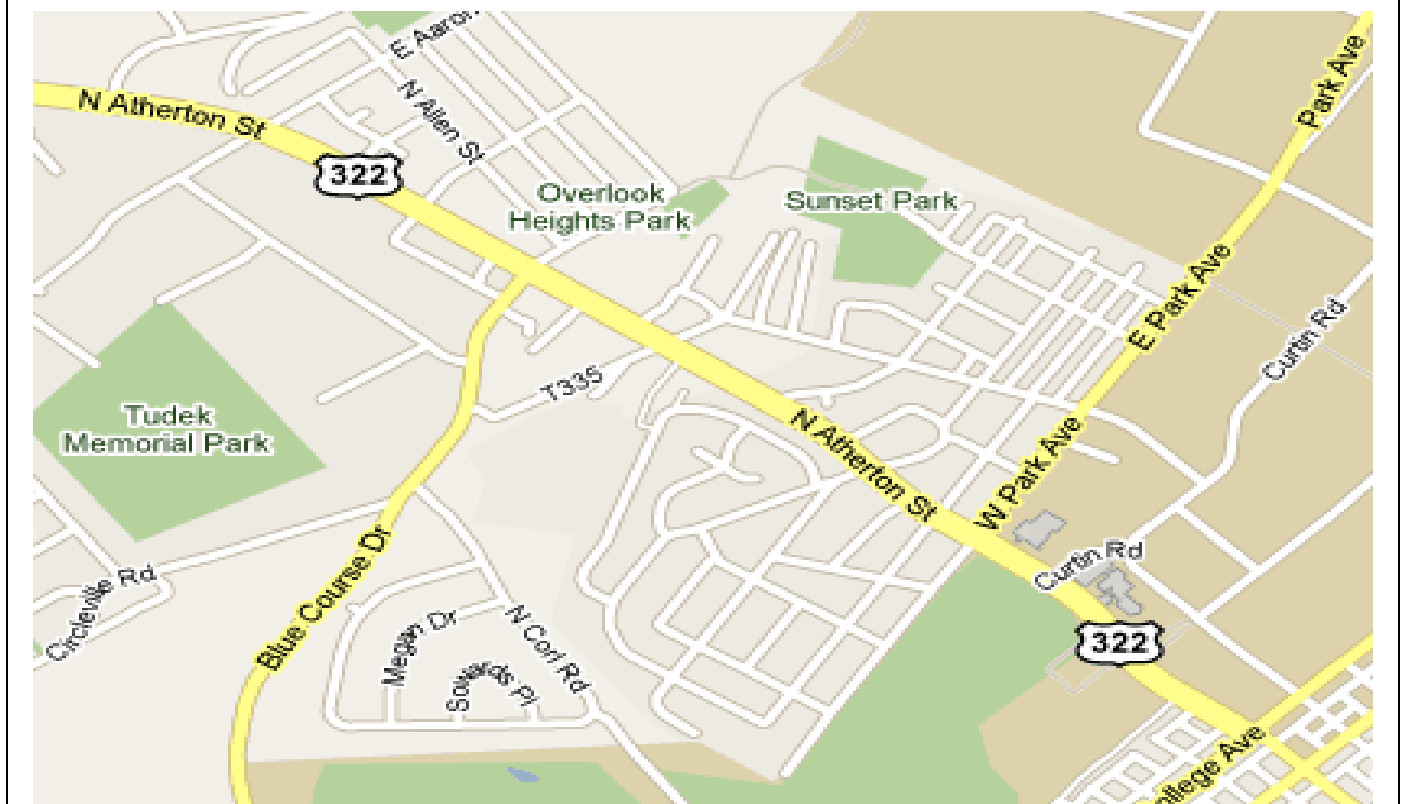


PROJECT REQUEST FORM

1) Project Name:	North Atherton Street Bus Rapid Transit		
2) Project Location:	Along Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street in Patton and Ferguson Townships and State College Borough, between Vairo Boulevard and the Penn State University campus		
3) Applicant:	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)		
4) Contact Person:	Gregory M. Kausch		
5) Phone:	(814) 238-2282 x133		
6) Fax:	(814) 238-7643		
7) Email:	gkausch@crcog.net		
8) Mailing Address:	2081 West Whitehall Road		
9) City:	State College, PA	10) Zip Code:	16801

11) Project Type (please check only one):		
A) Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility		Route #:
B) Bridge – Local System		Route #:
C) Bridge – State System		Route #:
D) Highway		Route #:
E) Public Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Route: Various
F) Rail		Line:
G) Other		

12) Please attach a location map and photo(s).



13) Please provide a brief (one or two sentence) description of the project :

Building on the North Atherton Street / Vairo Boulevard transit signal priority project currently underway, this project will establish a bus rapid transit corridor along Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street in Patton and Ferguson Townships and State College Borough. The bus rapid transit corridor will include a dedicated reversible transit-only lane along these two roadways, passenger boarding platforms, and queue-jump signal upgrades for transit at current and future signalized intersections along the corridor.

14) Please describe the project being requested, specifically what issues/problems are present and how this project will improve conditions:

As traffic congestion increases on busy urban arterials such as Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street, public transit agencies like CATA must continue to explore new and innovative methods to improve operating efficiency so that transit remains a viable alternative to driving single-occupant vehicles. One way to increase transit efficiency, and move more people within existing corridors, is to take steps to reduce the time buses are stopped in the general flow of traffic and at signalized intersections.

Several factors have an impact on travel time and delay for buses on urban arterials. These factors include the frequency of buses stopping, number of passengers getting on and off the bus, location of bus stops (near- versus far-side of intersection), traffic congestion, and the time spent waiting at traffic signals. In the case of Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street, bus frequency, the number of passengers boarding and alighting, and overall traffic congestion are as high as any corridor CATA serves; these levels rise during peak morning and evening travel periods, and during special events on the campus of Penn State University. Moreover, the amount of time buses spend waiting at in the general flow of traffic and at signalized intersections can represent a significant amount of overall delay time. By reducing the amount of time buses spend waiting in this traffic flow and at traffic signals, it may be possible to reduce the number of stops, delays, and overall travel time for buses.

CATA has recognized that traffic congestion contributes to their bus delays, erodes the overall efficiency of their transit routes, and prevents the maximum number of persons from moving efficiently within congested corridors, such as Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street. This project will establish a reversible, dedicated transit-only lane along these roadways and attempt to reduce travel time for buses while increasing the effective person carrying capacity of the congested corridors. Moreover, the project will implement queue-jump signal upgrades at each existing and future traffic signal throughout the corridors to maximize the efficiency of transit vehicle movements in an area of particularly heavy congestion, and construct passenger boarding platforms at key stops within the corridors to speed passenger boarding and alighting time.

As most or all of the signals along these corridors will be outfitted with the signal controller technology necessary to accommodate transit signal priority, and as all CATA fixed route vehicles are expected to be enhanced with the required on-board equipment as part of an existing project along North Atherton Street and Vairo Boulevard, this new project represents a future opportunity to build on these upgrades and improve transit efficiency and effectiveness in one of CATA's primary service corridors.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Do you believe this project will:

15) Reduce crash rate?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			
The reduction in single occupant vehicles using the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors as a result of bus rapid transit may have the indirect benefit of reducing the probability of vehicle crashes due to congestion in these corridors.			

16) Reduce conflicts between motorized and non-motorized transportation modes (Pedestrian/Bicycle/Buggy)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain and note if a pedestrian/bicycle/buggy amenity will be maintained or added as part of the project:</i>			
Again, the reduction in single occupant vehicles using the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors as a result of bus rapid transit may have the indirect benefit of reducing the conflicts between single-occupant vehicles and non-motorized transportation modes in these corridors. Moreover, it will separate transit vehicles from the general flow of traffic, reducing the likelihood of conflicts between these two traffic types, and thereby improving safety.			

17) Improve intersection(s) and/or roadway alignment(s)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain and note the intersection(s) that will affected:</i>			
Queue-jump signals for transit vehicles along Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Streets will contribute to improved conditions at these heavily-congested, transit-intensive intersections.			

18) Improve the security of the traveling public (Ex. Improves upon incident response, establishes detour/evacuation routes, implements security features on public transportation vehicles and facilities)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			
By virtue of consolidating an increased number of single-occupant vehicle trips into transit trips, it is expected that increased public transit capacity along Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street can contribute to increased security of the traveling public, particularly during inclement weather conditions or periods of heavy congestion. Increased transit capacity will provide the same benefits in terms of congestion reduction for detour and evacuation routes as it does for regular daily routing. Moreover, mass transportation plays a documented, vital role in response to, and evacuation from, natural and man-made disasters.			

PRESERVATION OF THE EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Do you believe this project will:

19) Prolong the useful life of the transportation system and infrastructure through reconstruction, rehabilitation and preventative maintenance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

By consolidating single-occupant vehicle trips, increased transit capacity would not only enhance and preserve capacity along the surrounding road network, it would also help to optimize the function of the North Atherton Street and Vairo Boulevard corridors, as well as surrounding surface streets. Moreover, it would reduce wear-and-tear on road surfaces.

20) Rehabilitate and modernize public transportation facilities or fleet?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

This project would serve as a key element in improving the function of existing transit facilities along North Atherton Street and Vairo Boulevard, and would clearly modernize these facilities with a world-class transit corridor. These facilities are some of the most heavily-utilized in the entire CATA fixed route network.

21) Improve ride quality?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain and provide current International Roughness Index:

EFFICIENT SYSTEM MANAGEMENT & OPERATION

Do you believe this project will:

22) Reduce congestion, improve Level of Service and reduce travel times within the project area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain and note how this project may impact adjacent routes/travel patterns:</i>			
<p>As noted earlier on this project request form, by consolidating single-occupant vehicle trips, increased transit frequency and capacity will contribute to reduced congestion and improved Level of Service along the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors, as well as along surrounding surface streets. In terms of travel time, we believe that bus rapid transit will help CATA meet or exceed commute times for trips taken by single occupant vehicle. Moreover, reduced congestion and improved Level of Service will provide cascading benefits to all travelers within the project area, not only those who utilize mass transportation.</p>			
23) Increase public transportation service frequency and capacity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			
<p>By shortening travel times, bus rapid transit would clearly allow CATA to greatly increase frequency and capacity along the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors without adding to the actual number of buses and operators on the street. Moreover, it lays the groundwork for better function of additional service going forward.</p>			
24) Improve system functionality through improvements such as signal upgrades, Intelligent Transportation System applications and access management approaches?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			
<p>This project will, by its definition, improve traffic signal function and apply Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) features throughout the project area. Any transit frequency and capacity added will make full use of CATA's existing Advanced Public Transportation System (APTS) capabilities, including GPS location of vehicles, enhanced dispatch-to-driver and driver-to-dispatch communications, on-time performance reporting, and real-time, web-based customer information with respect to routing and scheduling. Moreover, it will also benefit from additional planned APTS improvements including automatic passenger counters, on-board stop annunciators, on-board video recording capability, and wayside signage.</p>			

INTEGRATION & CONNECTIVITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Do you believe this project will:

25) Eliminate/overcome barriers (Ex. Closures, detours & delays, weight restrictions) in key corridors?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain and note official detour distances based on factors such as weight restrictions:</i> This project will clearly allow CATA to better overcome delays in two of Centre County's most critical corridors.			

26) Establish/maintain intermodal connections?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i> Existing transit facilities along the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors already feature connections between the private automobile, mass transportation, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and these connections would not be negatively impacted by this project.			

27) Introduce new connections between existing travel patterns (Ex. Street connectivity, linking bicycle/pedestrian routes, connections between transit routes and providers)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i> While this project will not implement new intermodal connections, it will allow existing connections to function more efficiently and effectively.			

28) Align residents with their destinations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i> Through reduced travel times and delays, and increased transit frequency and capacity, this project will clearly better align residents with their destinations in downtown State College, on the campus of Penn State University, and throughout the CATA service area. Specifically, the project will establish a much better linkage between student and community housing concentrations and the major area of economic activity in the State College area.			

ACCESSIBILITY & MOBILITY OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE & FREIGHT

Do you believe this project will:

29) Improve public transportation services: routes, ride share opportunities, vanpools, and park & ride lots?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain and include projected ridership:

Reduced travel times and delays within the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors will clearly accommodate increased transit frequency and capacity within the project area, and allow for "express" service between the northern portion of the State College area, and campus and downtown State College.

30) Improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

As noted earlier in this document, existing transit facilities along the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors already feature connections between the private automobile, mass transportation, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and these connections would not be negatively impacted by this project.

31) Improve access to airports, freight distribution facilities or major industrial districts?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

By increasing access to the primary transfer points between fixed routes within the CATA system – principally located in downtown State College – this project would enhance the ability of area residents to access the University Park Airport, as well as industrial districts within the Centre Region, including the Science Park Road and Cato Park areas.

32) Implement Complete Streets principles?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

As noted earlier in this document, existing transit facilities along the Vairo Boulevard and North Atherton Street corridors already feature connections between the private automobile, mass transportation, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and these connections would not be negatively impacted by this project. Therefore, the project is expected to play at least a contributing role in implementing Complete Streets principles.

CONSISTENCY WITH PLANNED GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Do you believe this project will:

33) Be consistent with the following documents?			
A) County Comprehensive Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
B) Regional Comprehensive Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
C) Municipal Comprehensive Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
D) Municipal Zoning Ordinance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
E) Municipal Official Map	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

If yes to any of the above, please explain:

This project is fully consistent with the Centre County Comprehensive Plan (Pages E-2 and E-3, Figure 2) and Centre Region Comprehensive Plan (pages 75-76). Moreover, it does not conflict with relevant municipal zoning ordinances or official maps.

34) Improve/support the existing transportation infrastructure in existing & planned growth areas?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

This project clearly improves existing transportation infrastructure and prolongs the useful life of other transportation infrastructure components. Moreover, it does not promote new growth areas, but rather links already-existing areas of current and planned development activity.

35) Promotes Smart Growth Principles (Ex. walkable communities, fosters distinct communities & sense of place, supports integration of mixed land uses into communities)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

Through the enhancement of transit service, this project will link existing activity centers of a wide variety of uses through alternative modes that do not require the use of single-occupant vehicles.

36) Avoid negative impacts on communities and the environment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If no, please explain:

ENVIRONMENT & AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY

Do you believe this project will:

37) Improve air quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i> By enabling consolidation of single-occupant vehicle trips into mass transportation trips, and reducing wait times at congested intersections, this project will clearly have a beneficial effect on air quality within the region. As the vehicles that will serve these corridors are consistent with CATA's existing compressed natural gas (CNG) program, these expected benefits will be even further enhanced.			

38) Promote energy conservation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i> Again, by enabling consolidation of single-occupant vehicle trips into mass transportation trips, and reducing wait times at congested intersections, this project will clearly have a beneficial effect on energy conservation within the region. As the vehicles that will serve these corridors are consistent with CATA's existing compressed natural gas (CNG) program, these expected benefits will be even further enhanced.			

39) Avoid impacts on endangered or threatened species, key natural habitats, agricultural lands and historic & cultural resources?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If no, please explain:</i> 			

40) Avoid impacts upon water resources (Ex. water recharge areas & exceptional value/high quality streams?)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If no, please explain and note which water resources may be affected:</i> 			

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Do you believe this project will:

41) Improve access and/or enhance freight movement to regional & national economic centers?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			

42) Encourage tourism?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			
<p>Not only will this project enhance access to major intercity transportation facilities (University Park Airport, State College Intercity Bus Depot) for area residents, it will also make more accessible the natural and historic resources of downtown State College and the greater State College area.</p>			

43) Encourage infill development, the redevelopment of brownfield sites within reach of existing infrastructure & the overall redevelopment of core communities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain:</i>			
<p>As mentioned earlier in this project request form, this project does not promote new growth areas, but rather links already-existing areas of current and planned development activity. Moreover, this project will link existing activity centers of a wide variety of uses through alternative modes that do not require the use of single-occupant vehicles. It would also complement revitalization efforts in downtown State College and throughout the area.</p>			

PRIORITY

44) Is this your highest priority (#1) project?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>Highest priority projects will be granted a half-point (0.5) bonus. Entities requesting projects may submit only one highest priority project.</i>			

45) If this is not your #1 priority, what rank did you assign this project?	Undetermined at this time
<i>Municipalities may submit as many projects as they wish. The CCMPO requests that you rank all of your candidate projects.</i>	

COST

46) What is the total estimated cost?	\$20,000,000
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47) What is the cost by project phase, if known?	
A) Preliminary Engineering	\$200,000
B) Final Design	N/A
C) Utilities	N/A – included in ROW costs
D) Right of Way	\$9,900,000
E) Construction	\$9,900,000