.
• As Nassau county grows, a robust and effective transportation system becomes more important. NICE is tasked with providing access to high-profile economic development projects, including ridership growth of the LIRR through the East Side Access launch, Belmont Racetrack Redevelopment Project and the 90-acre Nassau Hub Development.

• Tompkins County is growing and TCAT is responding to more requests for service and trips on rural routes to improve the ability of residents to get to jobs and other activities. TCAT has added a fourth trip on Saturdays to several rural routes. Technology is changing and increased STOA supports staff that are critical to ensuring that TCAT can advance important projects and make the best use of new technology.

• Greater Glens Falls Transit extended transit service in northern Saratoga County.

Capital Investments
In 2015, NYPTA prepared its first Non-MTA 5-year capital needs report, documenting infrastructure investments needed to replace buses, modernize maintenance and passenger facilities, and add new technology. The Governor and Legislature responded with the first ever Non-MTA 5-year capital funding program, which provided $455 million in state funding for capital projects. This funding improved transit infrastructure, benefiting hundreds of thousands of transit customers in communities across the state.

Investments made possible by the transportation capital program include the replacement of hundreds of transit vehicles, improvements to maintenance and passenger facilities, upgrades to fare collection systems that allow smartcards and mobile fare payment, and the addition of new technology. Examples of projects funded from 2015-2019 include:

NFTA
• Completed the rebuild of 16 light rail vehicles
• Replaced 76 CNG buses and 16 clean diesel buses ($51.4 m.)
• Replaced several escalators at underground rail stations ($10 m.)
• Installed a CNG fueling facility ($4.0 m.)

CDTA
• Replaced 60 transit buses ($36 m.)
• Replaced 18 paratransit vehicles ($1.5 m.)
• Purchased four 100% electric buses and installed related charging infrastructure ($4.5 m.)
• Installed a computer added dispatching system and upgraded fare collection technology ($25 m.)
RGRTA
- Replaced 46 transit buses ($20.9 m.)
- Constructing a new bus service building to fuel buses, empty fareboxes and clean buses ($12.5 m.)
- Implementing mobile ticketing payment for fixed route network allowing customers to pay via mobile app ($4.2 m.)
- Replaced radio systems on buses and added mobile data collection ($4.2 m.)
- Purchased six 100% electric buses and installed related charging infrastructure ($7.5 m.)

CNYRTA
- Replaced 49 CNG transit buses, 26 transit buses, and 12 paratransit vehicles ($36.9 m.)
- Replaced bus camera system for fleet ($1.7 m.)
- Roof replacements at Syracuse maintenance facility and Regional Transportation Center ($1.4 m.)

UCAT
- Equipped bus fleet with WiFi, providing free service to passengers ($64,000)
- Installed an automatic bus washer to better maintain the fleet ($242,000)

Chemung County Transit
- Renovated the Chemung Transit Center ($1.030 m.)

Greater Glens Falls Transit (GGTF)
- Constructing expanded bus/trolley passenger transfer station in Lake George
- Made significant energy efficiency improvements in GGFT's main transit facility

Westchester (Bee-Line)
- Purchased 78 hybrid articulated buses to replace diesel articulated buses ($88.6 m.)
- Purchased a dynamometer to evaluate brake systems to improve bus maintenance ($1.5 m.)
- Upgrade White Plains Transit Center including improved access for disabled customers ($0.4 m.)

Nassau County (NICE Bus)
- Replaced 95 CNG buses ($47.7 m.)
- Upgraded CNG fueling station ($8.7 m.)
- Revitalized Rosa Parks Hempstead Transit Center ($2 m.)
Impacts of Capital Investments

These capital improvements provide long lasting benefits to customers and communities. Infrastructure investments lower operating costs, reduce subsidy needs and result in better service transit customers. System improvement projects like fare collection equipment, vehicle location technology, real time information and traffic signal priority make transit easier to use and help to increase ridership. Increasing transit use has multiple benefits to communities, revitalizing downtowns, promoting smart growth, improving the environment and reducing the need for roadway expansion and parking.

* A new 2020-2024 Non-MTA capital plan with Increased state funding is critical to improving infrastructure across the state and ensure delivery of the Statewide Transit Action Plan. 