



STRATEGIC PLAN

2016-2026



MASS TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY



MTA MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Mass Transportation Authority is to transport all the people in Genesee County who desire public transportation services through an integrated system that is safe, efficient, affordable and responsive.

MTA VISION STATEMENT

Mass Transportation Authority's vision is to be a transformational leader in providing a system of innovative, accessible, and sustainable public transportation services that increase opportunities for residents of Genesee County and contribute to building a healthy, vibrant community.

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To the Citizens of Genesee County

Public transportation in Genesee County is experiencing major societal changes that present transit with significant opportunities. The population of the United States is growing, aging and urbanizing; needs of travelers are shifting with current trends elevating a need for alternative special forms of transportation and demand for more personal choice in mobility. Therefore, transportation systems must be more flexible. Public transportation can be an important enabler to access health services, jobs, affordable housing, education and training, and connections to suburban, rural and inner city communities. The strategic planning process depends upon the success of building strong participation from both the public and private sector. These partnerships show a firm commitment to support multimodal transportation models that serve transit riders with a broader goal of serving the regional commuters accessing jobs in adjacent counties.

The Flint and Genesee County community is facing a number of challenges that impact the economic climate and the quality of life for all residents. The need for flexible services directed at millennials, those born between 1982 and 2000, and those of an aging population require new transportation options that address services at both ends of the spectrum. In addition, in the Genesee County community, over 80,000 persons are affected by some form of disability. A full family of services that provide the highest level of independence is a priority in this Strategic Plan.

The future of public transportation in Genesee County is dependent upon a proper balance of Federal, State and Local funding sources. Further, the development of public/private partnerships that provide for sustainable growth and the expansion of service options while contributing to the economic prosperity and improved quality of life for our citizens is extremely important.

The foundation of this Strategic Plan is centered on providing great service to the residents of our community utilizing the sustainable practices that include alternative fuels, cutting edge technology, investing in the development of our employees, and focusing on the customer to provide the most efficient and effective transportation system possible.

We would like to thank all of the organizations and individuals who provided important input to this process. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the community for the past support that has been provided and we look forward to a bright future for public transportation services.

Sincerely,



Paul D. Newman
Board Chair, Mass Transportation Authority



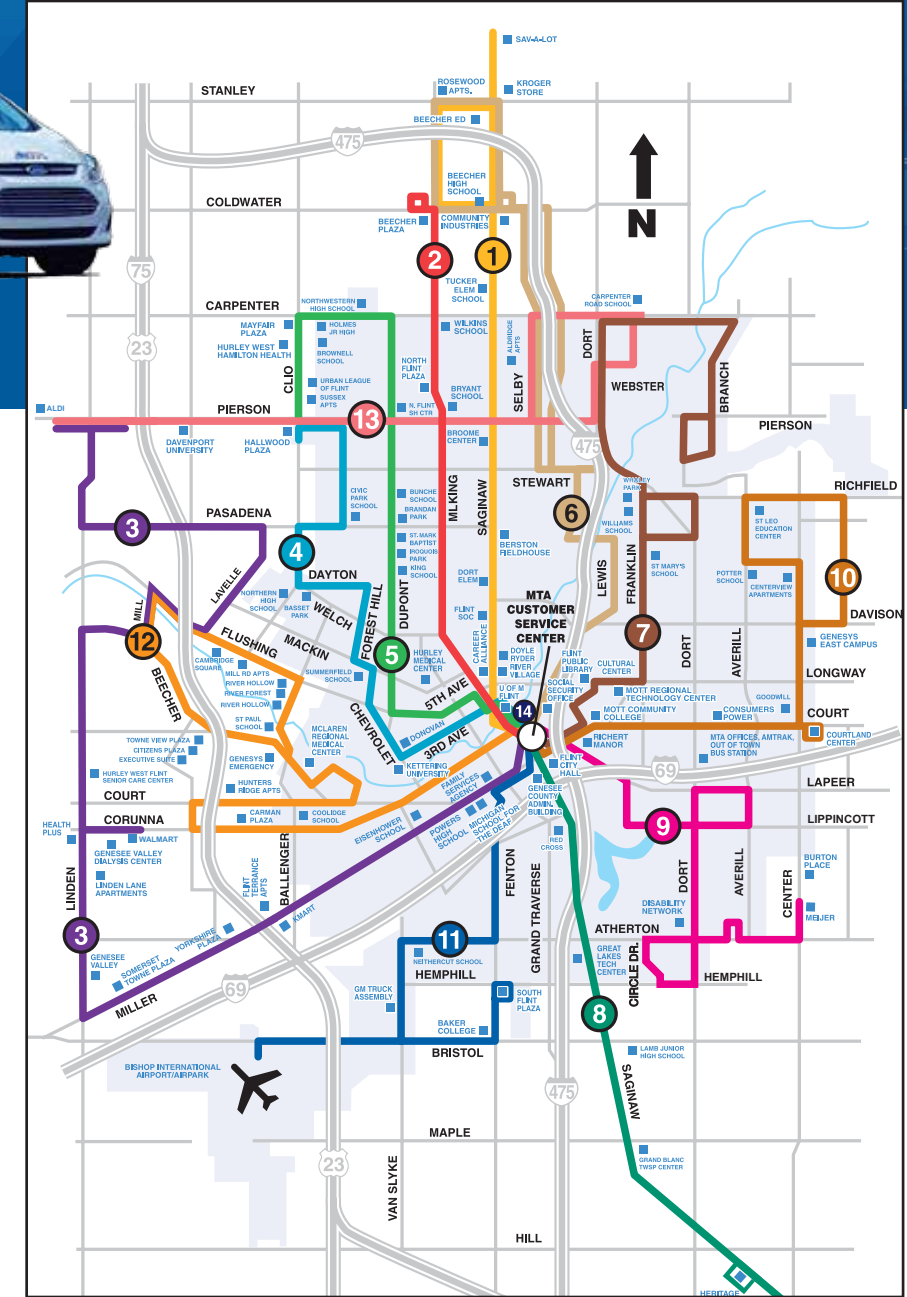
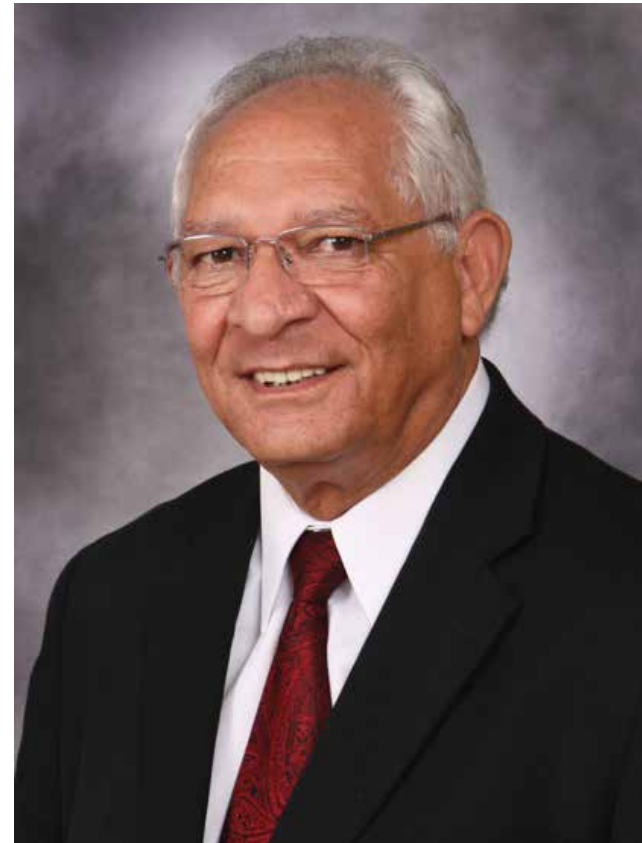
AT A GLANCE

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MILLION PASSENGERS

The Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) is the public transportation provider for Flint and Genesee County, Michigan, operating as a countywide authority. In FY2015, MTA had a ridership of 5.5 million passengers.

- **14 Primary Fixed Routes** operating seven days a week with over 4 million passenger boardings annually
- **83 Peak Period Routes** that augment the primary routes at high demand times
- **Regional Bus Service** from Genesee County into five surrounding counties for work and medical-related trips
- **Your Ride**, a curb-to-curb paratransit service, operating at eleven local service centers throughout the county. Your Ride provides over 450,000 rides annually to Genesee County residents who are elderly, disabled, or live outside the MTA fixed route service area
- A variety of **Specialized Services** including: Your Ride Plus, a non-emergency medical transportation program and Ride To Groceries, a pilot program created to increase access to healthy food options



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In 2016, the Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) celebrates its 45th anniversary of service to Flint and Genesee County. Both the MTA and the community it serves have experienced transformative change over the years. MTA has grown from a small, local transit service to a countywide organization operating across the region. MTA's transformation over the last two decades was guided by a Strategic Plan that responded to needs brought forth by the community. Now it is time for MTA to reassess and renew the vision, as the community has changed in size, shape, and needs.

The 2016-2026 Strategic Plan is built on input from MTA customers, community stakeholders, sister agencies and organizations. The MTA Board of Directors shaped this input into a vision, core values, goals and strategies. A plan for implementation starts with today's realities and builds a pathway for the MTA to follow over the next ten years into the future.

MTA's family of services operate throughout Genesee County and the surrounding region. **In FY 2015, 5.5 million passengers used MTA to get to**

their destination. MTA provides essential service to riders who use it to go to work, school, medical appointments, shopping, and personal trips. **It is the MTA's highest priority to retain the current level of services.** Many passengers arrange their lives according to MTA schedules, and experience shows that service changes disrupt lives, businesses and social services. MTA's ability to sustain its current level of service against unforeseen circumstances requires the prudent set aside of additional fund reserves.

MTA is dedicated to excellence and integrity. In order to insure that services continue to meet high standards, the MTA must regularly reinvest in its resources: the people, vehicles, and facilities involved in service operations. MTA must have a work force that is well-suited to their jobs and motivated to do their best. **A comprehensive strategy of employee development, advancement, satisfaction and succession is a high priority.**

The fleet and facilities must be well-maintained and up-to-date. **An ongoing program of regular vehicle replacement is essential** and presents the opportunity to continue the conversion to alternative fuels. Integration of alternative fuels into the fleet has financial, environmental, and community rewards.

Other **technologies** will also be employed to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness. MTA will continue to roll out on-board technology, web based applications, hardware and software that simplify complex processes and **improve passenger information and access.**

Marketing and communication efforts will be closely aligned with customer preferences in order to reach a varied passenger base. Passenger-oriented enhancements will be designed to make MTA services smoother, more comfortable, easier to understand and use. Potential for **partnering and collaboration will be pursued.** Cooperation with other local entities on projects of mutual interest will provide benefits that exceed the cost. MTA will work with communities to achieve local goals featuring transit friendly design.

MTA must expand in order to meet all the local need for public transit services. MTA's current capacity limits ridership on all of its services, including the primary routes, peak period routes, regional routes, and Your Ride. Ridership will increase by expanding services as additional operating and capital funds become available. MTA will seek nontraditional sources of operating funds to accelerate opportunities for service expansion. Capital funds for scheduled vehicle replacement will take priority over funding for fleet expansion.

MTA will champion major initiatives that will transform the public transit system. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Saginaw Street will heighten access along the major north-south corridor. Commuters will enjoy express transit service along the I-75 corridor. Development of a regional transit authority will serve passengers throughout a three county service area. These are long term projects with probable results ten or more years out.

This Strategic Plan presents **38 recommended action strategies over the next ten years.** The implementation plan provides a timeline for achieving the strategies. **MTA is currently operating at capacity.** Its available people, facilities, equipment and financial resources are fully engaged in current operations. **New or expanded services will require an infusion of new operating and capital dollars.**

A **funding strategy** for the MTA will include **nurturing existing sources, engaging community partners, instituting specialized niche services with premium fares to relieve pressure on traditional MTA**

services, advocating with state and federal leaders for stronger transit programs, and seeking new funding resources. New funding sources likely will fund specific activities rather than serve as a broad funding base.

MTA's future is positive and filled with possibilities. The 2016-2026 Strategic Plan will be its roadmap for achieving its vision of continuing to build a robust public transportation system that serves all Genesee County residents.

The MTA Board of Directors has endorsed a set of core values that define the MTA as an organization. These core values should be at the forefront in all planning, decision-making, and actions. Consistency between values, goals, and strategies will produce transformational results for the MTA and the public it serves.

MTA CORE VALUES



Integrity

MTA demonstrates honesty, consistency, dependability, transparency, and accountability in all its actions.

Dedication to Excellence

MTA consistently works to improve service delivery and maintain impeccable standards in every facet of the organization.

Responsiveness

MTA anticipates and assesses the changing transportation needs of the community. It strives to respond with effective and efficient solutions.

Customer-Focused

MTA values its passengers and treats them with dignity and respect. In all interactions, internally and externally, customer satisfaction is paramount.

Collaboration and Partnering

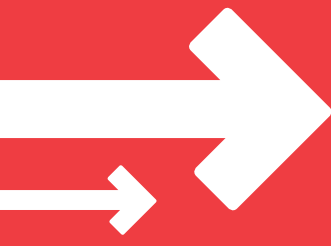
Success is achieved by working together. Through strategic partnerships, MTA works with the community to achieve mutually beneficial goals.

Transformational Leadership

MTA demonstrates a vision that inspires and motivates others. It embraces change and champions ideas that move transit forward.

Innovation

MTA embraces new technologies and seeks to advance innovative ideas to improve the efficiency of the organization.



Rosa Parks statue at the Downtown Transit Center

INTEGRITY

Goal 1

Ensure accountability, efficiency, transparency, and sustainability throughout the organization.

Strategies

- Have a well-defined and understood set of organizational values that is widely discussed and distributed to all current and incoming employees
- Be accountable and transparent to the community through publication of an annual report
- Implement performance measures throughout the workplace
- Maintain financial sustainability by growing the fund reserve to auditor-recommended levels



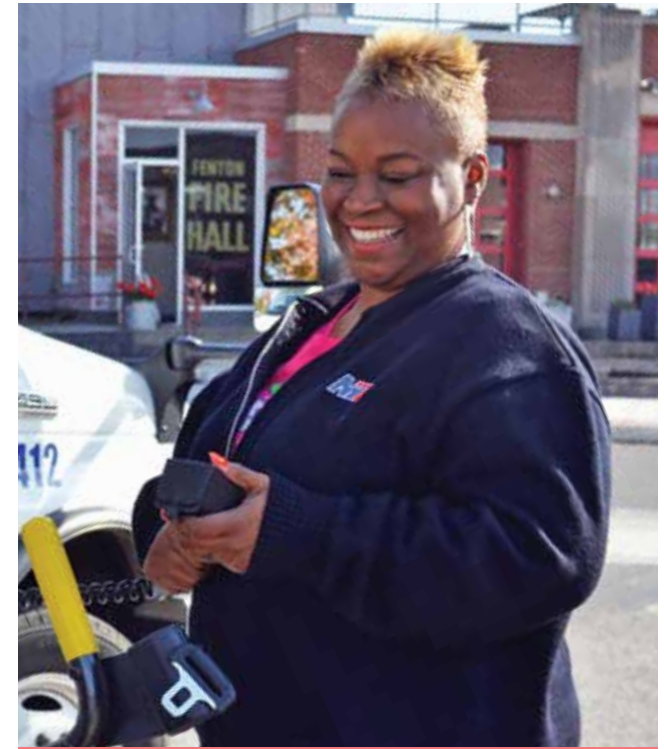
DEDICATION TO EXCELLENCE

Goal 2

Create a workplace that attracts and retains a qualified, talented, and committed workforce.

Strategies

- Nurture job skills through employee development opportunities and ongoing training
- Implement advancement and succession plans for MTA personnel
- Incorporate sensitivity and cultural competency training
- Continue employee engagement programs, including Quality of Work Life and Total Quality Management



Satisfied employees deliver greater customer service.



DEDICATION TO EXCELLENCE



RESPONSIVENESS



160

VEHICLES CURRENTLY DUE FOR REPLACEMENT

Goal 3

Maintain a fleet of vehicles and facilities that are recognized as community assets.

Strategies

- Use the Bus Fleet Management Plan (BFMP) as a blueprint for vehicle acquisition and disposal
- Have all vehicles in generally accepted useful life by 2026
- Develop an MTA Facilities Plan for current and future services, vehicles, and support activities. Include provisions for the expansion of non-emergency medical transportation and alternative fuels vehicles storage, servicing, and maintenance

Goal 4

Strengthen and update existing services while introducing new and expanded services to meet community needs.

Strategies

- Implement Primary Route Study recommendations
- Meet requests for additional peak route services
- Expand regional routes to increase job access for Genesee County residents
- Increase capacity of Your Ride Services
- Explore options for the growth of specialty services, including non-emergency medical transportation, shopper services, and veterans' transportation
- Pursue innovative funding models for new or specialty services



Ride to Groceries provides access to healthy food choices.



CUSTOMER FOCUSED



COLLABORATION AND PARTNERING

Goal 5

Provide total quality customer service.

Strategies

- Expand capacity of Marketing department
- Train all employees on customer service principles
- Provide MTA information in a variety of formats to accommodate a diverse population
- Create clear and easy-to-use channels for customer feedback with an established system for reviewing compliments and complaints
- Implement The Disability Network's Bus Stop Accessibility Study recommendations to ensure bus stops and shelters are user-friendly and completely accessible
- Build a comprehensive travel training program for new passengers
- Utilize social networks in addition to traditional communication channels to improve communication with public

Goal 6

Enhance strategic partnerships and collaborations with organizations throughout the region.

Strategies

- Seek buy-in from service beneficiaries who may have the ability to subsidize the cost of providing transportation for their clients or customers
- Explore additional regional connections with neighboring transit systems, including Greater Lapeer Transit Authority (GLTA), Saginaw Transit Authority and Regional Services (STARS), Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART), Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority (AAATA) and Livingston Essential Transportation Service (LETS)
- Provide technical assistance to local planning and land use design projects to ensure connectivity to sidewalks; shelter placement; and other transit-friendly design
- Examine the benefits of partnerships with businesses and organizations for activities, such as: employee training; fueling station operation; shelters; snow removal; park and ride lots; and bike share projects



New Ride to Worship Sunday shuttle service

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Goal 7

Provide leadership on both short-term initiatives and on long-term, visionary projects.

Strategies

- Engage with community leaders to ensure MTA is a partner in economic development projects, including: University Corridor; Shriners Park; Genesys Regional Medical Center expansion; and other major corridor improvements
- Utilize MTA's Strategic Plan for Alternative Fuels as a guide to maintain momentum on the successful alternative fuel program
- Explore potential for Saginaw Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project that would improve system quality and reduce congestion on one of MTA's most heavily traveled routes

500,000 GALLONS LESS DIESEL FUEL

Since 2011, MTA has dramatically decreased its usage of diesel fuels. In FY2016, MTA will realize an annual reduction of over ½ million gallons of diesel! Over 34% of MTA's fleet is now fueled with propane, compressed natural gas, or hydrogen fuel cells.

- Continue working with Parsons Brinkerhoff consulting firm to complete I-75 Corridor Study that seeks to improve public transportation options on I-75 from Bay City to Detroit. Develop timeline to implement recommendations from study
- Explore feasibility of implementing a regional transit authority model for Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties, combining these three agencies into one regional transit authority

INNOVATION

Goal 8

Maximize utilization of technology to achieve optimum operational efficiency and improved customer experience.

Strategies

- Update MTA's Information Technology Plan
- Complete installation of electronic fareboxes in fixed route vehicles
- Use on-board technology to enhance data collection and reporting
- Verify Automatic Passenger Counters (APC) and integrate into regular service
- Identify and implement web-based applications to improve passenger transit experience, including imminent arrival software; text notification alerts; GPS-based bus locator apps; online trip planning; and online Your Ride trip requests



With the ever growing presence of smartphones, online trip requests would increase customer convenience.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

CORE VALUE	RECOMMENDATION	TIMEFRAME			FUNDING	
		Short Term (1-3 years)	Medium Term (4-6 years)	Long Term (7-10 years)	Operating	Capital
INTEGRITY	Promote MTA values	X			X	
	Provide regular accountability through publication of annual report	X			X	
	Implement performance measures	X			X	
	Maintain financial sustainability by growing a fund reserve	X	X	X	X	
EXCELLENCE	Nurture job skills through employee development opportunities	X	X	X	X	X
	Develop advancement and succession plans for MTA personnel	X			X	
	Provide sensitivity and cultural competency training	X	X	X	X	
	Continue employee engagement programs and improve internal communications	X			X	
	Implement capital program of scheduled vehicle replacement using BFMP	X	X	X		X
	Have all vehicles in generally accepted useful life by 2026			X		X
	Develop and implement an MTA facilities plan	X	X	X	X	X
RESPONSIVENESS	Implement Primary Study Route recommendations	X	X		X	X
	Meet requests for additional peak route services		X		X	X
	Expand regional routes to increase job access		X		X	X
	Increase capacity of Your Ride services	X	X		X	X
	Explore options for growth of specialty services	X			X	X
	Pursue innovative funding models for new or specialty services	X	X		X	

CUSTOMER FOCUSED	Expand Marketing Department capacity	X			X	
	Train all employees on aspects of customer service	X	X	X	X	
	Have MTA information in various formats and languages	X			X	
	Create clear channels for customer feedback and review	X			X	
	Implement TDN Bus Stop Accessibility recommendations	X	X			X
	Partner with United Way for 501c(3) donations to subsidize fares	X			X	
	Build a comprehensive travel training program for new passengers		X	X	X	
	Utilize social networks to improve communication with community	X			X	
PARTNERING	Seek financial buy-in and cosponsors for service	X			X	
	Explore regional connections with neighboring transit systems		X		X	X
	Provide technical assistance to local planners	X	X	X	X	
	Explore partnerships in training, fueling, shelter upkeep, snow removal, park and ride lots, bike share projects	X			X	X
LEADERSHIP	Actively engage in community projects	X	X	X	X	
	Utilize Strategic Plan for Alternative Fuels	X	X	X	X	X
	Explore potential for Saginaw Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)	X	X	X	X	X
	Implement recommendations of the I-75 Corridor Transit Study	X	X	X	X	X
	Develop a regional transit authority service model		X		X	
INNOVATION	Complete update to MTA's IT plan	X			X	
	Complete installation of electronic fare boxes on fixed route buses		X			X
	Verify Automatic Passenger Counters (APC) and integrate into service	X			X	
	Implement web based applications for passenger information		X			X

MOVING FORWARD

MTA Flint is excited and optimistic as we move forward to implement this Strategic Plan.

Genesee County is an outstanding community and will become more so with the continued growth of transportation choices that meet the varied needs of its residents. MTA Board of Directors and staff are honored to be able to share our vision with the community and look forward to working with all of you to make it happen. Thank you for participating in the strategic planning process and working with MTA to strengthen and transform public transportation in Flint and Genesee County!



PARTICIPANTS

Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center
 American Red Cross
 Ann Arbor Area Transportation Authority
 Baker College of Flint
 Bishop International Airport Authority
 Brennan Senior Center
 Catholic Charities
 City of Flint
 City of Grand Blanc
 Crim Fitness Foundation
 Davison Township
 Disability Network
 Fenton Township
 Flint and Genesee Chamber of Commerce
 Flint and Genesee Convention and Visitors' Bureau
 Flint Downtown Development Authority
 Flint Farmers' Market
 Flint Housing Commission
 Flint Institute of Arts
 Genesee County Community Action Resource Development
 Genesee County Department of Veterans Services

Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission
 Genesee County Office of Senior Services
 Genesee County Parks and Recreation
 Genesee County Road Commission
 Genesee Health System
 Genesee Intermediate School District
 Genesee Shiawassee Thumb Michigan Works
 Genesys Regional Medical Center
 Goodwill Industries Inc.
 Grand Blanc Township
 Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority
 Hamilton Community Health Network
 HealthPlus of Michigan
 Hispanic Technology and Community Center
 Hurley Medical Center
 International Academy of Flint
 Jewish Community Services
 Kettering University
 Lapeer Development Corporation
 Loose Senior Center
 Livingston Essential Transportation Services

Metro Community Development
 Michigan Rehabilitation Services
 Michigan State University, College of Human Medicine
 Michigan Department of Human Services
 Mott Children's Health Center
 Mott Community College
 Mundy Township
 National Kidney Foundation
 Resource Genesee
 Safe and Active Genesee for Everyone
 Saginaw Transportation Authority for Regional Services
 Salvation Army
 Shiawassee Area Transportation Authority
 Sierra Club
 Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation
 United Way of Genesee County
 University of Michigan – Flint
 VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System
 VA Community Based Outpatient Clinic
 Valley Area Agency on Aging
 Vienna Township



MASS TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

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Customer Service

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