

Guyasuta Fellows Executive Summary to Pittsburgh City Council, Nov. 27, 2006

The Guyasuta Fellows are young citizens of the Pittsburgh region who have volunteered their time to collaborate on ideas for how to fix Pennsylvania's broken transportation system. Since June of 2006, we have viewed numerous studies and communicated with community leaders about enhancing our region's transportation system. Given that we are not transportation professionals, the reports, studies, and proposals served as a menu of options available to us. The recommendations given here are meant to help guide elected officials and community leaders on how to attain the transportation system that we envision. We envision a 21st Century transportation system for Southwestern Pennsylvania that is environmentally clean, economically efficient, easy to use, and accessible to all communities. The assets are here, but the administrative bodies that contribute to our current system are disparate and sometimes seem to have very different visions for our region. These bodies will have to act in concert to deliver the system we envision to stakeholders.

City Council

- Use the Bureau of Building Inspection to aggressively pursue violators of citywide sidewalk maintenance ordinances
- Add demarcated bike lanes and 'sharrows' (shared lane pavement markings stenciled to City streets) to provide safer roads for cyclists

Port Authority of Allegheny County

- Install bike racks on all buses. Fund the addition of bike racks with advertising such as the Metropolitan Atlanta Regional Transit Authority (MARTA) does
- Provide real time passenger information (RTPI) to commuters
- Abandon the hub & spoke system and connect buses to nodes along transportation spines such as our busways and the T. This will provide greater opportunities for transit-oriented developments.
- Perform annual audits of transit service by issuing "Service Scorecards" to the public. Engage the public on the quality of service that they are receiving.
- Pass no more unbalanced budgets

Regional Transit Operators

- Form a region wide transportation authority to integrate fare structures, reduce duplication of services, pursue a regional system of commuter rail, and reduce jurisdictional conflicts in Southwest Pennsylvania. The scope of this new authority would include the transit agencies of Allegheny, Beaver, Lawrence, Butler, Westmoreland, Fayette, and Washington counties as they all already offer service into Pittsburgh.

Grassroots transit supporters

- Work to establish coalitions with rural users of public transit to lobby Harrisburg legislators. The elderly and disabled in rural areas have been effective groups at ensuring transit service exists in 42 Pennsylvania counties.

Allegheny County Transit Council

- Move to solicit more public comment on particular transit routes with a service akin to the Straphangers Campaign of NYC.

Allegheny County

- Connect Downtown to Oakland with high-speed public transit
- Allow private/commercial access to our busways & HOV lanes. Assess fees to limit traffic, recoup expenses, and generate revenue.

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Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

- Aggressively market www.commuteinfo.com. This is a great asset towards promoting ridesharing.

Port of Pittsburgh

- Explore the possibility of a rail-truck-waterway intermodal facility.
- Seek to establish Pittsburgh as an inland distribution port connected to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

PennDOT

- Partner with the Turnpike Commission to toll more interstate roads that serve as arterials for goods moving through the state.

Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission

- Pursue public/private partnerships to attract private equity to public assets, strengthen PennDOT's balance sheet, and provide motorists with quality roads

Southwestern Pennsylvania municipalities

- Modernize and synchronize all traffic signals to reduce congestion and improve safety at our intersections

State Legislators

- Find a dedicated source of funds for public transportation in Pennsylvania that grows with inflation
- Raise the gas tax and dedicate a portion to public transit
- Assess higher license and registration fees to motorists
- Keep the Clean Vehicles Program to reduce noxious tailpipe emissions

Federal Legislators

- Fix our region's locks and dams. Their condition is a disgrace. Freight movement on our region's waterways is big business. This is a federal responsibility..