



# COMMISSIONERS OF CUMBERLAND COUNTY

---

Vince DiFilippo  
*Chairman*

Jim Hertzler  
*Vice Chairman*

Gary Eichelberger  
*Secretary*

June 21, 2016

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Megan Silverstrim, Communications Specialist

717.729.7019

***CUMBERLAND COUNTY TO MOVE FORWARD WITH  
REGIONALIZATION OF PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICES***

**Cumberland County, PA** –Seeking to realize over \$1 million in savings for taxpayers over the next 5 years; and improvements in service for commuters, the Cumberland County Commissioners have announced their intent to move forward on implementing PennDOT’s Phase II plan for regionalizing fixed route public transit services by July 1, 2017. Board Chairman Vince DiFilippo summed up the reason for this course of action as follows:

"Cumberland County is moving forward with regionalization of public transit as recommended by PennDOT and we look forward to working with our colleague's in surrounding counties. This is a unique opportunity for cost savings and improved service to our residents. It is too great of an opportunity to let pass."

In a letter to the Board of Directors of Capital Area Transit (CAT) dated June 17, regarding the County’s funding of CAT for the second half of 2016, the Commissioners stated:

“Our target date for implementation of a consolidated regional transit solution for Cumberland County remains July 1, 2017. Our fervent hope is that all CAT funding partners would join in such an effort. However, we respect that other CAT funding partners may wish at this time to pursue other options. In such an instance, Cumberland County would expect to be allowed by its fellow CAT funding partners to pursue its desired form of regional consolidation as much in alignment with the Phase II study as possible.”

To ensure that fixed route services are not interrupted, the County stated it would pay its share of local match funding for the remaining two quarters of 2016. Funding after December 31, 2016 will depend on progress towards regionalization. The Commissioners provided 2 options:

1. That a competent and mutually agreed upon third party be placed in charge of CAT management and operations with the primary purpose of transitioning CAT either to a single consolidated regional transit entity (PennDOT’s plan); or any number of “mini” consolidations;  
OR

2. Failing such, that Cumberland County and any other current CAT funding partner so inclined be granted permission to withdraw from CAT as of July 1, 2017, to implement other options for its fixed route transit needs

CAT currently provides fixed route transit services in Cumberland County. Under the PennDOT Phase II proposal, fixed route transit service for Cumberland, Dauphin, York, Adams, Franklin Counties, along with the city of Harrisburg would be consolidated into a single authority operated by Central Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (CPTA); formerly rabbittransit of York. Lancaster and Berks Counties, part of PennDOT's original Phase I plan, merged 2 years ago, but have expressed interest in future consolidations with the Phase II jurisdictions.

Cumberland County recently joined the CPTA in January of 2016 after merging its shared ride services with rabbittransit. In its first year, CPTA/rabbittransit has improved service and reduced the cost of providing special transport services to eligible Cumberland County residents.

Cumberland County supports the PennDOT Phase II option because it optimizes savings through consolidation of administrative functions. The study, under development and discussion for over 5 years, estimates that Cumberland County would save about \$2 million in transportation subsidies over 10 years.. If all 8 jurisdictions were to participate, the study estimates \$16.6 million in combined local match savings for the region over 10 years.

Such a plan maximizes chances of improving service by reinvesting merger savings to expanded routes. Additional benefits will accrue to the region's economy by connecting residents and visitors to businesses, schools, health care providers and amusement/recreation venues in a seamless, integrated public transit system. The Phase II plan does not involve reducing commuter services, the number of drivers and mechanics, ensuring that current service will not be impaired. Nor would it interfere with existing labor agreements.

Cumberland County officials have been engaged in ongoing discussions with Dauphin County and the City of Harrisburg in hopes that all three funding partners would pursue the PennDOT plan. However, Dauphin County has expressed interest in pursuing a closer relationship with Lebanon Transit as more suitable to their needs. Cumberland County has stated that if all of CAT isn't willing to pursue the Phase II plan, its preference is to merge its fixed route service with CPTA. PennDOT is currently assessing the cost savings and service potential of these so-called mini-consolidations.

With Dauphin looking to Lebanon, and Cumberland towards York, CAT as currently configured may have outlived its purpose. Cumberland Commissioners expressed support for mini consolidations as a next best option for CAT members, which can only happen if all funding partners are freed of their relationship to CAT as it currently exists. The Commissioners also expressed their support for a second wave of mergers in the future with Dauphin-Lebanon, Berks-Lancaster, and CPTA.

The letter commits Cumberland to supporting CAT's ongoing service through the end of the year; and beyond that until such time as CAT no longer exists, or Cumberland withdraws. The letter also supports bringing in a competent third party to run CAT more effectively through June 30, 2017 in order to get its

house in better order for its funding partners to pursue consolidation with other Counties. Cumberland Commissioners repeated their commitment to county commuters that the transition will be seamless, with no interruption of service. For information on Cumberland County's regionalization effort visit [www.ccpa.net/4333/Fixed-Route-Transit](http://www.ccpa.net/4333/Fixed-Route-Transit)

# # #