

FINAL REPORT

**Cambria County, Pennsylvania
Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service
Transportation Plan**

Prepared By:
Cambria County Coordinated Transportation Steering Committee

Facilitated By:
Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran)

Approved By:
Johnstown Area Transportation Study (JATS) Metropolitan Planning
Organization
Draft- May 24, 2007
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Cambria County Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Executive Summary

Enacted into law on August 10, 2005, SAFETEA-LU- the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users regulations requires that projects selected for funding under 5310, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom programs are derived from a local coordination plan. A coordinated, public transit-human services plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.

The Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran) is the designated transportation coordinator in Cambria County. Therefore, after discussion with the Cambria County Planning Commission (CCPC), CamTran took the lead by expanding the existing CamTran Local Advisory Committee to include more stakeholders representative of the local transportation community.

The information contained in the coordination plan will be submitted to the Johnstown Area Transportation Study (JATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for their final review and approval at their February 11, 2008 meeting.

The public transit- human service coordinating committee will meet on an as needed bases to identify needs, develop strategy and assist with program implementation.

Strategies and activities derived from this plan may afford the opportunity to be funded through Section 5310, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom's programs.

The following tasks are outlines in the plan:

- Task 1- Assessment of Available Services
- Task 2- Assessment of Transportation Needs
- Task 3- Strategies to Address Gaps and Achieve Efficiencies
- Task 4- Prioritize Needs to be Addressed
- Task 5- Define 5310 Selection Criteria

Cambria County Pennsylvania
Coordinated Public Transit – Human Service Transportation Plan

Introduction:

Enacted into law on August 10, 2005, SAFETEA-LU - the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users regulations requires that projects selected for funding under 5310, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom programs are derived from a local coordinated plan. A coordinated, public transit-human services plan identifies the transportation needs of individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes, provides strategies for meeting those local needs, and prioritizes transportation services for funding and implementation.

As a result we were asked to establish a public transit-human services transportation coordinating committee. The Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran) is the designated transportation coordinator in Cambria County. Therefore, after discussion with the Cambria County Planning Commission (CCPS), CamTran took the lead by expanding the existing CamTran Local Advisory Committee to include more stakeholders representative of the local transportation community. See Attachment A for committee members.

What is 5310, JARC and New Freedoms?

Section 5310

Section 5310 Program provides funding to the state for capital projects (vehicles) to assist in meeting the transportation needs of older adults and persons with disabilities.

JARC

Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funding is for transportation programs to facilitate job access and reverse commuting.

New Freedom's

New Freedom's is a brand new program under SAFETEA-LU to encourage services and facility improvements to address the transportation needs of persons with disabilities that go beyond those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. It provides a new formula grant program for associated capital and operating costs. Projects must be included in a locally-developed human service transportation coordinated plan beginning in FY 2007. It provides transit service to/from jobs and training for the disabled only.

1. Purpose of the committee

To start the process of building a coordinated, public transit-human services transportation system that solves access, quality, and cost issues as various agencies fill the transportation needs of the residents of Cambria County.

2. Develop plan

- Task 1 -Assessment of available service-Who are public/private/non-profit providers?
- Task 2 -Assessment of Transportation Needs-individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low income. (Experience, perceptions, gaps, other.)
- Task 3- Strategies/activities to address identified gaps and achieve efficiencies in service delivery for target populations.
- Task 4- Prioritize needs to be addressed based on time, resources and feasibility of implementation /Project priorities must be in coordinated plan.
- Task 5-Define 5310 selection criteria

3. Next step?

The information contained in this plan will be submitted to the Johnstown Area Transportation Study (JATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for their final review and approval at their February 11, 2008 meeting.

The public transit - human service coordinating committee will meet on an as needed basis to identify needs, develop strategy and assist with program implementation.

Strategies and activities derived from this plan may afford the opportunity to be funded through Section 5310, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), and New Freedom's programs.

The Coordinating Committee developed the following:

- Task 1- Assessment of Available Services
- Task 2- Assessment of Transportation Needs
- Task 3- Strategies to Address Gaps and Achieve Efficiencies
- Task 4- Prioritize Needs to be Addressed
- Task 5- Define 5310 Selection Criteria

Task 1.

Assessment of current transportation services.

- A. Public** – Cambria County Transit Authority (CamTran) and CamTran+ Rural Division provide fixed route service, paratransit, and Reserve-A-Ride (Shared Ride) service in both its urban (Greater Johnstown) and rural (northern parts of Cambria County areas).
- B. Private** –Med Van, West End, 7th Ward, Health Med, Senior Life, Taxi Cabs. and Charter providers.
- C. Non-Profit** –United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), Lifestyles, Cambria County Association for the Blind and Handicapped (CCABH), Cambria County Area Agency on Aging (C.C.A.A.A.), Home Nursing Agency, and Cambria Residential Services (CRS)

Task 2.

Assessment of Needs/Gaps. Where is there a need for additional transportation service?

Persons with Disabilities:

A. Service Area. Complementary Paratransit service is designed to complement the fixed route bus service in the Johnstown and rural areas. It will only operate when the fixed route service is operating in the area in which the person wants to travel. In addition, the Paratransit service only operates within a specific path so service is only available when the origin and destination of the trip is within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of an existing fixed route. In rural Cambria County, the origin and destination of the must be within $1 \frac{1}{2}$ miles of an existing rural fixed route. The committee recognizes the need for transportation service beyond what CamTran currently provides.

The following are considered locations in Cambria County where current public transportation cannot serve certain residents due to the above restrictions:

Krings area – ADA deficiency
E. Taylor Twp – ADA deficiency
Mineral Point – ADA deficiency
Oakhurst (outside area)
Richland – Galleria Area
Elton
Windber
N. Cambria area

The dilemma per extending paratransit services is that it would become cost prohibitive for CamTran to extend beyond what it currently does unless we were approved for New Freedom's funds to do it.

B. Gap in Service Hours.

1. Time of service/frequency. Should examine the feasibility of starting earlier and quitting later during the workweek and at the weekends. Cost is a big factor in whether this can be done or not. The Cambria County Association for the Blind and Handicapped provides transportation for its clients at times when CamTran is not operating. For example, funerals, later work hours, etc.

Senior Citizens and persons with low income:

1. Need more flexible hours and increased frequency of service. This would make riding the bus more appealing. Many jobs have third shifts that CamTran cannot accommodate to take people back from work.
2. Weekends have a lack of adequate transportation services.
3. Senior citizens not aware of the free ride program. Although, the majority of CamTran marketing is geared towards senior citizens.

Task 3.

Strategies to Bridge Gaps

- A.) Vehicles to cover areas identified in plan - Purchase smaller, more efficient vehicles.
- B.) Develop Website – Trip planning and coordination of transportation services. Having this in one place would be very helpful to a person looking for transportation services.
- C.) More effective communication between agencies providing transportation is needed.
- D.) Build awareness of pre-tax benefits to employers when employees using public transit.
- E.) Build greater awareness of transportation system agencies in Cambria County both public and private.
- F.) CamTran needs to increase awareness of the Senior Free Ride Program.
- G.) CamTran needs to increase awareness of travel training programs available to riders.
- H.) Address the needs of the frail as well as those with disabilities. Very often the most frail in our community are forgotten as a group with special transportation needs.

Task 4.

Prioritize Needs to be Addressed

- A. Capital equipment support** - It is important that funding support existing services. The number one priority is to use section 5310 funding to continue to support services in Cambria County that meet the funding requirements.
- B. Educational Awareness Campaign** - Develop one marketing piece i.e., a brochure that lists all the transportation services available to the residents of Cambria County. This would be part of the website ideas mentioned in Task 3. Seek New Freedom's funds to undertake this work.
- C. Review the areas identified** as lacking transportation and develop a plan of action to address that need and assess the need for New Freedom's funds to pay for additional service.
- D. Undertake an inventory of vehicles** from the various agencies that currently transport customers and review if these agencies could coordinate their services in order to more efficiently serve the transportation needs of the residents of Cambria County and seek a funding source to undertake a pilot coordination project.

Task 5.

Define a process for evaluating 5310 applications. This is the methodology that will be used to evaluate 5310 applications. Once completed by the coordinating committee the recommendations of the committee will be sent to the Johnstown Area Transportation Study (JATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The evaluation form will be used to review and prioritize the 5310 applications received by Penn DOT. See Attachment B.

The following procedure will be used for the evaluation process:

Step 1: Applications received will be divided into three groups:

Group A: public organizations and non-profits who are proposing providing service to two or more qualified organizations will be placed in group A.

Group B: Applications from non-profits serving one organization will be placed in group B.

Group C: Application from non-profits serving one organization will be placed in group C.

Step 2: Each group of applications will be scored by the Coordinated Transportation Steering Committee. Score sheet, found in Attachment B, will be tallied.

Step 3: Results will be forwarded to the MPO for Review and concurrence.

Step 4: The MPO will forward scored applications to Penn DOT for final review and possible funding.

The Coordination Committee selected several members to meet and review the 5310 applications. The committee met on May 9, 2007. Three applications were reviewed.

The review of applications has changed since last year. This year PennDOT will evaluate the applications.

Attachment A

Cambria County Public Transit-Human Services Coordination Committee Members

Rose M. Lucey-Noll
Chief Assistant to the General Manager
CamTran
726 Central Avenue
Johnstown PA 15902

Jim Parks
Operations Director
CamTran
726 Central Avenue
Johnstown PA 15902

Paul Mallin
Cambria County Area Agency on Aging
1226 North Center Street
Ebensburg, PA 15931

Jim Salvia
Cambria County Mental Health Mental Retardation
Agency
Central Park Complex
110 Franklin St.; Suite 400
Johnstown, PA 15901-1831

Loretta Hall
Cambria County Community Action Council
516 Main St
Johnstown, PA 15901

Don Pullman
Executive Director
Hiram G Andrews Center
727 Goucher St
Johnstown, PA 15905

Ann Torledsky
Director Career Services
Goodwill Industries
920-922 Oak Street
Johnstown, PA 15902

Ms. Marie Polinsky
Executive Director
United Cerebral Palsy of Southern Alleghenies Region,
Inc.
Nan McElhenny
Operations Manager
CamTran +
1226 North Center Street
119 Jari Drive
Johnstown, PA 15904

Ebensburg, PA 15931

Michelle Mentzer
CamTran+ Accountant 1
726 Central Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15902

M. Veil Griffith
Cambria County Area Agency on Aging
Central Park Complex
110 Franklin St.; Suite 400
Johnstown, PA 15901-1831

Mr. Richard C. Bosserman
President
Cambria County Association for the Blind and
Handicapped
211 Central Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15902

Mr. John Stahl
Cambria County Association for the Blind and
Handicapped
211 Central Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15902

Melissa Murray
Hiram G. Andrews Center
727 Goucher St.
Johnstown, PA 15905

Ms. Dorothy Kuchinsky (CamTran Rider)
350 Tioga Street
Johnstown, PA 15905

Ms. Debbie Keen
Senior Life
401 Broad Street
Johnstown, PA 15906-2716

Tom Simmons
2307 Bedford Street
Johnstown, Pa 15904

Kathy Kist
Executive Director, PAID
727 Goucher Street
Johnstown, Pa 15905

Attachment B
Section 5310 Application Review Score Sheet

Applicant: _____

Reviewed: _____

Score

1) Applicant Group

- A. Applications from public organizations and non-profits who are proposing providing service to two or more qualified organization – **Group A**, 25 points
- B. Applications from residential non-profits serving one organization- **Group B**, 5 Points
- C. Application from non-profits serving one organization – **Group C**, No Points

2) Request Justification

The justification of the number of vehicles and equipment requested that would provide the proposed service. Point Range: 20 – 25.

3) Satisfactory Control

The organization's financial and operational ability to sustain the transportation service. Point Range: 20 – 25.

4) Quality of Application

The accuracy and completeness of the application. Point Range: 15 – 20

Total Score
