

Questions/Answers/Comments from the Transit Options Forum

Question 1): As part of an effort to increase CAT ridership, is it possible to create or build bus shelters at the designated stops to shelter riders from the weather and to pronounce the bus stop? Many of the bus stops are truly sad and seem to be an afterthought.

Answer 1): Capital Area Transit is currently conducting a Transit Development Plan for the first time in more than 20 years. One of the elements of the plan will be to examine the locations and amenities at bus stops throughout the system. The amenities provided have to be prioritized based upon rider volume at the stops and availability of capital funding.

Question 2): Where and when do you see an expansion of Route 81?

Answer 2): PennDOT conducted a widening study of the I-81 corridor from the Maryland line to the I-78 split in 2005. The study was recently updated in 2018 and estimated the costs of widening the entire corridor to 3 lanes at nearly \$3 billion. The Harrisburg Area Transportation Study (HATS) initiated a study in 2019 aimed at identifying priority improvement locations along the corridor and developing associated cost estimates. Proposed projects coming from that study will need to be integrated in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) when funding is available.

Question 3): How is the vanpool formed? How is a driver designated and what happens when no one wants (or can't) drive? Is there a financial incentive provided to employer to provide to the employees?

Answer 3): To identify potential riders for a vanpool, an analysis of where employees live (either by zip code or town) is completed by us. Once this "heat map" is completed, we can identify which employees we'd like to invite to a "formation meeting" to find the interest and explain the benefits.

A person has to volunteer to be the driver in a vanpool. A vanpool is dependent upon a volunteer driver being available. There are federal tax benefits available to the employer and

Question 4): I urge all panelists to partner with people in the disability community to incorporate accessible options. There are groups for people with disabilities outside of the 9-3 M-F timeframe of the current paratransit model. An expansion of services for evenings and weekends is needed.

Answer 4): Thank you for this question. The hours of service that paratransit is provided is based upon the level of funding in CAT's budget that it can afford to provide. We understand that there is a need and desire for expanded service. I urge you to get involved in the CAT Service Development Plan to provide input into the future service.

Question 5): Increase transportation opportunities for people with disabilities. In Cumberland County, there are two options:

- Share-a-ride – only can have a ride between 9-3; and
- Center for Independent Living of Central PA – they provide accessible transportation 7 days and pretty much at all times. Contact this organization as their services are underutilized.

Answer 5): Thank you for this question. The hours of service that paratransit is provided is based upon the level of funding in CAT's budget that it can afford to provide. We understand that there is a need

and desire for expanded service. I urge you to get involved in the CAT Service Development Plan to provide input into the future service.

Question 6): What advice do you have for community/borough residents who have concerns about tractor trailers using narrow residential streets as a shortcut between state roads and routes? These same residential streets are also used as “speedways” from one intersection to the next intersection. What can residents do to lobby for more stop signs or other traffic calming strategies?

Answer 6): If the streets are Borough or locally owned streets, residents will need to work with the Borough or local municipality on those concerns. If they are state roads, then residents need work with PennDOT District 8-0.

Question 7): Just 2 comments:

- Many warehouses start at 6 a.m. or 6:30 a.m. (1st shift) A move to more busses getting to warehouses before that start time would help.
- I believe a full-time person hired to connect businesses to CAT would be a wise hire. My clients spend about \$600/yr to ride CAT busses. If this hire raised ridership by 100 riders it could be enough to pay their salary.

Answer 7): We understand that there is a need and desire for expanded service. I urge you to get involved in the CAT Service Development Plan to provide input into the future service. Your comments will be forwarded to the team working on it.

Question 8): Congestion and pollution as possible impediments to economic development - quality of life ↓ = ↓investment; new tech and automated mobility options for trucking and commuting cannot be achieved without 5G (tech investments).

- Is PENNDOT or PA investing in this area?
- Consider targeted PILOT Programs across “hot spots” in PA, preferably CAEDC, CREAC, Lebanon, Lancaster.
- Is Statewide plan being developed?

Answer 8): PennDOT receives federal funds called Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds. Those funds are allocated to areas of the state that have poor air quality per federal standards. They are prioritized locally for projects that have a demonstrable, measurable positive impact on air quality. There is a statewide transportation plan (see the PennDOT website for more details on that plan).