



NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2005

Where Do You Want To Go?

People in southwestern Butler County are on the move, balancing daily activities with very busy lives. We have heard from over 800 people concerning their views on transit service that could provide more options for getting around. The Study Team gathered input from private citizens, local businesses, churches, schools and colleges, municipal governments, area transit agencies and the users of park-n-ride facilities at Warrendale and Blade Runners.



You told us that your communities' future vision includes becoming less auto-oriented and more transit friendly. A transit system could support work, shopping and social, recreational, and personal trips, with service for the local area as well as the region. Based on your comments, the Study's Steering Committee feels it is important for transit system improvements to be designed and phased in financially viable ways.

"We have developed a preliminary transit service plan with input from the public and even with the rapid growth in southwestern Butler County, we are recommending a two year demonstration program. Due to the uncertainty of transit funding, implementation of these services will depend on your input to decision makers. Upon implementation, its success will be dependent on the number of people who use the system and intergovernmental and agency

cooperation," said John Paul, Executive Director for the Butler Township-City Joint Municipal Transit Authority.

The Port Authority of Allegheny County supports expanded public transportation services for the Cranberry area. "We will continue to work with Butler County officials as they develop and implement transit service between one of the fastest growing residential areas in the region and jobs and services in downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland," said Paul Skoutelas, Chief Executive Officer, Port Authority of Allegheny County.

"The Cranberry Area Transit Study demonstrates SPC's commitment to public transportation in our region," said Jim Hassinger, Executive Director of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. "Advancing projects such as this illustrates how regional planning makes progress possible."

This is just the first step and we need your continued support to make this plan a reality. Please let us know what you think. We want to hear from you!

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Visit our website where you will find up-to-date information about the study...

www.spcregion.org/CATS

or call Carol Uminski at (412) 391-5590, ext. 363 for more information.

We Have A Plan

We've learned there is definite interest in transit service in southwestern Butler County – so where do we go from here? The Study Steering Committee, including representatives from Butler County, Cranberry Township, Butler Township-City Joint Municipal Transit Agency, Port Authority of Allegheny County and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, endorses a two stage implementation plan including a demonstration program to test the service concept which, if successful, would be followed by a long term plan for continued service.



Implementation of a transit service program in the Cranberry area should be done cautiously and incrementally due to the uncertainty of key factors for success, such as the number of people who will actually use the service and state subsidies for existing transit systems. With these considerations in mind, the Steering Committee recommends a two year demonstration program as a starting point.

The demonstration program will offer commuter service between southern Butler County and the cities of Butler and Pittsburgh, and local circulator service around Cranberry. It will also provide an opportunity for transit riders to travel from Zelienople / Harmony, Evans City, Mars and Warrendale to a transit center located in Cranberry, where they can transfer to either the commuter or local service.

There are several steps that must be taken before this demonstration program can begin:

- A local program authority, most likely the Butler Township-City Joint Municipal Transit Agency, a.k.a. **The Bus**, must be identified to manage the two year demonstration program.
- A minimum of 400 new park-n-ride facility spaces must be located.

The annual operating cost for the demonstration program is expected to be \$1.3 million to support annual ridership, which is estimated to be 350,000 to 400,000 trips. The sources of funding will primarily be the State of Pennsylvania, local governments, and rider fares. After the above steps have been completed, a grant request will be made to the state to secure the funds. The recommended time for starting service is spring 2006.

Cranberry Transit Demonstration Program

Current plans for the demonstration program include the transit concepts shown below. The Transit Center mentioned would be centrally located with easy access during the demonstration program, after which a new structure convenient to the Cranberry Township Municipal Building will be considered.

Service Concept	Description	Areas Served
Pittsburgh Express Commuter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service every 30 minutes during rush hour on weekdays • Service every two hours during non-rush hour times and on Saturdays • Via coach buses 	US Route 19, I-79/I-279, Downtown, Transit Center
Zelienople / Harmony / Evans City / Mars Regional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service every 60 minutes Monday through Saturday from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM • Via mini-buses or vans 	US Route 19, Zelienople, Harmony, Transit Center, PA Route 528 Park-n-Ride, PA Route 228, Mars-Evans City Road, Transit Center
Cranberry North-South Local Circulator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service every 60 minutes Monday through Saturday from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM • Via mini-buses or vans 	Rochester Road, Powell Road, Freedom Road, Commonwealth Drive, Transit Center
Butler Express Commuter (Optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service would include two trips in the AM and two trips in the PM on weekdays • Via coach buses 	PA Route 68, PA Route 528, US Route 19, Warrendale Park-n-Ride, I-79/I-279, Butler, Downtown, Transit Center

We Want To Help You Get Where You're Going

Please tell us what you think about this demonstration program for transit service. Does it meet your needs?

Visit our website at www.spcregion.org/CATS for more details and let us know what you think.



Where Do We Go From Here?

We need your support in order to make public transportation a viable service for southwestern Butler County. Future plans for transit service will be dependent on the outcome of the proposed two year demonstration program, measured in terms of how many people will use the service and if funding can be sustained. If successful, expansion of the demonstration program would occur incrementally to local circulator service and study area and regional connections.

Consider the possibilities of a successful public transportation program:

- Support for the Cranberry community's vision of a new town center.
- Job creation through the construction and on-going operations of a transit hub as part of the Cranberry town center, as well as a light maintenance facility.
- Improved transit service to work within the region through expansion to six park-n-ride facilities within the Cranberry area.
- Ease of access to shopping, medical visits and recreational opportunities for senior citizens and others who do not drive.
- A community that is more transit- friendly – consistent with your future vision.

Help Make It Happen!

Thank You

The Project Team would like to thank the residents, businesses and community groups who provided ideas and comments to guide this study. We would also like to thank the Study Steering Committee and Regional Stakeholders for their time and commitment to this important project. Their support of the study has led to the current recommendation and will be invaluable towards advancing a public transportation system in southwestern Butler County in the future.

The Study Steering Committee includes Cranberry Township, co-chair; Butler County, co-chair; Butler Township-City Joint Municipal Transit Agency; Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; and PennDOT.

The Regional Stakeholders include the Federal Transit Administration; Port Authority of Allegheny County; Beaver County Transit Authority; New Castle Area Transit Authority; Butler Area Rural Transportation; Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board; and study area municipalities, businesses and private citizens.

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