



**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION**

# **ARRA & The State of Public Transportation**

**Public Transportation Testimony  
to  
The Pennsylvania Senate  
Transportation Committee**

**March 16, 2009**

Presented by:  
Richard H. Farr  
PPTA Chairman  
Executive Director, rabbittransit  
York County Transportation Authority



## **ARRA**

The Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association members are positioned to maximize the outcomes from the funding being provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Systems have been working with PennDOT and their local MPOs to ensure their projects are shovel ready and are on the STIP. Many systems have reported that they have already begun the grant process with the Federal Transit Administration. Our mission for the ARRA is to have Pennsylvania in a position to accept any funds that may be reallocated from other states. Attached in exhibit 1 is a list of projects from selected systems to provide you with a sense of the how the funding will be utilized.

While we all hope that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 will get the nation back on track, it cannot distract us from our ongoing efforts to address the Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure. The economic stimulus funds can not be seen as a substitute to state funds. Despite the fact that Act 44 went a long way in keeping our highways, bridges and transit systems functioning, it did not deliver to the level identified in the Transportation Funding and Reform Commission's report. We must continue our work on finding solutions to provide sustainable funding so Pennsylvania transportation infrastructure remains strong.

## **State of Public Transportation**

On behalf of the entire membership of the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (PPTA), I would like to extend our gratitude to the members of the General Assembly and to Governor Rendell for visionary leadership on the development and passing of Act 44. This legislation came at a time where transit systems from all across the state, from the largest to the smallest, were in crisis. Systems were planning extensive service cuts and excessive fare increases in an effort to keep their budgets balanced.

In 2008, PPTA reported on the positive outcomes related to Act 44. Those benefits have continued over the past year. Systems like Beaver County, Cambria County and Warren County reported that they were able avoid service reductions. Systems such as Bradford/Tioga County, Indiana County and Crawford County were able to implement new services and have reported significant increases in ridership. Other systems like Berks County, Luzerne County and Union/Snyder Counties were able to have system performance studies completed to assist them in making improvements.

Much has changed in our world since July 17, 2007. Act 44 provided the necessary resources for public transportation to continue operating service at a time when our nation experienced the largest increase in energy cost ever. Pennsylvanians, like thousands of people all across the country, turned to transit in large numbers seeking refuge from the high gas prices. Many found that transit offered real solutions to their everyday transportation needs and have continued utilizing the services. At the same time, many others found that our transit systems could not solve their problems – too few routes, limited hours of service, and in some circumstances more passengers than vehicles could accommodate.

In the formative stages of Act 44, a significant amount of attention was given to the area of reform. PPTA is pleased to announce that we have made progress in this area. Through the assistance of PennDOT, we have begun several initiatives. The first is Transit Board of Directors training where roles and responsibilities are communicated, including Act 44 reform elements. Additional training for senior level management/leadership is currently being developed which will include special emphasis in the area of continued improvement in service delivery. Several systems have begun initiatives that would foster reform, such as transit development plans and cost/benefit analysis for capital and service projects.

The National Conference of State Legislatures noted that we are at a critical juncture for making decisions about investments in the nation's surface transportation system.

“By many standards, U.S. transportation needs are growing. On the nation’s highways, more people are traveling more miles—vehicle miles traveled have grown by more than 35 percent since 1990—than at any point in the history of the country. Freight shipments through the United States are expected to double in volume by 2020, and truck travel connected to international trade should double by 2015. The demand for public transportation services has increased by 23 percent since 1995 and is at its highest point since World War II. Since 1993, urban traffic has increased 45 percent, while rural highway traffic has increased 23 percent. Traffic congestion on U.S. highways is now estimated to cost Americans nearly \$65 billion each year in wasted time and fuel.”

As the transportation needs and costs continue to grow it is imperative that we expeditiously work to identify real solutions.

To continue to be responsive to the needs of all Pennsylvanian residents, we must recognize that there is a need for a new and broader role for public transportation. Elected officials and transportation professionals must begin looking at transportation as one system, a system of mobility. This view goes beyond the traditional transportation system and begins developing a network of diverse transportation services and providers to satisfy customer needs. We must consider a system where traffic management, technological innovation, land-use practices and regulatory policies will work in concert to support the effective delivery of transportation services.

Clearly these are complicated times. Difficult decisions will have to be made by the Pennsylvania Legislative body on how the state will continue to meet the surface transportation system’s growing needs. While Pennsylvania is not alone in this national problem, we encourage you to make sure Pennsylvania is the leader in finding a solution. The members of the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association stand ready to assist you in any way possible. We appreciate the work on Act 44 and value the efforts yet to come.



## **PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION**

Formed in 1997, by the merger of the Pennsylvania Association of Municipal Transportation Authorities and the Pennsylvania Association for Community Transportation, the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association builds upon 37 years of collective history and sets the standard for the transportation industry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association is a state-wide membership services organization that advocates for nearly 150 public and community transportation suppliers and providers and the communities they serve. With members serving every county in the Commonwealth, our membership includes shared-ride programs, medical assistance transportation programs, providers of coordinated transportation, urban systems, rural providers and multi-modal systems. PPTA provides leadership, resources, support and technical assistance and serves as a unified voice to advocate and strengthen the role of public transportation in improving the quality of life for all Pennsylvania citizens.

[www.ppta.net](http://www.ppta.net)

## **AARA PROJECTS PER PPTA MEMBER SYSTEMS - 3/13/09**

### **AMTRAN – BLAIR COUNTY**

Part of AMTRAN's ARRA funding will be used on Phase I of our Joint Development Project, a building renovation that will maintain local construction jobs in the short run and will have economic development opportunities in the long run. Details at [www.amtran.org](http://www.amtran.org) under "Trolleyworks Business Park."

We expect to be able to obligate more than 50% of the money in less than 180 days as the following items are already in place.

- All environmental approvals are complete.
- The Blair County MPO has added it to the TIP, and FTA Region 3 has already included it as approved on the State TIP.
- The building renovation project has been approved by the county and city planning commissions.
- The construction specs will be going out to bid April 2 and should be awarded on May 18.

Other projects under the ARRA funding may include a new bus wash and re-paving our parking lot. These are not very exciting, but are very necessary.

### **BARTA: TOTAL PROJECT COST - \$ 4,272,356**

#### **Project #1 – Preventive MA**

**Project Cost - \$ 500,000**

Preventive maintenance activities to upgrade and repair the BARTA Complex with general improvements; energy efficient lighting; and safety and security measures.

Maintenance of this asset is critical. Project also includes standard vehicle preventive maintenance activities.

<u>Milestone Description</u>	<u>Est. Comp. Date</u>
RFP/IFB Issued	Apr. 01, 2009
Contract Award	May 27, 2009
Contract Complete	Sept. 01, 2009

#### **Project #2 – Safety and Security Equipment**

**Project Cost - \$ 272,356**

BARTA currently has (25) twenty-five vehicles that are not equipped with safety and security cameras. This project will purchase and install security and surveillance cameras.

<u>Milestone Description</u>	<u>Est. Comp. Date</u>
RFP/IFB Issued	Apr. 01, 2009
Contract Award	May 27, 2009

Contract Complete

Sept. 01, 2009

**Project #3 – Paratransit Vehicle Replacement**

**Project Cost - \$1,100,000**

BARTA currently has (15) fifteen paratransit vehicles that have passed their useful life. BARTA will be replacing (6) six 2003 International Condor diesel paratransit vehicles with (4) four Hybrid-Electric paratransit and (2) two diesel paratransit vehicles. Project includes related equipment. Vehicles will be purchased and delivered in 2009.

<u>Milestone Description</u>	<u>Est. Comp. Date</u>
RFP/IFB Out for Bid	Apr. 01, 2009
Contract Awarded	May 27, 2009
First Vehicle Delivered	Sept. 01, 2009
All Vehicles Delivered	Oct. 01, 2009
Contract Complete	Oct. 01, 2009

**Project #4 – Fleet Expansion**

**Project Cost - \$2,400,000**

BARTA will expand its fleet by (4) four Hybrid-Electric buses and related equipment. This fleet expansion will allow BARTA to expand or improve service to much needed areas. This purchase will further “green” BARTA’s fleet. Vehicles will be purchased in 2009 and delivered in 2010.

<u>Milestone Description</u>	<u>Est. Comp. Date</u>
RFP/IFB Out for Bid	Apr. 01, 2009
Contract Awarded	May 27, 2009
First Vehicle Delivered	Sept. 01, 2010
All Vehicles Delivered	Oct. 01, 2010
Contract Complete	Oct. 01, 2010

**CamTran – CAMBRIA COUNTY**

An AE bid on February 27, 2009. The AE firm is working on two projects. 1) Replacement of concrete driveway/bus bays at down Transit Center. 2) Preliminary design/Planning for New Operations/Maintenance Facility. Plan FTA submission by early April. TIP revision for ARRA projects approved at JATS MPO meeting on February 26, 2009. Hope to start concrete project by early summer (project temperature linked) and complete mid Summer. Per the preliminary design and planning of new facility estimate start date early summer, complete date late summer. Note: we are working currently with AE firm for more precise milestones that we will need for FTA application process.

**CAT – CAPITAL AREA TRANSIT**

CAT's No. 1 Project is to grade separate the construction of Norfolk Southern Railroad's Lemoyne Connection Project. The MPO voted unanimously at their February 27, 2009 meeting to place this project on the TIP for ARRA Funding. CAT is currently working

with Norfolk Southern, FTA, PennDOT and other partners to move this project to implementation.

### **CATA – CENTRE COUNTY**

CATA will be using its \$1.67 million in ARRA funds for the rehabilitation of buses. We have 10 1998 New Flyer CNG coaches that are due for mid-life rebuilds. This project was on the Fleet Restoration Plan that our Board approved in 2006, but we never had the funds available to do the work.

While is this work that will be done at the facility of the successful bidder, and not in Centre County, it is a labor-intensive process, so it will definitely create jobs. The work will extend over perhaps six months.

Judi is already working with FTA to get the funds obligated, and we have an Request for Proposals already developed. Just as soon as we can, we'll be out the door with our RFP, in hopes that we can get a contract in place and begin the work this summer.

### **CARBON COUNTY**

For the County of Carbon. The vehicle replacement projects aren't really ARRA projects, but I threw them in to be complete. We are 'advancing' these projects as part of a general 'stimulus' effort.

**System Study: \$200,000** - The county will engage a consultant to conduct a feasibility study to accomplish two goals:

- 1) To determine whether a joint maintenance/office facility for public transit and county fleet maintenance would be cost effective; if so, what kind of design/engineering criteria should be included and where would be the best location for this facility within the County. This project is intended to aid both Transit and the County Maintenance department through the sharing of construction costs and the long-term savings in operating expenses for such a facility. Currently, public transit staff offices are housed in a rented storefront and there are no maintenance facilities for the fleet.
- 2) Evaluation of the fixed-route service operating within the County to determine whether an alternative 'call-n-ride' service might be more cost effective and provide residents with better transportation access.

### **Intelligent Transportation Project: Mobile Data terminals - \$100,000**

Since 1999, the County's transit fleet has employed a sophisticated paratransit software to manage the system, enhance efficiency and organize trip requests and bus operations in an effective way. To augment the County's control of the fleet and to maximize efficiency, mobile data terminals (MDT) will be added to the system. This will place small computer terminals in each of the County's 22 vehicles and enable automated vehicle location (AVL). MDT's will greatly aid management staff in monitoring the system and improve the response to customer needs as they change throughout the service day.

**Vehicle Replacement: \$248,000**

The County is advancing a vehicle replacement project. This will result in the replacement of 4 mini-buses that are beyond their useful life.

**Vehicle Expansion Project: \$300,000**

The County is advancing a project to expand its paratransit fleet. Over the past 5 years, demand has increased for specialized door-to-door services for the elderly and people with disabilities. The transit system has been able to manage this increased demand through the use of 'spare' vehicles and vehicles provided by the County's subcontractor for service, a private, for-profit entity. This project will expand the fleet by 5 vehicles – fully accessible mini-buses.

**CENTRE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

- Purchase 2 full accessible 2009 Ford E350 Phoenix bus with 2 wheelchair positions
- Purchase price for two vehicles is \$95,060

**CRAWFORD COUNTY**

CATA has submitted a candidate project to PennDOT for inclusion of Stimulus funding for the Crawford Intermodal Administration Facility for a total request of \$2,500,000.

Current status of project: Received Categorical Exclusion regarding further environmental testing from the FTA. Received authorization from PennDOT for land acquisition. Currently in final negotiations on sales agreements with the City of Meadville for property acquisition. Anticipated property acquisition - May 1, 2009. RFP for Design/Engineering/Architectural services is currently out with proposals due tomorrow (3/13/09). Anticipated awarding of contract by April 10, 2009. Early estimates for release of construction bid documents will be October 31, 2009.

**DuFAST**

DuFAST does not have any projects lined up as a result of ARRA funding.

**LACKAWANNA - COLTS**

COLTS intends to purchase 3 or 4 hybrid 35' buses and ITS equipment such as needed to update our AVL system for a total of approx 2.5 million dollars. We are looking to piggyback for the buses and are preparing to bid out the ITS work.

**LEBANON COUNTY – COLT**

COLT intend to use the ARRA allotted funds for rolling stock. The three (3) bus purchase has been approved by the Lebanon County MPO and has been placed on the STIP. They have received options to purchase all of the vehicles from the BARTA contract with GILLIG Corp. The project is already in TEAM, and currently waiting for final authorization from FTA before submitting the purchase order to GILLIG.

**LUZERNE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**

1. Purchase of five (5) electric-diesel hybrid buses at an anticipated cost of \$530,000 each for a total of \$2,650,000. This project is included on the TIP and voted on at MPO meetings held on February 18 and 25, 2009. LCTA is currently in the process of working

with the Gillig Corporation in identifying a transit authority in neighboring states which can provide a piggyback option for the purchase of these buses. LCTA's plans are to commit to a contract for this purchase immediately upon an option becoming available. The purchase of Associated Capital Maintenance Items in the form of spare engine(s) and transmission(s) at an estimated cost of \$119,586 is an additional project to the purchase of the buses, also on the TIP with a start date of the project to be comparable to that of the buses.

2. Purchase of a new radio communications system at an estimated cost of \$60,000. This project is included on the TIP and voted on at MPO meetings held on February 18 and 25, 2009. LCTA plans to solicit RFP's for this project as early as April 1, 2009 and hopes to have the project completed by June 30, 2009.

3. Purchase of two (2) support vehicles, a heavy-duty pick up truck and a one (1) ton dump truck. This project is also included on the TIP and voted on at MPO meetings held on February 18 and 25, 2009. LCTA's timeframe for this project is also beginning by April 1, 2009 and completed by June 30, 2009.

4. Purchase of a security surveillance camera system for the bus fleet at an estimated cost of \$120,000. The project is included on the TIP and voted on by the MPO. LCTA hopes to be able to start this project also by April 1, 2009 and complete by June 30, 2009.

5. Purchase of a new photo copy/fax/scanning machine at an estimated cost of \$30,000 and the purchase of bicycle racks, considered as transit enhancement, at the 1% allocation of \$31,107. An RFP for the copier is expected by April 1, 2009 and completed by May 31, 2009 and an RFP for the bicycle racks is expected by June 1, 2009 and completed by August 31, 2009.

These projects have not yet been placed on the TIP but will be submitted to the Luzerne County Planning Commission for its inclusion in the near future.

### **MID-MON VALLEY TRANSIT**

The funds made available to the MMVTA by ARRA will be used to further the Donora Intermodal Transit Facility. Phase One of the project, construction of the bus maintenance facility, is under way. Engineering & Design is expected to release IFB's for construction on March 26<sup>th</sup>. Phase Two of the project, which is renovation of administrative offices, passenger amenity area, Park & Ride area and vehicle storage will be able to move forward into final design phase and construction. All NEPA requirements have been met.

### **MONTOUR COUNTY**

I have been making phone calls in regards to the Building that was put in on the ARRA funding for Montour County. Congressman Chris Carney announced several weeks ago that we were getting the building but since then we have not heard anything else official. We are anticipating that our building will be completed by the deadline of Sept 2010. We look forward to working with PPTA, PennDot, FTA because this will be a benefit to

our County and also add Construction Jobs to our County as well as numerous other opportunities for expansion within the County.

### **PERRY COUNTY**

PCTA has requested \$132,000 for replacement paratransit buses and \$185,000 for MDT's and supporting software. The buses would be purchased on the state piggyback system allowing PCTA to move forward the moment funds would be awarded. A RFP is going to be going to PaDot next week for their approval so that part of the process is complete by the time awarding of funding takes place.

### **RED ROSE – LANCASTER COUNTY**

RRTA will be using all of its ARRA funds to renovate/expand operations facility. We expect to be out for bid in June. Total project cost \$8-9 Million.

### **STS – SCHUYLKILL COUNTY**

Project list from Penn Dot attached / Request to place projects that are not yet on the TIP will be made early next week.:

- 1) Vehicle replacement, 35' Gillig bus: Bus will be available through piggy back purchase (30-60 days)
- 2) Paving: Upon approval, request for bids will be submitted ASAP (60-90 days)
- 3) CTC 4- 27' Small Buses: Currently on TIP (30-60 days)
- 4) Intermodal Facility Project: In the Hands of Penn Dot. Project on TIP (in progress)

### **WARREN COUNTY**

The Warren County Transit Authority is preparing to implement one project consisting of several work elements. Our project will, if fully funded allow us to complete rehabilitation and construction activity of our intermodal transit facility. The project will consist of the following work elements; 1) put a new roof on our building; 2) rehab the second floor of our building. This floor will be shared with our local Area Agency on Aging and will be partially used as a senior center; 3) construct a new wash bay; and 4) construct two new maintenance bays. Our schedule calls for construction documents to be completed by May 18, 2009 and going out to bid by June 22, 2009. Contracts will be awarded sometime in July 2009.

### **RABBITTRANSIT - YORK COUNTY**

- 1) Facility Renovations: \$1,150,000 in federal economic recovery funds for renovations to the maintenance and administrative office facilities, repair the parking lot, purchase maintenance equipment & office equipment, and repair the transfer center drive for rabbittransit.
- 2) Vehicles: \$600,000 in federal economic recovery funds for the purchase of vehicles and vehicle asset maintenance for rabbittransit.
- 3) Paratransit Facility: \$1,750,000 for the construction of a paratransit facility which includes a maintenance area, administrative offices with tools and equipment for rabbittransit.