

Pittsburgh, PA

Port Authority of Allegheny County Transit Development Plan



The Pittsburgh area has undergone one of the most successful transformations anywhere in the United States. Since the collapse of the steel industry in the late 1970s, the region has completely transformed its economy to one that is now based on medicine, higher education, and research. The result of this transformation is that Pittsburgh is thriving and is now rated as one of the most livable places in the country. However, while the region was changing dramatically, the transit provider—the Port Authority of Allegheny County—was not. The system failed to keep up with the changes occurring around it, and by the mid-2000s, was being heavily criticized by its riders and the public as providing substandard service, and by the city, county, and state as providing inefficient service.

Nelson\Nygaard was hired to conduct a comprehensive overhaul of service designed to dramatically improve service in a manner that will serve Allegheny County's current needs. The project entailed an extensive public participation plan, an examination of Allegheny County's travel markets, a comprehensive review of existing services, and the development and evaluation of service improvements.

The recommendations from this plan will increase ridership by 11% with no increase in costs:

- “Over 75% of our riders will see improved services in the form of better frequency, earlier trips, later trips, faster trips or more weekend service.
- Customers on our most crowded routes will see additional service resources, aimed at freeing up space on these buses and trains when it's most crucial.
- Some of our most heavily travelled corridors, like downtown to Oakland, will see an exciting new service model called “rapid bus,” aimed at radical improvements in service quality and significant ridership gains in these corridors.
- Through improved schedule coordination and focusing our resources where they're most needed, we will see one-way vehicle trips increase by 6%, despite no increase in total service hours.



In adopting the recommended plan, the Port Authority's Board called the changes “historic” and “sweeping.” Editorials in both major newspapers endorsed the plan, and the project's MPO representative wrote that it was “one of the finest planning projects I have ever been involved with.”

Project Duration: 2007 - 2009

Total Budget: \$1,300,000

Nelson\Nygaard Budget: \$1,100,000

For more information:

Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC)
345 Sixth Avenue, Third Floor
Pittsburgh PA 15222-2527

Contact:

Steve Bland, CEO
412-566-5311
sbland@portauthority.org