

Phase 2 Outreach Plan

Buffalo, NY ITS4US Deployment Project

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16. Abstract The Buffalo NY ITS4US Deployment Project seeks to improve mobility to, from, and within the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus by deploying new and advanced technologies with a focus on addressing existing mobility and accessibility challenges. Examples of the technologies to be deployed are electric and self-driving shuttles, a trip planning app that is customized for accessible travel, intersections that use tactile and mobile technologies to enable travelers with disabilities to navigate intersections, and Smart Infrastructure to support outdoor and indoor wayfinding. The deployment geography includes the 120-acre Medical Campus and surrounding neighborhoods with a focus on three nearby neighborhoods (Fruit Belt, Masten Park, and Allentown) with underserved populations (low income, vision loss, deaf or hard of hearing, physical disabilities (including wheeled mobility device users) and older adults). This document is the Outreach Plan for Phase 2 of the project, which identifies the outreach efforts this project will perform to promote and ensure stakeholder engagement.					
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1 Introduction

Buffalo, New York (NY) is one of five sites selected for the U.S Department of Transportation (USDOT) Intelligent Transportation Systems for Underserved Communities (ITS4US) Deployment Program, which seeks to integrate innovative technologies to improve mobility and accessibility. The Buffalo, NY project plans to deploy an integrated set of travel support services and systems within neighborhoods surrounding Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC).

This document, the Phase 2 Outreach Plan, details the communication efforts with stakeholders and research/deployment community, including all anticipated activities and the specific products to be developed for each one. This document presents an integrated communications strategy that incorporates and streamlines key elements of the project, an audience analysis, an overarching marketing strategy with specific tactics and messaging, as well as an implementation schedule. While this document addresses general stakeholder outreach, details on training, education, and recruitment are provided separately in the Participant Training and Stakeholder Education Plan.

1.1 Project Background

Buffalo is striving toward a sustainable future for all of their members of society, incorporating actions in the community, government, and private entities in the area. Enabling community mobility and access to jobs, healthcare, and services to traditionally underserved populations is the primary motivation for all the regional partners involved in this deployment.

The ITS4US Deployment Program is an effort led by the ITS-JPO and supported by OST, FHWA, and FTA to identify ways to provide more efficient, affordable, and accessible transportation options for underserved communities that often face greater challenges in accessing essential services. The deployment location is targeted around the downtown Buffalo area with a focus

on travel to and from the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC). The deployment includes the 120-acre Medical Campus and surrounding neighborhoods with a focus on three nearby neighborhoods (Fruit Belt, Masten Park, and Allentown)—see Figure 1.



Figure 1. Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus relative to the neighborhoods of focus: Allentown, Fruit Belt, and Masten Park.

The program aims to solve mobility challenges for all travelers with a specific focus on underserved communities, including people with disabilities, older adults, low-income individuals, rural residents, veterans, and limited English proficiency travelers. This program will enable communities to build local partnerships, develop and deploy integrated and replicable mobility solutions to achieve complete trips for all travelers.

As one of the selected sites, the Buffalo, NY ITS4US deployment concept is:

1. **Providing transit access to healthcare and jobs** to underserved residents, including persons with disabilities, and allowing them to access the economic development in downtown Buffalo.
2. **Leveraging technology to work in support for accessible transportation**, integrating accessible transportation technology, transit, and connected automation to solve a transportation need.
3. **Developing a scalable model** for considering accessibility and universal design in transportation technology projects.

The Buffalo, NY ITS4US project will be completed in three phases: Phase 1- Concept Development, Phase 2- Design and Test, and Phase 3- Operation and Evaluation.

1.2 Project Overview

The Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) established its vision of the region for 2050 in its “Moving Forward 2050 – A Regional Transportation Plan for Buffalo Niagara” (GBNRTC; University at Buffalo Regional Institute, The SUNY at Buffalo School of Architecture and Planning; Cambridge Systematics; TyLin International, 2018). The plan seeks to guide transportation investments to:

1. Raise the region’s standard of living.
2. Support efficient freight movement.
3. Maximize infrastructure resiliency.
4. Support focused growth in communities (urban, suburban, and rural).
5. Ensure access to opportunities and services.
6. Support healthy and safe communities through targeted transportation investment.
7. Strengthen the fiscal health of local governments.
8. Preserve and protect a healthy environment and accessible open spaces and waterways.
9. Create a fully integrated and seamless transportation environment.

The Buffalo ITS4US Deployment goals directly align with GBNRTC’s goals 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9 by providing innovative tools and services to better enable travelers to make complete trips in and around the BNMC. Furthermore, the proposed system focuses on providing transit access to

healthcare and jobs to underserved citizens and allow them to share in the economic development in downtown Buffalo.

To achieve these goals, the proposed system of interest is made of four major subsystems and a variety of data interfaces between them. The four major subsystems include:

- **Complete Trip Platform (CTP)** – The CTP is the integrated trip planning function for travelers. It includes various modules that allow users to personalize their trip planning, execution, and navigation experience. Specific modules in this subsystem include:

User Profiles	Real-time situational monitor
Trip Booking	Performance metrics
Trip Planning	Trip history/ledger
Trip Monitoring and Notifications	User Interface (UI): Mobile application
Geolocation and Mapping	UI: Web and Interactive voice response
Navigation	
- **Community Shuttle Subsystem** – The Community Shuttle subsystem provides demand-responsive transit services within a specified zone of operations, using a mix of vehicles, including both human-driven shuttles (HDS) and self-driving shuttles (SDS). The SDS will operate on a predefined route(s), consisting of a set of streets within the zone and pick-up and drop-off locations, but will be responsive to travelers' demand (e.g., it can skip certain pick-up/drop-off locations if there is no demand). The HDS will provide door-to-door on demand service within the zone of operation. Modules within this subsystem include both types of vehicles, as well as a Shuttle Operations Center (SOC).
- **Smart Infrastructure Subsystem** – The Smart Infrastructure subsystem includes wayfinding and orientation for indoor and outdoor, provision of navigation and destination finding through information kiosks (Transportation Information Hub, TIH), augmented communications technologies (Smart Signs), and intersection treatment (Ped-X) for hands-free, pedestrian signal requests.
- **Performance Dashboard Subsystem** – This subsystem measures and presents the performance of the system to the agency operating the system.

Figure 2 provides a high-level context diagram for the system. The reader is referred to the Phase 1 Concept of Operations (FHWA-JPO-21-860) for more details on the system's components and functions.

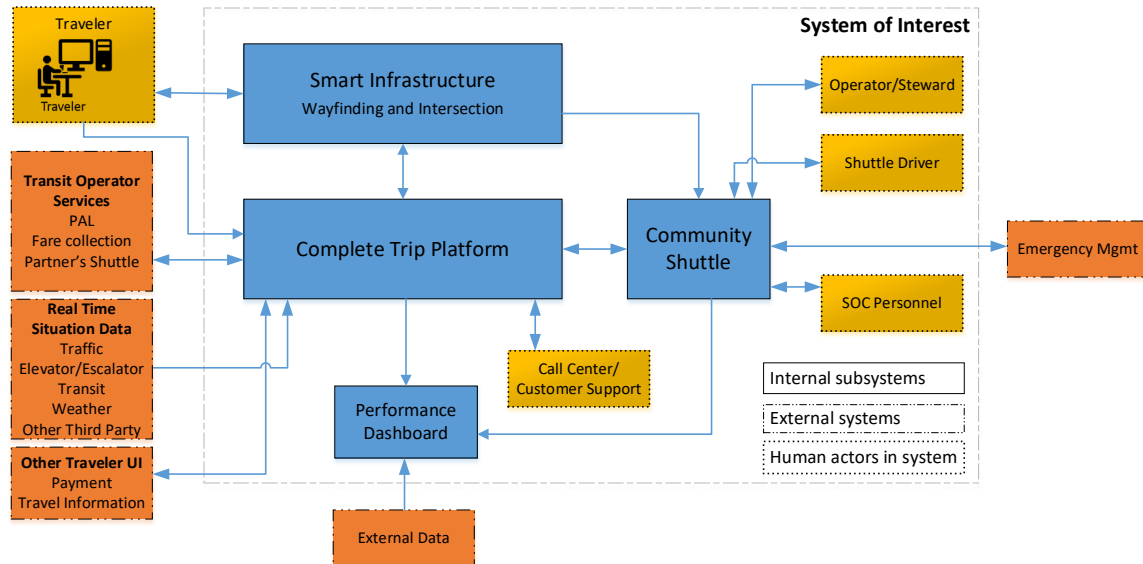


Figure 2. High level context diagram for the Buffalo, NY ITS4US System.

Source: Buffalo, NY ITS4US

1.3 Organization of the Report

This remainder report is organized into six sections as described below.

- Section 2 provides the overall project outreach strategy that will guide all outreach activities, including communication objective with supporting key messages and anticipated frequently asked questions, target audiences, and a summary of the outreach and communication approach in relation to the communication objectives.
- Section 3 provides communication management information including roles and responsibilities, coordination with USDOT, and guidance for communication across a variety of use cases including the internal project team, between ITS4US awardees, external stakeholders, evaluation support, broad outreach, and crisis situations.
- Section 4 details the various communication platforms that will be used across the project including branding and marketing assets, web presence, local stakeholder outreach, local community outreach, and non-local meetings, conferences, and media.
- Section 5 provides the public relations and marketing plan, including guidance for outreach material development and delivery and a detailed schedule of activities.
- Section 6 provides direction for measuring outreach effectiveness including success criteria and impact assessment planning.
- Appendix A lists stakeholders that will be targeted through the project's outreach efforts.

1.4 Acronyms

Table 1 lists the acronyms used in the document.

U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology
Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office

Table 1. List of acronyms.

Acronym	Description
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ASL	American Sign Language
BNMC	Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus
CART	Communication Access Realtime Translation
CTAA	Community Transportation Association of America
CTP	Complete Trip Platform
HDS	Human-Driven Shuttle
ITE	Institute for Transportation Engineers
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems
Ped-X	Pedestrian Crossing
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SDS	Self-Driving Shuttle
SRM	Stakeholder Relationship Management
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SXSW	South by Southwest
TBD	To Be Determined
TRB	Transportation Research Board
UB	University at Buffalo
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

2 Outreach Strategy

2.1 Communication Objectives

The communication objectives will guide the key messages, target audiences, and outreach strategies implemented throughout the deployment, as well as the measurement of outreach effectiveness described in Section 6. The three primary communication objectives are:

1. Build support for the project among the local community, including potential users of the system, through education and recruitment;
2. Build shared purpose among institutional partners through outreach to local and external stakeholders; and
3. Advance the state of the industry by sharing lessons learned with peer agencies at national and international levels.

2.1.1 Key Messages

Typically, messaging falls into two categories:

1. Primary messages that will resonate with most audience groups and cover the overarching elements of the program, and
2. Secondary messages that will target specific interests, challenges, or sensitivities of the various audiences relevant to the program.

The primary message of the Buffalo ITS4US deployment emphasizes providing transit access to healthcare and jobs for underserved residents and allowing them to access the economic development of downtown Buffalo.

Secondary messaging includes themes such as:

- The deployment's effect on leveraging technology to support accessible transportation.
- Integrating accessible transportation technology, transit, and connected automation to solve a transportation need.
- Developing a scalable model for considering accessibility and universal design in transportation technology projects.
- Sensitivity to the needs of Fruit Belt and Masten Park residents given historical context and perception that the neighborhoods have been negatively impacted by growth of the BNMC.
- Managing the attention and interest drawn by the SDS technology element, particularly focusing on having a better reach to the targeted communities.

Calls-to-action for audience groups ensure that messaging provides clear and simple guidance on actions the audience can or might take—e.g., visit website or download app. Generally, outreach and communication activities will push potential system users to the CTP mobile app first as a point of entry to other project elements such as the community service shuttle. Table 2 shows which primary and secondary messages will be used with each target audience and the communication objectives they advance. Target audiences are described in detail in Section 2.2.

Table 2. Alignment of Messages with Communication Objectives and Target Audiences.

Message	Communication Objectives	General Public	Potential System Users	Local Employers & Service Providers	Local Media	Operators and Partners	Industry Stakeholders
Primary Message Themes							
Provides transit access to healthcare and jobs for underserved residents, including persons with disabilities	1, 2, 3	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provides safe and convenient transportation system connecting Metro Rail and the BNMC	1, 2	X	X	X	X	X	
Uses innovative technology to improve quality of life for users and community equity	1, 2, 3	X	X	X	X	X	X
Secondary Message Themes							
Supports underserved residents access the economic development in downtown Buffalo	1, 2	X	X	X	X	X	
Serves users and neighborhoods that have not been prioritized by private sector investment in transportation tools and technologies	1, 2, 3	X	X	X	X	X	X
Integrates accessible transportation technology, transit, and connected automation to solve a transportation need	2, 3		X	X		X	X
Develops a scalable model for considering accessibility and universal design in transportation technology projects	3						X
Is an innovative and worthwhile usage of taxpayer resources for the public good	1	X				X	

Message	Communication Objectives	General Public	Potential System Users	Local Employers & Service Providers	Local Media	Operators and Partners	Industry Stakeholders
The Community Shuttle service is a targeted pilot or proof of concept that can be scaled to other areas if successful	1, 2, 3	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provides a flexible set of transportation services, which has been a long-standing community need	1, 2	X	X		X		

2.1.2 Frequently Asked Questions

Supporting these key messages, the project information below will respond directly to anticipated audience questions including What, Who, Where, When, and Why?

- **What:** The project provides more efficient, affordable, and accessible travel and transportation services, including transit access to healthcare and jobs. The key tools and services offered by the project include:
 - **A Complete Trip Platform Application (CTP)** – an Open Trip Planner based transit trip planning app that is customized for accessible travel. This app will address user needs around improved transit planning and travel support including enroute navigation congruent with each user’s accessibility needs. As previously discussed, the CTP will be the primary point of entry for potential system users to learn about the project, as the CTP is not geographically limited to the BNMC, unlike the Community Shuttle and Smart Infrastructure.
 - **Community Shuttle Service** – a shuttle service that is integrated with the CTP and provides circulation in BNMC campus and Fruit Belt area. This service will be based on both human-operated and self-driving shuttles (with an on-board assistant/steward). This component addresses user needs around BNMC local circulation (travel between partner sites and support for first- and last-mile transit connections).
 - **Smart Infrastructure** – improvements to digital features within and around BNMC, particularly along the public rights-of-way. These include adding communication, connectivity and traveler information technologies to the sidewalks and their adjacent loading/parking areas for transportation vehicles, bus shelters, intersections, and wayfinding technologies in indoor and outdoor venues. This component addresses user needs around outdoor and indoor mobility and wayfinding for travelers.
- **Who:**
 - The project serves all travelers with a specific focus on underserved communities, including people with disabilities, older adults, low-income individuals, and people with low English proficiency. The Community Shuttle serves employees, visitors, and patients at BNMC and residents of surrounding neighborhoods: the Fruit Belt, Masten Park, and Allentown.
 - The project is led by the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) in partnership with BNMC and University at Buffalo (UB) with funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).
- **Where:** The project is targeted around the downtown Buffalo area with a focus on travel to and from BNMC. The project includes the 120-acre Medical Campus and surrounding neighborhoods with a focus on three nearby neighborhoods (Fruit Belt, Masten Park, and Allentown).

- **When:** Messages related to the project timeframe will depend on the detailed schedule of activities in Phase 2 (design and testing) and Phase 3 (operation and evaluation).
- **Why:** Questions about why the project is important should be met with the key messages presented in Table 2. Additional context may help convey opportunities to collaboratively resolve transportation challenges, including:
 - *Improving accessibility of infrastructure:* While BNMC continues to improve pedestrian accessibility, sidewalk quality and intersection crossings still are a challenge for wheelchair users and users with vision and hearing disabilities. Intersections are the leading locations for pedestrian injuries (even when excluding traffic accidents). Increasing accessibility of the outdoor environment within BNMC is vital to participation for persons with reduced mobility and balance issues, including those reliant on mobility aids (such as canes, walkers, and wheelchairs), as well as those with vision loss, hearing loss, or cognitive disabilities.
 - *Providing tools, technologies, and services that meet user needs:* The project serves users and neighborhoods that have not been prioritized by private sector investment in transportation tools and technologies. A lack of tools, technologies, and services that adequately addresses user needs is a major problem for community mobility, especially for people with disabilities. This often leads to compromised healthcare (e.g., rescheduled or missed appointments, delayed care) and/or dependence on paratransit service, which is much costlier for transit agencies and can be burdensome for riders.
 - *Providing convenience in the transportation system by connecting Metro Rail and the BNMC:* Once passengers exit the Metro Rail at Allen/Medical Campus Station, there is no easy way to provide door-to-door transportation to different destinations within the 120-acre campus. More than 16,000 people work or study at the BNMC and more than 1.5 million visit each year for healthcare and other services, generating significant transportation demand for the area, its visitors, and its employees.

2.2 Target Audiences

Target audiences were derived from the Stakeholder Registry, with emphasis on potential system users, local partners, external stakeholders including employer, potential system user, media, and subject matter experts, as well as industry stakeholders. More information is provided below.

2.2.1 Potential System Users

This category represents stakeholders who may be direct users of the systems developed as part of the project. Their interest rests in the benefits that they will gain from the system. Potential system users/travelers include the people living in the Buffalo region, and especially in the neighborhoods surrounding the BNMC who live, work, and travel in the area. While all stakeholders will have access to and use the system, target audiences of potential system users include the following groups:

- **Persons with Disability (PWD)**
 - A person with a disability is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as “a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment”¹. This deployment identifies users with four types of disabilities:
 - Mobility – Travelers with various physical disabilities that affect both gross and fine motor skills that may or may not require a personal assistance device (e.g., cane, walker, wheelchair, scooter, etc.).
 - Vision – Travelers who are blind or have low vision.
 - Hearing – Travelers who are deaf or hard of hearing.
 - Cognitive – Travelers with cognitive disabilities.
- **Low Income**
 - Travelers with annual incomes <26K that use services (e.g., public transportation and health services) and travel in the area.
- **Older Adults**
 - Travelers who are over the age of 65.
- **Low English Proficiency (LEP)**
 - Travelers to BNMC who do not use English as their primary language.
- **Neighborhood Residents**
 - Residents of the Fruit Belt, Masten Park, Allentown neighborhoods surrounding the BNMC.
- **BNMC Employees, Visitors, and Patients**
 - Individuals who work, study, visit, or receive services on the BNMC campus. Some visitors and patients may travel to the BNMC from outside of the Buffalo area.
- **Caregivers**

¹ Source: <https://www.ada.gov/cguide.htm#anchor62335>

- Individuals who regularly look after others (e.g., child, older adult, or PWD)

2.2.2 Local Partners and External Stakeholders

This category represents Buffalo’s leadership, local cities, adjacent neighborhoods to the BNMC and public agencies with interest in this project due to their direct affiliation or potential to impact the project and their desire to improve/increase services that are compliant with the ADA. Members of this category may play one or more of roles within the project, such as service providers, employers, subject matter experts, the local media, and operators/partners.

2.2.2.1 Local Service Providers, Employers, and Subject Matter Experts

Local service providers, employers, and subject matter experts are outlined in Table 16 in Appendix A, which is excerpted from the Stakeholder Registry developed in Phase 1, Task 2, the Concept of Operations.

2.2.2.2 Local Media

Local media partners include news outlets across print, digital, television, and radio, as outlined in Table 17 in Appendix A, which is excerpted from the Stakeholder Registry presented in the deployment Concept of Operations.

2.2.2.3 Operators and Partners

Operators and partners of the project are outlined below in Table 3, which is derived from the Concept of Operations, Section 5.3 Stakeholders and Actors of the Proposed System.

Table 3. System Operators and Partners.

Operator/Partner	Short Description	Role and Responsibilities	Changes from Current System
Shuttle Operations Center (NEW)	Systems of the public or private entity hired or assigned to operate the micro transit service defined in the concept.	Operate the micro transit service including the SDS and HDS vehicles.	This is a new actor.
Complete Trip Platform Deployer (NEW)	Public or private entity hired or assigned to deploy or maintain the complete trip platform defined in the concept.	Deploy and maintain the complete trip platform for the duration of the project.	This is a new actor.
NFTA Paratransit Operations (PAL)	Systems (call center, web, and phone) and personnel used to support PAL operations.	Service provider; Infrastructure owner and operator.	New interface to CTP needs to be developed and maintained.

Operator/Partner	Short Description	Role and Responsibilities	Changes from Current System
NFTA Operations	Systems and personnel involved in NFTA bus and rail operations. Also includes public and private traveler information systems currently in use at NFTA (Transit, Moovit, Agency website, phone) and associated personnel.	Service provider; Infrastructure owner and operator.	Updated bus shelters. Updated process for collecting and monitoring outages. Maintenance of the system of interest.
City of Buffalo Operations	Systems and personnel responsible for the streets, signals, sidewalks, bridges, traffic systems in the deployment area.	Infrastructure owner and operator; Planning & development.	Support for intersection crossing system. Support writing the law enforcement interaction and emergency management plan.
Niagara International Transportation Technology Coalition (NITTEC)	Systems and personnel responsible for traffic operations collaboration in the Buffalo region.	Infrastructure owner and operator; Planning & development.	Provide data to the complete trip platform and shuttle operations center about transportation network conditions.
Regional Travel Demand Management (TDM) Services	Systems and personnel involved in travel demand management activities in the region including campus-wide initiative to create a more sustainable and active transportation system for employees on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC), the regional Go Buffalo Niagara TMA, and statewide mobility management services (NSYDOT 511NY Rideshare).	Service provider; Outreach to end users.	Supporting adoption of complete trip elements.
NY State (NYS) Department of Motor Vehicles	Systems and personnel responsible for permitting self-driving shuttle operations.	Planning & development.	Continue regulation of AV shuttle operations.

Operator/Partner	Short Description	Role and Responsibilities	Changes from Current System
Emergency and Law Enforcement Entities	City, state, and transit law enforcement and emergency systems and personnel responsible for monitoring emergency, safety of traffic, and transit operations. Includes City of Buffalo, NFTA, and NY State Police that may have jurisdiction in the system of interest.	Planning & development; Infrastructure owner & operator.	Monitoring of shuttle operations and responding to emergencies. Lead writing the law enforcement interaction and emergency management plan.
BNMC Entities	Partners included in the BNMC Transportation Management Association (TMA). Input from representatives from each of the partner agencies on travel needs for their employees and visitors. User group includes systems and personnel involved in partner's specific parking, access, and traveler services. Five sub-groups are identified here around each for the partner agencies: Roswell Park (RP) VIA Kaleida Health (KH) University at Buffalo (UB) Buffalo Hearing and Speech Center (BHSC)	Planning & Development; Employer; Outreach to end users.	Installation of indoor beacons and touch models to support facility navigation through the complete trip platform.
Call Center Personnel (NEW)	Human actors involved in call center operations to support the phone-based access of the CTP or the Community Shuttle.	Respond to calls regarding the CTP or the shuttle.	New but can leverage existing call-center/customer support capabilities.
Shuttle Operations Center Personnel	Personnel working as part of the shuttle operations center.	Operate and maintain the shuttle service.	New.
Shuttle Driver	Drivers of the HDS.	Drive the shuttle, pick-up and drop off passengers based on manifest.	New but can leverage existing staff capabilities.

Operator/Partner	Short Description	Role and Responsibilities	Changes from Current System
Operator/Steward	Operators/stewards in the self-driving shuttle.	Monitor and assist travelers in using the SDS. Be prepared to take over in case of disengagement of the system.	New.

2.2.3 Industry Stakeholders

This category represents non-local industry stakeholders across the public and private sectors spanning public transportation, emerging technology, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), transportation planning, engineering, and accessibility. This is the target audience for media strategies outlined in Section 4.5, involving national industry publications, trade magazines, trade shows, journals, press, conferences, annual meetings, exhibitions, and webinars.

2.3 Outreach and Communication Approach

The outreach and communication approach involves a range of activities and platforms including branding and marketing assets, web presence, local stakeholder outreach, local community outreach including local media, and non-local meetings, events, and conferences. This section identifies the objectives and level of site deployment content to be shared for these outreach and communication tactics, which are described in-depth in Section 4.

2.3.1.1 Branding and Marketing Assets

A distinct brand will help achieve the first communication objective to build support for the project through education and recruitment. The brand will clearly identify the deployment to potential users and stakeholders, help generate attention, recognition, and trust for the deployment.

A style guide will be developed for all marketing assets to ensure consistency in communication. Ideally, the brand will become easily recognizable to potential users and stakeholders, facilitating promotional or educational messaging.

The branding will be developed in Phase 2 of this project. The deployment will incorporate ITS4US branding into communication materials developed in Phase 1.

2.3.1.2 Web Presence

A dedicated webpage on the BNMC website will serve as a reliable source of up-to-date information for the program—link to website is <https://bnmc.org/its4us-buffalo/>. The webpage is the deployment's main public-facing source of information about the deployment and will be designed to have a broad appeal with content that resonates with target audiences, including deployment users, partners, decision makers, and other stakeholders.

The webpage content will include details of the deployment development and deployment timeline, resources for partners, news (including blog posts, social media feeds, and events), the

deployment video, and contact information. Content details are available in Section 4.2 of this report.

The 508-compliant webpage, hosted by BNMC, will meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 standards. The webpage will also be enabled with Google Translate to allow for translation to other languages for the LEP community.

The site will also use social media to promote the program, provide updates on progress, and create a supportive and engaged community.

2.3.1.3 Stakeholder Outreach

Outreach to local partners and external stakeholders will advance the first and second communication objectives to build support for the project among the local community entities and organizations, and to build shared purpose among institutional partners. Stakeholders includes local service providers, employers, and operators, including stakeholders of the NFTA, BNMC, city, county, and state leaders, as well as community and human services organizations. The overall approach will follow the structure and timeline defined in the Outreach Implementation Schedule.

2.3.1.4 Local Community Outreach

Local community outreach will advance the first communication objective of building local support for the project by educating and recruiting potential system users while also sharing project benefits with general audiences. The primary mechanisms for local community outreach will be gathering user testimonials, attending community meetings, onsite advertising, and onsite events and local media. Local TDM programs including the regional Go Buffalo Niagara initiative and the GOBNMC TMA are other important avenues for reaching the traveling public and potential system users with information about the deployment.

2.3.1.4.1 User Testimonials

User testimonial and personal stories can generate social proof and create positive influence for others to use the CTP and the Community Shuttle. Such testimonials could be gathered through interviews and other means to gather feedback from users (e.g., directly from the CTP app and from users' social media post). These could then be shared with the public through social media posts or included in promotional materials (e.g., videos and printed materials).

2.3.1.4.2 Attending Community Meetings

Attending ongoing community meetings provides an opportunity to present about the project to potential system users and organizations representing them. This may include events hosted by partner organizations (e.g., human services and advocacy) targeted in stakeholder outreach activities described in Section 2.3.1.3.

2.3.1.4.3 Onsite Advertising

Promotional messaging and other advertisements displayed in public transportation spaces, such as at transit shelters and stations, on buses, or through partner facilities can highlight the deployment service among existing transit riders or other travelers accessing destinations served by the deployment.

2.3.1.4.4 Onsite Events & Local Media

Onsite events and local media include public and community events, onsite tours, and local media outreach. These outreach avenues will educate audiences about the deployment and the benefits it will create for users and residents of the Buffalo region and for future complete trip deployments across the country. Events for local audiences serve many purposes, including building and maintaining support for the project, helping recruit and retain potential users, overcoming misperceptions, and increasing awareness.

2.3.1.5 Non-Local Meetings, Conferences, and Media

Non-local meetings, conferences, and media serve to share lessons learned and best practices with the national and international industry partners. Outreach platforms include conferences and trade shows, industry trade journals and newsletters, as well as USDOT-organized activities. The initial list of non-local activities is provided in Section 4.5.

3 Communication Management

The Outreach Plan provides the framework for effective communications and stakeholder engagement throughout Phases 2 and 3 of the project. The plan will be updated as communication needs change and the stakeholders change. Building from the project management approach, this section identifies and defines the roles of people involved in this project.

3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

This section identifies the individuals and organizations responsible for leading and participating in the different communication and outreach efforts in Phases 2 and 3. The key outreach personnel are the Site Outreach lead, the Site Outreach Spokesperson, and the Outreach Materials Development Lead. The responsibilities of these key roles and additional roles are identified below in Table 4 below, followed by staff contingency plans in Table 5. The overall outreach team is composed by the key outreach personnel and the technical consultant team supporting NFTA in the deployment project.

Table 4. Outreach Role and Responsibilities.

Individual/Group	Responsibilities
Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support meeting requests and identify locations to host various scheduled meetings other project working groups• Ensure continued commitments to participate in the ITS4US Planning process from stakeholders• Resolve conflicts between team members and facilitate technical delivery of the project• Ensure USDOT awareness about communication requests being made of the project team• Ensuring USDOT approval of communications on project-related document and deliverables• Use appropriate reporting templates for monthly reporting and program management

Individual/Group	Responsibilities
Outreach Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead the development of the outreach plan and strategy, including how to handle negative feedback or quick response situations Lead the development of outreach products such as factsheets, presentations, news releases, etc. Coordinate external requests for project information with the project team and USDOT Support outreach delivery and stakeholder engagement Identify presenters on the ITS4US project at various stakeholder forums identified by the project team
Site Outreach Delivery Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead community engagement and partnerships efforts, including recruitment plans, partner engagement and seeking commitments Oversee outreach to potential system users through tabling and participation in community events Oversee stakeholder relationship management (SRM) system of outreach contacts and activities Advise on the development of outreach products such as factsheets, presentations, news releases, etc. Coordinate external requests for project information with the project team and USDOT Coordinate with Site Outreach Spokesperson on social media content Coordinate with day-to-day operations of BNMC's parking and transportation system, including the GOBNMC TMA Oversee management of qualitative feedback (e.g., from focus groups) as well as follow-up communications
Site Outreach Spokesperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with the site and media on press releases, advisories, social media, and ensures that communications are approved Serve as designated representative to speak on behalf of the site to media
Outreach Materials Development Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee design, development, and distribution of distinct deployment branding and marketing assets Advise on communications strategy including crisis communications scenarios Support the Outreach Manager and Site Outreach Delivery Lead
Government Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive updates and distribute communications to constituents

Table 5. Staff Contingency Plans.

Role	Current Proposed	Current Back-up
Project Manager	Kelly Dixon, GBNRTC	Rob Jones, NFTA
Outreach Manager	Katie O'Sullivan, ICF	Kate Brangaccio, ICF

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Role	Current Proposed	Current Back-up
Site Outreach Delivery Lead	Jamie Hamann-Burney, BNMC	Pat Kiely, BNMC
Site Outreach Spokesperson	Maria Morreale, BNMC	Adriana Viverette, BNMC
Outreach Materials Development Lead	Kate Brangaccio, ICF	Krista Wilson, ICF

3.2 Coordination with USDOT

The project team will maintain frequent communication and interactions with FHWA through different means. There will be bi-weekly status meetings with the Agreement Officer's Representative (AOR) to discuss any project management issues, provide updates and coordinate efforts within the project and overall ITS4US program. There will also be USDOT training sessions in which USDOT will provide guidance on the different tasks and special topics selected by them and in coordination with the sites. The team will also coordinate with USDOT for broader outreach, such as participation in national and international conferences and USDOT specific information dissemination activities (e.g., internal newsletters and communications). Finally, the project team will submit to USDOT reports to provide monthly updates on progress, as well as deliverables (in accordance with the project schedule, to be clearly defined in the Phase 2 Project Management Plan). The project team will pursue USDOT coordination and approval for use cases such as an external request for detailed technical material to be shared or vendor/supplier interaction with the media.

3.3 Outreach Team Communication Plan

Throughout Phase 2 and Phase 3, the project team will engage with different stakeholders (i.e., internal, external, and USDOT) through a variety of channels, as appropriate for each stakeholder. These channels are described in the following subsections, which outlines use cases where team coordination and approval ensures efficient and consistent outreach. Use cases include internal project team communications, inter-ITS4US awardee coordination, stakeholder engagement, evaluation support communications, broader outreach, and crisis communications.

3.3.1 Internal Project Team Communications

Internally, the project team will meet frequently through management-focused meetings and ad hoc meetings to discuss tasks, deliverables, and development progress. These meetings will be used to provide internal updates and engage in any technical discussion necessary for the development of deliverables and resolve issues.

3.3.1.1 Content Development and Approval Process

The Outreach Manager will coordinate with the Outreach Materials Development Lead to draft and develop the branding and marketing assets described in Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this plan.

Outreach content will undergo the following approvals before it is submitted for public distribution:

1. BNMC approval: 1 week

2. NFTA/GBNRTC approval: 1 week
3. USDOT AOR approval: 2 weeks

3.3.2 Inter-ITS4US Awardee Coordination

The project team will maintain communication with other ITS4US awardees through roundtables and trainings sessions provided by USDOT, to share lessons learned and discuss issues that may be relevant to other awardees. In addition, the project team will engage with other awardees around specific technical areas (e.g., wayfinding and transit data specifications).

3.3.3 Stakeholder Engagement

The project team will continue to coordinate with stakeholders in the Buffalo area who engaged in the Phase 1 process to share project updates (e.g., through emails and newsletters) and recruit participants for testing and deployment. Engagement activities in Phase 1 focused on introducing the proposed system, including benefits to potential users and partners to stakeholders. A detailed stakeholder registry was created and maintained as part of Phase 1, with relevant excerpts provided in the Appendix A.

3.3.4 Evaluation Support Communications

The project team will engage with the Independent Evaluator (IE) for the ITS4US Deployment Program, the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center. The project team will work with the IE to determine a communications protocol, which may be coordinated through the various USDOT roundtables.

3.3.5 Broad Outreach

The project team will engage in broader outreach activities with the purpose of gaining support from the targeted communities, as well as recognition within and outside of the Buffalo region as detailed in Section 4. For this, the Project Team will develop a series of outreach materials to promote the project and summarize its findings and participate in webinars and conferences to promote the project.

The primary objective of broad outreach initiatives will be to first educate the public about what the project is. It is important to keep in mind that publicity and education are not the same, and education needs to come first. The Project Team will work collaboratively with community organizations to educate their own stakeholders and users.

Media requests for onsite visits and stakeholder interviews would be vetted by the Site Outreach Lead. For example, the project team could accommodate stakeholder groups requesting tours including the SDS, Smart Infrastructure, and CTP app.

The outreach team would develop social media content, which would be reviewed and refined by the Site Outreach Lead and shared by partners including the NFTA, University at Buffalo, and BNMC.

3.3.6 Crisis Communications

In the event of a crisis or emergency, the outreach team would support communications and ensure that proper protocol are followed. The deployment Safety Management Plan describes

strategies to manage and respond to potential safety issues including crisis scenarios such as inclement weather.

With the SDS in operation, incident and emergency procedures will need to be coordinated between the SOC/SDS and traffic operations and emergency and law enforcement agencies to manage incidents. If the SDS has an emergency alert button, the emergency and law enforcement agencies may need to set up a response plan for dealing with emergency situations.

In the case of a serious vehicle crash, a crash involving a vehicle and a pedestrian, or a health emergency onboard the Community Shuttle service, the existing emergency response plans of the City of Buffalo, Erie County, and NYS Department of Transportation in place will be followed. This will include an available user and/or operator calling 911, and emergency responders responding to the emergency following their standard procedures. In case of crashes involving a malfunction of a technology component (e.g., the Ped-X or SDS), the system would revert to the fail-safe mode of operations (i.e., using the signal push button or manually driving the shuttle) until the cause of the crash is determined.

Incidents involving a health emergency for a passenger on board the shuttle would adhere to the following communication protocols.

- In the case of a SDS, when the human steward onboard the shuttle or the operators at the SOC detect a health emergency for a traveler (e.g., an onboard traveler may contact the SOC, or the SOC, through its remote monitoring capability may detect the emergency), the SOC sends a command for the SDS to stop at the nearest safe spot.
- SOC/the shuttle steward will contact emergency management (e.g., 911) to describe the nature of the incident and give the exact location for the shuttle.
- Emergency management will deploy the appropriate vehicle, first responder, and emergency medical technician to the scene.
- In the case of a HDS, when the driver detects a health emergency for a traveler onboard the shuttle, the driver stops the shuttle and contact 911 and then the SOC, if needed.
- When responding to a health emergency for a PWD, emergency management may benefit from health-related information about the person's disability.

4 Communication Platforms

Communication platforms will be utilized to connect stakeholders and project partners with potential users. Regular and consistent content will be communicated through owned, earned, paid media, including social media. This section identifies the objectives and outlines the strategy of how communication platforms will be utilized. Communication platforms described in this section are summarized in Table 6 below. It is important to note that, when possible, the message delivered through the different platforms will meet different accessibility criteria (e.g., videos will have subtitles in both English and Spanish, printed materials will have translations), see the accessibility notes for more details.

Table 6. Summary of Communication Platforms.

Platform	Target Audience	Frequency	Accessibility Notes
Print Marketing Assets	Potential system users, LEP, partners / stakeholders (local service providers, local media, operators)	See 4.1	Translation for LEP populations
Webpage (https://bnmc.org/its4us-buffalo/)	Potential system users, persons with LEP, partners / stakeholders (local service providers, local media, operators)	Blogs, articles, updates as needed (see 4.2.1)	508 compliant, Google translate enabled, meets WCAG 2.0 standards
Social media	Potential and current users, older adults, PWD	See 4.2.2	Captions on all video, alt text for images
Public meetings / community events	PWD (mobility, vision, hearing, cognitive), low income, older adults	At least quarterly through Phase 2 and as needed through Phase 3	Accessible buildings (ramps for mobility devices, etc.), buildings accessible by public transit, microphones available. Contract with local American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, option to attend virtually (when possible)
Onsite events	PWD, older adults, persons with LEP	TBD	Utilization of accessible building, ASL or translator if needed, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) service

Platform	Target Audience	Frequency	Accessibility Notes
Local media	PWD, older adults, persons with LEP	TBD	Closed captioning or other accessibility programs provided by media outlet
Press conferences & follow-up press releases	Stakeholders and local media	Quarterly, or based on project milestones	Utilization of accessible building, captions on all video (if virtual), ASL interpreter or translator and CART service, if needed
Conferences / trade shows	Stakeholders, service providers, operators	Quarterly	Accessible presentations – 508 compliant

4.1 Branding and Marketing Assets

Many of the outreach channels will be supported by the same set of marketing materials, to help enforce the message through visual products or take-home materials. This section outlines and details that specific set of outreach collateral necessary to support awareness about the ITS4US Deployment Program, and how innovative technologies will improve mobility and accessibility for underserved communities looking to gain access to/from/around the BNMC. Branding and marketing assets are summarized in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Summary of Branding and Marketing Assets.

Asset	Description	Timeline
Video	Developed to distribute information and feature testimonials	Phases 2 and 3
Communications Toolkit	Developed to communicate with key stakeholders	Phases 2 and 3
Flyer / Postcard / Doorhanger	To provide an “at a glance” look at the program	Phases 2 and 3
Infographics	To visually represent key elements of the program	Phases 2 and 3
Surveys	Developed to receive important feedback	Continual
Posters	Created to communicate key messaging	Phases 2 and 3

4.1.1 Branding

To ensure consistency in the look and feel of all outreach materials for the Buffalo deployment, a project brand name, logo, and PowerPoint template will be developed. The brand name and logo will tie in with USDOT’s ITS4US Program’s style but will help set this project apart from the other four sites. The logo will be included on every piece of marketing material and on all presentations.

4.1.2 Video

In Phase 2, NFTA will develop a series of short videos (up to 3 videos, around 1-2 minutes long each) to distribute information, provide important visuals, and engage potential users in the rider experience. The videos will be updated in Phase 3 with program information and user testimonials. The videos will be hosted on the deployment webpage and will be integrated into presentations for local stakeholders as well as national conferences and trade shows. Target audiences will receive the promotional video when the program is launched that explains the goals and objectives of the project in detail, with an emphasis on the needs that the project will address and benefits for users.

4.1.3 Communications Toolkit

A communications toolkit, developed in Phase 2, will ensure the outreach team is equipped to effectively communicate with potential stakeholders, partners, and users. The toolkit, which will include scripts, talking points, and PowerPoint presentations, is discussed in further detail in Section 5.

4.1.4 Flyer and Postcard

Flyers, posters, doorhangers, and postcards that provide an “at-a-glance” look at the program will be developed, with easy-to-understand infographics. More detail on these materials is included in Section 5.

4.1.5 Infographics

Infographics visually represent key deployment elements or processes with graphics and key phases. These can be used by partners in their own messaging and communication to help promote or explain the project. This item is discussed in further detail in Section 5.

4.2 Web presence

Audiences are turning more often to online resources to obtain information. It is imperative that this deployment has a strong online presence where anyone can find up-to-date information at a moment's notice. For this deployment, the web presence will consist of a webpage and social media posts, which partners including the NFTA and BNMC will cross-promote. It is important to note that the project will still maintain a strong non-online presence (though flyers, postcards, factsheets, etc.) to ensure that the message comes across all targeted audiences, including those with no or limited access to internet.

4.2.1 Deployment Webpage

The deployment webpage will be maintained as part of Phase 2 building a robust web presence with video, and project status information with a focus on graphical content that is easily shareable, engaging, and accessible. The GOBNMC website will also be an important launching pad for learning about the deployment and links to accessing the CTP website and downloading the CTP app from the proper app store.

A dedicated webpage for the deployment project will be developed to serve as a key information resource supporting the project outreach strategy. The webpage is the program's main public-

facing source of information and will be designed to have a broad appeal with content that resonates with both the public and industry or stakeholder groups. The page will be hosted by BNMC with all HTML and updates provided by ICF in Phase 1 and by the Outreach Materials Development Lead in phases 2 and 3. The webpage will be 508-compliant and meet WCAG 2.0 standards in coordination with any ITS4US design guidelines.

4.2.1.1 Development Process

The steps below outline the process in which the project team will work in partnership with ITS4US, USDOT, and project partners to develop a user-friendly and accessible webpage that will be 508-compliant and meet WCAG 2.0 standards, with alternative language versions available for individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

1. Host Web Development Kick-off meeting.
2. Gather requirements for review and approval by ITS4US and USDOT.
3. Coordination with input from ITS4US, USDOT, and project partners.
4. Develop site map and wireframes that outline and describe the content and navigation of the site.
5. Develop site design mockups and present them to the project team and USDOT for review and feedback.
6. Design and develop pages.
7. Testing and QA/QC.
8. Deliver HTML to client to build site.
9. Deploy and launch, using pre-approved media and user outreach plan.

4.2.1.2 Webpage Contents

4.2.1.2.1 Home page

The Home page will include a rotating carousel, highlighting messaging for overarching audience groups, including the general public, potential users, and stakeholders/potential partners. It will include a timeline showing the past and current status and anticipated future activities.

As the deployment progresses, the home page will evolve with additional sections that provide links to new outreach materials posted on the partner page, deployment status updates, deployment testing results and promotion of any derived benefits that resulted from the testing and deployment, and other information. Links to social media will also be posted here as will any pictures taken of participants in the deployment using the system's services.

4.2.1.2.2 About page

This page will include background on ITS4US program, as well as the program's project partners, key goals, and benefits to the community.

4.2.1.2.3 *Partner page*

The partner page will include detailed information and links to the program's project partners. It will also link to important information on how to become a project partner. Outreach materials will be included for download (fact sheet, embedded video, and embedded widget) to be used by advocacy groups and partners. All attachments and downloadable content will be 508-compliant and translated for key identified audiences.

4.2.1.2.4 *News page*

This portion of the webpage will include project information that is created through owned, earned and bought media. This includes blog posts, social media feeds, upcoming events and any content developed by internal and/or external sources. It will be continuously updated to confirm to readers that the materials are up-to-date and relevant with important information.

4.2.1.2.5 *Contact Us page*

The Contact Us section of the webpage will include contact information from project representatives and partner organizations. It will also include a feedback form.

4.2.1.3 **Webpage Maintenance and Updates**

The webpage will be updated at least monthly, and these changes will be provided in HTML, especially the news page, blog posts and event production.

4.2.2 Social Media

Social media promotes the program, provides updates on progress, and creates a supportive and engaged community – all at a low cost and level of effort. Social media content will combine direct calls to action (take this survey, attend this event), curated content like graphics and video, and testimonials from the community. The social media content calendar will be developed to include scheduled posts for key milestones and activities. The outreach team working in the field will solicit photos and testimonials from potential and eventually current users to be used on social media. Events will also be reported live when appropriate. The development and rollout activities for social media posts will be as follows.

1. Produce evergreen content calendar, updated quarterly with scheduled content. Scheduled content may include links to press releases and video.
2. Plan at least two cross-promotional posts per month.
3. Establish hashtags, e.g., #ConnectBuffalo.
4. Produce spontaneous, unplanned content as needed.
5. Work with project partners to cross-pollinate content and posts.
6. Provide quarterly analytics/insights on social media activity.

Table 8 below describes the types of platforms, audience, goals, frequency, and type of posts. Note that frequencies could change as content is developed and more information needs to be provided to the public.

Table 8. Summary of Social Media Platforms.

Platform	Audience	Goal	Frequency	Type of posts
Facebook	General public, stakeholders, and potential system users including older adults	Increase awareness	1 post per month	Upcoming stakeholder/partner events. Engaging and accessible photos, graphics, video. Success stories / partner testimonials.
Instagram	General public / potential users	Build community	1 post per month	Professional photos. User photos. Graphics. Live on-the-ground updates.
Twitter	General public and stakeholders, local operators, local media	Live updates, increase awareness, promote events	1 post per month	Retweeting partners. Live on-the-ground updates. Graphics, video. Retweeting users.
LinkedIn	Current and potential partners	Increase awareness, connect with stakeholders / partners	1 post per month	Articles / blogs. Upcoming events (conferences, press events).
YouTube	General public, stakeholders, and potential system users including older adults	Increase awareness	1 post per month	Videos.

4.3 Local Stakeholder Outreach

Local outreach will take place in two iterative phases: the first will be local stakeholder outreach to establish trust with organizations representing potential system users, and the second will use those stakeholder relationships to conduct direct local community outreach to potential system users and general audiences.

Local stakeholder outreach will take place through speaking engagements and participating in standing meetings of organized bodies representing local service providers, employers, operators, government agencies, as well as advocacy and human services organizations. Local stakeholder outreach activities will also help to amplify the deployment's web presence as described in Section 4.2.

4.3.1 Project Team Members

As project team members, the NFTA, BNMC, and University at Buffalo will leverage established stakeholder networks to build support for the project among the local community and to build shared purpose among institutional partners.

4.3.1.1 NFTA

NFTA will seek feedback and provide education and updates to the agency's two standing committees of riders and stakeholders, the Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC).

The CAC is composed of six "riders-at-large" (people who ride the bus regularly) as well as 19 representatives from community, governmental, and philanthropic organizations who serve transit supportive and transit dependent populations. CAC organizations that may be relevant to this project include: Western NY Independent Living, Person Centered Services, Service Employees International Union 1199, GObike Buffalo, Buffalo Urban League, and more. The CAC meets every other month either online or at NFTA facilities in downtown Buffalo.

AAC meetings occur monthly and are open to the public. The AAC brings together riders, advocates, and community organizations to discuss issues of importance to the accessibility community with NFTA staff and management. Many organizations of interest to this project are regularly involved, such as Visually Impaired Enhancement (VIA) and Deaf Access Services, as well as many members of the public with valuable experience and insight.

4.3.1.2 BNMC

The BNMC convenes a variety of councils representing member institutions and employers on the campus as well as relevant partner organizations. These councils include the BNMC Communications Council, BNMC Transportation Operations Council, BNMC Public Safety Council, BNMC Neighborhood Engagement Council, and the BNMC District Planning Council. The project team will engage all councils to communicate project updates with employers, patients, visitors, and staff as standing agenda items.

4.3.1.3 University at Buffalo

The project will engage the UB Council, which serves as the primary oversight and advisory body to the University at Buffalo. Among the regular duties of the council are reviewing all major plans and activities of the university in the areas of academics, student life, finances, buildings and grounds, as well as making recommendations and regulations for the benefit of the university in matters of community and alumni relations.

4.3.2 Local and State Leaders

Gaining buy-in from decision makers at city, county, and state levels will require one-on-one engagement with leadership teams in addition to presenting at standing meetings of boards and commissions. Decision makers are elected officials and government agencies that enact laws, adopt regulations, and shape transportation policies and programs at state and local levels that affect development and deployment of complete trip technologies. They control important funding sources for deployment efforts and related infrastructure improvements, and they also influence public opinion. Public leaders need complete and accurate information to support the deployment

and its social, economic, and mobility benefits. Potential standing forums for presenting the deployment to local and state leaders are listed below.

- **GBNRTC Policy Committee:** sets regional policies for transportation and associated development activities in the Buffalo Niagara region, while providing a pathway through external political and legislative systems.
- **NITTEC** convenes a variety of committees relevant to the project including Strategic Planning, Technology and Systems, and Traffic Operations Center. Each committee is comprised of representatives from member agencies in Western New York and Canada.
- **City of Buffalo Citizens Planning Council:** a group of appointed citizens that makes capital budget recommendations to the Mayor's Office based upon capital budget requests from City departments, not-for-profit institutions, and the community.
- **Buffalo Common Council President, Darius Pridgen:** represents the Ellicott District constituents, which encompasses the Community Shuttle service area.
- **Erie County Health & Human Services Committee:** reviews and discusses matters, requests, and proposals from legislators, the County Executive and various community groups affecting health, mental health, and welfare issues in Erie County.
- **New York State Developmental Disabilities Planning Council:** addresses the needs of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD) through projects that promote self-determination, integration, and inclusion.

4.3.3 Community and Human Services Organizations

Community and human services organizations provide potential system users and the public with information, programs, events, and services. Examples of these organizations are listed in Table 16 in Appendix A, specifically those noted as “E” (employer) and “U” (end user) numbers in the first column. The project team will engage community and human services organizations through a combination of one-on-one discussions and participating in ongoing events and meetings to build relationships, trust, and support for the deployment. Engaging these organizations will provide an important foundation for reaching the individuals that they serve.

4.4 Local Community Outreach

Building on the relationships with local stakeholders strengthened through the outreach tactics described in Section 4.3, the project will conduct local community outreach to directly engage the general public and potential system users. Local community outreach tactics include user testimonials, community meetings, onsite advertising, onsite events including tours, and local media.

4.4.1 User Testimonials

The project team will cultivate stories by following users and obtaining testimonials for branding and marketing assets as well as other communication platforms. In Phase 2, a sample of users will be recruited as a testers and users of the prototypes of the system. These users will provide

both the baseline data on current travel conditions as well as be early users of the CTP. These users will play an active role in prioritizing features, and they will be asked to provide feedback and testimonials that can be used in the project's outreach and communication activities.

4.4.2 Attending Community Meetings

Project team members will attend ongoing community meetings to deliver educational presentations about the deployment directly to community members. Community meetings may be convened by neighborhood groups such as the Masten Block Club Coalition, the Fruit Belt Coalition, and the Allentown Association, or by organizations such as the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) that work with community residents on local planning projects. Community meetings will provide opportunities to share the project benefits with general audiences, including non-users, and to engage stakeholders to gather their input/feedback. Where possible, the outreach team will provide remote access and call-in options to local meetings and events to enable participation by community members and stakeholders who are not able to attend in-person. With broad community support, the success of the project could extend to other areas and underserved communities in the Buffalo region.

It is important that outreach to the local community be sensitive to the historical context of these neighborhoods and potential negative perceptions about the project. As the BNMC campus expanded, surrounding neighborhoods felt that they did not receive substantial investment but suffered from negative impacts of growth including more traffic and parking demand in residential areas. As an example, there may be sensitivities about the vehicle type for the Community Shuttle service.

4.4.3 Onsite Advertising

Onsite advertising will reach the public and potential system users through physical notices, such as posters, billboards, etc. Onsite advertising will direct audiences to the deployment's webpage or social media. Informational kiosks that connect users with the CTP webpage as well as the 511NY and 511NY Rideshare websites will be placed throughout the BNMC including parking garages and hospital lobbies. The specific number and placement of kiosks will be determined in Phase 2. Other possible onsite advertising opportunities are listed below.

- NFTA transit real estate including bus shelters, transit vehicle wrapping, transit vehicle interiors, and Metro stations (specifically Allen Station on the medical campus) will be available for print advertising.
- BNMC facilities will host print advertisements in corridors, entrances, and other areas with high foot traffic. Wayfinding markers throughout the campus provide other opportunities for orienting passerby to the Community Shuttle service.
- Through the BNMC Communications Council described in Section 4.3.1, flyers and other print marketing collateral can be distributed to member institutions, employers, and human service organizations serving potential system users.

4.4.4 Onsite Events & Local Media

Participating in community events, offering onsite tours, and engaging with local media is an opportunity to engage directly with potential riders and partners. Sharing information at community events can reach a wide range of people, elevate the trust and credibility of the

project, and allow for face-to-face interaction with interested parties. Tours present an opportunity to share information about the project in a fun and engaging way. For these types of public interactions, the project team will consult with the partners hosting events or the client, to understand accessibility needs, potential needs, and resources to assist people in need of physical or language accommodations. For meetings involving RSVPs or confirmation of attendance, the project team will request that invitees indicate needs for accessibility accommodations in their responses. Potential accommodations may include portable ramps, flyers printed in target languages, ASL interpreters, CART (on-site captioning in real-time), or opportunities for telephonic translation for individual questions.

Community events and public meetings are communication platforms that are instrumental to building excitement, engagement, and eventually buy-in from users and communities that surround the project. One-hour events in accessible, convenient locations will be hosted by project partners and key community stakeholders if necessary. Attendees will have access to a 30-minute presentation addressing the current state of the project, and then a question-and-answer section will directly follow. The meetings will be announced via earned, owned, and social media to ensure all communities are represented and sign-in sheets will be utilized to collect contact information and feedback from attendees. Media partners will be invited as appropriate to showcase the capabilities, intent, and value of the deployment. Where possible, the outreach team will provide remote access and call-in options to local meetings and events to enable participation by community members and stakeholders who are not able to attend in-person.

The project will also leverage ongoing community events led by project partners to share outreach materials to educate the general public and recruit potential system users. For example, NFTA conducts regular community outreach activities both on and off site and can include information about this project as part of those efforts. In 2019, the agency attended more than 10 community summer events, including the Buffalo Pride Festival, Juneteenth, the Puerto Rican / Hispanic Festival, Disability Pride Festival, Taste of Buffalo, and more. In 2020, NFTA conducted virtual outreach through online surveys and public meetings on initiatives such as the Bus Network Improvements Plan. In 2021, NFTA conducted more than 70 hours of in-person outreach around service changes in Niagara Falls, and also provided outreach and education at several outdoor festivals. When it is safe from a Covid-19 perspective, NFTA expects to continue and expand on this in-person outreach. Similarly, outreach staff for the Regional TDM Services Provider Go Buffalo Niagara regularly table at community events and employers to educate the public about available travel options in the region. The BNMC's GOBNMC TMA is another avenue to reach community members with deployment information through tabling and presentations about transportation options on the campus.

4.4.4.1 Onsite Tours

Onsite tours will be a centerpiece of the local community outreach strategy. The site anticipates offering tours via requests by email, web form, and or telephone to the Site Delivery Lead. Although it should be noted that frequency of tours may change as deployment progresses. (e.g., could be increased to capture more participants or reduced if sufficient participants are recruited) These tours will educate audiences about the deployment and the benefits it will create for users and residents of the Buffalo region and for future complete trip deployments across the country. Tours for local audiences serve many purposes, including building and maintaining support for the project, helping recruit and retain potential users, overcoming misperceptions, and increasing awareness of the project partners as leaders in regional transportation. For visitors from beyond the Buffalo region, tours showcase the project as a national model for complete trip deployment.

4.4.4.2 Local Media

Local media will be utilized to communicate key messaging with target communities, including underserved individuals, including people with disabilities, older adults, low-income individuals, rural residents, veterans, and limited English proficiency travelers in neighborhoods surrounding the BNMC. Local media channels are provided in Appendix A, Table 17. A mix of local media including print, digital, television, and radio will be used to ensure that people with hearing and vision loss will be able to access information.

The media will be provided project status updates throughout the planning and implementation via local, in-person fifteen-minute press conferences and follow-up press releases. The purpose of each press conference and follow-up press release is to provide an update about the project during the following specific times of the project. Press conferences will include a five-minute speech, accompanied by PowerPoint slides. Validators and community stakeholders will be invited to participate, confirmed, and prepped.

Potential questions that could be posed by the media will be prepared, as will the talking points in response to those potential questions. A dry run will be conducted one day before the scheduled press conference, with the speaker participating at the press conference location. The follow-up press release will be a summary of the press conference speech and include any pertinent images, illustrations, or infographics used in the PowerPoint slides.

The audience targets will receive two email invitations to each press conference – the first two weeks before the press conference and the reminder two days before the press conference. The audience targets will also receive the press release within one week of the press conference.

4.5 Non-Local Meetings, Conferences, and Media

Non-local meetings, conferences, and media serve to advance the state of the industry by sharing lessons learned with peer agencies at national and international levels. Prior to each event, the project team will inquire about the provision of accessibility accommodations such as closed captioning services, interpretation/translation of multiple languages including ASL, and physical accessibility as needed.

4.5.1 Conferences and Trade Shows

Trade shows and conferences serve as a prime opportunity to engage with potential users, stakeholders, and the industry. These events include, but are not limited to: USDOT sponsored events, transportation focused conferences (Association for Commuter Transportation, Transportation Research Board (TRB)), South by Southwest, Institute of Transportation Engineers. While the focus of these outreach efforts will be on non-local events to reach national and international industry peers, the project team may also participate in more local or regional conferences and trade shows.

This deployment project will participate in nine industry-focused conferences or trade shows over the course of Phase 2 and 3 (three per year). The project outreach team will participate in each event as detailed in the schedule provided in Section 5.3, and will provide one representative to participate at the event and represent the project at the booth. For USDOT-sponsored events, the site will provide a representative, print outreach materials as described in Section 4.1, and will not purchase trade show space if USDOT is arranging floor space.

A conference and trade show outreach packet will be developed to bring to the industry events comprised of the project collateral described in Section 5.2. As the deployment progresses, existing materials in the packet will be updated with new information as necessary and new materials will be added. This packet will include the communications toolkit, fact sheet, brochure, infographics, and posters.

If planned in-person events are moved to virtual or web-only events, the project team will adapt outreach materials to electronic formats to share during virtual presentations.

4.5.2 Industry Trade Journals and Newsletters

Publications in industry trade journals will help publicize the project within the transportation industry. Journals include, but are not limited to: Journal of Commerce, Traffic Technology International, and the Journal of the Transportation Research Board.

Publications in industry trade journals and newsletter will help publicize the deployment's work within the transportation industry and potentially inform more people who were not following USDOT's program. At least three articles will be published in industry trade journals and newsletters each year during Phases 2 and 3.

The specific articles anticipated journals are detailed in Section 5.3 and will be finalized as the deployment progresses. Links to any published articles will be shared on the webpage and social media.

4.5.3 USDOT Organized Activities

The project team will coordinate with USDOT to share relevant content in USDOT-organized activities, such as webinars, meetings, or events. Topics may cover the following: System Architecture/Design, Application Development and Deployment Progress, Operational Readiness/Baseline Data Collection Plan, Results of Readiness Test and Baseline Performance, Highlights of the Operational Capability Showcase, and Performance Measurement/Transition Plan. To support USDOT's efforts to share lessons with its international partners, the ITS4US outreach team will participate in any requested collaboration activities.

5 Public Relations / Marketing Plan

This section will describe the project’s public relations and marketing plan, which will be imperative to creating a strategy that engages and educates the community, with a special focus on the project’s key messages introduced in Section 2.1.1.

The project team will pursue a multi-channel approach to rollout the Buffalo, NY ITS4US Deployment Project that combines organic and paid digital, social, and traditional marketing with in-person community outreach. The list of options below could be “mixed and matched” for a customized approach to connect most effectively with individual audience groups identified in Section 2.2.

Standard outreach and web development processes are covered in Sections 4.1 and 4.2. This section will examine public relations and earned media opportunities. The below media strategy uses a multi system approach to educate and engage the public and key stakeholders throughout the project in a cost-effective way. The multi system approach includes the following channels:

- Paid media: Includes the purchase of ad space through numerous platforms to promote a brand to larger audiences. This approach will be on a case-by-case basis and not all content will be paid to be distributed.
- Owned media: Newsletters, websites, and marketing eblasts are all forms of owned media. This strategy uses platforms that are managed internally to communicate brand awareness.
- Social media: Uses organic or sponsored content to create brand awareness on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tiktok, and Reels.
- Earned media: This strategy uses creative elements, including events, ride-alongs, and media pitches to get stories picked up by the media.

Potential opportunities include are listed in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Public Relations and Marketing Opportunities.

Rollout Tactic and Channel	Paid Media	Owned Media	Social Media	Earned Media
Banner Digital Ads	•			
Blog Posts				•
Earned Media/Media Relations				•
E-Newsletters (<i>from stakeholders</i>)		•		
Facebook Advertisements	•			

Rollout Tactic and Channel	Paid Media	Owned Media	Social Media	Earned Media
Facebook Organic Content			•	
Grassroots Outreach		•		
Incentive Programs * (when mobile app is launched)	•			
Instagram Organic Content			•	
LinkedIn Organic Content			•	
Station Bench Wraps	•			
Marketing Materials		•		
Satisfied Rider Testimonials				•
Op-Eds/Editorials				•
Podcasts				•
Public Bus Wraps	•			
Digital/Streaming Ads	•			
Web Search Advertisements	•			
Search Engine Optimization (SEO)		•		
Social Media Influencers	•		•	
Sponsored Blog Posts	•			
Sponsored Events	•			
Television Spots	•			
Twitter Organic Content			•	
Video		•		
Webinars for Stakeholders and Operators		•		
Webpage		•		

5.1 Accessibility and Accommodations

All deliverables and materials included in the Public Relations / Marketing plan will be prepared with language and accessibility accommodations. This includes:

- Accessibility accommodations such as ASL interpreters, translation, and CART services, for press conferences and in-events.
- Video that has closed captioning and voiceover narration with audio description.
- Ride-alongs and tours that are accessible for people with disabilities.

- In-house translation services for all printed materials to ensure that all signage, press releases, printed and digital collateral are accessible to Spanish speaking communities, and other selected languages.
- Targeted media outreach efforts geared towards older adults and people with temporary or permanent disabilities.
- Accessible signage, through braille, raised print, and audible options (when digital).
- Media placements in Spanish and other diverse publications.
- Designated team member to handle all accommodation requests.

5.2 Outreach Material Development and Delivery

As mentioned above, many of the outreach channels will be supported by the same set of marketing materials, to help enforce the message through visual products or take-home materials.

This section details the specific set of outreach collateral necessary to support awareness about the program, educate stakeholders and target audience groups, and drive intended actions. Outreach collateral be developed includes a brand name and logo, a communications tool kit, a fact sheet, a brochure, infographics, and promotional video.

5.2.1 Branding

All project collateral will incorporate a distinct project brand, logo, and style to ensure the design remains consistent and supports brand awareness. The project branding, logo and PowerPoint template will be developed as part of Phase 2 by the Outreach Materials Development Lead and the technical staff identified in Section 3.1. Throughout Phase 1, prior to project branding, all project collateral will incorporate the ITS4US logo and branding to ensure consistency.

5.2.2 Communications Toolkit

The purpose of the Communications Toolkit is to ensure that the deployment team has the necessary tools to communicate effectively with the target audiences. The toolkit will include:

- 15-second elevator pitch – concise speech answering, “Why we are doing this (the user needs)”, “What do we deliver (benefits)?”, “How do we do it (differentiation)?” and “Who do we do it with (target market)?”
- Talking points – customized for different audience types that the Team can use to educate the audience about the deployment and, if appropriate, encourage them to participate and/or support the deployment. Additional talking points will be added as the project progresses.
- PowerPoint presentation slides – customized with messaging and imagery to resonate with target audience groups. As needed, slides will be added to different presentations as needed, enabling quicker turnaround of presentations. Additional slides with new information or updated slides will be added to this toolkit as the project progresses. There

will be a summary project PowerPoint for shorter presentations (15 minutes and less) and a more detailed PowerPoint for longer presentations at conferences and for technical external stakeholder audiences.

5.2.3 Flyer

A two-sided 4x5 inch (postcard-sized) at-a-glance overview of the deployment, that highlights the “who, what, where, why, and how” in an easy-to-understand visual format will be developed. After the testing phase, an updated flyer will be produced that discusses the derived benefits identified from the testing results.

5.2.4 Brochure

A printed, leave-behind trifold piece with detailed information about the deployment will be developed. After the testing phase, an updated brochure will be produced that showcases specific use cases experienced during the deployment.

5.2.5 Infographics

Infographics visually represent key deployment elements or processes with graphics and key phases. Up to three infographics will be developed that cover how the ITS4US Deployment Program will fill the transit gap for underserved residents, how to download the app, etc.

5.2.6 Video

The promotional video will be developed in Phase 2 and used to distribute information, provide important visuals, and engage potential users in a rider experience. Target audiences will receive a promotional video when the program is launched that explains in detail how this program will fill in the gap of a complete trip, and why this project is important. The video will be updated in Phase 3 to feature users and Individuals’ stories. The video development process is as follows:

- Develop a creative strategy brief, review with USDOT for input and approval.
- Develop a script for review and approval.
- Determine art direction based on brand elements and script tone.
- Conduct pre-production planning—develop a video plan and timeline.
- Once script is approved, develop a storyboard based on the key portions of the approved script.
- Add a scratch track voiceover recording of approved script.
- Create an animation storyboard for animation products.
- Present story board for feedback and approval.
- Select stock music cuts for review and approval.
- Present rough cut/first draft of video for review and feedback.

- Conduct edits based on feedback/ develop final motion graphics and animation.
- Cast for voiceover artist, record voicers, and mix.
- Present final cut of video for approval.
- Conduct 508 compliance review.
- Final deliverables, including animated video and closed captions are reviewed/approved.

5.2.7 Feedback Survey

To follow-up with the attendees at the local community events, the project team will collect email addresses and names upon entrance to the event. Following the event, a feedback survey will be delivered to attendees via email, via Survey Monkey. The survey will include questions to gauge the audience's sentiments and reaction to the program, and to evaluate the project's communications and rollout plan for the program. The survey will be designed so that the respondent spends less than 5 minutes answering the questions and will be no more than 5 questions. The results from the survey will be used to inform how future community events will be conducted and may also result in updates to the materials in the Communications Toolkit.

5.2.8 High-Level Outreach Delivery Schedule

Table 10 below provides a high-level delivery schedule for outreach materials and activities.

Table 10. High-Level Outreach Delivery Schedule.

Outreach Milestone	Timeframe	Actions
Launch project online landing page	End of Phase 1	Launch project landing page on BNMC website that all outreach material will direct target audiences to. Link: https://bnmc.org/its4us-buffalo/
Project branding	Beginning of Phase 2	Distinct project brand and logo will create cohesive identity for outreach collateral and communications through Phases 2 and 3.
Public education	Beginning of Phase 2	Press releases to local media to educate the public on the project.
Deployment announcements	Throughout Phase 2	Press releases to local media with each major release (CTP app, HDS, SDS, and Smart Infrastructure).
Operational readiness test and demonstration (major media event)	End of Phase 2	This event will be a major project milestone that marks the end of Phase 2 testing and the beginning of Phase 3 implementation and serves as an opportunity to promote the project across target audiences.

5.3 Detailed Plan and Schedule of Outreach Activities

This section provides a detailed plan and schedule of activities and events, audiences, proposed/tentative dates, and platforms. The tables below facilitate information presentation, tracking and updating, and review. Through conferences, trade shows, webinars, public meetings and press conferences, the project team will engage, educate, and activate the industry partners that would benefit from lessons learned. These schedules are subject to change throughout the progression of the project's lifecycle. Table 11 provides the conferences, trade shows, and workshops that the project team anticipates participating in throughout Phases 2 and 3. Mandatory conferences are identified with asterisks (*). Table 12 outlines anticipated webinar topics, Table 13 provides potential industry journal topics that are generally aligned with the webinars, and Table 14 provides resources for industry publication, trade magazines, and journals.

Table 11. Workshops, conferences, and tradeshow for Phases 2 & 3 (June 2022 - December 2025).

Event	Date	Location	Rationale	Activities
Agreement Year 1				
ITS World Congress*	September 18-22, 2022	Los Angeles, CA	This congress brings global professionals and experts to present their work on ITS implementations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibit (Video and outreach materials) • Possible ITS4US panel • Outreach materials at the booth
Universal Design, UD2022	September 7-9 2022	Brescia, Italy	Sharing research knowledge and best practices with Universal Design professionals and academics worldwide. Themes include built/urban environments, users' wellbeing, mobility, and knowledge transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD
TRANSED	September 12-16, 2022	Virtual	Opportunity to present our project and engage with experts in mobility, accessibility, and demand response transportation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible ITS4US panel
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES) International Annual Meeting	October 10 - 14, 2022	Atlanta, GA	Opportunity to reach thought leaders in the field of human factors and ergonomics, including 1,500-2,000 attendees from education, government, and industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in workshops, keynotes, or panels
AMPO	October 25-28, 2022	Minneapolis, MN	Share initial concept for deployment and engage with metropolitan agencies that may be interested in future deployments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in ITS4US panel.
Agreement Year 2				
ITE Annual Meeting and Exhibition*	August 13–16, 2023	Portland, OR	Present an update on our design, development, latest achievements and lessons learned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBD

Event	Date	Location	Rationale	Activities
2023 INFORMS Annual Meeting (The Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences)	October 15-19, 2023	Phoenix, AZ	6,500 members, students, and academic and industry experts in fields including operations research, analytics, management science, economics, behavioral science, statistics, artificial intelligence, data science, applied mathematics, and more. The organization's mission is to: advance and promote the science and technology of decision making to save lives, save money, and solve problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible poster presentation
Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)	TBD	TBD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible presentations at session • Possible ITS4US panel
Agreement Year 3				
TRB Annual Meeting*	TBD (Jan. 2025)	Washington, DC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations at USDOT sessions and workshops • Outreach materials at USDOT booth
TRB Conference on Advancing Transportation Equity	TBD	TBD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible presentation at poster, panel, or technical sessions
SXSW	TBD	TBD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible presentations at session and/or at booth • Outreach materials at the booth Conferences
American Public Transportation Association	TBD	TBD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible presentations at session • Possible ITS4US panel

* Mandatory conferences

Table 12. Anticipated Webinar Topics for Phases 2 & 3 (June 2022 – December 2025).

Webinar Topic	Expected Timeline	Relevant Task Areas
Year 1		
System Architecture/Design	Arch: Oct 19-26, 2022 Design: Nov 14-18, 2022	2-B: Systems Architecture 2-B: Systems Design
Software Development and Integration	TBD	2-E: Software Deployment and Integration
Year 2		
Operational Readiness	June 12-15, 2023	2-G: Operational Readiness Plan
Results of Readiness Test	Marc 15 – June 14, 2024	2-H: System Test Results Summary Documentation
Year 3		
Highlights of the Operational Capability Showcase (after the OCS)	TBD	3C: Operational Capability Showcase
Performance Measurement/Transition Plan	TBD	3-D: Performance Measurement 3-E: Comprehensive Transition Plan

Table 13. Potential Industry Journal Topics for Phases 2 & 3 (June 2022 – December 2025).

Article Topic	Timeline	Relevant Task Areas
Year 1		
Deployment Plan/Overview	TBD	Phase 1 Integrated Complete Trip Deployment Plan
System Architecture/Design	TBD	2-B: Systems Architecture 2-B: Systems Design
Software Development and Integration	TBD	2-E: Software Deployment and Integration
Year 2		
Operational Readiness	TBD	2-G: Operational Readiness Plan
Results of Readiness Test	TBD	2-H: System Test Results Summary Documentation
Site-Selected Special Topic #1	TBD	TBD
Year 3		
Highlights of the Operational Capability Showcase (after the OCS)	TBD	3C: Operational Capability Showcase
Performance Measurement/Transition Plan	TBD	3-D: Performance Measurement 3-E: Comprehensive Transition Plan
Site-Selected Special Topic #2	TBD	TBD

Table 14. Resource for Potential Industry Publication, Trade Magazine, and Journals for Phases 2 & 3 (June 2022 – December 2025).

Name	Primary Audience
Trade Publications	
Ability Magazine	Disability Community

Name	Primary Audience
IEEE Xplore	Emerging Technology
IEEE Intelligent Transportation Systems Magazine	ITS Industry
Mass Transit	Public Transportation Industry
Metro Magazine	Bus Industry
Passenger Transport	Public Transportation Industry
Thinking Highways	ITS Industry
Wireless Week	Wireless Community
Journals	
Transportation Research	Transportation researchers
Applied Ergonomics	Ergonomists and all those interested in applying ergonomics /human factors in the design, planning, and management of technical and social systems at work or leisure.
Association / Non-Profit Publications	
American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) Prism (journal)	Engineering students and recent graduates
AARP – The Magazine	Older Adults
CT Magazine	Transportation Officials and Planners
ITS International	ITS Industry
ITE Journal	ITE Members
National League of Cities – Cities Speak Blog	Elected Officials – Local Level
National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) E-Newsletter	City Transportation Officials

Name	Primary Audience
Planning	American Planning Association
Real Warriors eNews	Veterans
TransportationTV	AASHTO
General Media	
Forbes Technology	General Public / Technology
CityLab	General Public
Wired	General Public / Technology
Disability Community Specific	
Ability Magazine	People with Disabilities
ADD: American Association of Persons with Disabilities (AAPD)	People with Disabilities
Blinded Veterans Association News Blog	Veterans with Vision Loss
Brain Injury Association News Blog	People with brain injuries and caretakers
Easter Seals eNews	People with Disabilities
Hearing Health Magazine	Hearing Loss (Hearing Health Association)
United Spinal Association Newsletter & Pubs	People with Disabilities

5.4 Outreach Implementation Schedule (OIS)

The Outreach Implementation Schedule (OIS) documents the activities required to implement the Phase 2 Outreach Plan, see Table 15. The Outreach Manager will provide monthly updates to the OIS.

The OIS will be completed at a later date, per the project's schedule provided in the Project Management Plan, and included in the Outreach Plan once completed. The OIS will also be filled out monthly as part of the reporting process once the outreach activities start.

Table 15. Outreach Implementation Schedule.

Materials/Activity	Expected Date

6 Outreach Effectiveness

Evaluating the effectiveness of the Outreach Plan will include a combination of qualitative and quantitative assessment. The section below defines success, including the individual trip taking reductions, the reduction of car dependence, improving access, and finding a new cohort of customers.

The project team will continuously monitor and evaluate the progress of individual plan activities, and adjust the approach accordingly based on results. See below for the types of metrics used to track effectiveness. The project team will provide quarterly metric and analytics reports of key performance indicators and other metrics, with special focus on increases in awareness immediately following any outreach activities.

6.1 Success Criteria

The project team will use both qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach plan. The team will monitor results and outcomes from events, site visits, and community outreach qualitatively via feedback from USDOT and by looking at outcomes such as level and type of media coverage. The team will continually evaluate message points to determine what is resonating and working well with audiences, and what points may need adjustments within the communications toolkit. Quantitatively, the project team will monitor webpage traffic, social media engagement, and the number of email or phone inquiries about the project.

The team will also monitor traditional and digital/social media activity, by identifying key search terms and setting up Google Alerts, and by using the USDOT media monitoring software, which can be customized with key words related to the program.

These tools will provide analysis and reporting on traditional, online, and social media coverage of the program. A baseline media analysis will be conducted, followed by quarterly media monitoring reports, to evaluate how the program is being covered in the media. As the project progresses, the project team will run bi-monthly reports that will gauge the level of coverage, positive or negative sentiment, and types of themes topics covered. This analysis will provide guidance on how social media activity should be tweaked and lead to any revisions to the social media calendar, to how the press conferences are conducted, or to modifications to the press releases.

Updates on outreach effectiveness will be included in Monthly Progress Reports, including progress on marketing deliverables and results of strategies and activities as they are rolled out.

Below are some specific evaluation metrics that the team will use to evaluate achievement of communication objectives. As the project progresses, we will update the outreach plan with specific targets.

- Number of webpage views; unique and new visitors.

- Number of media mentions and media coverage.
- Number of followers/fans on social media channels.
- Amount of engagement on social media channels.
- Click-throughs from social media channels to webpage (increased referral traffic).
- Number of events and number of attendees at events.
- Feedback from the surveys sent out following the local community outreach events.

The team will track each evaluation metric from the beginning of Phase 2 or when the channel being measured has been deployed (i.e., webpage and social media accounts) and then on a monthly basis in a spreadsheet. The team will be looking for growth in these metrics, which can be an indicator that awareness about the project is expanding, especially in regard to increases in awareness immediately following any outreach activities.

Additional metrics include:

- Community sentiment toward the project.
- Perceived value to agency partners, including the ability to reach their goals, objectives, and users.
- Increased satisfaction of trip-making as evidenced in individual stories. Increased satisfaction may also include a reduction of dependency on private automobiles, or improved access to jobs/services.
- Increased numbers of individual riders trying the service.
- Number of user champions (engaged in testing and project development through agile process).

Qualitative metrics such as community sentiment, perceived value to agency partners, and user satisfaction will be tracked via surveys discussed in 5.2.7. Other tracking strategies include sentiment analysis of aggregated media coverage, social media mentions and comments, and other feedback received from users and stakeholders verbally and in writing.

6.2 Outreach Impact Assessment Planning

The project team will track stakeholder contacts and outreach activities including local meetings, presentations, and events, through a stakeholder relationship management (SRM) system. The SRM will be maintained by Technical and Outreach Staff. Tracking activities in the SRM will enable the project team to connect key performance indicators to specific outreach tactics and will ensure that messages reach all intended target audiences. Anticipated objects and fields to be tracked in the SRM are listed below:

- Contacts

- Name, title, organization, contact information
- Target audience(s): employer, service provider, government agency, subject matter expert, local media, national media
- Activities
 - Activity type
 - Participate in standing meetings
 - Onsite event
 - Media
 - Other
 - Key messages conveyed
 - Outcomes
 - Education
 - Recruitment of potential system users
 - User testimonial(s)
 - Other

Appendix A. Local Stakeholders

Table 16 lists local stakeholders and Table 17 list local media that could be contacted as part of this project.

Table 16. Local Service Providers, Employers, and Subject Matter Experts.

Organization	Goals / Motivations	Influence	Interest
Buffalo Center for Health Equity	Eliminate race, economic, and geographic-based health inequities in WNY by changing the social and economic conditions that cause illness and shorten lives among the sickest of the region.	Use policy analysis, research, evaluation, advocacy, community engagement and education, and program development and implementation to eliminate inequities.	High
Buffalo Hearing & Speech Center	Serves children and adults with speech, hearing, communication, and specialized education/learning needs.	Employees and visitors	High
Kaleida Health	Largest healthcare provider in WNY; member institution and property owner on the BNMC. Responsible for physical planning, programming, and development	Employees and visitors	High
Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center	Provides cancer research and treatment serving over 44,000 patients and 3,500 staff.	Employees and visitors	High
University at Buffalo Capital Planning	Representative on physical and transportation planning for UB	Employees, students, and visitors	High
VIA (formerly Olmsted Center for Sight)	Provides services to people with vision loss	Employees and visitors	High
AARP New York	AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that empowers people to choose how they live as they age.	Network	High
Age Friendly Erie County	Creates a vibrant, inclusive community for residents to grow up and grow old.	Service provider	High

Organization	Goals / Motivations	Influence	Interest
Allentown Association	Serves the Allentown community through beautification efforts, encouraging historic preservation and property maintenance, promoting appropriate business development, and fighting crime.	Block club / neighborhood association	High
Aspire of WNY	Works with over 4,000 adults and children with developmental disabilities to help them live as independently as possible.	Service provider	High
Center for Self-Advocacy	Helps people with intellectual and developmental disabilities work, advocate within their communities, and have an independent and productive lifestyle. Received 5310 grant for peer-to-peer travel training program.	Service provider. Peer to peer travel training program.	High
Deaf Action Center	Responds to the interests of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals by promoting communication access, awareness, and opportunities in the greater community.	Service provider	High
Erie County Senior Services	Advocate on behalf of the needs of older persons, coordinate planning activities and programs.	Service provider	High
Fruit Belt Coalition	Protect and improve the quality of life within the neighborhood and Medical Corridor.	Block club / neighborhood association	High
GObike Buffalo	Promotes active mobility options, trails and greenways, and complete streets	Advocacy & programs	High
Heart of the City/ Fruit Belt Community Land Trust	Affordable housing programming in surrounding neighborhoods	Service provider	High
LISC WNY	Involved in community planning in Masten District.	Planning	High
Masten Block Club Coalition	Strengthen and unify the efforts of individual block clubs located in the Masten District.	Block club / neighborhood association	High

Organization	Goals / Motivations	Influence	Interest
National Federation of the Blind, Buffalo Chapter	Through their network of blind members, the Federation coordinates many programs, services, and resources to defend the rights, provides information and support, and builds a community that creates opportunities for blind children and adults.	Network	High
People Centered Services	Care Coordinators link and refer to a huge network of resources, making sure people are connected to the support they need.	Service provider	High
People Inc.	Provides services to those with special needs, their families, and seniors.	Service provider	High
University at Buffalo Marketing	Distributes communications to employees, students, and visitors	Employees, students, and visitors	High
WNY Independent Living, Inc.	Improves the lives of individuals with disabilities in WNY through the Independent Living philosophy of consumer choice	Service provider	High

Table 17. Local Media Stakeholders

#	Organization	Goals / Motivations	Influence	Interest
E1	Afro American Criterion	The oldest Black owned weekly newspaper in Western New York	News outlet	Low
E5	Buffalo News	Digital and print local newspaper. Caitlin focuses on smart city reporting	Region's primary newspaper	Low
E8	Channel 2: WGRZ - (NBC) - Buffalo, 2 On Your Side.	Broadcasts nightly local news via television.	News outlet	Low
E9	Channel 4: WIVB-TV - (CBS) - Buffalo, News 4	Broadcasts nightly local news via television.	News outlet	Low
E10	Channel 7ABC WKBW	Broadcasts nightly local news via television.	News outlet	Low
E41	Panorama Hispano News	Largest publisher of free monthly community newspapers and online news to Hispanic markets in WNY and Erie PA.	News outlet	Low
E44	Spectrum News	Provides the Buffalo metropolitan and Western New York area with 24-hour local news, politics, features, and weather seven days a week.	News outlet	Low
E45	The Challenger Community News	Print and digital news with focus on the local African American community.	News outlet	Low
E49	WBFO	Local public radio station.	News outlet	Low

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