



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2004

Let Someone Else Do the Driving

The kids need to be picked up after school and taken to the Cranberry Mall. It's Friday afternoon and you're sitting in traffic on Route 19 waiting to turn left. Sound familiar? We all spend a good deal of our time traveling from home to school, work, shopping, recreation and entertainment activities. With the price of gasoline hovering at \$2.00 per gallon, automobile travel has become more expensive than ever.

Or perhaps you're the human resources manager for one of the major hotels in the Cranberry area. The business meetings, weddings and special events are being booked. Your challenge is to find enough workers to fill the vacant jobs.



Would access to reliable transit service make your life a little easier? That's the question being asked of residents, business owners and employers in and around the Cranberry area. Representatives from Cranberry Township, Butler County, Butler Township City Joint Municipal Transit Agency, and Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) are asking you to identify the need for public transportation improvements in Cranberry Township and surrounding communities.

In this Issue...

- What's On Your Mind?.....p. 2
- A Few Things You Told Us....p. 2
- Transit Choices.....p. 3
- Public Meeting
Announcement.....p. 4
- Frequently Asked
Questions.....p. 4

"Residential and employment growth during the last ten years has led to additional congestion on major roads throughout our community," says John Milius, Township Supervisor for Cranberry Township and Co-Chair of the study's Steering Committee. "We are doing our best to manage the traffic and are asking our citizens to tell us what they think about public transportation as a viable alternative - if they need it and what areas it should serve."

Please join us in the Cranberry Area Transit Study. We want to hear from you!

Study Schedule

Needs Assessment	Feb – Mar 2004
Comprehensive List of Alternatives	April – May 2004
Screen Alternatives/Concept Plans	June – Aug 2004
Locally Preferred Alternative/Implementation Plan	Sept – Nov 2004

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

www.spcregion/CATS

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



What's On Your Mind?

The public will guide this study. Gathering input from the general public, area businesses, public facilities and elected officials is essential in order to identify, analyze and recommend public transportation improvements for Cranberry and the surrounding area.

The first phase of community involvement focused on getting the word out on the study, providing information to the public about alternative transit options, and gathering ideas and input about transportation and community needs. The general public and public officials were invited to participate in a community open house at the Cranberry Township Municipal Building in March 2004 that provided a venue to talk one-on-one with the study staff.



Additionally, the study team engaged in an extensive public outreach program and met with over 30 community groups representing different aspects of the area, including:

Private Citizens - Homeowners' Associations, Senior Citizens

Business Interests - Major Employers, Chambers of Commerce

Public Facilities - Area Churches, Schools and Colleges

Government/Agencies - Township and Borough Managers, Area Transit Agencies

We also surveyed 200 users of park-n-ride facilities located at Warrendale and Blade Runners to gather their thoughts on public transportation needs for southern Butler County.

Here Are a Few Things You Told Us

Over 500 people provided ideas and suggestions during this first round of public involvement and the following is a summary of what you told us about transportation improvement needs. These comments provide valuable input into the needs analysis for the study and are being used to help develop a broad range of preliminary transit service ideas for Cranberry and the surrounding area. You are invited to view and discuss these transit ideas with the study team at a second community open house on June 22. (See the back cover of this newsletter for details.)

Transit is important to:

- Make it easier for people to commute to and from jobs in Cranberry, downtown Pittsburgh and other areas.
- Help those who do not drive – seniors and young people, for example – have better access to shopping, entertainment and schools.
- Attract workers to employment opportunities in the Cranberry area, particularly in entry level jobs.

People want transit service to take them:

- Locally around Cranberry along Route 228, Freedom Road, Rochester Road and Rowan Road; and, to the Cranberry Municipal Building, the proposed Cranberry Town Center, Cranberry Woods and Thorn Hill Industrial Park.
- To work in downtown Pittsburgh from southern Butler County; and, to jobs in Cranberry from Beaver County and Butler County.
- Around the region including Butler, Beaver and Allegheny Counties.

Possibilities for major transit stops and transfer locations include the Cranberry Mall and Cranberry Township Municipal Building.




There are different types of vehicles a transit service might use. The public mentioned large and small buses, taxis and paratransit (door-to-door and on demand service). Seniors identified the need for low floor buses to provide easy access.

And, no matter what type of vehicle is used or where public transportation takes you, we all want features like convenience, reliability, comfort and ample parking.

Transit Choices

Perspectives from citizens, employers and public officials have helped identify the needs for transportation system improvements in Cranberry, which will in turn determine the form that transit service takes. There are a variety of factors to consider, including what areas and routes transit will serve; what types of vehicles will be used; and where major stops and transit points may be located.

The table below provides a menu of transit options for consideration:

Mode	Examples	Characteristics	Issues
Commuting or Regional Access	<p>Light Rail Bus Rapid Transit Enhanced Bus</p> 	<p>Used primarily as express service for commuting to work</p> <p>Operates mostly at rush hour</p> <p>Travels the greatest distances at the fastest speeds compared to other types of services</p> <p>Vehicles are large and comfortable with a large passenger capacity</p>	<p>This system may require a dedicated roadway or guideway</p> <p>Stops are limited to achieve express service</p> <p>This system may be expensive to operate</p>
Local/Circulator	<p>Street Car Local Fixed Route</p> 	<p>This service expands coverage to neighborhoods on a fixed route</p> <p>It operates more frequently and continually during the day</p> <p>It may serve as a connection between the neighborhood and the transit station where commuting or broader geographical access is provided</p>	<p>More frequent stops improve local access, but result in slower trips</p>
Neighborhood	<p>Taxi Small Transit Vehicle Van</p> 	<p>Individual service offered as door-to-door or on-demand in smaller vehicles</p> <p>It primarily serves specific clientele including senior citizens and persons with disabilities</p> <p>There are lower user costs because of federal and state support</p>	<p>It may be expensive to operate due to the personal nature of the service</p>

Here are some things to consider when thinking about transit...

Using public transportation saves you money – It costs over \$70.00 more per month compared to a year ago to commute between Cranberry and Pittsburgh because of gas prices and parking increases.

If you are a two car household with three or more drivers in the family, transit may provide a cost-effective alternative to buying additional automobiles.



Your Suggestions are Important...

Based on what you told us, we sketched some preliminary transit service ideas. Did we get it right? Let us know!

Community Open House
Tuesday, June 22, 2004

11:30 AM - 2:00 PM
4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Cranberry Township
Municipal Building

2525 Rochester Road
Cranberry Township, PA

Drop by anytime during the meeting hours. The Cranberry Township Municipal Building is accessible to persons with disabilities. For further information, please contact Carol Uminski at (412) 391-5590, ext. 363.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will the kind of services provided be determined?

Community input will guide this study and will be sought at each step of the process including needs identification and evaluation of options for transportation system improvements for Cranberry Township and surrounding communities. The range of alternatives will be evaluated using many factors including how many people will use it, revenues, costs, compatibility with community development plans as well as community input. We will ask the community which alternatives they prefer and work with the community on a plan.

How will transit be funded?

One of the study tasks will be to determine how much the service will cost and how it will be funded. Some of the funding will come from fare box revenues or funding for senior riders from the Pennsylvania Lottery. Other traditional funding sources include federal and state transportation agency capital and operating grants, and support from county and municipal governments. Partnerships with private sources and non-transportation related government agencies are also possible.

**Find the answers to other frequently asked questions when you visit the study website,
www.spcregion.org/CATS**