



SOUTH CENTRAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

APPENDIX C: PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

MAY 2018



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	2
	Public Involvement Activities.....	2
2	ROUND 1 PUBLIC MEETINGS.....	3
	Summary of Input on Transit Priorities	3
	Summary of Written Comments Received.....	5
3	STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS.....	10
	Introduction	10
	Stakeholders	10
	Interview Questions.....	12
	Overall Themes.....	13
	Stakeholder Interview Responses	16
4	AGENCY WORKSHOPS.....	23
	Participants	23
	Workshop Questions	24
	Overall Themes.....	24
	Summary of Agency Workshop Discussions	25
5	ROUND 2 PUBLIC MEETINGS.....	31
	Berks County - Summary of Comments Received	32
	Lancaster County - Summary of Comments Received.....	33
6	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.....	36

1 INTRODUCTION

The South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) is developing a Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the fixed-route bus and paratransit services in Berks and Lancaster Counties. The TDP will serve as a guide for meeting future demands for transit services and increasing the overall use of public transit. As part of this effort, two rounds of public outreach were conducted. A first round of public outreach was conducted during Fall 2017 to share information about the study and solicit feedback from stakeholders, current riders, and the general public. After the development of draft recommendations, a second round of public meetings was held in April 2017 to receive feedback and ultimately inform the final recommendations.

Public Involvement Activities

- **Public Meetings:** Each round of public meetings included two meetings, one in Reading and one in Lancaster. Both meetings included a presentation about the study and several maps and interactive exercises for attendees to share their feedback. SCTA and consultant team staff were available to speak one-on-one with attendees and hear comments.
- **Stakeholder Interviews:** Individual and group interviews were held with several community stakeholders in both Berks County and Lancaster County. These interviews were conducted by members of the consultant team, and allowed stakeholders to shed light on some of the major issues and opportunities facing transit in SCTA's service area.
- **Agency Workshops:** The team also facilitated focus group-style workshops with representatives from human service agencies to learn more about the transportation needs of their clients and how existing paratransit services (BARTA Special Services in Berks County and Red Rose Special Services in Lancaster County) are performing. Two workshops were held, one in Reading and one in Lancaster.

2 ROUND 1 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Two public meetings were held to gain input regarding transit service in Berks County and Lancaster County for the SCTA Transit Development Plan. The first meeting, focusing on Berks County and BARTA, was held at the BARTA Transportation Center (BTC) on Monday, November 13, 2017. The second meeting, focusing on Lancaster County and RRTA, was held at the Park City Mall – Community Room on Thursday, November 16, 2017. Both meetings were held from 4:00pm to 7:00pm and followed an open house format. Meeting attendees were given an opportunity to review presentation boards and provide input on existing and future SCTA services. Additionally, an overview presentation of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) project was provided several times during the open house period. Public comment forms were collected at each meeting and accepted for a two-week period after the meetings. Publicity for the meetings included a press release, letters and flyers sent to SCTA partners, and flyers posted on BARTA and RRTA buses (in both English and Spanish).



Participation

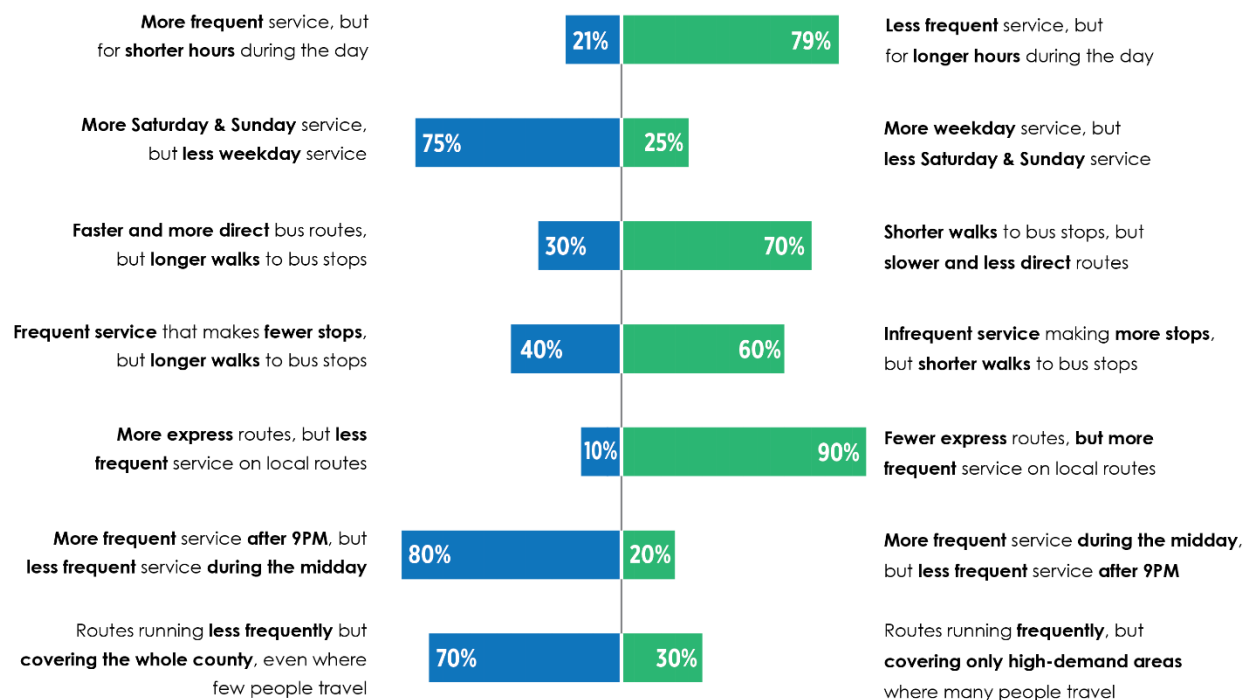
Participation Format	Berks County	Lancaster County
Attendees	24	23
Comment Forms/ Letters	18	13
Written comments on existing service maps	25	17
Transit priority dot votes (average per question)	11	12

Summary of Input on Transit Priorities

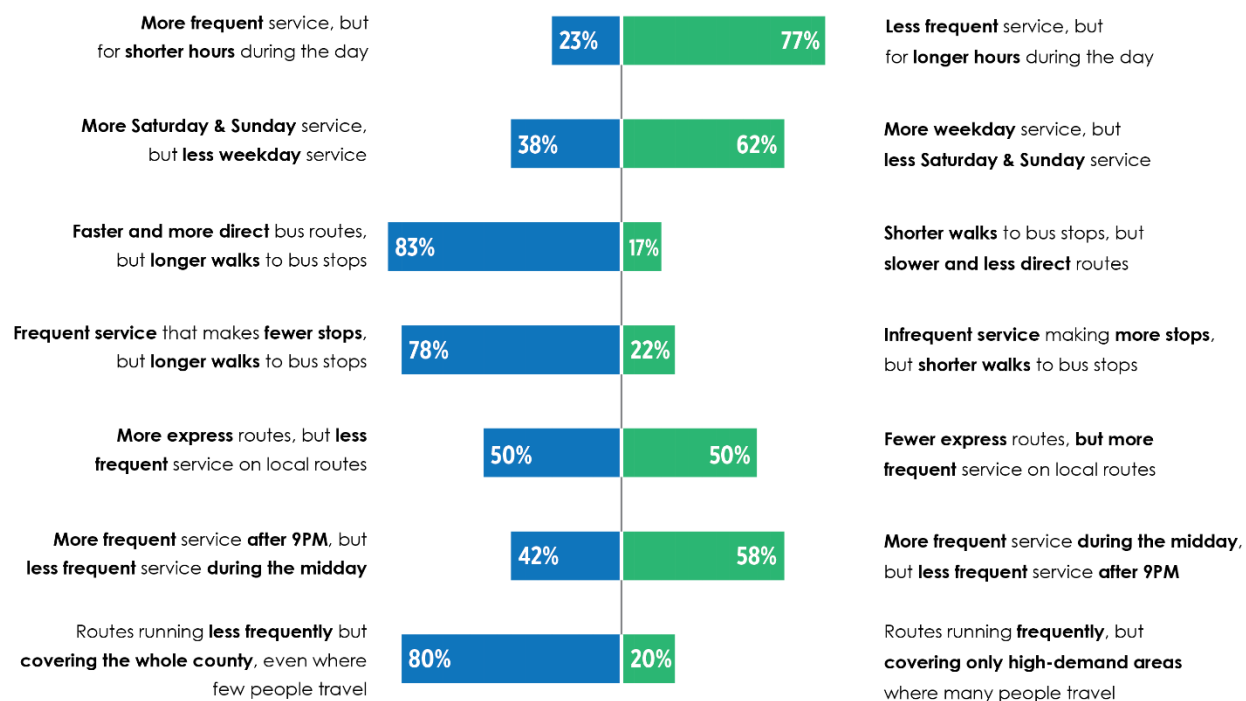
At each public meeting, attendees were asked to identify their transit priorities through a series of tradeoff questions. Transit agencies frequently operate with limited resources, and these tradeoffs require respondents to identify which types of service and improvements they most value. Most results differed between each meeting, revealing different sets of priorities for attendees in Berks County and Lancaster County.

Transit Priority Tradeoffs

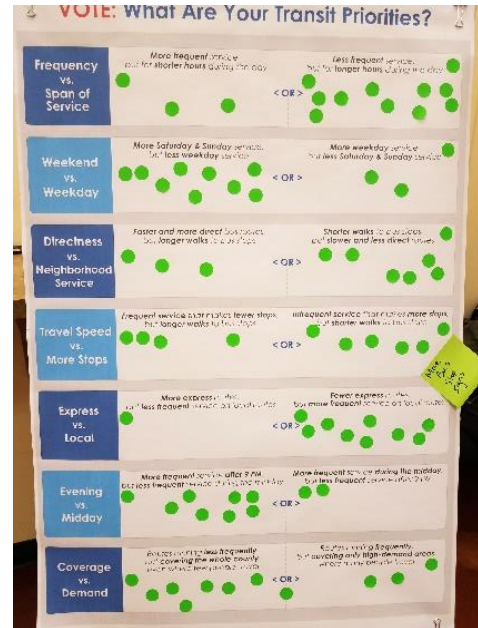
Berks County Respondents Only



Lancaster County Respondents Only



- Most respondents at both meetings preferred longer hours of service at the expense of frequent service.
- Berks County respondents valued adding more service on Saturdays and Sundays, while Lancaster County respondents preferred more weekday service.
- Lancaster County respondents generally preferred faster and more direct routes, which would mean less frequent bus stops. In contrast, Berks County respondents expressed a preference for more bus stops at the expense of faster service.
- Similarly, Berks County respondent indicated a higher preference for less frequent service with more bus stops and shorter walks to stops, while Lancaster County respondents preferred more frequent service with fewer bus stops and longer walks.
- Berks County respondents overwhelmingly preferred more frequent service on local routes instead of providing more express routes, while Lancaster County respondents were evenly split.
- Berks County respondents overwhelmingly valued more frequent service in the evenings (after 9 PM) rather than during midday hours. Lancaster County respondents generally preferred more frequent midday service instead of more frequent evening service.
- All respondents generally expressed a preference for prioritizing coverage across each county at the expense of frequent service, rather than focusing resources on high-demand areas.



Summary of Written Comments Received

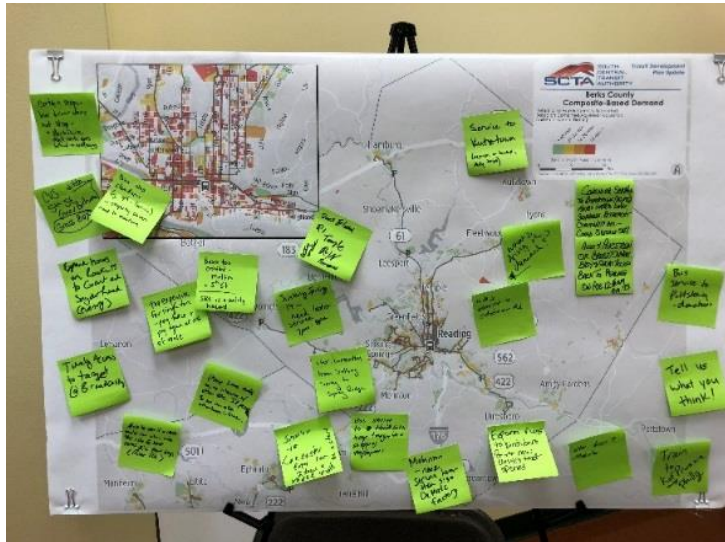
A summary of public comments and ideas received at and after each public meeting is presented below. This summary is based on the written comments on the map boards, comment forms, and conversations with SCTA staff and the consultant team members. The comments are separated for Berks and Lancaster Counties, respectively.

Improve Existing Service

Berks County

- Revise bus schedules to provide more timely transfers
- Co-locate Bieber/ inter-city bus service at BTC
- More Sunday service
- Bus Route 1: Add later service in the evening
- Bus Route 3: Extend evening hours and add Sunday service
- Bus Route 4: Frequency was reduced to improve on-time performance, but now it doesn't run often enough
- Bus Route 5: Add service after 6pm
- Bus Route 7: Increase the frequency to provide service every 30 minutes

- Bus Route 8: Increase service to Birdsboro throughout the day
- Bus Route 10: Add one later trip in the evenings
- Bus Route 11: Add evening and Sunday service, particularly for commuters and shift workers (Demets Candy Company employees)
- Bus Route 14:
 - Extend evening hours of service, particularly after 7pm
 - Increase frequency during the day
- Bus Route 15:
 - Extend evening hours of service
 - Extend service to Snyder Road
- Bus Route 16:
 - Timely access to Target/Broadcasting Square is important
 - Service on Sundays begins too late for employees to get to work
- Bus Route 19: Increase the frequency to provide service every 30 minutes all day
- Bus Route 18: Extend service to the airport to serve industrial jobs
- Bus Route 20:
 - Expand midday service (currently no service between 10:05am & 2:05pm)
 - Route is very long and usually arrives at Cabela's late, especially the 4pm trip when there is traffic
- Bus Route 22:
 - Provide more frequent service to Fleetwood
 - Extend evening hours and Sunday service (particularly along Kutztown Road)
- Downtown Reading bus routing and stops: Riders exit Bus Route 4 because it pulls over, and then transfer to Bus Route 22 or 3 to reach to the BTC faster
- Service to First Energy Stadium
 - Need to better align bus schedule with start times
 - Potential rerouting to visitor parking



Lancaster County

- Access to jobs is a key issue
 - Bus schedules do not consistently align with shift work schedules. This is particularly an issue for Bus Route 12 (along Route 23) and Bus Route 11 (along Route 222) due to the light industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing facilities. Additional hours of service are needed to support 3rd shift jobs and weekends.
 - Participants asked if alternative services, such as shuttles or van pools, could be available to better serve employment centers with shift work schedules.

- Historic Downtown Trolley
 - The existing trolley should provide better connections to the historic and entertainment destinations.
 - Create a fare-free zone downtown for the trolley.
 - Expand the weekend and evening hours of the trolley to better serve tourists and visitors.
- Operate more service after 6pm
- Park City Mall
 - Begin Sunday service earlier for employees
- Bus Route 10: Add later service in the evening
- Bus Route 11:
 - Increase the number of stops between Lancaster and Ephrata (and within Ephrata)
- Bus Route 12:
 - Extend service to Conestoga Wood Specialties, located approximately one mile from Shady Maple
 - Add later service in the evening
- Bus Route 13: Add later service in the evening
- Bus Route 16:
 - Provide a more direct connection between the Amtrak Station and Millersville University
 - Extend morning and evening hours of service for Bus Route 16
 - Better coordinate transfers at Park City Mall with Park City A/B/C routes (Routes 1, 2, and 3)
 - Provide seasonal alterations to bus schedules to coincide with the University's schedule.
- Bus Route 17:
 - Restore the 7:35pm trip from Marietta to Lancaster
- Bus Route 19: Add later service in the evening
- Bus Route 21:
 - Reinstate the weekday 3:40pm & 4:40pm routes (inbound) at Urban Outfitters
 - Reinstate the weekday 11:40pm route (outbound) at Urban Outfitters
 - Reinstate the weekend 5:40am route (outbound) at Urban Outfitters

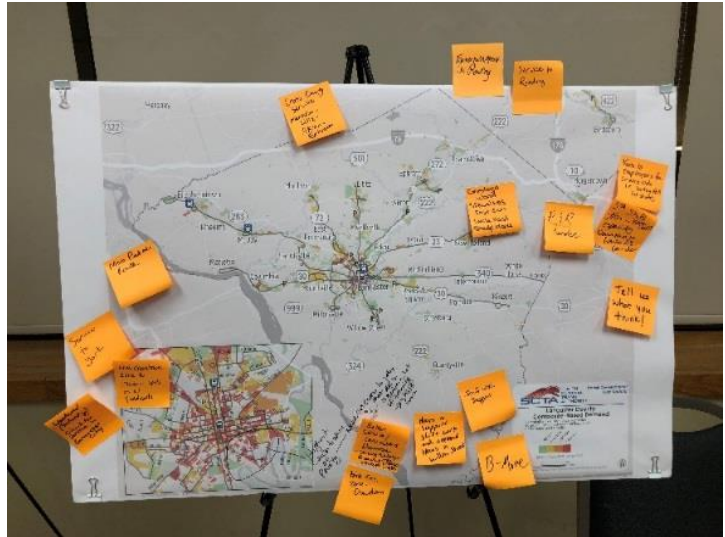
New Services

Berks County

- Service to Health South Rehabilitation Hospital and Morgantown for connection to employment centers
- Transfer or connection from Sinking Spring to Spring Ridge
- Service to Kutztown (express or limited stops)
- Downtown Reading Loop – with free transfers to/from suburban routes
- Loop serving Reading, West Reading, and Wyomissing

Lancaster County

- More cross-county routes, such as:
 - Cross-county route connecting Manheim, Lititz, Akron, and Ephrata
 - Ephrata to New Holland
- Route serving shift work employees, such as the Turkey Hill Plant
- Expand park-and-ride facilities for both transit and ridesharing
- Express service between Lancaster-Columbia-East York
- Short line rail from Park City Center to Smoketown Airport
 - Both properties about Keystone Corridor
 - Shuttle service from Smoketown Airport Station to Tanger/ Rockvale Outlets & other tourist attractions along US 30
- Shared ride service (would use bus to go to work and shared ride to come home at 10pm)



New Inter-County Service

Berks County

- Reading to Lancaster (Downtown, Park City Mall)
- Reading to Ephrata
- Reading to Pottstown
- Reading to Boyertown (limited)
- Train to King of Prussia and planned extension of SEPTA's Norristown High Speed Line offering connecting rail service to Philadelphia

Lancaster County

- Lancaster to York
- Lancaster to Baltimore
- Lancaster to Reading
 - Excursion trips to Reading Phils and other special events
- Elizabethtown to Hershey
- Ephrata or Reamstown to Mohnton or Reading
 - Connection from Lancaster to Pepperidge Farms in Denver
- Lancaster to Middletown/airport

Technology

Berks County

- Issues receiving schedule alerts/notices via text
- Regular riders who are familiar with using the MyStop app like the GPS tracking feature.
- Increase information available at selected bus stops, such as route maps and schedules.
- Increase awareness and information regarding upcoming schedule changes.
- Automated announcements on vehicles are great

Lancaster County

- Reloadable fare cards, auto recharge pass (like SEPTA Key)
- Smart card/tap card payment
- Payment using smartphone
- Amount-based card instead of ride-based card
- Autonomous vehicle technology has a huge potential impact on transit routing and scheduling
- Bus rapid transit or dedicated right of way should be considered in high traffic corridors and/or areas with high ridership

Commendations/Complaints

Berks County

- Received both positive and negative comments regarding bus drivers. Some comments noted that some bus drivers do not stop at all scheduled stops. Also, some drivers reportedly drive too fast and erratically.
- \$0.25 rides and \$10 monthly passes during the month of October were well received
- On-time performance on some routes is poor
- Cleanliness issues with buses and bus stops
- Relocate the smoking area at the BTC away from doors to terminal
- Some riders play loud music or videos on devices
- Buses are too crowded
 - Particularly Route 1
 - Standing room only is a safety hazard
- Fares are too high

Lancaster County

- Buses are clean, efficient & punctual
- Helpful and friendly staff
- Passes work well
- MyStop app works well
- Need for exact change is a nuisance

3 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Introduction

The consultant team conducted interviews with over 50 key stakeholders and community leaders with knowledge and interest in BARTA or RRTA services. The purpose of the interviews was to gather opinions and perceptions on current transit services, opportunities, issues, and challenges. This is a summary of the input received during the interviews to help identify issues to address in the Transit Development Plan update.



Stakeholders

Listed below are the individuals that were interviewed and the organizations they represented. Some were conducted as individual interviews, while others were conducted as a small group or panel.

Berks County

Organization	Representative(s), Title
Albright College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael Gross, <i>Director of Public Safety</i>
Berks County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kevin Barnhardt, <i>Commissioner</i> Jessie Seidel, <i>Assistant to Commissioner Barnhardt</i>
Berks County Latino Chamber and Community First Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lucy Cortez, <i>Chair</i>
Berks County Workforce Investment Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan Fogarty, <i>Director of Workforce Development</i>
Berks County Planning Commission/Reading Area Transportation Study (RATS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shannon Rossman, <i>Executive Director</i> Alan Piper, <i>Transportation Planner</i> Michael Golembiewski, <i>Transportation Planner</i>
Business Panel I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gail Landis (Greater Reading Chamber Alliance), <i>Senior Vice President - Government & Community Relations</i> Fred Levering (Licensed Realtor, Wyomissing Borough – Economic Development Committee,

Organization	Representative(s), Title
	Chair of Great Reading Chamber's Transportation Committee) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diane Ohlinger (IWCO), <i>Human Resources Manager</i> ▪ Sean Landrigan (Aerotek), <i>Account Manager</i>
Business Panel II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kristi Gage (Gage Personnel), <i>Executive Vice President</i> ▪ Annmarie Morganti (Gage Personnel), <i>Operations and Recruitment Solutions Manager</i> ▪ Carolyn Weaver (Tray-Pak), <i>Director of Human Resources</i> ▪ Julissa Rodriguez (Tray-Pak)
Greater Reading Convention and Visitors Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crystal Seitz, <i>President</i>
Hispanic Center of Reading and Berks County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Michael Toledo, <i>Executive Director</i>
Reading Housing Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jack Knockstead, <i>Resident Services Director</i> ▪ Maggie Hansen ▪ Linda Nye ▪ Sandra Flores-Nieves ▪ Grisel Saez ▪ Courtney Baldwin
Reading School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chris Celmer, <i>Assistant Superintendent of Operations</i> ▪ Eric Turman, <i>Principal – Reading High School</i>
SCTA Board Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Jim Schlegel

In addition to the Berks County stakeholders listed above, a presentation on the TDP and feedback session was held at the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance's Business and Community Advocacy Council Meeting on December 1, 2017.

Lancaster County

Organization	Representative(s), Title
City of Lancaster, Department of Economic Development & Neighborhood Revitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paula Jackson, <i>Chief Planner, Bureau of Planning</i>
Economic Development Company (EDC) of Lancaster County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lisa Riggs, <i>President</i>
Lancaster Business Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heather Valudes (Lancaster Chamber) ▪ Jodi Pace (Advanced Food Products) ▪ Aidalis Lopez (High Industries)

Organization	Representative(s), Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nelson Lonenecker (Four Seasons Produce) David Swartley (Moravian Manor) Nate Martin (LSC Communications) Lauren Weaver (Eurofins)
Lancaster City Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marshall Snively, <i>President</i> Bob Shoemaker, <i>Project Executive</i> Jeremy Young, <i>Community and Economic Development Manager</i> Shelby Nauman, <i>Vice President Neighborhoods and Community</i>
Lancaster Count	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dennis Stuckey, <i>Commissioner</i>
Lancaster County Housing Opportunity Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ray D'Agostino, <i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
Lancaster County Planning Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lauri Ahlskog Bob Bini Emma Hamme Mark Huber Kyle Salage Dean Severson Scott Standish Brad Stewart
PA Career Link – Lancaster County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valerie Hatfield, <i>Site Administrator</i>
SCTA Board Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June Wolf, <i>Chairman</i> Bonnie Glover (<i>Director of Domestic Violence Services for Community Action Partnership</i>)
Spanish American Civic Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carlos Graupera, <i>CEO/Executive Director</i>
Higher Educational Institutions	
Franklin and Marshall College	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lori Foust, <i>Director of Housing</i>
Millersville University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Charity Welch, <i>Assistant Dean for the College of Graduate Studies and Adult Learning</i>
PA College of Art and Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jane Higinbotham, <i>Director of Student Life & Housing</i>

Interview Questions

All stakeholders were asked the following questions for the interview. These questions were used as a guide and served as the starting point for detailed conversations about existing BARTA/RRTA services and future opportunities to enhance services in both Berks and Lancaster Counties.

1. Describe your organization's interest/involvement with BARTA/RRTA, as well as your personal experience with BARTA/RRTA.
2. What is your overall view or perception of current BARTA/RRTA services and facilities?

3. What BARTA/RRTA existing services do you consider to be *most* effective in their operations today, and why? (What do you like best about existing BARTA/RRTA services?)
4. What existing BARTA/RRTA services do you consider to be *least* effective, and why? (What existing BARTA/RRTA service would you change?)
5. What do you consider to be the top three transit related issues or challenges for Berks/Lancaster County *today*?
6. What do you consider to be the top three transit related issues or challenges for Berks/Lancaster County *in the future*?
7. What do you consider to be the top three transit related issues or challenges for your organization?
8. Are there particular locations where transit needs to be improved or expanded? Where and why? Who would be the primary beneficiaries or users of this service?
9. Are there particular locations where transit needs to be improved or expanded? Where and why? Who would be the primary beneficiaries or users of this service?
10. When reconfiguring transit services as part of future planning, what major factors should be considered (i.e. cost-effectiveness, ridership increases, basic level of service, social equity)?
11. Do you have any other ideas for enhancing the BARTA/RRTA system that would encourage more people to ride?
12. Do you believe there is community and political support for BARTA/RRTA services? What would you recommend to increase this support both politically and throughout the community?

Overall Themes

Access to jobs is critical

Most stakeholders agreed that one of the key functions of the transit systems in Berks and Lancaster Counties is to provide access to jobs. Both transit systems are radial or hub-and-spoke systems that were designed primarily to transport people from suburban areas to the cities and county seats of Reading and Lancaster. While both cities are still centers for employment and economic development, significant employment centers have emerged in suburban areas. Employment centers in suburban areas are often more challenging to serve with the existing fixed route bus routes. Key issues with serving more suburban employment centers identified by stakeholders include:

- Suburban locations are often lower density with limited pedestrian facilities. Employers and employees often request route deviations to better serve facilities that are not located directly on the bus route.
- Jobs in some suburban employment clusters are shift based and the workforce represents a large potential transit customer base. However, it can be challenging to align bus schedules with various shift schedules and shift work requirements.
- Due to the radial design of bus routes, riders often need to transfer at the transportation centers in Reading and Lancaster. This lengthens the travel time and is a disincentive for employees to ride transit.

Employers have recognized the importance of public transit service to attracting and retaining employees. Many businesses stated that public transit access directly impacts their ability to hire employees. Representatives of the business communities expressed an interest in working closer with SCTA. Stakeholders shared the following ideas for enhancing access to jobs (and improving coordination with the business community):

- Coordinate more closely with the County Planning Commissions and Economic Development organizations in both counties regarding long range planning, land development projects, and working with municipalities early and often.
- Establish a consistent timeline and process for modifying bus routes and schedules on a semi-annual or annual basis. Share the timeline and process with the business community through the Lancaster and Reading Chambers. Provide opportunities for businesses to submit requests and learn about changes before they are implemented. Educate the business community about the opportunities, challenges, and restrictions with modifying bus routes and schedules.
- Evaluate ways for businesses to make contributions towards public transit services, whether it is for specific services or an annual “investors” program.
- Publicize and promote the Access to Jobs Programs in each County. Promote the program through marketing/advertising, as well as coordination with partner and professional organizations.
- Evaluate other types of more flexible transit services (such as demand-responsive), vanpools, or ridesharing that are more flexible to serve employment centers not located on bus routes, and to serve employers with shift schedules that cannot be met by traditional fixed route transit service. Many stakeholders asked about alternatives to fixed route services and if smaller buses or vehicles could be used. Stakeholders felt that smaller vehicles could operate more efficiently. Closer coordination with Commuter Services and possibly bolstering vanpools was also mentioned as another idea for more flexible service. In the City of Lancaster, there is a focus and plan for combatting poverty, including expanding traditional and innovative transportation options to connect low income people with job opportunities.
- Establish new SCTA staff position(s) (or dedicate existing staff) to serve as a community liaison, possibly one for each county. Make staff more available to represent BARTA/RRTA at community meetings and events, engage in planning and projects at the local level, and promote collaboration and partnerships with community and business organizations. The community liaisons can help to be the “face” of SCTA and bridge gaps between planning, operations, marketing, and help to advocate for public transit. If SCTA is not able to dedicate staff resources, then possibly partner with the County Planning Commissions and/or Commuter Services to identify staff that can help represent and share SCTA's interests.
- Coordinate with partner and professional organizations. The Lancaster Chamber, Greater Reading Chamber Alliance, and Berks County Latino Chamber are three potential partner organizations that offer committees and events where SCTA can engage more closely with businesses. The Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) is a professional organization with local chapters in each county that could serve as a resource to coordinate with a number of businesses.

Marketing is key to public perception

Stakeholders generally agreed that there is a stigma attached to riding the bus; stating that the general public views the bus as a vital service for those who need it, but it is a “last resort”, “too

slow", and only for "poor people and students." However, through effective marketing and promotion, it is possible to shake this reputation.

- Develop a robust marketing campaign.
- Social media could be a valuable tool moving forward. The advice was to establish an identity for the transit agency and stop trying to be everything for everyone.
- Make it "cool" to ride the bus.
 - Enlist and publicize high profile members of the community (i.e. elected officials, business leaders, local celebrities) using transit.
 - Have "bus ambassadors" available to help people navigate the system.
 - Participation in local community meetings and events is also an opportunity to engage and educate potential customers.

Need to improve user experience

While SCTA transit facilities and vehicles are modern and well maintained, the user experience often falls short of expectations. There are five main components to this:

- Route information and schedules posted on both BARTA and RRTA websites is often outdated and difficult to understand, and the MyStop app is not an effective tool for navigating either system.
 - MyStop App: The app works well for regular transit riders who know which routes they need to take. Many stakeholders were not aware of the MyStop App and it is difficult to find instructions to access the app from the websites. It is very difficult to use the app to plan a trip if customers do not know what route they need. This can mostly be attributed to the fact that the bus routes are not loaded into Google Transit. Without doing so, the app is useful only to identify the location of a bus on its route at a given time. A user is not able to provide an origin and destination to get directions on how transit can be used to make the trip. Also, the app should be used to disseminate information about annual service plan updates and other SCTA related information.
 - An overall system map that shows bus routes and street names must be updated and available on the website(s).
- There is a need to modernize and simplify fare structures and collection. Very few people carry exact change to ride the bus occasionally. Rules related to zone fares and transfers can be confusing, especially for new riders. The inconsistent fare collection system (RRTA) of paying when boarding some routes and leaving others is confusing to riders. Additionally, different fares and eligibility for Medicare card holders, handicapped, and seniors can be confusing and a barrier to riding.
- There are physical barriers to boarding and riding the bus. Most notably, a lack of infrastructure at (benches, shelters, loading pads) and leading to (sidewalks, pedestrian paths, crosswalks) bus stops. The fixed route buses can be difficult for people with disabilities to board and ride. However, this has been partially addressed by the new kneeling buses.
- Customer service falls short of expectations on two fronts. First, drivers are often seen as unfriendly to all but the most regular customers. Second, it can be difficult to obtain information from the website or by calling the information lines.
- Additional amenities, both on the bus and at the stops, would improve the overall customer experience. Bus stop amenities could include bus shelters, benches, trash

receptacles, and route information. The number one cited amenity needed on the buses was wireless internet.

Bolster existing successful service

Generally, BARTA and RRTA serve areas of the two counties where there is a need and demand for transit services. Rather than expanding service to new geographies, stakeholders generally agreed it would be best to focus on retaining and enhancing existing services. The existing transit system works well inside the cities of Lancaster and Reading, but there are service limitations in suburban and rural areas. Special attention should be given to strengthen the routes that perform well as they are best serving BARTA's and RRTA's core customer base. In an attempt to provide service to as many people as possible, some routes extend long distances to serve pockets of potential riders in outlying towns in both Berks County and Lancaster County. This results in a high number of stops with low ridership and very low frequency. Additional service and higher frequency should be given to areas with the highest ridership. Flag service on some of the longer suburban routes is not effective. Often, drivers do not notice riders waiting for the bus to arrive at flag stops. Many routes take a midday break or stop in the late afternoon/early evening. An effort should be made to maintain consistent service and extend service later into the evening on routes that serve shift-based employers and areas with high potential nighttime ridership.

Stakeholder Interview Responses

Overall Perception

Most stakeholders reported a positive view or perception of SCTA/BARTA/RRTA, and in particular noted that the organization has a good reputation and the buses and facilities are generally clean and well maintained.

- Stakeholders that are more intimately familiar with SCTA reported that it is a well-run organization with a qualified management team. Additionally, stakeholders more familiar with the organization acknowledged that many of SCTA's limitations are related to funding and/or regulations.
- Stakeholders less familiar with SCTA noted a lack of user-friendly information about services and fares (especially for new riders), issues with not knowing who to contact at SCTA/BARTA/RRTA with issues or questions, and a lack of understanding about transit planning and operations. Additionally, people that do not ride BARTA/RRTA shared perceptions that services are slow and inconvenient.

Most Effective Services

Generally, stakeholders noted that existing fixed route services are effective. Also, shared ride services are viewed as a vital community resource. Many people in both Berks County and Lancaster County rely on paratransit service each day. Even so, the process of certifying eligibility could be improved and streamlined, and paratransit service is not as cost effective as fixed route service.

BARTA

- Route 1 has the highest ridership of any BARTA route. Frequency has been increased in the past as a response to the demand.

- Adding Sunday service was seen as a positive.
- The Senior Shared Ride program is viewed as a huge success.
- Service in the City of Reading is great.
- Bikes on buses are an asset for customers.

RRTA

- Thanks to the design of the system, it is very easy to access Lancaster City Hall during regular business hours.
- The transit center in Lancaster is very well maintained.
- Bikes on buses and kneeling buses are great assets for customers.

Least Effective Services

Stakeholders with experience riding BARTA/RRTA shared observations about the transportation centers in Reading and Lancaster, respectively. Generally, stakeholders shared positive perspectives about the centers. Some noted that the transportation centers can be intimidating, especially for new riders. Others shared concerns about having the bathrooms open/closed and recognized the issues with keeping public restrooms safe and clean.

While shared-ride services were noted as a community asset and well used service in both counties, stakeholders noted the long wait times (over one hour) are a significant concern and frustration for riders. Additionally, the different applications for eligibility are confusing, even for people that are somewhat familiar with the process.

Finally, the few stakeholders that were familiar with the Access to Jobs Programs noted limitations of the current programs, including that the service is not flexible and does not meet the needs of workers.

BARTA

- No service to warehouse distribution centers along I-78.
- The Board is hesitant to try new technology because of a past failure with electric buses.

RRTA

- The hub and spoke design of RRTA system does not effectively serve the transit needs of the community.
 - The corridors feeding into the City of Lancaster are not effectively connected to downtown.
- The trolley has potential, but it is poorly executed. Riders should be able to hop on and off. Multiple transfers are needed to use the trolley and it does not run on the weekend.

Top Transit-Related Challenges

Access to Jobs

- Suburban employment centers are not well served by existing routes and schedules.
- Service hours are not aligned with employment opportunities that require shift work, particularly 3rd shift.

- Access to Jobs programs are not well known and are not flexible and responsive to the current needs of work.

Technology

- Increasing the variety of transit vehicles could add flexibility into schedules/routing.
- Vehicle technology is constantly evolving. Hybrid, electric, and natural gas vehicles are available now. In the future, autonomous buses may add efficiency to the system, while the impact of autonomous cars on public transit is uncertain.
- Fare modernization would reduce the need for customers to have exact change.
- Transit signal prioritization would improve on time performance by reducing time spent in traffic congestion.
- Staying on top of routine maintenance should be a priority.
- In the future, technological advances will likely change the demand for public transit services. More people will be able to work from home, and for manufacturing jobs, robotics may replace employees and change the need for service to suburban employment centers.

Competition

- Parking is cheap and convenient.
- Ride sharing and taxi service can provide door to door service. Competition includes Uber, Lyft, and La Mexicana (Reading).
- Traffic congestion is not at a level where people start to look for options other than driving alone; however, congestion levels are increasing.

Real/Perceived Barriers

- Suburban development patterns and pedestrian access to stops is often limited.
- Car dependent culture.
- Convenience of transit service (frequency/timing).
- Fares are high, especially for low-income and middle/high school students.

Administration

- Need for succession planning at SCTA, including management, as well as mechanics and drivers.
 - Coordinate with Technical Schools/Career and Technology Centers to provide training programs and workforce development for mechanics and drivers.
- Funding shortfalls/cuts.
- SCTA should be involved in the land development review processes and coordinate more closely with municipalities.
- Need for better coordination with PennDOT, particularly on roadway resurfacing and improvement projects.
- Need for better coordination with the business community.

Berks County

- Cultural/demographic shifts

- The population is aging and by 2025, approximately 1 out of every 5 Berks County residents will be over the age of 65 and a “potential retiree.” As a result, agencies in Berks County are focusing on workforce development.
- A recent study of disconnected young adults who are not in school or the workforce found that lack of transportation is the top reason young adults are not enrolled in school or working.

Service Enhancement or Expansion Ideas

Stakeholders generally agreed that ridership is critical factor for service planning, and it is better to focus on providing more frequent and reliable service with fewer stops on routes with high ridership or ridership potential. Stakeholders also acknowledged that it is difficult to discontinue service, even on routes with low ridership.

BARTA

- Route 20: Additional frequency and service hours are needed along Route 20 to better align with shift work at several employers. Some specific examples are provided below.
 - Bus schedule does not align well with the two-shift schedule for IWCO located in Hamburg. IWCO operates 2 shifts (7am – 7pm, 7pm – 7am) and employees that end work at 7pm have to wait until 11pm for a bus. Additionally, Sunday service is an issue. Further coordination may be beneficial with IWCO and other businesses in the area regarding shift schedules.
 - TrayPak operates 3 shifts (7am-3pm, 3pm-11pm, and 11pm-7am, normally weekdays but occasionally on weekends). TrayPak representatives reported that employees have to travel to Hamburg first in order to get back to Reading and the Transportation Center? Additionally, they reported that additional service is needed on Sunday evening for their 2nd / 3rd shifts. Finally, employees have to walk 0.5 miles to the bus, so they were wondering if it would be possible to divert the route to better serve their facility and some of the other surrounding businesses.
 - Hamburg Commerce Park and Hamburg Logistics Park: These two land development projects could bring almost 5 million square feet of flex warehousing, industrial/manufacturing buildings to the Route 61 corridor off of Zions Church Road. As the buildings are completed and occupied, there may be a need to serve this location. With planned roadway improvements, it may be possible to serve the new parks with Route 20, but there will be access and circulation issues, particularly in the southbound direction.
- There are multiple routes servicing areas west of Reading (Routes 6, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16). However, these routes all feed into downtown Reading. There is some need for a route that follows PA 724 to connect the areas of Shillington, West Reading, Wyomissing, West Lawn, and Wyomissing Hills.
- There is not direct service to the doctors' offices and other destinations on Reed Avenue (off of Spring Street) in Wyomissing.
- Utilized data from shared ride system to identify key destinations and evaluate ways to better serve these key destinations with fixed route and/or shared ride services.
- Reading High School has a growing internship program for seniors. There may be demand for enhanced service from the High School to key employment centers, particularly mid-day.

- Potential locations to expand service within Berks County:
 - Exeter
 - Morgantown
 - Kutztown
 - Bethel
 - Denver
 - Sinking Spring

RRTA

- Focus on providing better service to the metro areas and along key corridors, possibly considering transit signal priority or bus rapid transit.
- Focus on connecting low-income communities and employment centers.
- Consider cross-county connections that would connect metro areas without requiring transferring in Lancaster.
- The downtown circulator is inefficient because it doesn't serve a large enough area, weekend and evening service is limited, transfers are required to move around the city, and an east/ west loop is missing.
- Better access to train stations.
 - Buses should be timed to meet the Amtrak trains so riders can make timely transfers at the train stations (specifically Lancaster).
- There is a need for planning and coordination with the expanding network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, including bicycle lanes and bike share.
- Route 9: It is difficult to travel from Millersville University to the Ware Center in Downtown Lancaster. The bus schedule is not aligned with the class schedule. (Classes end at 9pm and students are unable to catch the bus at 9:10pm. The next bus does not arrive until 10:15pm. Based on survey responses, students do not feel safe waiting for the bus in the evening. Additionally, the timeliness of the bus is an issue.
- Existing service to Willow Street is not timely and new residential developments in the area may increase demand.
- There will be a demand for transit at the new shopping areas being built – The Crossings at Conestoga, Shops at Belmont.
- Potential locations to expand service within Lancaster County:
 - Quarryville
 - Lititz (particularly to serve new senior housing facilities)
 - Columbia
 - Ephrata
 - Gap
 - Elizabethtown

Inter-city Connections

Stakeholders generally agreed that there is limited demand for a commuter connection between Reading and Lancaster. Stakeholders identified that destinations/employment centers in both counties are too dispersed. Additionally, in both counties, there is a focus on connecting existing residents with employment opportunities within the counties. In Lancaster County, there

are more job openings than available workers. However, service for special events has potential economic development/tourism benefits. Another idea supported by several stakeholder was to provide connecting service with a transfer at an intermediate stop in Denver. Denver, which is strategically located at interchanges for US 222 and the PA Turnpike, has a number of existing light industrial/warehouse facilities (such as Pepperidge Farm) and the new UGI Headquarters is under construction. Therefore, there might be demand for access to Denver from both Lancaster and Reading, making this an ideal potential transfer location.

Many stakeholders identified other potential inter-city connections that may have greater demand. In Berks County, ideas for inter-city service were focused primarily on a better connection to the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area. In Lancaster County, stakeholders noted potential demand for connecting service to York or Harrisburg.

Berks County

- Coordinate with Bieber regarding inter-city services.
- Provide a connection to SEPTA services
- Reading to:
 - Philadelphia (Rail)
 - Philadelphia Airport
 - King of Prussia/Valley Forge
 - Limerick Outlet Center
 - Lancaster – connecting to Amtrak station

Lancaster County

- Lancaster to:
 - York
 - Harrisburg
 - Hershey
 - Philadelphia
 - Denver

Other Ideas for Enhancements

- Work with employers and colleges to provide flexible services that fit the needs of employees and students.
- Utilize park and rides around the city centers to provide a last mile connection. This would reduce traffic congestion and parking expenses.
- More promotions would show how customers are appreciated and build community support. The \$0.25 promotion was a success. Study the differences in ridership gains between RRTA and BARTA.
- Provide options for same day urgent medical appointments.

Bolstering Community and Political Support

Overall, stakeholders felt that there is community and political support, but believed it could be bolstered through education, information, and partnerships.

- SCTA Board – Most stakeholders reported that the merger of BARTA and RRTA was a positive. SCTA Board Members should continue to be advocates and community leaders for public transit. The Board can help to promote transparency and education regarding SCTA's plans and operations by providing information and education to the public and partners about funding, capital budget, operating budget, and service plans. When new board members are appointed, it may be beneficial to seek individuals that represent the racial and ethnic diversity of the riders and community.
- Public – Stakeholders noted that the general public has a neutral view of transit. Most people see the importance of it for people other than themselves. A marketing campaign would be critical to building public buy-in and establishing a reason for people to care about public transportation. Promotions and signs of customer appreciation, such as the \$0.25 fare, also help to build public support. Additionally, information regarding routes, schedules, and fares needs to be presented so that a non-rider can understand the information and is not intimidated.
- Political – Elected officials are generally supportive of transit in Berks County and Lancaster County, but there is a need for ongoing education about the important role transit plays at the municipal, county, and state levels. There is also a need for better coordination with leadership and staff in the City of Reading.
- Business – Identify and build stronger support from major businesses with employees that rely on transit.
- Reading School District – Meet once a year with representatives from the Reading School District to discuss any issues and potential changes to routes/hours.
- Reading Housing Authority – As the largest landlord in the City of Reading, the RHA is willing to host public meetings and help disseminate information to their residents.
- Universities – Educational institutions (Albright College, Franklin & Marshall College, Kutztown University, Millersville University, HACC, RACC, etc.) account for a large potential customer base and should be considered important partners. Some educational institutions, such as Albright and Franklin & Marshall College, provide shuttle services specifically for students. As a result, fewer students utilize BARTA/RRTA services. However, other institutions, such as Millersville, partner with RRTA to provide services. Opportunities to coordinate with multiple educational institutions can be through professional organizations, such as APPA for campus facility professionals.
- Hispanic/Latino Community – BARTA and RRTA has been underrepresented in the Hispanic community. The administration should find ways to become involved. El Palo Magazine, Latino Chamber Magazine, and Mega 92.9 radio station are some ways to share information with the Hispanic/Latino communities in Berks County. Also in Berks County, the Latino Chamber of Commerce and Hispanic Center are community organizations and potential partners to engage the Hispanic/Latino community.

4 AGENCY WORKSHOPS

The consultant team facilitated focus group-style workshops with representatives of human service agencies and service providers to learn more about the transportation needs of their clients. One workshop was held in Reading to meet with service providers from across Berks County, whose clients use BARTA Special Services, and one workshop was held in Lancaster with representatives from across Lancaster County, whose clients use Red Rose Special Services. Below is a summary of the input received during the workshops to help identify issues to address in the Transit Development Plan update.

Participants

Listed below are the individuals that participated in the agency workshops and the organizations they represented.

Berks County

Organization	Representative(s)
Berks Encore	▪ Lisa Lorah
Berks County Area Agency on Aging	▪ Ann Barlet
Reading Dialysis Center/PA Dialysis Clinic of Reading	▪ Caroline Clark
Service Access and Management (SAM)	▪ Shara Garipoli ▪ Carol Patterson

Lancaster County

Organization	Representative(s)
Office of Aging	▪ Lisa Paulson
Garden Spot Village Adult Day Services	▪ Christina Haeusler
EARS Inc.	▪ Dave Lloyd
VisionCorps	▪ Chris Ament
Lancaster County Behavioral Health & Developmental Services	▪ Al Gantz
Davita Dialysis	▪ Michele Hartman ▪ Kim Matthews ▪ Michelle Wooster
Albright LIFE	▪ Lori Brandt
United Disabilities Services	▪ Sue Bollow
Landis Homes Adult Day Services	▪ Faith Hoover

Organization	Representative(s)
The Arc of Lancaster County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maureen Westcott Debbie Fredereck
Pennsylvania Department of Human Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daniel Pick

Workshop Questions

The following questions were used to guide the discussion during each workshop. These questions served as the starting point for detailed conversations about BARTA Special Services and Red Rose Special Services and future opportunities to enhance services in both Berks and Lancaster Counties.

Overall Themes

Several predominant issues emerged from conversations at both workshops:

- **Long Travel Times:** In-vehicle travel time is frequently very long, and this is compounded by circuitous routing and perceived inefficiencies. Clients also often wait for long periods of time due to scheduling. One appointment can become a day-long event due to the time commitment required for transportation. In general, many respondents reported that using the available paratransit and demand-response services is arduous and inconvenient.
- **Limited Service Area:** Respondents cited a need for service to more parts of Berks and Lancaster Counties, particularly in more rural communities. A desire for travel between counties was also expressed, particularly for clients traveling to or from medical and other services just across county boundaries.
- **Limited Hours and Days of Service:** Limited hours and days of service pose a barrier for clients, and limit when they can schedule appointments, job opportunities, and being able to participate in community and recreational activities.
- **Inconvenient and Antiquated Reservation Process:** The current reservation process is inconvenient and cumbersome. The use of fax technology is antiquated, and often leads to lost requests and dropped information. Opportunities for email or other communication improvements would make the process more convenient and consistent.
- **High Transportation Costs:** Transportation costs are a huge challenge for agencies and clients. Limited waiver program funding is available for transportation services, and fares can be a significant barrier for clients. Clients who are trying to access employment may not be able to get to work because of transportation costs.
- **Inconvenient Fare Collection:** There is a need for improved fare collection options to remove the need for exact change. Many clients have limited access to a bank to ensure they have exact change for trips and end up over-paying. Clients may not be able to set up monthly billing because they do not have a bank account or do not take the same number of trips every month. Having to carry cash also poses a safety risk for clients.
- **Communication and Customer Service:** Respondents reported poor experiences with customer service by clients as well as themselves. Concerns include lack of communication about pickup windows and late arrivals, challenges with making reservations, negative interactions with customer service staff, and a need for more proactive notification by service providers about service changes.

- **Opportunities for Alternative Service Types:** Other types of services – such as taxis, ridehailing companies, and vanpools – may present opportunities to relieve pressure on resources and fill gaps in the network, especially for occasional trips, shorter distance trips, shared-ride trips, and travel outside of traditional service hours like evenings and Sundays. These services would also be useful for clients who value the flexibility and convenience they offer.

Summary of Agency Workshop Discussions

A summary of the discussion and ideas received at each workshop is presented below. This summary is based on the facilitated conversations with SCTA staff and the consultant team members at each workshop. The comments are separated for Berks and Lancaster Counties, respectively.

Service Issues, Gaps, and Challenges

Berks County

- Long travel times are the biggest challenge for our clients.
 - Lots of waiting time for clients: an appointment trip can take all day: pickup early AM, dropoff at 6 PM.
 - Perceived inefficiencies: Some people may be going to the same place but are assigned to different vehicles.
- Limited operating times
 - Timing/limited service hours make it challenging to schedule appointments.
 - Seniors may not be able to participate in some activities at senior centers because the bus comes to pick people up and they need to leave early.
 - Sunday service would be great to have.
- Fare payment and need for exact change is a barrier.
 - It's hard enough for riders to get to dialysis or other appointments, never mind to the bank. Many end up overpaying because they don't have exact change.
 - Having to carry cash also poses a security risk for riders.
 - One program does monthly billing if a rider uses waiver programs. But if the rider is private paying, they need to use exact change.
- Riders and their family often prefer the shared ride service for the group experience: perception of safety in numbers, and drivers look out for them.
- Many riders would like to be able to use BARTA fixed-route services.
- BARTA Special Services is operated in-house, and use Easton only if they need capacity. There is a perception that this service is run more smoothly than Red Rose Special Services operations.

Lancaster County

- Long travel times are the biggest issue.
 - Transportation is the biggest issue we hear from our clients on a consistent basis. The greatest frustration is getting driven a long way or out of direction.
 - Some riders travel 4 hours for 6 hour program.

- Especially challenging for dialysis appointments: 3x/week, for a 4 hour process that is exhausting. Come from all parts of county. Full day, difficult.
- Drivers may drive past destination to pick up/drop off other riders; driver can't deviate from schedule.
- Large pickup window/timeframe. Riders end up getting ready and waiting for a long time. Issue especially if someone is incontinent or takes a long time to get ready.
- Window should be +/- 15 minutes, but some drivers come an hour early.
- Inefficient routing across the county. Routes just don't make sense.
- One client gets to program 2 hours late because trip is so long.
- The quality of service deters many from using it at all
 - Many refuse to go to day programs because transportation is such a problem.
 - I tell new clients to expect inconsistency. Many give up using the service.
 - We lose clients because transportation took too long, they avoid the service.
- The service is stressful – not a social or comfortable experience.
- Different service spans/availability across the county.

Application & Reservation Process

Berks County

- We work with many Spanish-speaking families. SCTA is very accommodating, even with language barriers.

Lancaster County

Some service providers complete the application and reservation process for their clients.

- We often call on behalf of families.
- We do it for our clients. Often we have faxed, scanned, etc. information to RRTA, but RRTA says they haven't received it.
- Faxing is antiquated, and there is only one fax machine in their office. Why can't we just send an email to a general email address?
- Frustration with reservation process: Patients will call RRTA to set up a trip, and will be told that RRTA needs to hear from the dialysis facility to create a reservation. They won't take the patient's word for it.
- Is internal staffing adequate?
- Especially for canceling/changing a reservation, it would be helpful to know who cancelled/called to make sure it wasn't done in error.

Cost

Berks County

- Our organization's focus is getting clients employed, but transportation cost is often a barrier. 20% of door-to-door riders have moved on to less expensive options. (However, taxis don't have wheelchair lift)
- Does your agency cover any costs?
 - Medical assistance. Waiver programs.

- Constantly balancing different funding sources. We juggle trip numbers/purposes for clients. Consolidated waiver clients have unlimited funds. Some people have county funding, which offsets some costs.
- When able, we have switched some clients to rides with friends and done reimbursement, if it's cheaper. It's a last resort because of the inconvenience, but it's cheaper.
- Limited reimbursement for fixed-route trips, especially from farther out like Birdsboro.
- Funding has decreased, which has had a major impact on costs

Lancaster County

- Cost is a major challenge. There are several waiver services but limited waiver funds, and much of it ends up going to cover transportation. Especially for a program with limited transportation, it uses up their budget.
 - Copay can be \$6/one way trip, which quickly adds up.
- Our clients make minimum wage, but transportation cost is high
- Rates went way up this year
- Fares differed based on different sectors (geographic zones), but this has changed. Now based on mileage instead of zones.
- Especially with PFDS budget, some people group and take a taxi because it's cheaper.
- Taxi options work for some clients; not for long-term living.
- Provide reimbursement or subsidy for fares?
 - We have a program to assist with cost, but it's limited.
 - For older adults, yes, subsidized. If employed, no – very expensive.
 - We provide transportation separate from RRTA, using our own vehicles, drivers, etc. But cost isn't far off from paying for RRTA service.
 - Office of Aging pays for 15% of fare and lottery revenues cover the rest. Sometimes need to limit how often clients can go to the senior center because of transportation cost. Pay \$17k/month for transportation (300 people going to senior centers).

Service Coverage, Destinations, Trip Purposes

Berks County

- Rural area service is very limited, but these areas are still part of the county. Family members work during the day and can't provide transportation, and there are no other options out there.
- Serve trips to other counties.
 - Lancaster County is generally a destination for services.
 - Medical resources are far away. Sometimes it may be easier to go to Lancaster than clinics in the county.
 - Boyertown, some Lehigh, border with Lebanon County (VA).
 - 1-2 clients go from Berks to Lebanon County. 1-2 from Berks to Montgomery County (Pottstown).
 - County is looking to change day programs: Community Participation Supports aiming to keep people in their own communities and better integrate them. If anything, we may see less intercountry demand.

- SCTA has been responsive in providing service during certain times. When employers move, or organizations/service providers move, many don't consider transit access.
- There are many providers, but they have very limited scopes/trip purposes: Red Cross serves the VA, church volunteer drivers can only serve certain areas, etc.
- BCAA maintains a guide of transportation options as a county agency, but it's not complete. Updated every 1-2 years, but it's difficult to maintain: information changes, points-of-contact leave, etc.
- Transportation services may be available for wheelchair users, but only for medical appointments, not other types of trips.
 - Young people using wheelchairs often don't know whether their non-medical trips qualify or what services they can use. Especially for recreational/social trips, limited hours, etc.
- Types of trips that are not served today?
 - Getting to jobs, education, volunteering, community activities
 - Recreation
 - Necessities, errands (e.g. bank)
 - In many cases, people are just not making these trips today – no options available
 - Smaller vehicles, if only 1-2 people, could make it easier to meet those needs

Lancaster County

- Should be able to get anywhere in the county
- One problem is that you can't cross county lines. Need to reach jobs, medical appointments.
 - Hershey Medical Center
 - Clinic is close to county line, but client can't come
 - Client can't get to job in Lebanon County
 - Outside Lancaster County
 - Our facility is in Elizabethtown, but client address is in Dauphin County

Communication

Berks County

- BARTA is very accommodating, even with language barriers. We work with many Spanish-speaking families.
- There is huge paranoia about missing the bus. There are no arrival calls or calls about time changes, etc. They are given an approximate window for their reservation. Some drivers knock, others honk – inconsistent.
- Vicki is wonderful to work with – very responsive, proactive.

Lancaster County

- Faxing is antiquated, and there is only one fax machine. Why not one general email address for service requests, etc.?
- People are deterred by poor experiences with customer service.
 - Participants expressed being "appalled, it's disturbing how I've been talked to."

- One representative in particular is a problem.
- Our agencies have a good relationship with the drivers, but there are issues working with the back end at RRTA.
- Customers should be notified of important information directly, not just through signs posted in vehicles. Many have issues with literacy, vision, dementia, etc. Communication is crucial.
- The previous contracting company was very friendly.

Technology

Berks County

- Pre-paid cards, auto billing methods. It's safer if riders don't have to carry cash.
- Real-time vehicle tracking would be good. Vehicles are equipped with GPS and SCTA can track vehicles, but that information isn't shared with the customer.

Lancaster County

- Faxing is antiquated. Why can't we just send an email? It would be easier
- Tablets can be great, but less dynamic – drivers still need to follow an established route.
- For patients that do pay, need for exact change is frustrating. Need for better payment options.
- Clients' schedules change a lot, so monthly fee may not be useful for everyone.
 - Some clients already do monthly billing.
- Real-time arrival information for vehicles.
 - Vehicles use GPS, but it would be nice for agencies and clients to see it too.
 - Develop an app for clients, caregivers.
- Cameras are installed on vehicles now, which is good. (Just video, no audio.)
- Software: EcoLane (PA-mandated, statewide contract) is why we went to mileage-based reimbursement.
 - Is set routing fixed by agency? State? Software should have dynamic routing setting/option.

Alternative Service Types

Berks County

- Are there opportunities for Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), like Uber/Lyft?
 - State won't allow us to pay for these with state funds.
 - Some counties have tried to do this, but an issue was they couldn't ensure for safety.
 - Depends on a combination of ability, technology, and comfort. Clients may not know the drivers or be comfortable with them. This is especially in the case of standing orders, when clients often have the same driver and are familiar with them.
- One private provider used to reimburse clients for transportation, but has since stopped.
- BCAA did pay for taxi services at one point. This may have been for emergency situations only.

- Foster Grandparent grant program did pay for taxis, but only through the specific program.
- The flexibility is nice, but safety and routine are important for clients.

Lancaster County

- When shared-ride falls through, what do you do?
 - Family/caregivers
 - Plead with RRTA
- Clients would definitely consider using TNC options
- Opportunities/advantages of TNC options
 - Taxi, Uber/Lyft could help with the crunch of requests for shorter trips
 - Uber has opened up a whole new world for visually impaired people. More expensive, but a better option.
 - May be more cost-effective for employees going to the same work site, sharing the ride
 - Our facility is open Sundays during holidays, but service doesn't run at those times. Uber/Lyft could fill those irregular gaps.
 - Uber-type service is the way to go – more individualized, more options in when/where people go in the future.
 - Money goes to drivers, not vehicles
- Potential challenges of TNC options
 - On IDD side, some can't necessarily use app. How to use this service with a scheduling and payment process that is easier to use? How to help individuals manage it?
 - Immediate payment isn't always an option: clients may not have credit cards, can't have money banked, no immediate access to funds.
- In the future, look at how other counties are doing with this.

5 ROUND 2 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Two public meetings were held to receive input regarding draft recommendations for the SCTA Transit Development Plan. A public meeting focusing on Berks County and Berks Area Regional Transit Authority (BARTA) services was held at the BARTA Transportation Center (BTC) on Tuesday, April 17, 2018. A public meeting focusing on Lancaster County and Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA) services was held at the Lancaster County Administration Building on Thursday, April 19, 2018. Both meetings were held from 4:00pm to 7:00pm and followed an open house format. During the open house period, meeting attendees were given an opportunity to review and provide input on draft recommendations for future BARTA and RRTA services. Additionally, an overview presentation of the draft recommendations for the Transit Development Plan (TDP) project was provided several times during the open house period. Public comment forms were collected at the meeting and accepted for a two-week period after the meeting. Publicity for the meetings included a press release, letters and flyers sent to SCTA partners, and flyers posted on BARTA and RRTA buses (in both English and Spanish).



Participation

Participation Format	Berks County	Lancaster County
Attendees	24	29
Comment Forms/ Letters	4	2
Preferences Activity Comments	12	16

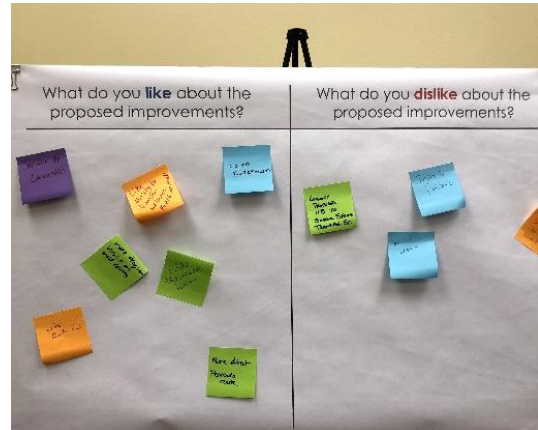
Berks County - Summary of Comments Received

A summary of public comments and ideas received at and after the Berks County Public Meeting is presented below. This summary is based on the written comments, public meeting activities, and conversations with SCTA staff and the consultant team members.

Preferences Activity

What do you like about the proposed improvements?

- Ability to transfer between Routes 15 and 16 at the Berkshire Mall
- More direct service to Pennside (Route 7)
- New Route 23
- Increased hours
- New service to Lancaster (Route RLX)
- More frequent service on most routes



What do you dislike about the proposed improvements?

- No service to Lebanon
- No service to Pottstown
- No service to Kutztown
- No service to Blue Marsh (particularly in the summer)
- No service to I-78 corridor and developing warehouses (particularly in the Hamburg area and west of Hamburg)

Comments on Route Changes

- Route 4
 - Consolidate stops on 10th/11th Streets so bus isn't too slow
 - Need frequent service between Kutztown Road and BTC
- Route 8X
 - Saturday service to Birdsboro
- Route 9
 - Concern about eliminating service to Alvernia University
- Route 10
 - Need Sunday service to 8:00pm
- Route 11
 - Need a 6:00pm run
- Route 11B
 - Extend and connect to Sinking Spring Transfer Station
- Route 14
 - Increase frequency
- Route 15

- Need 30 minute service
- Evening service to Spring Meadow Shopping Center (Giant)
- Keep evening service between Berkshire Mall and Berkshire Square Shopping Center (Walmart) in both directions
- Route 17
 - May need more service with future development at airport
- Route 20
 - Sunday service needed 7am-7pm (for mail facility shifts)
 - Service to festivals/events in Hamburg (possibly a shuttle)
 - Demand for service on the north side of Hamburg
- Route 22
 - Consider commuter service (like carpool) to serve Deka
 - Continue this service as-is
- Route 23
 - Desire for evening service
 - Service to Target at Broadcasting Square
 - Transfer between 23 and 15

Comment Forms Summary

- Clearly identify the routes that serve each stop at the stops.
- Ensure on-time performance of the bus routes (specifically Route 12).
- Some of the drivers need additional customer service training.
- Sometimes the buses are dirty, including the seats.
- Vending machines are useful for people who are diabetic and need to obtain a snack in an emergency.
- It is difficult to reach someone at BARTA by phone.

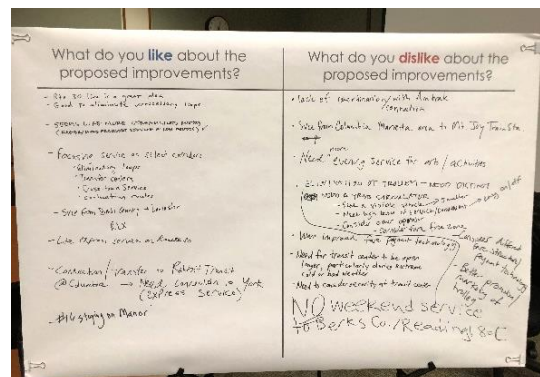
Lancaster County - Summary of Comments Received

A summary of public comments and ideas received at and after the Lancaster County Public Meeting is presented below. This summary is based on the written comments, public meeting activities, and conversations with SCTA staff and the consultant team members.

Preferences Activity

What do you like about the proposed improvements?

- Focusing service on select corridors
 - Eliminating loops
 - Transfer centers
 - More frequent service
 - Cross-town service (Route 30)
 - Co-locating routes
- Service from Berks County to Lancaster (Route RLX)



- Express service on U.S. 30 (Route 14X)
- Connection/transfer to Rabbit Transit at Columbia
 - Need connection to York (express service)
- Rerouting Route 16 on Manor Street

What do you dislike about the proposed improvements?

- Lack of coordination/connection with Amtrak, including:
 - Service from Columbia Marietta area to Mt. Joy Train Station
- Need more evening service for arts/activities
- No weekend service to Berks County/Reading (Route RLX)
- Elimination of Trolley – Need a distinct/need a true circulator
 - Need a visible and possibly smaller vehicle
 - Need a high level of service/convenient, allowing for easy on/off
 - Need better promotion/marketing
 - Consider different fare structure/payment technology, including fare free zone
 - Consider other operator
- Want improved fare payment technology
- Need for transit center to be open longer particularly during extreme cold or bad weather
- Need to consider security at transit center

Comments on Route Changes

- Route 2
 - Like elimination of loop and frequency
 - Confirm that Goodwill located at Plum Street and Juliette Avenue
 - Divert the route to better serve the Grandview Plaza Shopping Center near New Holland Avenue and Ross Street. There are doctors' offices with patients utilizing transit and it is a long and difficult walk from New Holland Avenue.
- Route 3
 - Start Sunday service at 9:00am
- Route 5
 - Provide service to the Golden Triangle Shopping Center, which is a popular destination
 - Need to serve Rutledge/Friendship and Hilltop/Skyline
- Route 12
 - Divert the route to better serve the Grandview Plaza Shopping Center near New Holland Avenue and Ross Street. There are doctors' offices with patients utilizing transit and it is a long and difficult walk from New Holland Avenue.
 - Provide additional frequency for weekday trips to Shady Maple area
 - Saturday wait times of 3+ hours are too long
- Route 13
 - Like the increased hours during am and pm commute

- Need 7:30 am out of Lancaster and 4:30 pm run back into Lancaster
- Route 15
 - Extend route to Quarryville
- Route 17
 - Consider connecting Marietta/Columbia to Mt Joy train station
- Route 20
 - Like Saturday and Sunday service
 - Less evening service
 - Need a bus stop at Eastwood Mobile Home Park

Comment Forms Summary

- Do not change Route 5 and particularly service to Rutledge/Friendship and Hilltop/Skyline in the near term
- Consider a loop route that connects the ends of the other routes
- Express transit needed to connect Lancaster to Reading and to York
- Need to modernize fare payment

6 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

In addition to specific public outreach events and activities, the study team has also received general comments and requests from members of the public to be considered under the SCTA Transit Development Plan Update. The additional comments received to date are summarized below.

Improve Existing Service

Berks County

- Expand Sunday service
- Route 20:
 - Adjust Route 20 schedules to better align with IWCO employee shift times
 - Add Sunday service on Route 20

Lancaster County

- Route 2:
 - Move route from N. President Avenue to Race Street next to the Franklin & Marshall campus
 - Request for later evening service for 3rd shift Donnelly workers at 11:30pm
- Route 16: Adjust Route 16 evening schedule to accommodate class schedules at Millersville University Ware Center in downtown Lancaster (classes end at 9pm, departure at 9:10pm is too early)
- Operate overnight bus service on RRTA (letter to the editor)

New Services and Service Requests

Berks County

- Request to deviate existing Route 8 from its current alignment to provide new service to Godiva Chocolatier plant
- There are a number of businesses off Route 61 between First Energy Stadium and Route 222 interchange/Tuckerton Road with potential need for service (BARTA Route 20 travels on Route 61)
- Request to deviate existing Route 20 from its current alignment along Route 61/Pottsville Pike to directly serve TrayPak
- Consider service to Bernville
- Service to HealthSouth Reading on Morgantown Road
- Add new service to planned development Hamburg Logistics Park
- Add new service to new housing development under construction along Route 724

- Service to Reading Outer Station, Bellevue Avenue and Route 61. Connection to First Energy Stadium
- Service to First Energy Center on Pottsville Pike

Lancaster County

- Cross-county services
 - Service connecting Ephrata and New Holland
 - Service connecting Brownstown and Lititz
- Deviate existing Route 18 away from its current alignment to serve a new housing development
- Deviate existing Route 17 off of its current alignment to add direct service to ARS Lancaster facility
- Request for service to Summit Living development in Silver Spring area of West Hempfield Township

Inter-County and Other Service

- Reading to Lancaster
- Ephrata to Mohnton or Shillington, serve Adamstown
- Connect BARTA and LANTA services
- Connect BARTA and SEPTA services