

Meeting Summary

Subject: SCTA Microtransit Feasibility Study – Steering Committee Meeting #1

Date/Time: January 6, 2025, 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Location: Teams Meeting

Attendees

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Lauri Ahlskog	SCTA (Project Manager)	Ashley Bulley	ECHOS
David Avery	SCTA	Liz Ackerman	Northern Lancaster Chamber of Commerce
Jen Boley	SCTA	Tom Martin	County Office of Aging
Keith Boatman	SCTA	Ray D’Agostino	County Commissioner, MPO member
Sandy Burke	SCTA Board Member	Will Clark	Lancaster County Planning Dept.
Joy Ashley	SCTA Board Member	Bryant Heng	City of Lancaster
George Tobler	VisionCorps	Cindy McCormick	City of Lancaster
Kat DeSantis	Lancaster Chamber	Tyler Beduhn	Kimley-Horn (Project Manager)
Mike Hession	Denver Borough Chamber	Vickie Karandrikas	Kimley-Horn (Outreach Lead)
Scott Peiffer	Quarryville Borough Manager	Lauren Ledesma	Kimley-Horn (Analyst)

Action Tracker

Action Item	Responsible	Target Completion	Status
Include Township Representative(s) in future Steering Committee Meetings	L. Ahlskog	3/3	In Progress
Schedule Steering Committee Meeting #2 for 3/3	T. Beduhn, Ahlskog	1/13	In Progress
Follow-Up with County Planning Commission on available data	L. Ahlskog	1/13	In Progress

Notes

The following notes accompany the meeting slides:

- Steering Committee (SC) members, SCTA, and the Kimley-Horn team introduced themselves
 - L. Ahlskog confirmed the team will look at adding township representation on the Steering Committee
- **Study Background and Overview of Microtransit**
 - How familiar are you with Microtransit? [Poll questions via Mentimeter]
 - Extremely familiar: 4
 - Slightly familiar: 6
 - Somewhat familiar: 3
 - Not at all: 0
 - T. Beduhn provided an overall review of microtransit as a service concept and examples
 - Feedback
 - J. Ashley – Asked if the examples of Microtransit listed are subcontracted companies or are they part of larger transit system in the area? T. Beduhn stated examples of both are shown, both options will be explored to determine what is best and more suitable for Lancaster County.
- **Roles and Responsibilities of Steering Committee**
 - The SC will have four meetings at study milestones, and will also review all task deliverables currently with SCTA; there will be a 1-week review period for each and SC members are encouraged to provide feedback
 - 3 upcoming Steering Committee Meetings
 - Opportunity Zones and Models Meeting: March
 - Recommendations Meeting: July
 - Draft Study Meeting: September
- **Project Scope and Timeline**
 - Beduhn stepped through the tasks and timeline for the study; there were no questions

- **Public Participation Plan Input**

- The project team (subconsultant Connect the Dots) will be developing a Public Participation Plan, which will have two rounds of outreach
 - Round 1: Study Introduction, Input on Opportunity Zones (Spring 2025)
 - Round 2: Draft Study (Fall 2025)

- Feedback

- L. Ahlskog confirmed a page is set up on the SCTA and RRTA website (under About Us tab), and SCTA has their website contractor working on adding a button on the main page to access study page. V. Karandrikas confirmed collaborating with their IT team on future content to be added to the website, as well as to provide links, QR codes, etc.
- B. Heng emphasized the importance of language accessibility and noted the City can help to identify community leaders to engage in this project.

- **Goals and Needs Discussion [Via Mentimeter]**

- Where are you seeing the most unmet transportation needs and challenges?
 1. Spoke model of the fixed route system is limiting to people who are trying to move laterally from one municipality to the next.
 2. Cross county connections are missing because of hub and spoke system.
 3. Connecting better to places of employment and healthcare
 4. Being in rural southern Lancaster county we have no real public transit. Microtransit may be the answer for more rural areas
 5. In our areas that don't have access to public transit. Ephrata and such.
 6. Last mile and first mile issue
 7. Between major areas of housing and employment where fixed bus routes do not exist or are not flexible enough
 8. The fixed route system acts like a wagon wheel land doesn't address tying communities in the northern tier like Lititz and Manheim. Also, the southern end of the county.
 9. Cross county connections and rural access within town or neighboring towns with now bus routes.
 10. Northern Lancaster County (Cocalico Area and Ephrata Area School Districts). Public Transportation ends at Walmart in Ephrata, so Rt. 222 N heading into Denver/Adamstown need access.

11. Rural areas
 12. Awareness and possible stigma about using public transit
 13. Employment opportunities developed in the last 20 years are not always on the different spokes.
 14. Limited public transit in our small community. Focus on connections to employment opportunities in surrounding region.
 15. Rural areas and for individuals in urbanized areas that the fixed route system does not serve well. Mainly for jobs and needed services.
- Which areas or populations do you feel need better or more tailored service?
 1. Southern end
 2. Where the fixed route service frequency is only hourly.
 3. Rural areas
 4. Northeast Lancaster County.
 5. Workers without vehicles, especially who work 2nd and 3rd shift
 6. Rural county areas currently do not have adequate public transit
 7. Populations include the elderly, those who have no personal transportation sources, and those who are homeless but are employed.
 8. Northwest region
 9. Impact to Amish and plain sect community
 10. Disabled community going short distances
 11. Northern Lancaster, Southern Lancaster, basically anywhere public transportation stops.
 12. Entry level job markets destinations need to be served to allow better access.
 13. B. Heng commented that recognizing cultural awareness and stigma of using public transit, as well as increasing the number of residents using the bus are vital for microtransit to be successful in Lancaster.
 - Which specific goals would you like to see a solution like Microtransit achieve?
 1. Greater access and frequency.
 2. To solve the issues mentioned in last 2 questions [connectivity and rural areas].
 3. Cross county connection

4. Access for those without transportation
 5. Provide affordable transit to jobs for residents in rural areas who may not own a car
 6. Covering fixed route service gaps
 7. We need a modern and creative solution and if microtransit is well resourced and accepted by the community, it could work
 8. Cost efficiency
 9. Improved connectivity and access, help public transit become more viable of an option for people in the county.
 10. Access to services for those who don't drive. Access to those services past the normal hours of operation.
 11. Cost efficiency; healthier for the environment; remove stigma of public transportation
 12. Provide higher level of ridership per vehicle hour when compared to lowest performing fixed routes
 13. Finding a way to pilot and test Microtransit in Lancaster county
 14. A feasible plan to provide Microtransit, one that stretches the SCTA's current model and thinking
- What outcomes would you consider a success at the end of this study?
 1. Piloting of micro transit
 2. L. Ahlskog emphasizes that SCTA needs steps of implementation before determining what success looks like. If high ridership is a target, then a potential next step would be a fixed route to carry a greater number of people where microtransit was successful. Beduhn noted that microtransit performance measures can be different than traditional transit measures depending on the goals and transportation needs you are trying to solve.
 3. An implementable plan that the community supports
 4. Piloting and testing microtransit in Lancaster County
 5. Creation of a viable solution that is embraced by the community
 6. Success will be a plan that will be implemented
 7. Provide goals and a potential test program
 8. The community of public transit users have more access to the goods and services within the county in a timely manner

9. Sustainable model
10. Creation of a viable solution that is embraced by the community
11. Hearing from residents/business owners that are not currently served by fixed route.
12. Affordable and sustainable option.
13. A way to evaluate microtransit pilots.
14. A list of prioritized microtransit areas to implement if the pilot is deemed successful.
15. T. Beduhn stated that customer convenience, rating, and wait time are other measurement factors to determine successfulness.
16. Affordable and sustainable
17. A way to evaluate microtransit pilots
18. V. Karandrikas asked how the Steering Committee may want to evaluate microtransit pilots. T. Beduhn stated there typically needs to be a ramp up period of one to two year minimum to fully evaluate the performance. The key is to be adaptable, there will be lots of data generated by the platforms with these services. There must be responses to customer needs and feedback along the way with small tweaks to increase effectiveness.

- **Next Steps**

- T. Beduhn reviewed next steps and next meetings. The team collectively decided the Steering Committee Meeting #2 will be on Monday, March 3, beginning at 8:30 or 9:00 am respectively.

- **Open discussion and Q&A**

- Feedback

- B. Heng asked to elaborate on who Connect the Dots are and how they will move the project forward. Also asked what kind of data is being analyzed. T. Beduhn stated Connect The Dots is part of the outreach and grassroots campaign and will create promotional content. They are a contractor helping us through first round of engagement. Data being used includes census data, density of population and employment, points of interest, Replica, origin destination, and looking at travel patterns to understand trip flows. SCTA shared operation and performance data, efficiency, effectiveness of current system. Main factors are population, demographics, performance, and travel data.

- G. Tobler asked if the project team will consider paratransit data? T. Beduhn confirmed using 3 months of common trips being analyzed. The team will explore how paratransit options compliment and exist today in other existing microtransit models.
- R. D'Agostino commented that the Commission has data or access to data which will be helpful. The TDP did not use this data to its fullest advantage. T. Beduhn confirmed the team can follow-up on available data.
- B. Heng asked if the team will speak to any employers? T. Beduhn stated it will depend on how services and recommendations evolve. If certain zones have key employers then employers will be considered, but the team will see how recommendations will come along. Employers will have the same opportunities to provide feedback.
- L. Ahlskog commented that previous efforts with the Chamber to get feedback from employers was not successful. She confirmed the team will utilize Commute PA and their connections with employers to discuss transit in general.