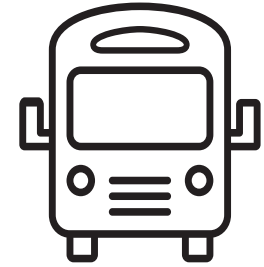




We invite you to help us in our efforts to **reinvent** public transit in new, more relevant and cost-effective ways.



**PUBLIC
TRANSIT**
THE

FUTURE

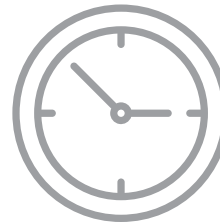


IS
HERE

BRTA FY 2019

“Public transit is the most **efficient** and **sustainable** way to move people as they go about their daily lives.”

Governor’s Commission on the Future of Transportation





A LETTER TO BRTA STAKEHOLDERS

During the past year, public transit has been getting a lot of attention. No doubt you've heard about the study to determine the feasibility and cost of expanding train service, from greater Boston to the Berkshires.

It's less likely that you've read the April 2019 report on regional transit, the work of the Governor's Commission on the Future of Transportation. That report cites the critical importance of **“well-run, far reaching and sustainable public transportation to the future of the Commonwealth.”**

The Task Force was charged with investigating the challenges and opportunities facing the Commonwealth's Regional Transit providers. Members were asked to explore how the RTAs could provide and improve service that meets community needs. We're back to what you

likely know: Meeting community transit needs, both in the Berkshires and at RTAs throughout the Commonwealth, requires more money.

One of the commission's foundational recommendations was to prioritize investment in public transit because **“public transit is the most efficient and sustainable way to move people as they go about their daily lives.”** BRTA is one of 15 Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs) who work each day to do just that.

All of us help people get to work, to school, to doctors' appointments, grocery stores, to visit family. In the Berkshires, our residents try to fit their transportation needs into the service hours we can provide while maintaining a balanced budget. What we have known for a long time is limited service hours have a significant impact on people who need to get to and from work in the evening and on weekends.

During FY 2019, increased funding was made available to regional transit. BRTA was able to use this increase to extend our

evening hours. You can read more about the extended service later in this report.

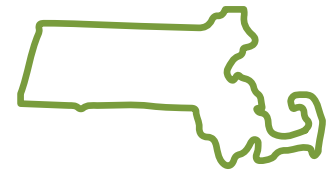
You may be wondering if there's anything you can do to keep the conversation about public transportation going. The answer is, "Yes!" Send letters to your elected officials. Tell them stories about your transportation challenges.

You matter.

Best regards,



Robert Malnati



BRTA is one of

15 RTAS



BRTA serves

26 member communities



FY 2019
INCREASED
funding



GETTING FROM POINT A TO POINT B

In fixed route transit systems, the system determines when and where riders can go. Not surprisingly, fixed route ridership has declined nationally, including here in the Berkshires.

People have busy lives and demanding schedules. They need transportation that is responsive to their needs. That's why we've seen the rapid rise of Uber and Lyft, providing consumers with the flexibility, responsiveness and convenience that a fixed route system cannot match.

We at BRTA have been asking ourselves: Would it be possible for us to create a more responsive solution? The answer is yes. Ideally, here is what it would look like. We would provide on-demand service Monday through Friday from 6p until 10p. Rather than

our large vehicles, we would incorporate the services of existing transportation fleets in Berkshire County.

Incorporating existing vehicles would make sense. BRTA has preexisting contracts with such fleets. Their drivers have been fully vetted and tested: driver background checks, drug and alcohol testing, insurance coverage. We would station these smaller, accessible vehicles in specific areas to accommodate riders. Riders would use a special feature on the RouteMatch app.

RouteMatch can capture both the GPS coordinates of where a person in need of a ride originated and their final destination. Utilizing a heat map, BRTA would be able to establish patterns and cluster rides. By creating these smaller shuttle runs, we would be able to transport more customers at a time in a cost-effective manner. Riders would pay for the ride by transferring funds via RouteMatch Pay. There would never be any cash exchanged with the driver.

We are currently seeking funding for a pilot program. We believe we can learn a lot including:

- Would Berkshire residents use the service?
- Would we be able to expand the pilot to other routes where shuttles make more sense than our 35-foot buses? We would have data regarding starting and ending points to help with that analysis.

Eventually, we believe we would be able to connect concentrated travel times and areas and turn these shuttles into the equivalent of rideshares. In some cases, we would be able to connect our shuttle riders to the closest bus stop, creating a multi-modal ride solution.

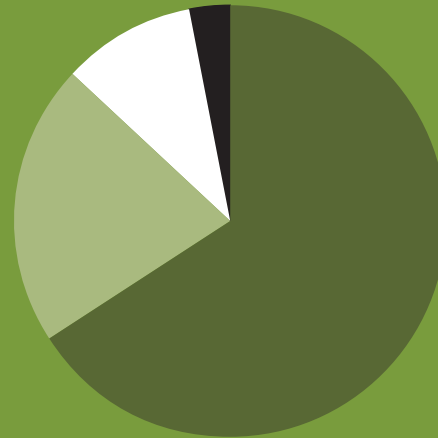
The time is now to create new, more responsive alternatives. Once the Berkshire Flyer begins bringing tourists from NYC to the Berkshires, it will be vitally important to have a robust Mobility on Demand system available to our visitors. We hope to make this idea a reality.

MOBILITY *on* DEMAND





THE NUMBERS: FY 2019



Total Operating + Non-operating Revenues of
\$17,458,162

- Transportation revenues 67%
- State and local operating grants 20%
- Federal operating grants 10%
- Other 3%



Total Operating + Non-operating Expenses of
\$17,474,679

- Transportation services 96%
- Administration 4%



Fixed Route
Ridership

497,498



Paratransit
Ridership

25,733

BROKERAGE TRIP HISTORY

DESTINATION	FY18	FY19
DMA (Department of Medical Assistance)	204,569	211,374
DDS (Department of Developmental Services)	104,458	107,551
DPH (Department of Public Health)	3,429	4,231
MRC (Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission)	1,052	219
DMH (Department of Mental Health)	3,351	3,666
TOTAL	316,859	327,041

BRTA TRIP HISTORY

	FY18	FY19
Bikes	7,069	5,654
Mobility Devices	2,019	1,737
TOTAL	9,088	7,391



MEASURING PROGRESS

More money flowed from the Statehouse to the Commonwealth's RTAs in FY 2019. As one might expect, legislators want to know if the money has any measurable effect on performance.

Starting in FY 2020, all RTAs, including BRTA, will be reporting performance measures each quarter in three categories:

- Fixed Route
- Demand and Response
- Systemwide

Among the items measured will be ridership, financial performance and overall customer service and satisfaction. According to Bob Malnati, "Accountability reporting isn't anything new for us. We report to the state and federal governments about how funding is appropriated. What's new is comparing each quarter's performance to BRTA's baseline FY 16-18."

Beyond ridership, financial performance and customer service, BRTA will also be reporting on its progress toward what's been identified as a stretch goal: transitioning to electronic fares. Electronic fares have been proven to reduce overhead costs for transit agencies and reduce the amount of time customers wait to reload fare cards or buy tickets. Naturally, this conversion won't happen overnight but it's important to BRTA's overall performance improvement. Stay tuned for more on our fare conversion progress.

SHOWING UP AND BEING COUNTED

Transit authorities across Massachusetts are involved in more than the day-to-day management of their respective systems.

Their management teams are active participants in regional initiatives. Why? Increasingly, people recognize public transportation's integral role in the life of every community, every region.

Our work beyond making sure our buses are running on time includes participation in:

- Berkshire Flyer Steering Committee
- BRTA Committee on Disability Services
- Berkshire Regional Planning Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee & MPO
- Berkshire Regional Coordinating Council on Transportation
- 1Berkshire Transportation Management Association Initiative
- Downtown Pittsfield INC Quality of Life Committee
- 2020 Berkshire County Census Committee
- BCAC's Poverty Forum

From developing plans for tourists getting from ITC to their destination to ensuring that all Berkshire residents, regardless of income, have access to transportation, these are the kinds of initiatives we actively participate in. We thought you'd like to know.





COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

BRTA has a number of partnerships with individuals who champion public transit within their organizations.

That said, BRTA has no greater champion than Paula Consolini, the Adam Falk Director of the Center for Learning in Action at Williams College. Under Paula’s leadership, the Center for Learning “strives to cultivate and sustain experiential learning opportunities in service of the teaching goals of faculty, civic aspirations of students and the needs of the wider community.”

For more than a decade, Paula has recognized the supportive role public transit plays in support of Williams College’s philosophy to “enhance students’ capacity to improve society.” BRTA helps get Williams

College students off the campus and out into the community.

Recently, BRTA reached out to Paula for her thoughts on our partnership.

“Williams counts on our BRTA partnership to fulfill our commitment to provide engaged learning opportunities for our students and to help us move closer to our environmental sustainability goals. Williams students take the bus to their fieldwork and to buy groceries. One student serving in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program this Spring regularly takes the BRTA

bus to the VITA work site in North Adams. Others have used the bus service to get to forums or project meetings of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition or to volunteer at the Berkshire Food Project or the Friendship Center Food Pantry. The Saturday morning #3 bus from Williamstown to North Adams is often full of students headed to buy food and other necessities. The students ride side by side with community members, saving energy by filling a bus seat instead of borrowing a car. In recent years, fewer Williams students are licensed to drive and as a

result, more are using the service and are fully cognizant of the critical need for it.”

Thanks to Paula’s ongoing advocacy, Williams students and faculty are able to ride, fare-free, on BRTA buses during the school year. And she is always there to help BRTA disseminate public information to the greater community. On behalf of the region, BRTA recognizes Paula Consolini for her work and for her support of public transit.

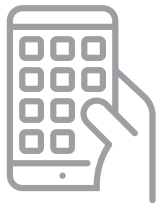


Transportation is not an issue of convenience. Good transportation can transform people’s lives - physically, emotionally, and financially. Transportation is ultimately the lifeblood of a community.

*Williams senior
Maria Hidalgo Romero*



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www.BerkshireRTA.com



Days of Bus Operation

Monday - Friday:

5:45 AM - 7:20 PM

Pilot evening hours to 11 PM

Saturday:

7:15 AM - 7:00 PM

Sunday:

No Service

No service on the following Holidays:

New Year's Day

Columbus Day

Martin Luther King Day

Veteran's Day

Memorial Day

Thanksgiving

Independence Day

Christmas

Labor Day

NOTE: Full Weekday service will be operated on President's Day & Patriot's Day

