



**Central New York
Regional Transportation Authority**

2026-27 Comprehensive Strategic Plan

2026-27 Financial Plan

**Annual
Report**



**MOVING COMMUNITIES
FORWARD!**

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INTRODUCTION

OUR MISSION

To be a driving force moving communities forward.

OUR VISION

Mobility solutions that help people achieve more.

OUR VALUES

Respect – Dignity and kindness always

Integrity – Do good, be good

Safety – Everyone’s responsibility

Excellence – Holding ourselves to the highest standard

Service – Passion for the community



Centro is committed **to being a driving force moving communities forward** by **providing mobility solutions that help people achieve more**. Our dedication to **respect, integrity, safety, excellence, and service** guides our operations, ensuring that public transportation remains reliable, accessible, and impactful for the communities we serve. Together, we are shaping the future of mobility and empowering individuals to move forward.

ABOUT CENTRO

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA), also known as Centro or the Authority, serves as the public mass transit provider for the Central New York region. Centro offers fixed-route, commuter, on-demand, and paratransit services across Onondaga, Cayuga, Oswego, Oneida, and Cortland counties. Collectively, these counties are home to nearly 926,000 residents.

Centro services encompass 5,000 bus stops, 210 passenger shelters, three transfer hubs, three surface parking areas, and a Regional Transportation Center. Operating a fleet of 233 revenue vehicles, supported by six maintenance facilities, including our largest full-service maintenance facility and administrative headquarters in Onondaga County (Syracuse). Centro operates 103 routes, covering more than 5.9 million miles annually, with over 2,500 bus trips each weekday for regular service and approximately 3,800 weekly trips for paratransit services.

Since our establishment in 1970 and the launch of publicly operated bus service in Syracuse on January 17, 1972, Centro has remained committed to enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality of Central New York. As a responsible community partner and an essential component of the region's public infrastructure, Centro continues to contribute through various initiatives, including:

- Providing ADA-compliant paratransit services to ensure accessibility for all riders.
- Offering transportation to the New York State Fair and local college campuses, including Syracuse University, SUNY Oswego, Onondaga Community College (OCC), Cayuga Community College (Cayuga CC), and Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC).
- Supporting community events, services, and educational programs throughout the year.
- Promoting environmental sustainability with a fleet of compressed natural gas (CNG) and clean diesel buses.
- Partnering with police, fire departments, emergency responders, and the Red Cross to support community safety during emergencies.



To Our Valued Riders, Friends, and Community Partners

For Centro and the communities we serve, FY 2025-26 was a year of momentum. The hard work and careful planning efforts of our team translated into meaningful improvements in our service, our infrastructure, and the lives of the people who ride with us every day.

Ridership continued to grow across the region as we've improved service in all five counties, connecting more people to jobs, healthcare, education, and opportunity. Overall, we saw a 6% increase in system-wide service last year which includes Cortland County, where we've now served the community for a full year.

We were proud to secure key grant funding this year, advancing once-in-a-generation investments such as Syracuse Bus Rapid Transit, fleet modernization, and the construction of a new Oneida facility. These achievements reflect not only the confidence our state and federal partners place in our work, but also our unwavering commitment to building a transit system ready to serve Central New York for decades to come.

In Oswego County, we rolled out our Better Bus: Oswego system redesign focused on consistent, streamlined routing with increased frequency, connecting people to the places they most want to visit. Since the launch in January, we've already seen a 12% increase in ridership there – a strong indicator that we've made the right choices on service upgrades.

Centro staff is continuing to advance planning efforts for Onondaga County's improvements. The Better Bus: Onondaga system redesign will launch in 2027 where we'll increase frequency in our urban core and introduce MOVE microtransit service in other neighborhoods. We're also working through the design phase of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes, which are expected to go live in 2028.

One of the things we're most proud of this year is how deeply community input shaped our decisions. From public hearings to neighborhood conversations, we've heard from riders, advocates, and partners and acted on what we learned. We sat at the table so we could understand the public point of view and invited folks into our facility so they could get a glimpse of all that happens behind the scenes. This year, we've been working hard on building relationships, and the result is a transit system that better reflects the needs of the people it serves.

None of this would happen without our hard-working Centro team. To the operators, maintenance staff, planners, customer service representatives, and administrative professionals – thank you. You are the backbone of this organization and your commitment to our riders is not taken for granted. And to our riders – thank you for choosing us. You are the reason we do this work and we'll never stop striving to earn your trust.



Nicholas F. Laino
Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nicholas F. Laino".



Christopher Tuff
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Tuff".





Anthony Q. Davis, Sr.
Vice Chairman
City of Syracuse



Nicholas F. Laino
Chairman
Oneida County



Darlene DeRosa Lattimore
Secretary
Cayuga County



Tina M. Fitzgerald
Treasurer
Governor's Office

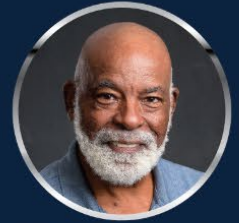


Neil Burke
Member
City of Syracuse

Central New York Regional Transportation Authority 2025-26 Board of Members



Robert F. Cuculich
Member
Onondaga County



Julius L. Lawrence Jr.
Member
City of Syracuse



Louella Williams
Member
Onondaga County



Francis S. Saya III
Non-Voting Member
ATU Business Agent



Heather Snow
Member
Oswego County



centro.org

PUBLIC BENEFIT SUBSIDIARY CORPORATIONS

HISTORY

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA) was established by the New York State Legislature in 1970 in response to economic, demographic, and land-use shifts that led to the decline of privately operated public transit companies. Across the United States, many private bus operators were unable to sustain their operations and replace aging equipment with fare revenue alone. As a result, public transportation authorities were created in major cities across New York State and other urbanized areas in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Public transportation plays a vital role in maintaining local economic vitality. It provides mobility options for individuals who cannot or choose not to drive, reduces traffic congestion and fuel consumption, lowers air pollution, and creates pathways to employment. Additionally, it offers an essential alternative for commuting to work, school, medical appointments, shopping centers, and social or entertainment venues. Like roads and bridges, public transit is a fundamental component of the nation's transportation infrastructure.

LEGAL STATUS

CNYRTA is a public authority and a public benefit corporation of New York State, created under Title 11-D of the Public Authorities Law in 1970. While it operates as an “agent” of the state, it is not part of the state itself. Its legislated purpose is to develop, improve, and maintain public transportation services within the Central New York Regional Transportation District. Under state law, CNYRTA is recognized as providing “*an essential governmental function*” for the benefit of New York State residents.

The original Central New York Regional Transportation District included Onondaga County. The law permitted additional counties Cayuga, Cortland, Jefferson, Madison, Oneida, and Oswego to join through a vote of their legislative bodies. To date, Oswego (1972), Cayuga (1973), Oneida (2005), and Cortland (2025) Counties have elected to join Onondaga County (1970) as part of the Authority’s service area.

As a governmental entity created for the public benefit, CNYRTA and its subsidiaries are tax-exempt from sales, excise, property, and income taxes.

For financial reporting purposes, CNYRTA is a Component Unit of the State of New York. Its independently audited financial statements, including those of its subsidiaries, are incorporated into New York State’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). Additionally, CNYRTA is recognized as a “specified” transit system in the annual appropriations of the New York State Budget.



ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Authority is governed by a Board of Members, consisting of fourteen positions, including one non-voting member representing the collective bargaining units. The current composition of the Board is as follows:

Onondaga County – 5 seats
 City of Syracuse – 3 seats
 Oswego County – 1 seat
 Cayuga County – 1 seat
 Oneida County – 1 seat
 City of Rome – 1 seat
 Cortland County – 1 seat
 Collective Bargaining Unit – 1 non-voting seat

Board members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the New York State Senate. Terms are fixed but staggered over seven-year periods, beginning on July 1. Members continue to serve until their successors are appointed and may be reappointed through the same process. Officers of the Board, including the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer, are elected by the Board of Members.

Board members serve without compensation but are eligible for reimbursement of necessary and actual expenses incurred while performing official duties.

The Board of Members holds at least one meeting per month, typically on the fourth Friday. These meetings are open to the public, recorded, and streamed live on the Authority's website: www.Centro.org.

COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE	FREQUENCY	DESCRIPTION
Audit & Finance	Monthly	Established by the Bylaws to ensure compliance with Public Authorities Law. Responsibilities include reviewing independent audits, financial statements, and related financial information.
Governance	Twice Annually	Established by the Bylaws in accordance with the Authorities Budget Office. Focuses on best governance practices, internal controls, and governance-related matters.
Pension	Quarterly	Established by Board Resolution to oversee and review the management of the Authority's pension funds.
Personnel	As Needed	Established by Board Resolution to address personnel-related matters, including work history and salary information. Meetings are typically held in executive session.
Legal	As Needed	Established by Board Resolution to discuss legal matters. Meetings are typically held in executive session.
Nominating	Annually	Established by Board Resolution to nominate Officers for the Board of Members. Meetings are typically held in executive session.



PUBLIC BENEFIT SUBSIDIARY CORPORATIONS

To fulfill its mission, CNYRTA has created several public benefit subsidiary corporations over the past 50+ years. The Authority provides comprehensive public transit services through its six "Centro" bus subsidiaries, serving Onondaga, Oswego, Cayuga, Oneida, and Cortland Counties. Additionally, two smaller subsidiaries manage specialized functions.

CNY Centro, Inc.

Provides fixed-route public transit services in Onondaga County, operating a fleet of 140 heavy-duty buses—131 powered by compressed natural gas (CNG) and 9 by diesel. CNY Centro also supports all other subsidiaries by managing fleet maintenance, route planning, scheduling, training, accounting, procurement, grant administration, payroll, human resources, IT, marketing, and other administrative functions.

Centro Call-A-Bus, Inc.

Provides demand-response paratransit services in Onondaga County, complementing fixed-route service as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Originally launched in the mid-1970s, Call-A-Bus was already in place for nearly two decades before the ADA mandated paratransit service nationwide. It operates a fleet of 18 specialized vehicles, supplemented by fixed-route buses, private van operators, and taxi services.

Centro of Oneida, Inc.

Operates fixed-route and ADA-mandated paratransit services in Oneida County, using 28 large and 9 small buses. It includes the Utica Division, serving Utica, Kirkland, New Hartford, and Whitestown, and the Rome Division, which provides service within the City of Rome. Before joining CNYRTA in 2005 these municipal transit operations faced significant financial and operational challenges. With support from New York State, CNYRTA successfully regionalized Oneida County's transit system under Centro of Oneida, Inc.

Centro of Oswego, Inc.

Provides fixed-route and ADA-mandated paratransit services in Oswego County, operating 14 large and 4 small buses. It serves SUNY Oswego, the cities of Oswego and Fulton, and commuter routes connecting Mexico, Fulton, Oswego, and Syracuse. Centro of Oswego operates from an Authority-owned light maintenance/office facility in Oswego.

Centro of Cayuga, Inc.

Provides fixed-route and ADA-mandated paratransit services in Cayuga County, operating 14 large and 2 small bus. It serves Auburn, Weedsport, and Port Byron, with commuter service to Syracuse and the Regional Transportation Center. Centro of Cayuga also operates extensive New York State Fair shuttle services and is based in an Authority-owned light maintenance/office facility in Auburn.

Centro of Cortland, Inc.

Launched in 2025, Centro of Cortland provides both fixed-route and ADA-mandated paratransit services throughout Cortland County. The system operates a fleet of 9 large buses and 4 small buses, offering essential mobility for residents and connecting key destinations. Service areas include the City of Cortland, Homer, Marathon, and Cincinnatus, along with key destinations such as Walmart, Tompkins Cortland Community College, and Greek Peak. Centro of Cortland operates from a light maintenance and administrative facility located in Cortland, with additional operational, administrative, and technical support provided by CNY Centro, Inc. in Syracuse. This structure ensures reliable service delivery, coordinated oversight, and efficient use of regional resources.



Centro Parking Inc.

Established in the 1970s to generate revenue supporting transit operations. It leases surface parking lots to SUNY Upstate Hospital and manages a permitted parking lot under Interstate 81 in Syracuse, leased from the State of New York.

Intermodal Transportation Center, Inc. (ITC, Inc.)

Created in 1995 to develop and manage the William F. Walsh Regional Transportation Center (RTC) in Syracuse, which opened in 1998. The RTC serves as a hub for Centro's local and regional transit, as well as Amtrak, Greyhound, Adirondack Transit Lines, and FlixBus. Before its construction, intercity travelers had no convenient way to transfer between these modes of transportation, as terminals were scattered across the region. The RTC operates 24/7 and has undergone multiple significant capital improvements by CNYRTA over the years.



STRATEGIC PLAN

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority has developed this strategic plan with a clear purpose and a strong commitment to the communities we serve. As an important link connecting people to jobs, services, and opportunities, we know public transportation is about more than just getting from place to place. Transit supports the local economy, improves quality of life, and helps move our region forward. Guided by our mission, vision, and values of respect, integrity, safety, excellence, and service, this plan lays out a path for the future. It reflects our commitment to using resources wisely, working collaboratively, and continuing to adapt so we can stay strong and make a meaningful, lasting impact.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

- **Financial Stewardship:** Managing public funds responsibly so riders and taxpayers get the most value, while keeping finances stable and decisions open and transparent.
- **Customer Experience:** Delivering consistent, high-quality interactions to create an experience that people trust and choose.
- **Community Partnership:** Building strong, collaborative relationships with community stakeholders to support shared goals, improve quality of life and enhance growth within our region.
- **Workforce Commitment:** Investing in and supporting professional employees to foster a skilled, engaged, collaborative, and inclusive workforce.
- **Environmental Consciousness:** Promoting responsible practices that reduce environmental impacts and support long-term sustainability.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Financial stewardship is essential to the Authority's ability to provide reliable, high-quality service now and into the future. This means carefully managing our resources, even as funding and economic conditions change. We work to balance spending with smart investments that keep our system strong. By improving how we operate, maintaining strong oversight, and planning for risks, we are committed to using public funds wisely and delivering the greatest possible value to the communities we serve. This pillar is supported by the strategic focus areas below.

Discipline	Strengthen long-term financial resilience by proactively managing funding variability, controlling costs, and mitigating the impact of economic fluctuations and unforeseen expenses.
Innovation	Drive continuous improvement through best practices, modern technologies, strategic capital planning and maximizing funding opportunities.
Risk Management	Strengthen internal controls, compliance, and enterprise risk management to protect public resources and ensure informed, resilient decision-making.



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

At the core of the Authority’s mission is a commitment to deliver a transit experience that meets the expectations and needs of our customers. We want every interaction to feel welcoming, safe, and reliable; one people can depend on and feel good about using. By focusing on the entire experience, from accessibility and cleanliness to on-time service and clear communication, we aim to build trust and make transit an easy choice. This strengthens our role as a reliable part of the community. This pillar is supported by the strategic focus areas below.

Customer Environment	Prioritize the customer experience with clean, safe, and comfortable spaces, supported by modern technology and accessible, connected service.
Access & Equity	Provide inclusive transit options that serve all members of the community.
Reliability & Performance	Deliver safe, on time, and dependable transit service through improved scheduling, fleet readiness, and proactive service monitoring.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Great service starts with great relationships. We build solutions that matter by working with our community and collaborating openly. By joining forces with local governments, organizations, businesses, and neighbors, we can expand access, encourage growth, and design transit services that truly reflect the heart of our region. Together, we keep our communities connected and moving. This pillar is supported by the strategic focus areas below.

Engagement	Foster meaningful dialogue with stakeholders and the public to build trust and shape transit services that meet community needs.
Collaboration	Partner with municipalities, regional planners, businesses, and institutions to provide transit access and support regional growth.
Communication	Maintain open communication through courteous, respectful interactions, clear information, and opportunities to share feedback that shapes the transit experience.

WORKFORCE COMMITMENT

Our employees are the foundation of everything we do. We are committed to creating a workplace where people feel respected, supported, and proud of the work they do. By promoting a positive culture, we aim to attract and keep a skilled and diverse workforce. We invest in training and development, giving our employees the tools and opportunities to grow. When our team is supported and engaged, they are better able to provide the high-quality service our community depends on. This pillar is supported by the strategic focus areas below.

Workplace Culture	Promote an inclusive workplace grounded in safety, respect, integrity and accountability where employees feel valued and supported.
Recruitment & Retention	Attract and retain a skilled and diverse workforce to ensure the long-term strength and resilience of the Authority.
Development & Training	Empower employees through ongoing training, professional development, and access to tools that foster adaptability, innovation, and high performance.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Public transportation is more than a service; it's a powerful opportunity to protect our environment and shape a sustainable future. We are committed to leading by example, operating with purpose, and making choices today that benefit tomorrow. Through smart planning, targeted investment, and continuous improvement, we are advancing cleaner, more efficient operations. In our efforts to educate the public, we promote the benefits of public transit as a solution to traffic congestion, environmental impact, and community health. This pillar is supported by the strategic focus areas below.

- Sustainable Operations** Ongoing evaluation of operations to improve environmental sustainability.
- Asset Management** Plan and invest strategically to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Enhance Awareness** Promote public transit as a key solution for reducing congestion, lowering emissions, and supporting regional sustainability.

Together, these focus areas reflect more than a plan, they represent a shared commitment to move our region forward in a thoughtful and responsible way. As we put this plan into action, we will continue to listen, learn, and adjust so we can meet the evolving needs of our community. By staying grounded in our values and focused on what matters most, we are building a stronger, more connected future for everyone who relies on us. We know progress takes time and steady effort, and we are prepared to do the work needed to see it through. We will measure our success not just by what we achieve, but by the trust we build along the way. Through this ongoing commitment, we aim to deliver results that are meaningful, practical, and lasting for the communities we serve.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

Both organization-wide and company-level performance measures are used to evaluate the Authority's progress toward achieving strategic goals and fulfilling Centro's mission to be a driving force moving communities forward. The Board of Members reviews the mission statement and associated performance measures annually to confirm continued alignment with organizational priorities.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

RIDERSHIP & SERVICE EFFICIENCY	
Farebox Recovery Ratio	Passengers per Revenue Hour
Subsidy Per Passenger	Operating Cost Per Revenue Vehicle Hour
Average Fare Per Passenger	Operating Cost Per Passenger
OPERATING PERFORMANCE & CUSTOMER SERVICE	
Call-A-Bus Ride Denials	% Pull-Outs Met
Call-A-Bus Call Waiting Time	Complaints per 1,000 Riders
% of Scheduled to Unscheduled Maintenance Costs	Mean Distance Between Service Interruptions
SAFETY	
Non-Preventable Accidents Per 100K Miles	Preventable Accidents Per 100K Miles



FINANCIAL POLICIES

CASH MANAGEMENT

The Authority's cash management process and investment program are designed to maximize earnings, address shortfalls, and ensure sufficient liquidity to support ongoing operations. Available cash balances are invested in accordance with the Authority's Investment Guidelines. The Authority and its subsidiaries adhere to investment policies governed by New York State, which outline permitted investments subject to various conditions. These include bank certificates, certificates of deposit, obligations of the State of New York or the United States government, certain repurchase agreements, and approved bonds and notes.

RESERVES

The Authority maintains a general fund balance to safeguard its budget against inherent financial risks, thereby protecting both service levels and fare stability from sudden fluctuations in revenue or expenses. With Board approval, funds may be allocated to reserves as necessary to mitigate financial risks. The Authority has established Board-Designated Reserves for significant cost items, such as healthcare, auto and general liability insurance, capital replacements, and paratransit services, all of which can have substantial financial impacts from year-to-year.

INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

The Authority invests in government securities, which are recorded at fair value based on quoted market prices and valuations provided by external sources. Unrealized gains or losses result from fluctuations between the cost and fair value of these investments on a specified valuation date. Changes in fair value are reflected in the statements of revenue, expenses, and changes in net position. Investment income is recognized on an accrual basis, with dividends recorded on the ex-dividend date.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT

Each fiscal year, the Authority engages an independent certified public accounting firm to conduct an external audit of its financial statements. The Audit & Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the independent auditor and recommends their selection to the full Board of Members.

DEBT MANAGEMENT

Although there is no legal restriction on the Authority's ability to issue debt, it has never issued bonds in its 50-year history.



FUNDING PROFILE - OPERATING

UNSUBSIDIZED GENERATED REVENUE

Regular Line Passenger Revenues include farebox revenue, sales of fare media, revenue received through a Purchased Transportation agreement, and Park-and-Ride revenue associated with the New York State Fair.

Special Line Revenues include funds received through service contracts established in partnership with local city schools, colleges, shopping centers, and the NYS Fair. These agreements strengthen community connections while supporting transportation needs across the region.

Advertising and Other Revenues include revenue from transit advertising on buses and shelters, parking fees, tenant lease revenue at the Regional Transportation Center, and other miscellaneous parking revenue.

GOVERNMENTAL SUBSIDIZED REVENUE

Federal Sources of Operating Funds

Section 5307 & 5311 – The Authority continues to rely heavily on federal operating assistance provided through the Section 5307 Urbanized Area Program. These funds support eligible preventive maintenance activities for buses and facilities operated by CNY Centro, Inc.

In addition to preventive maintenance funding, the Authority receives federal operating assistance designated for non-urban and small-urban service areas. This includes Section 5307 funding for Centro of Oneida, as well as Section 5311 funding for operations in Oswego, Cayuga, and Oneida Counties, and for service to Tully in Onondaga County. The Authority also anticipates receiving Section 5311 funding to support its operations in Cortland County.

State Sources of Operating Funds

Statewide Mass Transit Operating Assistance (STOA) – New York State, through the Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), remains the Authority's primary source of operating assistance. Annual STOA allocations are determined by the NYSDOT Commissioner, the New York State Division of Budget (NYSDOB), and/or the State Legislature, with any adjustments incorporated into the New York State Executive Budget. The Executive Budget is due by April 1 of each year.

Given the inherent uncertainty surrounding future STOA appropriations, the Authority maintains a conservative budgeting approach and assumes level funding until the final Executive Budget is released.

Local Sources of Operating Funds

Local 18b Match to STOA – Participating counties provide the required local match to the State's STOA contribution. Onondaga, Cayuga, Oswego, Oneida, and Cortland Counties currently provide this state-mandated 18-b match.

Local Voluntary Funds – The Authority also receives voluntary municipal support totaling approximately \$15,000 annually.



DEDICATED FUNDING

MORTGAGE RECORDING TAX (MRT)

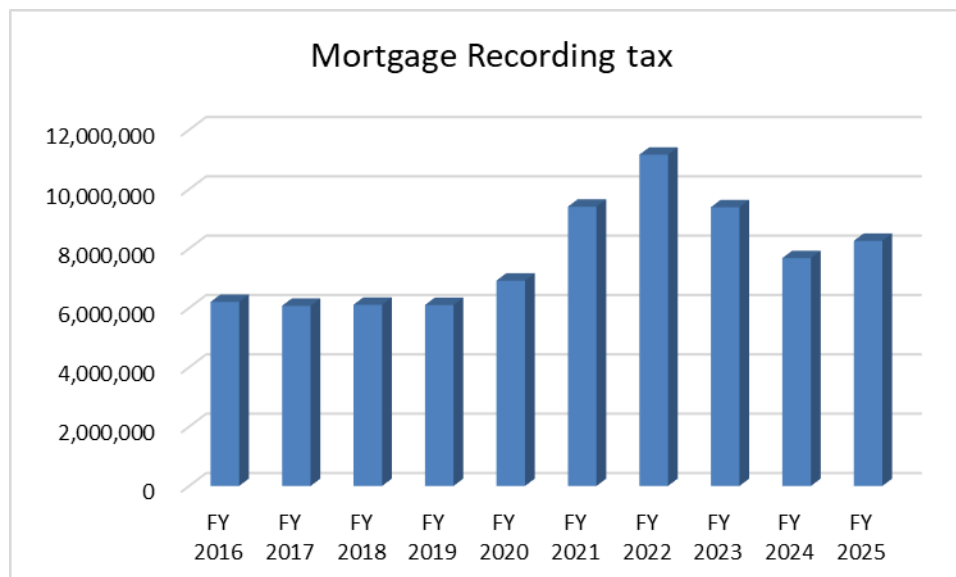
The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA) receives revenue from the additional mortgage recording tax of 0.25% (¼ of 1%) imposed on mortgages recorded within its participating counties (Onondaga, Cayuga, Oswego, Oneida, and Cortland). The tax is paid by the mortgagee when the mortgage is recorded with the county clerk or recording officer. Under New York Tax Law, this 0.25% levy is designated as the “special additional mortgage recording tax.”

Certain residential owner-occupied properties may receive partial exemptions, such as the statutory deduction on the first \$10,000 of mortgage debt for one- and two-family owner-occupied residences, which reduces the taxable base for the additional tax. (Full exemptions for one-to six-family properties do not exist under the additional MRT component.) Each participating county remits the tax revenue to the Authority on a monthly basis.

The Mortgage Recording Tax is inherently volatile and subject to significant year-to-year fluctuations. Revenue is influenced by national and regional economic conditions, housing activity, commercial borrowing, property values, and mortgage interest rates, which are closely tied to federal monetary policy. Historically, Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) reduced MRT collections by granting mortgage tax exemptions as part of their financial assistance packages. Recent reforms to IDA law now restrict these exemptions, providing greater stability in MRT revenues. Since the IDA exemption was eliminated in July 2017, CNYRTA’s MRT revenue has increased by an average of 38% compared to the period prior to the reform.

CNYRTA uses MRT revenue to fund the local share of capital projects, typically 10% of project costs, and up to 50% for competitive and specially awarded programs, as well as support reserves for insurance, capital, and general operations. MRT revenue is also used to retire debt, though the Authority currently carries no outstanding debt. While not legally required by statute, MRT revenue may also be used in the future to help subsidize operating deficits within the Authority’s bus operating subsidiaries.

As the only dedicated local transit funding source available to upstate regional transportation authorities in New York State, MRT remains a critical component of CNYRTA’s long-term financial structure. Although sensitive to economic cycles, it plays a vital role in supporting the Authority’s stability and capital investment capacity.



FINANCIAL PLANNING

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET PROCESS

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA) utilizes a zero-based budgeting methodology, building the budget from the ground up based on identified needs and costs rather than solely relying on prior-year spending levels. This approach strengthens cost control by preventing automatic budget carryovers and requires each expenditure to be evaluated in the context of the Authority's mission, service goals, and financial capacity.

The development process begins with a collaborative assessment by staff, who review departmental needs along with known financial obligations, including collective bargaining agreements, fuel lock-in contracts, and other operating commitments. Operational priorities, such as planned service adjustments, fleet or facility maintenance, and other strategic initiatives, are also incorporated into this evaluation.

The Authority's budgeting process must account for several major revenue sources that lie outside of CNYRTA's direct control. These include New York State transit operating assistance, federal formula and discretionary capital funding, and the locally levied Mortgage Recording Tax (MRT). Significant expenditure categories such as healthcare, risk management, workers' compensation insurance, and service agreements similarly represent areas of financial exposure that can affect the final spending plan.

To develop the proposed budget, staff analyze the current year's approved budget, year-end projections, prior-year actuals, and current economic conditions.

Once the proposed budget is prepared, it is reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Team, who evaluate key revenue and expense assumptions and the feasibility of operational initiatives. The proposed budget is then submitted to the Board of Members for consideration and adoption. Following adoption, the budget is entered into the Public Authorities Reporting and Information System (PARIS) by December 31, in accordance with Section 2801 of Public Authorities Law.

Budget monitoring continues throughout the process. Staff update assumptions based on the release of the Governor's Proposed Executive Budget, typically published in mid-January, and any other significant developments. The Board of Members adopts the final budget in March, incorporating all necessary revisions. The final adopted budget is included in the Authority's Annual Budget and Financial Plan, prepared in accordance with Comptroller Regulation Part 203, and published on the CNYRTA website by March 31.



FINANCIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

CNYRTA is managing a complex financial environment shaped by rising operating costs, workforce shortages, and increases in operating assistance that are unpredictable. Like many transit authorities across New York State, Centro faces mounting expenses for labor, vehicle parts, fuel, and insurance. These challenges require careful planning, thoughtful prioritization, and a commitment to using resources strategically.

Despite these constraints, Centro is actively reshaping its system in positive and forward-looking ways. The network redesign efforts in Syracuse and Oswego, branded as the Better Bus systems, represent major steps toward creating a more efficient, and understandable network. By reallocating service to corridors with the highest ridership potential and simplifying routes, these redesigns will help make better use of each operator hour while improving connectivity for riders. The system redesign also introduces on-demand service in Syracuse, allowing the Authority to provide flexible coverage in areas where fixed-route ridership is low.

Looking ahead, Centro is exploring opportunities to strategically increase bus frequencies on priority corridors. Layered onto this work is the continued planning for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Syracuse, an initiative that positions the region for significant mobility improvements. Even before full BRT implementation, incremental investments such as stop upgrades and improved travel-time reliability can begin delivering benefits that boost ridership and operational efficiency.

Collectively, these positive planning efforts show that while the Authority faces significant financial and operational challenges, it is actively building a stronger system for the future. By redesigning networks, investing in improved service models, and creating a path toward faster, more reliable corridor service, Centro is positioning itself to move the communities it serves and help people achieve more. In doing so, the Authority is not only responding to today's constraints but also emerging with a more responsive, resilient, and community focused transit network for Central New York.

In October, the New York Public Transit Association (NYPTA) will host its annual conference in Syracuse, October 19–21. This event brings together transit leaders, policymakers, and industry partners from across the state to focus on the shared challenges and opportunities facing public transportation systems. Hosting the conference in Central New York underscores the essential role transit plays in supporting regional mobility, economic vitality, and community connectivity. It also provides an important platform for continued advocacy around sustainable and predictable funding, infrastructure investment, and policies that strengthen public transit statewide. The Authority's participation in NYPTA's conference reinforces its commitment to advancing public transportation and ensuring that the needs of Central New York riders and communities are represented in statewide discussions.



BUDGET OVERVIEW

Centro is taking a proactive and forward-looking approach to financial planning. The Authority's budget framework is designed not only to support current operations, but also to advance system improvements, modernization initiatives, and investments that strengthen the long-term sustainability of public transportation in Central New York. The financial plan is organized around four key components that guide responsible decision-making and help position the system to meet evolving community needs:

- **2026-27 Operating Budget** – Establishes the financial foundation for daily service, outlining projected revenues, expenses, and funding sources essential to maintaining a stable and reliable transit network.
- **Multi-Year Operating Budget Projections (2026-27 through 2029-230)** – Provides a forward-looking analysis of financial trends, identifying potential challenges and opportunities that will influence Centro's long-term fiscal outlook and inform strategic choices.
- **2026-27 Capital Budget** – Focuses on near-term investments in vehicles, infrastructure, technology, and facilities that maintain a state of good repair, improve system performance, and enhance the customers' experience.
- **Multi-Year Capital Funding Plan (2026-27 through 2030-31)** – Outlines long-range capital needs and investments required to support system modernization, expand capacity, and ensure long-term resilience.

Together, these components form a financial strategy that is both practical and forward-looking. By aligning immediate budget needs with long-term system goals, Centro is working to balance fiscal responsibility with opportunities for service redesign, technological upgrades, and infrastructure improvements. This approach supports a more adaptable, resilient, and community-focused transit system, one equipped to serve Central New York today while preparing for the mobility demands of tomorrow.



2026-27 OPERATING BUDGET

As a vital transportation provider in Central New York, Centro plays a crucial role in connecting communities and advancing regional goals. Residents and visitors depend on Centro to access workplaces, schools, healthcare, shopping, entertainment, and other essential destinations that sustain daily life across the region.

Centro's operating budget supports the full scope of its service delivery, including fixed-route bus service, paratransit programs, and other mobility initiatives. These services are funded through a combination of fare revenue, contract revenue, and state and federal operating assistance. The Authority is now operating in a "new normal," marked by the end of historic COVID-19 relief funding, gradually recovering ridership, and persistent operator shortages. Even so, Centro's ongoing recruitment efforts continue to show progress, providing optimism that service levels can gradually increase in certain systems as staffing strengthens, including enhancements implemented through the Onondaga County system redesign.

Looking ahead, several financial and operational pressures will continue to shape Centro's outlook. These include uncertainty around operating assistance levels, shifting ridership patterns, rising operating costs, and the integration of Cortland County transit services. Centro of Cortland is projected to close the current fiscal year with a \$1.5 million deficit, and an additional \$1.5 million deficit is anticipated in FY 2026–27.

SUMMARY 2026-27 OPERATING BUDGET

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-26 BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	% CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	2025-26 PROJECTION	\$ CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS	% CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS
Revenue							
Unsubsidized Generated Revenue	\$ 15,875	\$ 15,938	\$ (63)	0%	\$ 15,317	\$ 558	4%
Governmental Subsidized Revenue	78,627	68,218	\$ 10,409	15%	67,866	\$ 10,761	16%
Mortgage Tax and Other Revenue	9,008	8,774	\$ 234	3%	10,556	\$ (1,548)	-15%
Investment Revenue	529	450	\$ 79	18%	1,304	\$ (775)	-59%
Total Revenue	104,039	93,380	10,659	11%	95,043	8,996	9%
Expenses							
Personnel	74,475	74,735	(260)	0%	63,901	10,574	17%
Non-Personnel	29,564	30,265	(701)	2%	27,187	2,377	11%
Total Expenses	104,039	105,000	(961)	1%	91,088	12,951	15%
Operating Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ (11,620)	\$ 11,620		\$ 3,955	\$ (3,955)	

The anticipated budgeted revenues for 2026–27 total \$104 million, representing a \$9 million increase over the projected 2025–26 year-end revenue. These revenues are comprised of \$15.9 million in unsubsidized generated revenue, \$78.6 million in government-subsidized revenue, \$9 million in mortgage tax and other revenue sources, and \$529 thousand in investment revenue.

Anticipated operating expenses for 2026–27 also total \$104 million, reflecting a \$13 million increase over the projected 2025–26 year-end expenses. These expenses include \$74.5 million in personnel-related costs and \$29.6 million in non-personal expenses.

A detailed discussion of the key factors influencing Centro's revenues and expenses, along with a comparative analysis of the 2026–27 Operating Budget and the 2025–26 year-end projections, is provided in the following sections.



2026-27 OPERATING BUDGET

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	% CHANGE 2025-26 BUDGET	2025-26 PROJECTION	\$ CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS	% CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS
Operating Revenue							
Regular Line Passenger Revenue	4,818	4,788	30	1%	4,621	197	4%
Special Line Passenger Revenue	8,715	8,808	(93)	-1%	8,307	408	5%
Advertising & Other Revenue	2,342	2,342	-	0%	2,389	(47)	-2%
Total Operating Revenue	15,875	15,938	(63)	0%	15,317	558	4%
Operating Expenses							
Salaries & Wages	45,542	45,486	56	0%	39,532	6,010	15%
Other Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes	4,706	4,689	17	0%	4,056	650	16%
Healthcare Benefits	16,100	16,348	(248)	2%	12,885	3,215	25%
Workers Compensation	3,493	3,717	(224)	6%	3,170	323	10%
Pension Benefits	4,634	4,495	139	-3%	4,258	376	9%
Risk Management	5,158	5,056	102	2%	6,499	(1,341)	-21%
Purchased Transportation	6,368	6,370	(2)	0%	5,835	533	9%
Materials & Supplies	5,133	5,200	(67)	-1%	4,534	599	13%
Services	8,573	9,031	(458)	-5%	6,987	1,586	23%
Fuel	2,583	2,750	(167)	-6%	2,066	517	25%
Utilities	1,012	1,102	(90)	-8%	880	132	15%
Other Expenses	737	756	(19)	-3%	386	351	91%
Total Operating Expenses	104,039	105,000	(961)	-1%	91,088	12,951	14%
Non-Operating Revenue							
Operating Assistance	78,627	68,218	10,409	15%	67,866	10,761	16%
Mortgage Tax Revenue	8,958	8,724	234	3%	10,475	(1,517)	-14%
Gain/Loss on Disposal of Capital	50	50	-	0%	81	(31)	-38%
Investment Revenue	529	450	79	18%	1,304	(775)	-59%
Total Non-Operating Revenue	88,164	77,442	10,722	14%	79,726	8,438	11%
Operating Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ (11,620)	\$ 11,620		\$ 3,955	\$ (3,955)	



REVENUE ASSUMPTIONS

OPERATING REVENUE

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	% CHANGE 2025-26 BUDGET	2025-26 PROJECTION	\$ CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS	% CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS
Operating Revenue							
Regular Line Passenger Revenue	4,818	4,788	30	1%	4,621	197	4%
Special Line Passenger Revenue	8,715	8,808	(93)	-1%	8,307	408	5%
Advertising & Other Revenue	2,342	2,342	-	0%	2,389	(47)	-2%
Total Operating Revenue	15,875	15,938	(63)	0%	15,317	558	4%

Regular Line Passenger Revenue

Regular line passenger revenue is budgeted at \$4.8 million, reflecting a 4% increase over the projected 2025-26 year-end revenue. The budget assumptions include:

- Anticipated ridership growth across all counties, supported by the restoration of services in Onondaga County and increased service frequency associated with the Better Bus Onondaga initiative, expected to launch in the latter part of the fiscal year.
- Revenue generated from the New York State Fair, based on projected attendance levels and fare collections.

Special Line Passenger Revenue

Revenue from subsidy agreements with community partners is budgeted at \$8.7 million, representing a 5% increase over the projected 2025-26 year-end revenue. The budget assumptions include:

- Contractual rate increases for existing agreements.
- Evolving service requirements from community partners.
- Revenue from the New York State Fair shuttle services, based on projected demand and historical trends.

Advertising & Other Revenue

Advertising and other revenues are budgeted at \$2.3 million, representing a 2% decrease compared to the projected 2025-26 year-end revenue. The budget assumptions include:

- Guaranteed minimum revenues from transit advertising agreements.
- Projected increases in parking revenues at the Regional Transportation Center, partially offset by the closure of the Route 81 parking lots.
- Modest rent increases, reflecting higher building expenses for leased commercial spaces.



NON-OPERATING REVENUE

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	% CHANGE 2025-26 BUDGET	2025-26 PROJECTION	\$ CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS	% CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS
Non-Operating Revenue							
Operating Assistance	78,627	68,218	10,409	15%	67,866	10,761	16%
Mortgage Tax Revenue	8,958	8,724	234	3%	10,475	(1,517)	-14%
Gain/Loss on Disposal of Capital	50	50	-	0%	81	(31)	-38%
Investment Revenue	529	450	79	18%	1,304	(775)	-59%
Total Non-Operating Revenue	88,164	77,442	10,722	14%	79,726	8,438	11%

Operating Assistance

The 2026-27 Operating Assistance budget is \$78.6 million, representing a 16% increase compared to the projected 2025-26 year-end revenue. Centro relies heavily on a combination of federal, state, and local aid to support operational expenses. The budget assumptions include:

Federal assistance totaling \$13.4 million, including:

- \$10 million in preventive maintenance funds, of which \$6 million is conserved funds
- \$2 million in Oneida operating assistance funds
- \$1.4 million in 5311 operating assistance funds
- \$25 thousand in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds

State assistance totaling \$61.9 million, including:

- \$60.5 million from New York State Transit Operating Assistance (STOA), including 5.75% anticipated increase
- \$1.3 thousand in state matching funds for preventive maintenance
- \$250 thousand in operating assistance for on-demand services

Local assistance totaling \$3.2 million, including:

- \$3.2 million for local 18b match to STOA
- \$15 local subsidy – Oswego County

Mortgage Recording Tax (MRT) Revenue

Mortgage Recording Tax revenue is budgeted at \$8.9 million, representing a 14% decrease compared to the projected 2025-26 year-end revenue, but a 3% increase over the fiscal year 2025-26 budget. Budget assumptions include:

- Ongoing monitoring of the residential real estate sector, as interest rates will influence MRT revenue
- Ongoing monitoring of the commercial real estate sector, as trends could further impact MRT revenue
- Consideration of real estate sector trends over the past five years

Investment Revenue

Investment revenue is budgeted at \$529 thousand. Budget assumptions include:

- Ongoing monitoring of U.S. Treasury interest rates
- Optimizing returns by investing idle cash in U.S. Treasury securities
- Evaluate the long-term potential of investment income as a sustainable revenue stream



EXPENSE ASSUMPTIONS

PERSONNEL EXPENSES

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	% CHANGE 2025-26 BUDGET	2025-26 PROJECTION	\$ CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS	% CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS
Personnel Expenses							
Salaries & Wages	45,542	45,486	56	0%	39,532	6,010	15%
Other Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes	4,706	4,689	17	0%	4,056	650	16%
Healthcare Benefits	16,100	16,348	(248)	2%	12,885	3,215	25%
Workers Compensation	3,493	3,717	(224)	6%	3,170	323	10%
Pension Benefits	4,634	4,495	139	-3%	4,258	376	9%
Total Personnel Expenses	74,475	74,735	(260)	0%	63,901	10,574	17%

Salaries and Wages

The 2026-27 budget for salaries and wages totals \$45.5 million, representing a 15% increase over projected 2025-26 year-end expenses. This increase reflects a combination of factors, including organizational changes, the employee incentive program, union wage agreements, NYS State Fair services, annual Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) adjustments, and the full staffing and operation of all departments. The budget also includes salary expenses for the seventy-nine (79) current open positions organization wide.

Other Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes

Expenses for other employee benefits and payroll taxes are largely determined by total staffing levels. The 2026-27 budget assumes full staffing across all departments. The budgeted amount of \$4.7 million represents a 16% increase over projected 2025-26 year-end expenses and is consistent with the overall salaries and wages budget.

Healthcare Benefits

The 2026-27 healthcare benefits budget is \$16.1 million, reflecting a 25% increase over projected 2025-26 year-end expenses. This allocation accounts for anticipated changes in healthcare plan premiums, prescription drug costs, dental coverage, stop-loss insurance, per claim costs, and assumes full staffing levels throughout the organization.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' compensation expenses for 2026-27 are budgeted at \$3.5 million, a 10% increase over projected 2025-26 year-end expenses. While the Authority continues to implement programs to manage claims effectively and enhance workplace safety, historical trends support this anticipated budget increase.

Pension Benefits

The 2026-27 budget for pension benefits is \$4.6 million, representing a 9% increase over projected 2025-26 year-end expenses. The Authority administers five retirement plans across its subsidiaries. This budget accounts for the regulatory requirements of each plan, full staffing levels, and actuarial guidance to ensure adequate funding aligned with market performance. Contributions to the defined benefit plans are made in accordance with actuarial recommendations, incorporating asset smoothing to maintain long-term stability.



NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 BUDGET	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	\$ CHANGE 2026-27 BUDGET	% CHANGE 2025-26 BUDGET	2025-26 PROJECTION	\$ CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS	% CHANGE 2025-26 PROJECTIONS
Non-Personnel Expenses							
Risk Management	5,158	5,056	102	2%	6,499	(1,341)	-21%
Purchased Transportation	6,368	6,370	(2)	0%	5,835	533	9%
Materials & Supplies	5,133	5,200	(67)	-1%	4,534	599	13%
Services	8,573	9,031	(458)	-5%	6,987	1,586	23%
Fuel	2,583	2,750	(167)	-6%	2,066	517	25%
Utilities	1,012	1,102	(90)	-8%	880	132	15%
Other Expenses	737	756	(19)	-3%	386	351	91%
Total Non-Personnel Expenses	29,564	30,265	(701)	-2%	27,187	2,377	9%

Risk Management

The 2026–27 risk management budget is \$5.2 million, reflecting a 21% decrease compared to projected 2025–26 year-end expenses. The prior fiscal year included substantial claim costs related to incidents from previous years that were settled during 2025–26. The 2026–27 budget anticipates a return to more typical expense levels, while also incorporating expected increases in liability insurance premiums consistent with industry trends.

Purchased Transportation

The 2026–27 budget for purchased transportation services is \$6.4 million, representing a 9% increase over projected 2025–26 year-end expenses. This increase is driven by continued growth in paratransit demand, with ridership increasing year-over-year, as well as contractual rate adjustments.

Materials & Supplies

The 2026–27 materials and supplies budget is \$5.1 million, a 13% increase over projected 2025–26 year-end expenses. It supports bus repairs, facility maintenance, operational supplies, schedule printing, and New York State Fair needs, including tent sides, a shed, and a golf cart, while also reflecting supply chain variability and broader cost pressures.

Services

The 2026–27 services budget is \$8.6 million, a 23% increase over projected 2025–26 expenses, which includes contracted and one-time services such as legal, audit, pension, maintenance, custodial, security, marketing, and recruitment. The primary cost increases are associated with maintenance software, engineering and professional services, CNG fueling stations service agreement, employee training, and expanded marketing efforts, all reflecting rising industry costs and ongoing investments in operational improvement and system modernization.

Fuel

Fuel expenses for 2026–27 is budgeted at \$2.6 million, representing a 25% increase over the projected 2025–26 year-end expenses. This increase reflects historical and projected fuel usage patterns, anticipated fuel price increases, and higher fuel consumption associated with the redesigned service network(s). The ongoing expiration of the federal Alternative Fuel Credit continues to impact this budget line, as the credit had previously helped offset the cost of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fuel.

Utilities & Other Expenses

Utilities and other expenses are budgeted at \$1.7 million for 2026–27, a 38% increase over projected 2025–26 year-end expenses. This increase reflects anticipated utility rate adjustments for electricity, natural gas, water, and waste services. Additionally, this category includes employee training and development costs that ensure regulatory compliance and continued workforce development.



PERSONNEL PROJECTIONS

LABOR CLASSIFICATION	2025-26 PROJECTED		2026-27 BUDGET	
	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME
Vehicle Operators	240	97	272	122
Vehicle Operations	65	9	66	10
Vehicle Maintenance	102	1	113	1
Facility Maintenance	20	1	24	1
General Administration	43	5	48	5
Total Employees:	470	113	523	139

*The 2026-27 budget assumes that all positions will be fully staffed throughout the entire year.

All employees listed are funded through the operating budgets of the Authority and its subsidiary operating companies. This means that wages are supported by a mix of fees collected for mass transit services, miscellaneous income, federal, state, and local transit operating assistance, along with Authority funds. The totals above encompass all employees of the Authority and each of its subsidiary public benefit corporations.



OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS

Sound fiscal management and compliance with public authority regulations require the development of a multi-year budget forecast. These projections are essential for keeping the Board of Members, customers, and federal and state stakeholders informed about potential challenges and opportunities that may affect the Authority's ability to achieve its mission and long-term goals. The forecast is updated regularly to reflect changes in economic conditions, the addition of new service areas such as Cortland County, and fluctuations in funding levels from key government subsidies.

The integration of Cortland County into the Authority's transit network presents both opportunities and financial considerations. The expanded service is expected to generate increased ridership, influencing both revenue and operating costs. The budget forecast incorporates these factors, including the additional service requirements, potential revenue growth, and the operational adjustments necessary to support the new service area.

It is important to recognize the uncertainties inherent in any multi-year projection. The forecast reflects expected expense growth, anticipated ridership trends, historical revenue patterns, and informed assumptions about broader economic conditions. Based on these factors, the Authority anticipates that any future budget gaps will be addressed through a combination of strategies, including pursuing new community partnerships and ridership contracts, controlling costs, ongoing federal and state transit advocacy, and when absolutely necessary, converting eligible capital funds into preventive maintenance operating assistance and using reserves.

These efforts are paired with the expectation that state operating assistance will continue to grow. Increased funding will help offset revenue shortfalls previously supported by emergency relief funds, reinforcing the Authority's financial sustainability as Centro continues to look to the future and remain a driving force in the communities it serves.

SUMMARY MULTI-YEAR OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	2027-28 BUDGET PROJECTIONS	2028-29 BUDGET PROJECTIONS	2029-30 BUDGET PROJECTIONS
Revenues				
Unsubsidized Generated Revenue	\$ 15,875	\$ 16,358	\$ 16,857	\$ 17,372
Governmental Subsidized Revenue	78,627	71,944	72,036	72,129
Mortgage Tax and Other Revenue	9,008	8,774	8,774	8,774
Investment Revenue	529	390	390	390
Total Revenues	104,039	97,466	98,057	98,665
Expenses				
Personnel	74,475	77,399	80,448	83,628
Non-Personnel	29,564	31,009	32,541	34,168
Total Expenses	104,039	108,408	112,990	117,796
Operating Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ (10,942)	\$ (14,932)	\$ (19,131)



MULTI-YEAR OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 PROPOSED BUDGET	2027-28 BUDGET PROJECTIONS	2028-29 BUDGET PROJECTIONS	2029-30 BUDGET PROJECTIONS
Operating Revenue				
Regular Line Passenger Revenue	4,818	\$ 4,914	\$ 5,013	\$ 5,113
Special Line Passenger Revenue	8,715	9,020	9,336	9,662
Advertising & Other Revenue	2,342	2,424	2,509	2,597
Total Operating Revenue	15,875	16,358	16,857	17,372
Operating Expenses				
Salaries & Wages	45,542	47,022	48,550	50,128
Other Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes	4,706	4,859	5,017	5,180
Healthcare Benefits	16,100	17,066	18,090	19,175
Workers Compensation	3,493	3,668	3,851	4,044
Pension Benefits	4,634	4,785	4,940	5,101
Risk Management	5,158	5,674	6,241	6,865
Purchased Transportation	6,368	6,623	6,888	7,163
Materials & Supplies	5,133	5,313	5,499	5,691
Services	8,573	8,873	9,184	9,505
Fuel	2,583	2,712	2,848	2,990
Utilities	1,012	1,063	1,116	1,172
Other Expenses	737	752	767	782
Total Operating Expenses	104,039	108,408	112,990	117,796
Non-Operating Revenue				
Operating Assistance	78,627	71,944	72,036	72,129
Mortgage Tax Revenue	8,958	8,724	8,724	8,724
Gain/Loss on Disposal of Capital	50	50	50	50
Investment Revenue	529	390	390	390
Total Non-Operating Revenue	88,164	81,108	81,200	81,293
Operating Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ (10,942)	\$ (14,932)	\$ (19,131)



FUNDING PROFILE – CAPITAL

The Authority maximizes capital grant opportunities from both federal and state sources, primarily through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT). The current capital programs available to the Authority are as follows:

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Section 5307 – Urbanized Area Formula Funding Program

Provides federal funding for transit capital, operating assistance, and transportation-related planning in urbanized areas. The Governor or the Governor’s designee serves as the designated recipient for areas with a population between 50,000 and 200,000.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

A flexible funding program that supports transit-related projects aimed at reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality. Eligible activities include transit system expansion, ridership-enhancing improvements, travel demand management strategies, shared ride services, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and promotional activities encouraging bicycle commuting.

Section 5339 – Grant for Buses and Bus Facilities Program

Provides federal funding to states and designated recipients for the replacement, rehabilitation, and purchase of buses and related equipment, as well as the construction of bus-related facilities. Funds may also be used for technological innovations, including modifications for low- or no-emission vehicles and facilities.

Section 5311 – Formula Funding from Rural Area Program

Provides capital funds to states to support public transportation in rural areas with populations of less than 50,000. The Authority receives these funds, administered by NYSDOT, for Centro of Oswego, Centro of Cayuga, Centro of Cortland (anticipated), and CNY Centro’s Tully service.

STATE PROGRAMS

Accelerated Transit Capital (ATC) Program

Provides state funding to upstate public transportation sponsors for capital projects with a minimum service life of at least five years. Eligible projects include vehicle rehabilitation and replacement, fleet enhancements, modern technology deployment, passenger amenities, and maintenance facilities.

Modernization and Enhancement Program (MEP)

Supports capital projects with a minimum service life of at least ten years. Eligible activities include vehicle rehabilitation and replacement, fleet enhancements, deployment of new technologies, passenger amenities, and maintenance facilities, consistent with FTA guidelines.

*State Grant Programs fund 100% of the project costs.



2026-27 CAPITAL BUDGET

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 CAPITAL BUDGET	FEDERAL	STATE	LOCAL
Onondaga Capital Improvements				
Building	\$ 6,970	\$ 3,805	\$ 2,403	\$ 762
Equipment	78	1	76	1
Land Improvement	271	177	72	22
Bus Transit Way Lines/Busway	2,200	1,760	220	220
Paratransit Vehicles	1,540	1,232	154	154
Office Equipment	350	245	31	74
Service Vehicles	286	148	119	19
Systems	510	408	51	51
Office Equipment - Unfunded	54	-	-	-
Systems - Unfunded	2,000	-	-	-
Total Onondaga Capital Improvements	14,259	7,776	3,126	1,303
Oneida Capital Improvements				
Land Acquisition	5,000	4,000	500	500
Building	400	320	40	40
Support Vehicles	195	156	20	20
Total Oneida Capital Improvements	5,595	4,476	560	560
Cortland Capital Improvements				
Equipment	674	540	67	67
Service & Support Vehicles	175	141	17	17
Shelters	200	160	20	20
Systems	500	164	316	20
Total Cortland Capital Improvements	1,549	1,005	420	124
Total Capital Improvements	\$ 21,403	\$ 13,257	\$ 4,106	\$ 1,987



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Authority's Capital Improvement Plan outlines the investments needed to maintain, modernize, and enhance infrastructure and operations. Key priorities include facility, equipment, and system upgrades, land acquisition, shelter purchases, and vehicle replacements. This strategic approach supports the Authority and its subsidiaries in strengthening financial stability, improving service quality and customer experience, and increasing ridership, while ensuring infrastructure and technology align with current standards and evolving community needs.

The 2026–27 Capital Improvement Plan includes \$21.4 million in funded improvements and an additional \$3 million in unfunded projects. The plan is developed within available funding constraints, with management closely evaluating federal and state resources when prioritizing projects; in limited cases, local funding may be used. Planned asset replacements help forecast capital needs, stabilize operating costs, enhance service reliability, improve energy efficiency, and prioritize the safety of customers and employees.

The following are the key highlights of the funded capital projects scheduled for completion during the 2026–27 fiscal year. These improvements will be financed through a combination of federal, state, and local funds:

- Building: Siding and door replacements; oil water separator installation; trench drain repairs; cooling tower installation; barrier gate and fire loop replacements; exterior signage updates; rapid roll doors and radiant heat upgrades for BRT readiness; CNG facility upgrade completion in Q1.
- Transit System Enhancements – BRT: Continued environmental review and network redesign; Phase 1 of real-time solar signage; ongoing design and implementation for BRT launch.
- Land Acquisition: Land purchase for the new Centro of Oneida facility upon NEPA completion.
- Service and Support Vehicles: Vehicle acquisitions to support operations in Syracuse, Cortland, and Oneida.
- Equipment: Two-post lift (Syracuse); digital torque guns (Syracuse and Oneida); Cortland equipment including drive-on lift, scrubber, bus cameras, AC unit, stacker, and CAC/AVL hardware.
- Paratransit Vehicles: Eight vehicles for system redesign and MOVE service launch; three replacement vehicles for Call-A-Bus.
- Systems: Fareboxes (Cortland); ID badge system; LED traffic signals at Syracuse Hub; ridership analysis software.
- Office Equipment: Computer replacements; training center furniture; tablets; and software acquisitions.

Unfunded Projects

Three capital projects requested for the 2026–27 fiscal year remain unfunded. These projects are important to maintaining the long-term reliability, safety, and efficiency of the Authority's operations. Management will continue to evaluate opportunities to advance these initiatives through capital surpluses, refined project prioritization, and the identification of additional funding sources, including potential partnerships and grants. The remaining unfunded projects include the acquisition of tablets and the software necessary to support the fire alarm device upgrade.



MULTI-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTIONS

(\$ Thousands)

	2026-27 PROJECTIONS	2027-28 PROJECTIONS	2028-29 PROJECTIONS	2029-30 PROJECTIONS	2030-31 PROJECTIONS
Onondaga Capital Improvements					
Building	\$ 6,970	\$ 2,376	\$ 268	\$ -	\$ 230
Land Improvement	271	20	-	-	-
Equipment	78	-	75	-	-
Bus Transit Way Lines/Busway	2,200	10,055	15,000	-	-
Fixed Route Buses	-	20,000	-	31,500	16,391
Paratransit Vehicles	1,540	1,154	1,875	1,298	1,586
Office Equipment	350	525	325	325	325
Service/Support Vehicles	286	1,180	575	-	-
Systems	510	566	-	10,000	-
Shelters	-	1,875	-	-	-
Building - Unfunded	-	2,500	-	-	-
Land Improvement - Unfunded	-	60	-	900	-
Fixed Route Buses - Unfunded	-	-	-	500	-
Equipment - Unfunded	-	-	350	-	-
Office Equipment - Unfunded	54	-	-	-	-
System - Unfunded	2,000	-	-	-	-
Total Onondaga Capital Improvements	14,259	40,311	18,468	44,523	18,532
Oneida Capital Improvements					
Building	400	19,444	36,000	-	-
Land Acquisition	5,000	-	-	-	-
Equipment	-	52	-	-	-
Service/Support Vehicles	195	660	-	-	-
Building - Unfunded	-	4,000	-	-	-
Total Oneida Capital Improvements	5,595	24,156	36,000	-	-
Cortland Capital Improvements					
Building	-	300	-	-	-
Fixed Route Buses	-	2,145	-	-	-
Equipment	674	-	-	-	-
Service/Support Vehicles	175	-	-	-	-
Shelters	200	-	-	-	-
Systems	500	-	-	-	-
Building - Unfunded	-	-	2,500	30,000	20,000
Fixed Route Buses - Unfunded	-	-	-	1,500	2,250
Paratransit Vehicles - Unfunded	-	-	2,145	-	-
Total Cortland Capital Improvements	1,549	2,445	4,645	31,500	22,250
Oswego Capital Improvements					
Building	-	-	-	150	-
Fixed Route Buses	-	2,000	-	-	-
Equipment	-	-	23	-	-
Service/Support Vehicles	-	190	-	-	-
Systems	-	14	-	-	-
Total Oswego Capital Improvements	-	2,204	23	150	-
Cayuga Capital Improvements					
Building	-	-	-	150	-
Equipment	-	-	35	-	-
Service/Support Vehicles	-	190	-	-	-
Systems	-	25	-	-	-
Total Cayuga Capital Improvements	-	215	35	150	-
Total Capital Improvements	\$ 21,403	\$ 69,331	\$ 59,171	\$ 76,323	\$ 40,782



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTIONS

The Authority has planned several significant future capital projects supported by projected capital grant funding available through state programs, the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and anticipated future reauthorization bills. However, there are several projects in the coming years that remain either partially funded or unfunded, creating uncertainty in advancing critical infrastructure and operational improvements. Continued and increased investment from federal and state legislators is essential to ensure the Authority can fully deliver these projects, maintain a state of good repair, and meet growing service demands. Sustained funding support will be critical to preserving system reliability, enhancing safety, and advancing transportation initiatives that benefit the communities we serve. Key initiatives include:

- Construction of a new Centro of Oneida facility
- Construction of a new Centro of Cortland Facility
- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Service Expansion:
 - James St. to South Ave. to Onondaga Community College corridor
 - Syracuse University to the Regional Transportation Center corridor
 - Bus Procurement to support the new service
- Facility Upgrades
- Fixed-Route buses, paratransit buses, support and service vehicle procurements

