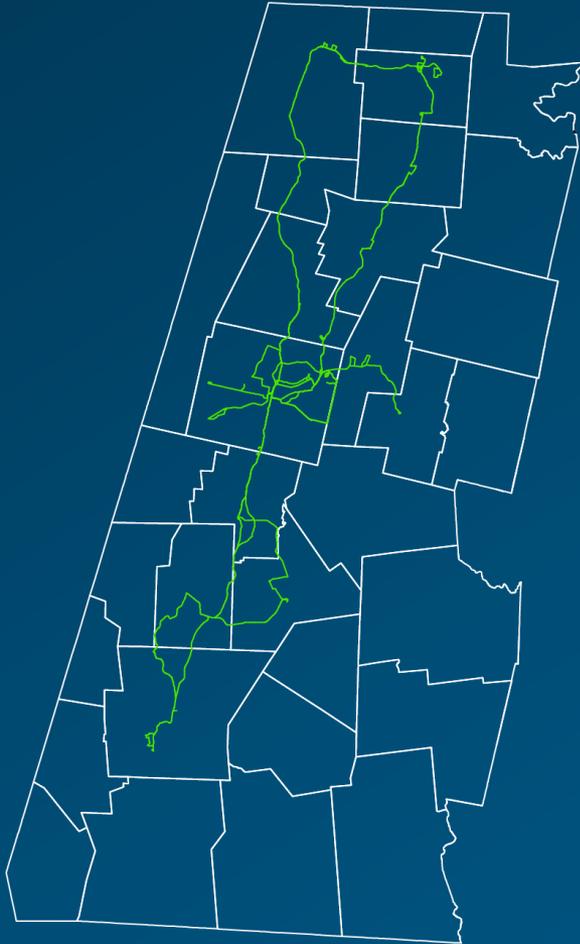




# Berkshire Regional Transit Authority



## BRTA Shared Ride Access to Work Study

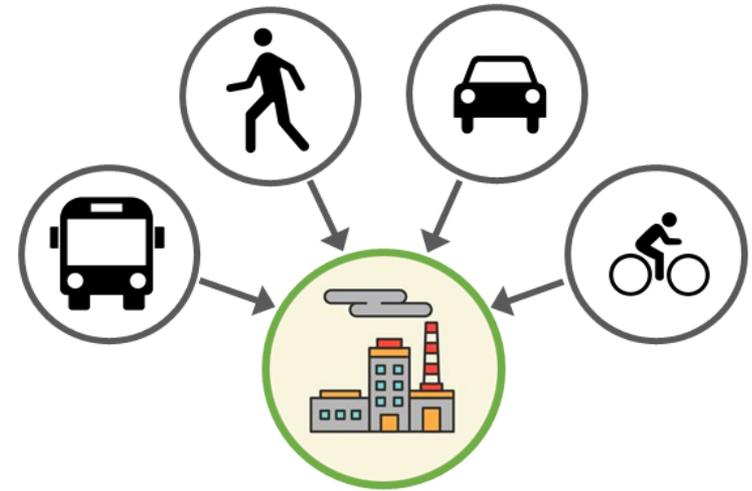


November 2017



## Access to transportation for low wage workers is needed for economic and workforce development

- Employers have identified a difficulty filling jobs locally
- Workers in Berkshire County communities without access to a car can't easily get to jobs in Berkshire County
- Fixed route bus service does not meet the needs of:
  - Second or third shift workers
  - Those that work on Sunday
  - Those whose homes or jobs may be more than a mile from a fixed route.



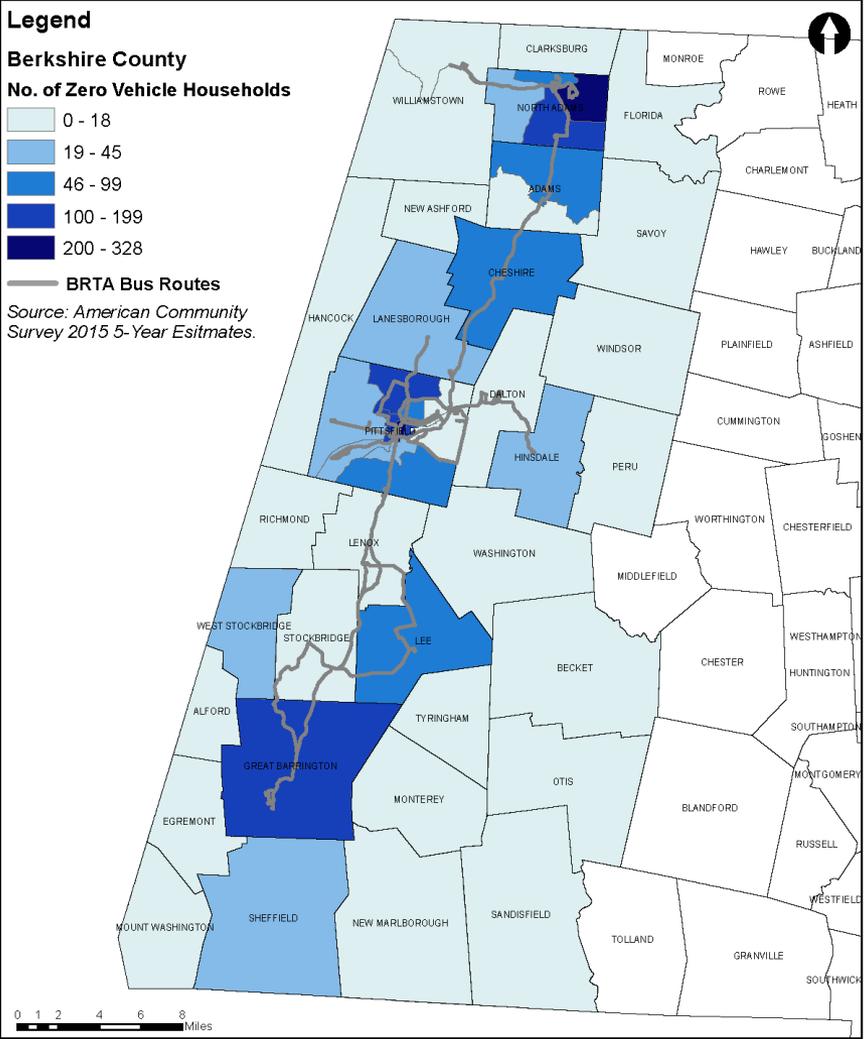


- Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) met with the Legislative Delegation in January 2017 to discuss the concept of assembling a network of transportation providers already operating in Berkshire County that could be contracted to perform shared-ride, work-related transportation.
- BRTA received a MassDOT grant in July 2017 to conduct this study.



- Examine the current unmet employment transportation need
- Identify employment centers
- Develop a service concept for a shared-ride employment network that makes use of existing transportation assets and service providers.

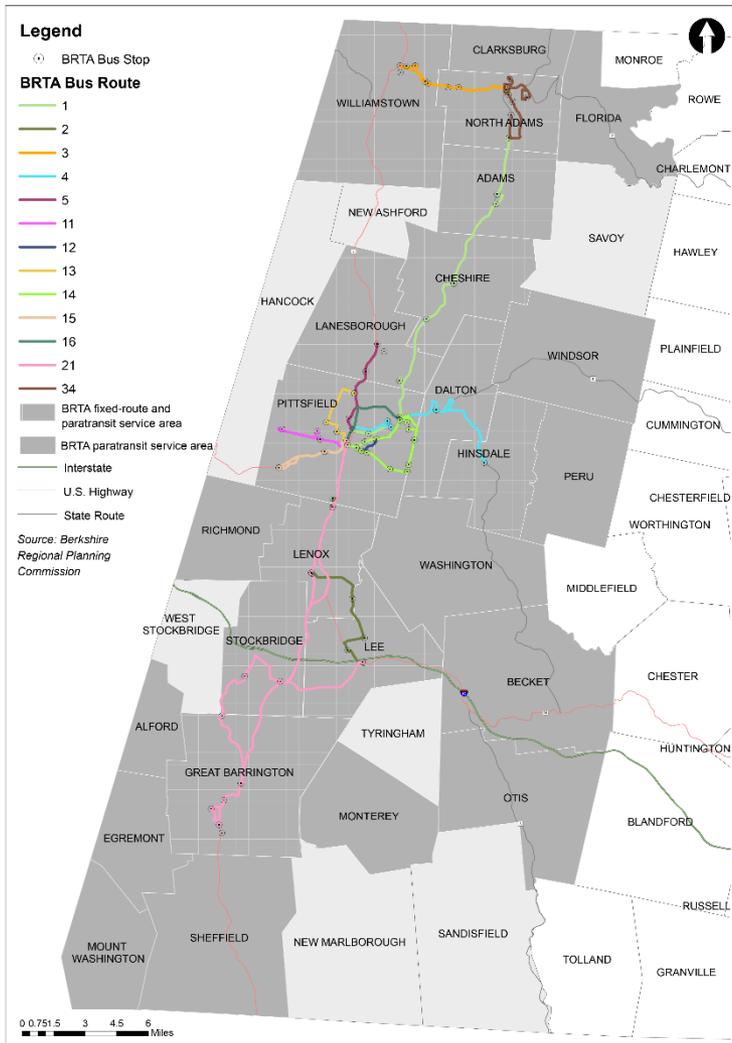
# Many Households Don't Have a Car



The highest numbers of households without a car are located in:

- North Adams
- Pittsfield
- Great Barrington

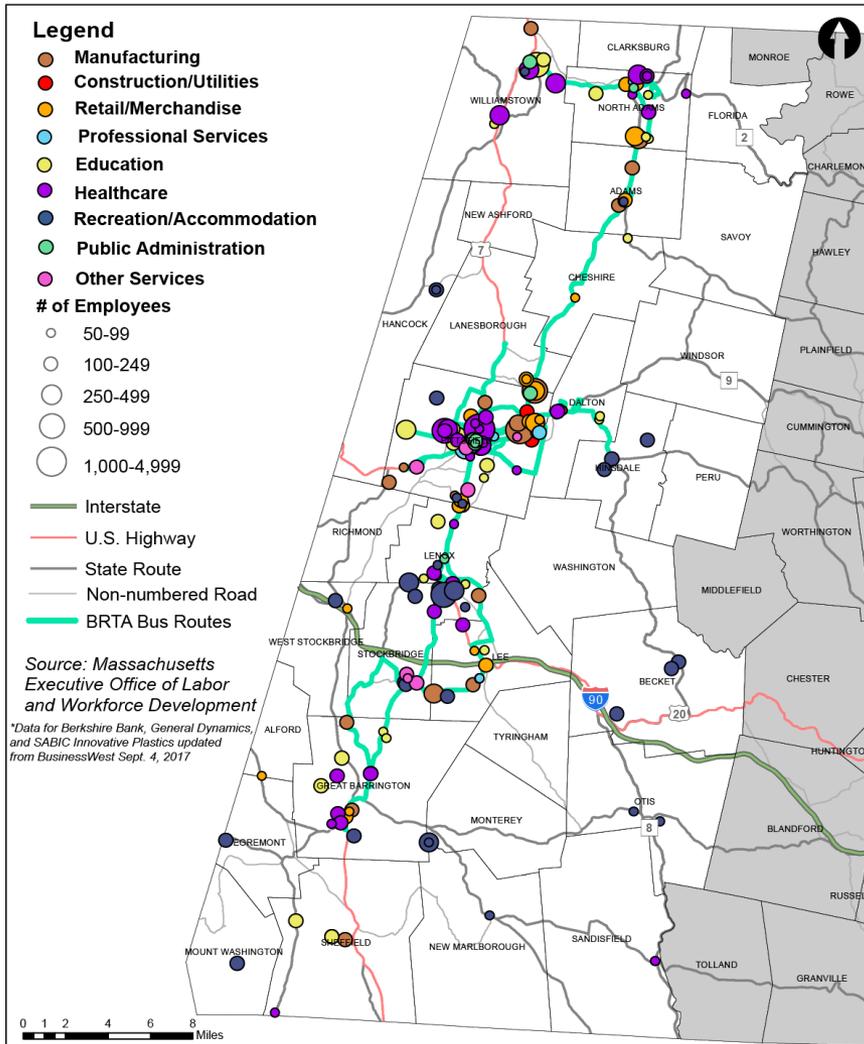
# Public Transit Challenges in Berkshire County



- Large area that is sparsely developed.
- Long distances between communities.
- Shortage of operating funds means:
  - Buses don't run frequently
  - No evening service
  - No Sunday service



# Employment Centers and Sectors

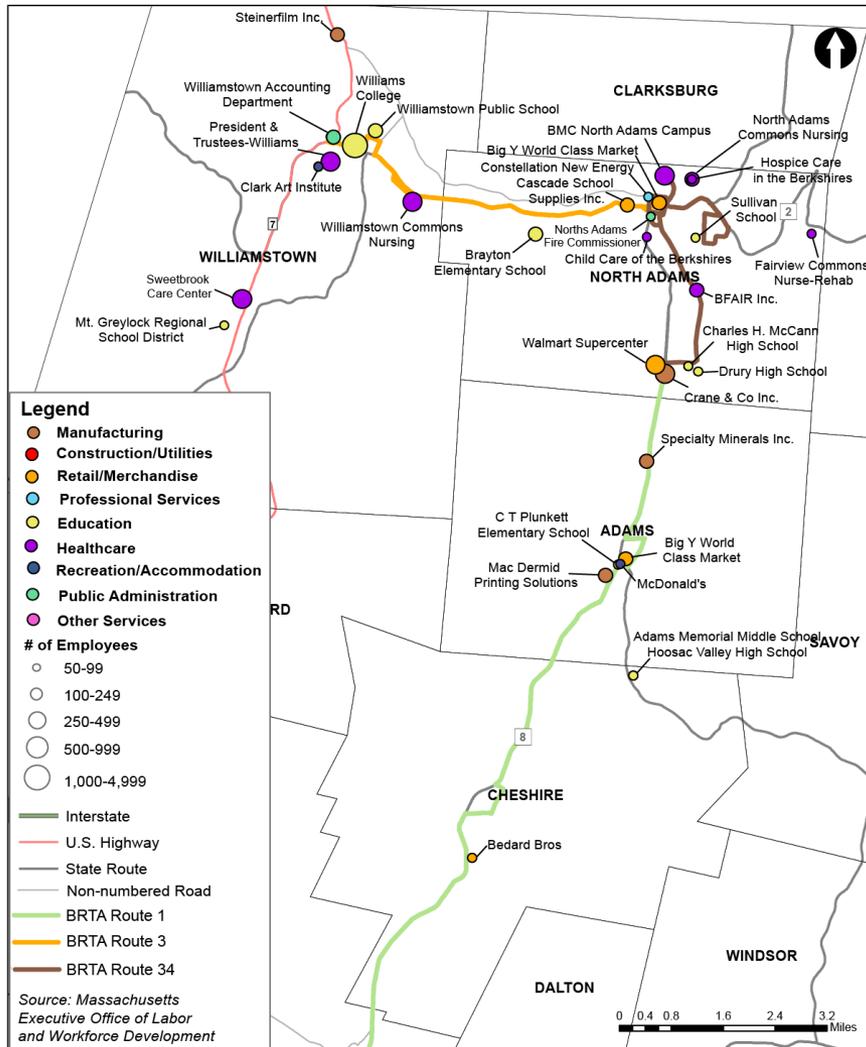


The largest number of jobs in Berkshire County are in:

- Health Care/Social Service
- Retail Trade
- Educational Services
- Accommodations/Food Service
- Manufacturing

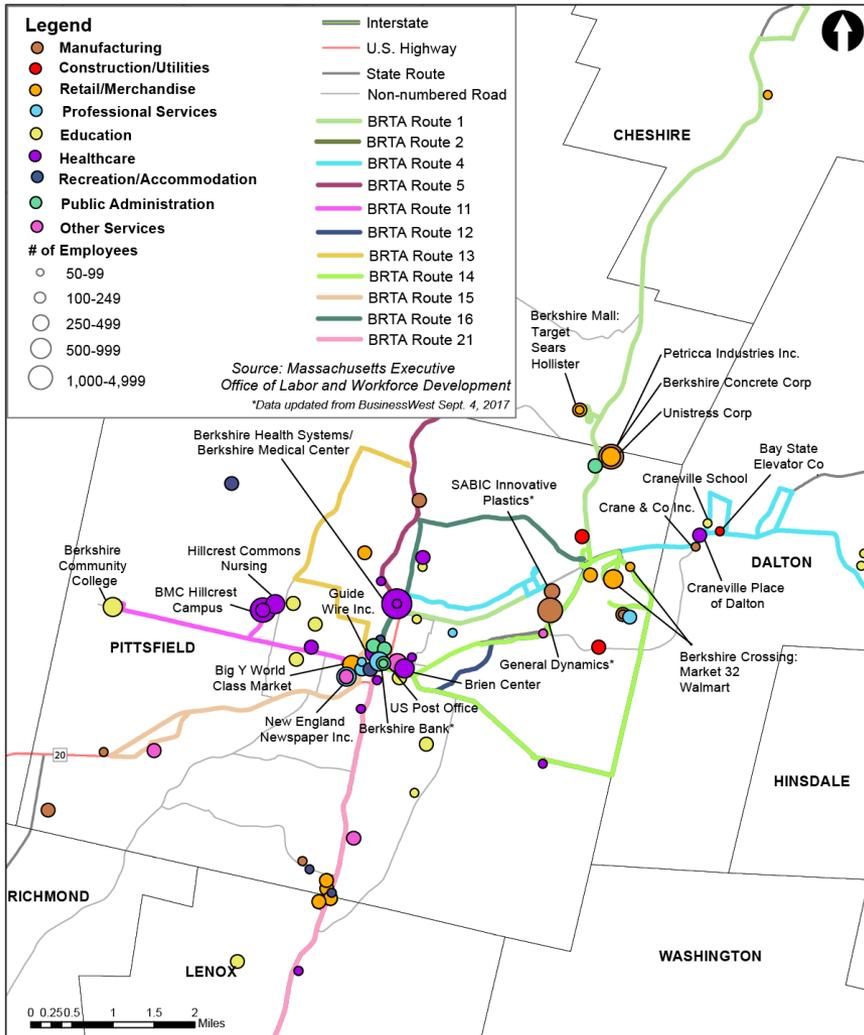
All have multiple shifts or work hours that extend beyond the hours of bus service.

# Top Employers –North Adams, Adams, Williamstown



- Williams College is the largest employer
- Health care provides a large number of jobs:
  - Williamstown Commons Nursing
  - Sweetbrook Care Center
  - BMC- North Adams Campus
- Walmart is the largest retail employer
- Crane & Co. is the largest manufacturing employer

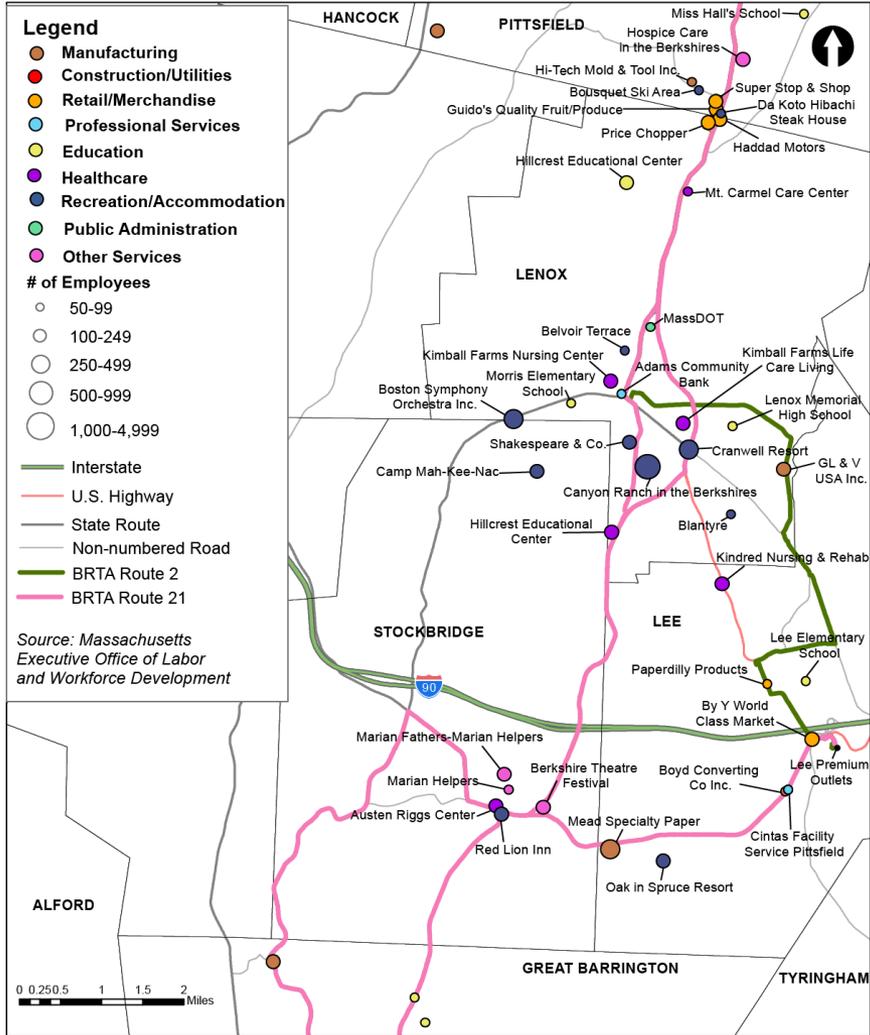
# Top Employers – Pittsfield, Dalton



## The largest employers and most jobs are in Pittsfield

- Health care employs the most people:
  - Berkshire Medical Center
  - Berkshire Health Systems
  - BMC – Hillcrest Campus
- Manufacturing is important
  - General Dynamics
  - Petricca Industries/ Unistress
- Top retail employers
  - Big Y
  - Walmart
  - Market 32

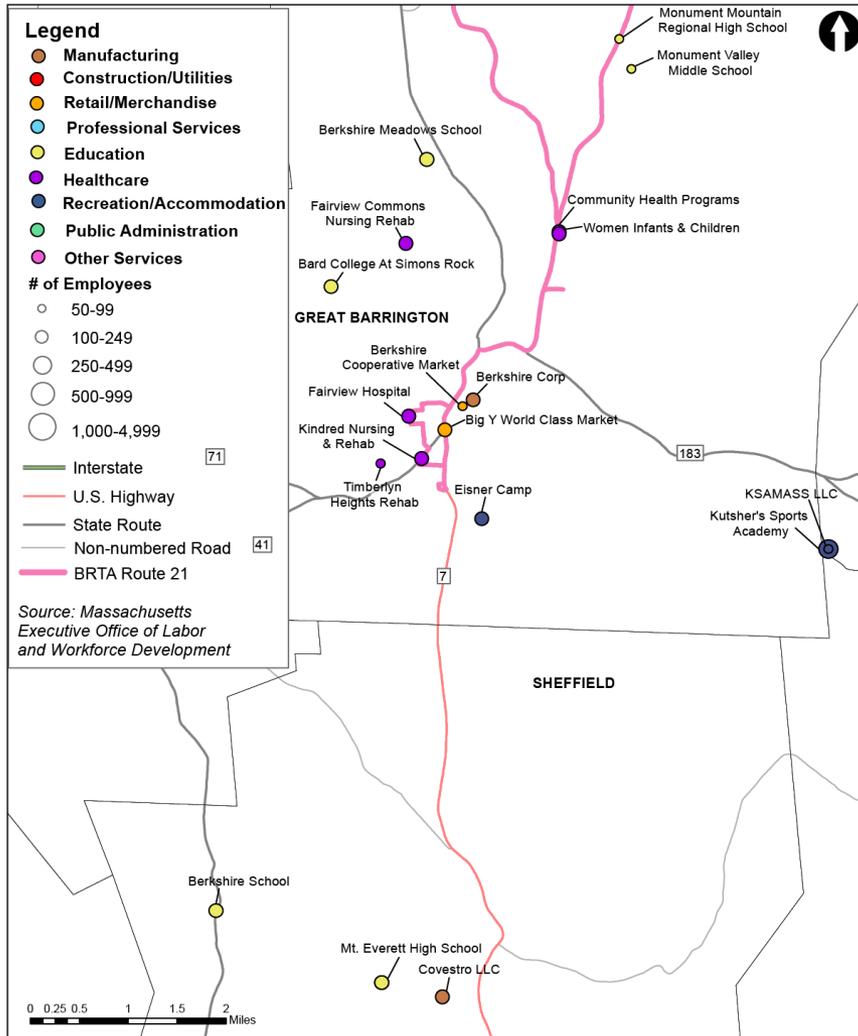
# Top Employers –Lenox, Lee, Stockbridge



The Accommodations/Food Service Sector employs the most people

- Canyon Ranch is the largest employer
- Mead Specialty Papers is the largest employer in the Manufacturing Sector
- Lee Premium Outlets and Big Y provide the most retail jobs.

# Top Employers – Great Barrington & Sheffield



Health Care and Education are the predominant employment sectors

- Health Care
  - Fairview Hospital
  - Fairview Commons
  - Kindred Nursing & Rehab
  - Community Health Programs
- Education
  - Bard College
  - Berkshire Meadows School
  - Berkshire Community College
- Covestro is the largest manufacturer



- **Short-term** – Implement a pilot program for shared ride service on evenings and Sundays using existing BRTA paratransit vehicles and human services transportation providers.
- **Longer –Term** – Develop a partnership with employers and institutions to establish a Transportation Management Association (TMA) to manage a range of mobility services.



## Purpose: Provide transportation to and from work when the fixed route buses are not running

- The service would operate in the evenings and on weekends:
  - Monday through Saturday from 6PM to Midnight
  - Sunday - to be determined based on public comment
- Service would be available to the general public.
- Rides would be shared with other passengers using:
  - Existing, available paratransit vehicles (the purple buses) operated by BRTA
  - Vehicles provided by existing human service transportation providers.
- Service would be provided to and from locations in communities that are within the BRTA fixed route and paratransit service areas.
- Interim stops would not be allowed
- Riders looking to use the service would need to call in to BRTA by 5 PM the day before the ride to arrange for the service. This could also potentially be done on line in the future.
- Fares would be based on number of towns travelled through.
  - A base fare for travel within one town
  - Each additional town of travel would require an additional fee
  - Fares to be determined.
- Service would be a pilot program to start. BRTA is looking for private partners such as businesses to share costs for the service.

# What is a TMA?



A membership-based, public-private partnership of businesses, institutions and municipalities that join together to provide transportation alternatives to driving alone in cars to work.

Services can include:

- Employment shuttles
- Shuttle connections to transit stops
- Ride-matching
- Van pooling
- Emergency/Guaranteed Ride Home
- Commuter Benefits Program from employers
  - Allows employees to set aside money on a pre-tax basis to pay for qualified work-related transportation expenses for transit, van pools etc. Employers can provide a match up to a specified limit.





## Please Contact:

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or

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[www.berkshirerta.com](http://www.berkshirerta.com)