

# PRESS RELEASE

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## CENTRO BEGINS BUS SERVICE IN CORTLAND COUNTY

**Cortland, NY** – Centro, the public transportation bus system for hundreds of thousands of Central New York residents, began rolling through the streets of Cortland County this morning, expanding its network for the first time in 20 years.

“We are thrilled to begin bus services in Cortland County,” said Centro Deputy Chief Executive Officer Christopher Tuff. “Residents can look forward to safe, reliable, and equitable transportation that will use the latest technologies to make using the bus an easy, convenient, and desirable option. Our mission is to be a driving force moving communities forward, and that’s what we intend to do in Cortland.”

Centro kicked off its service by providing free rides for the day and increasing service along one of Cortland’s busiest corridors. Beginning today, Centro more than doubled the number of roundtrips on its Route 6 service connecting Cortland with Tompkins Cortland Community College.

“I’m thrilled to see Cortland County join the CNYRTA, expanding access to reliable public transportation for residents across the region,” said State Senator Lea Webb. “This partnership will not only make commuting easier and more affordable, but it will also help connect more people to opportunities, healthcare, and vital services. As a strong advocate for improving public transit, I’m excited about the positive impact this will have on the community, and I look forward to seeing the benefits unfold for the people of Cortland and the entire Central New York region.”

Bus fares for the Cortland County riders will also be less expensive. Centro has reduced the bus fares to a standard \$1 per ride for all city bus lines and \$3 per ride on its commuter service to Cornell University.

“Efficient and affordable public transportation supports equity and economic access in the community and is instrumental in creating and stabilizing a strong middle class,” said New York Assembly Member Anna Kelles. “I’m honored to be championing a proposal in the state budget negotiations that adds Cortland to the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority and channels Standard Transit Operating Aid to Cortland, bringing lower bus fares and a wider service area, and will continue working to get these proposals over the finish line. I’m proud that the Assembly additionally supported increased capital funding for upstate transportation and will work with Cortland County and CENTRO to access this funding in the coming year.”



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Centro will also introduce Call-A-Bus - a service for qualifying individuals with a disability that provides service to the same areas as its bus lines. Centro's current Call-A-Bus network provides more than 200,000 rides per year in its other four-county service areas.

"Cortland County, for years, has been looking for ways to enhance our public transportation system and promote public transit throughout the County," said Kevin Fitch, Chair of the Cortland County Legislature. "The transition to CENTRO is a pivotal step in reshaping the transportation in our county. By joining the Regional Authority, CENTRO, now operating in five counties, has the expertise needed to take Cortland County's public transportation system to new heights."

Centro has provided public transportation in Central New York for more than 50 years, beginning service in Syracuse in 1972 and quickly expanding to Cayuga and Oswego Counties. Centro also added service in Oneida county serving Utica and Rome in 2005, almost 20 years to the day before beginning service in Cortland. Centro currently employs about 600 people and provides more than seven million bus rides each year.

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