

PROJECT REQUEST FORM

1) Project Name:	Moshannon Valley Commuter Bus Service		
2) Project Location:	Between the Moshannon Valley and State College areas, generally following the US-322 and I-99 corridors		
3) Applicant:	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)		
4) Contact Person:	Gregory M. Kausch		
5) Phone:	(814) 238-2282 x133		
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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: New Route
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 :

This project will be to establish commuter bus service (two morning “inbound” trips, one mid-day bi-directional trip, and two evening “outbound” trips) linking the Moshannon Valley to the State College area. We envision the service as operating from roughly 6:30am to 6:30pm, Monday through Friday, year-round with the exception of major holidays. Service will be coordinated with the Area Transportation Authority (ATA) of North Central Pennsylvania, and as such will also provide linkages between the State College area, DuBois, and Clearfield.

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

The 2008 Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan, prepared and adopted by the Centre County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO), finds that by virtually any objective measure (population density, senior and disabled population, poverty, income, unemployment, receipt of public assistance, automobile ownership, commute time, etc.) the Moshannon Valley region of Centre and Clearfield Counties (Philipsburg Borough and Rush Township) is the most transportation-disadvantaged community in the County, on par with the Lower Bald Eagle Valley and Mountaintop Region, particularly with respect to alternative modes of transportation. This area is currently targeted for commuter bus service by both the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA) and the Area Transportation Authority (ATA) of North Central Pennsylvania.

Regional transportation policymakers are well aware of these shortcomings. Transportation projects in the area figure prominently in the strategic plan of the Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA). The Centre County Office of Transportation Services (CCOT) offers demand responsive transportation to the area, but it is limited in scope and requires a level of flexibility in travel that may conflict with a regular work schedule. Moreover, it can be cost-prohibitive for a client that does not fit into a program such as the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP), Rural Transportation Program for Persons with Disabilities (PwD), or the PA Lottery Program. A park and ride lot study for the region was approved for funding under the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI); any lot(s) constructed as a result of this study will accommodate carpool and vanpool participants as well as other mass transit riders. Finally, CATA's Centre Commute program serves a large number of carpool and vanpool participants who commute between the Moshannon Valley and the State College area.

Commuter bus service linking the Moshannon Valley with the employment centers in the greater State College area has for years been one of the highest-ranked priorities on the transit element of the current CCMPO Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), as well as the largest missing piece of a well-balanced range of transportation options in the community. Major employment centers in the State College area currently employ about 28,000 people. Minor sites provide numerous other jobs.

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 US-322 and I-99 corridors as a result of commuter bus service 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 US-322 and I-99 corridors as a result of commuter bus service may have the indirect benefit of reducing the conflicts between single-occupant vehicles and non-motorized transportation modes in these corridors.			

17) Improve intersection(s) and/or roadway alignment(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain and note the intersection(s) that will be affected:</i> 			

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 many single-occupant vehicle trips into several transit trips per day – utilizing professional drivers and well-maintained equipment – it is expected that commuter bus service can contribute to increased security of the traveling public, particularly during inclement weather conditions. Commuter bus service 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, commuter bus service would not only enhance and preserve capacity along the surrounding road network, it would also help to optimize the function of the US-322 and I-99 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:

Service would necessitate the use of new 40- or 45-foot over-the-road coaches, which, through direct purchase, lease agreement, or by contracted provider, would likely lower the average age of CATA's fixed route fleet.

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, commuter bus service will contribute to reduced congestion and improved Level of Service along the US-322 and I-99 corridors, as well as along surround surface streets. In terms of travel time, we believe that a commute by mass transportation vehicle – though not necessarily shorter – will be competitive with that 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>Regularly-scheduled commuter bus service will clearly increase transit frequency and capacity within the project area, where mass transportation options are currently limited.</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>New commuter bus service 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 type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
<i>If yes, please explain and note official detour distances based on factors such as weight restrictions:</i>			

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>			
<p>Commuter bus service as proposed would offer connections to other fixed route and demand responsive transit services in the area, interface with carpool and vanpool groups within the US-322 and I-99 corridors, link with bicycle and pedestrian facilities present within the project area, and serve any future lots that are constructed as a result of the aforementioned Moshannon Valley Park and Ride Lot Study. Moreover, these services would be closely coordinated with current and future services offered by the Area Transportation Authority (ATA) of North Central Pennsylvania.</p>			

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>			
<p>As mentioned directly above, commuter bus service would link existing and planned transit facilities – including park and ride lots – bicycle and pedestrian routes, and existing and planned transit services in the area, including local transit service provided by ATA, carpools and vanpools, and demand-responsive service offered by the Centre County Office of Transportation Services (CCOT).</p>			

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>			
<p>Commuter bus service would clearly link the Moshannon Valley to the State College area – an area rich in employment opportunities and other supportive services (education, child care, shopping, medical) on a consistent, predictable basis. Major employment centers in the State College area currently employ about 28,000 people. Minor sites provide numerous other jobs.</p>			

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:

Regularly-scheduled commuter bus service will clearly increase transit frequency and capacity within the project area, where mass transportation options are currently limited.

Though no service is currently offered in the Moshannon Valley-State College corridor, CATA would expect a total average weekday ridership of 125 for the project. The project as proposed, though, could accommodate up to 330 trips per average weekday. Therefore, CATA expects this project to provide about 31,750 one-way trips per year. This is based on an average weekday ridership of 125, and 254 service days per year.

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 in the existing CATA service area (Centre Region, Bellefonte, and Pleasant Gap areas), commuter bus service would provide CATA with a vested interest in working with local developers within the project area to improve transit amenities (pull-off areas, stop pads, shelters) as well as companion bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

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:

Through a system of transfers between commuter bus service and CATA's existing fixed route network in the State College area, Bellefonte, and Pleasant Gap, this project would enhance the ability of Moshannon Valley 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 above, commuter bus service would provide CATA with a vested interest in working with local developers within the project area to improve transit amenities (pull-off areas, stop pads, shelters) as well as companion bicycle and pedestrian facilities. 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); the Moshannon Valley does not appear to have an integrated comprehensive plan. 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:

Service planning activities for this project already involve – and will continue to involve – local municipal officials and residents to ensure that the selected routing and scheduling best meets local needs. Moreover, commuter bus service in this case 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 establishment of mass transportation service, as well as implementation of related transit amenities and companion bicycle and pedestrian facilities, 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 consolidating many single-occupant vehicle trips into several mass transportation trips, this project will clearly have a beneficial effect on air quality within the region. Assuming the vehicles selected for this project 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 consolidating many single-occupant vehicle trips into several mass transportation trips, this project will clearly have a beneficial effect on energy conservation within the region. Assuming the vehicles selected for this project 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
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If yes, please explain:

42) Encourage tourism?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
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If yes, please explain:

Not only will this project increase access to major intercity transportation facilities (University Park Airport, State College Intercity Bus Depot) for Moshannon Valley residents, it will also make more accessible the natural and historic resources of the Moshannon Valley.

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
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If yes, please explain:

As mentioned earlier in this project request form, commuter bus service in this case 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 Philipsburg – the only designated “Main Street” Community in Centre County – and throughout the Moshannon Valley.

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?	\$700,000 for a three-year demonstration period, although it is expected that a significant portion of project costs will be recovered through passenger fares.
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47) What is the cost by project phase, if known?	
A) Preliminary Engineering	N/A – Non-construction project
B) Final Design	N/A – Non-construction project
C) Utilities	N/A – Non-construction project
D) Right of Way	N/A – Non-construction project
E) Construction	N/A – Non-construction project