



BUSINESS BRIEFS

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"Transit Summit 2011" in Danville on November 18



The future of public transportation in a six-county region of Central Pennsylvania is the focus of a one-day conference in Danville on November 18. Transit Summit 2011 will be held at the Henry Hood Center

for Health Research, on the campus of the Geisinger Medical Center. The conference is open to the public and there is no cost to attend.

Transit Summit 2011 is a result of efforts undertaken by the [North Central Pennsylvania Public Transportation Task Force \(NCPPTT\)](#), which recently completed an assessment of public transportation needs in Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties.

The Task Force, in conjunction with SEDA-COG, inventoried and analyzed existing transportation services, and evaluated potential transit demand in the region. Alternative

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transit improvement strategies were discussed and prioritized by the Task Force as part of the process. The study was conducted by Gannett Fleming Inc., and funded by PennDOT, counties included in the study, and Cherokee Pharmaceuticals, located in Riverside, PA.

NCPPTT's final reports can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

"Broad public support is needed as public transportation moves forward in the region," said Mark Murawski, Chairman of the Task Force, "Transit Summit 2011 is one step in building that support."

Keri Albright, President/CEO, Greater Susquehanna Valley United Way and Vice Chair of the Task Force, added, "We've taken on this initiative because enhanced public transportation is not just for the 'needy.' It also benefits those who recognize the need and understand its value. Employers, recreation hot spots, movie theatres, malls, grocery stores, family and friends all benefit when their employees, clients, patrons, and loved ones can travel independently, but don't have or are unable to operate a vehicle."

The Public Transportation Task Force has set the following objectives for the conference:

- Provide information about local transit options that are available
- Promote the benefits of public transportation
- Identify transit opportunities and build support for increased services
- Take steps toward establishing a decision-making body regarding transit services in the six-county region.

Several speakers have been scheduled:

- Toby Fauver, PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation
- Bill Nichols, River Valley Transit (RVT), Williamsport
- Melissa Wilson, a paraplegic who has made extensive use of Montour County's transit services
- Keri Albright, Greater Susquehanna Valley United Way
- Joe Daversa, Gannett Fleming consultant services
- Frank Trembulak, Geisinger Health Systems, Danville
- Jim Hollister, Bloomsburg University
- Senator Jake Corman

Among transit-related topics Transit Summit 2011 is expected to address are funding issues, natural gas, transit services for the physically challenged, human services, and health care. "We'll also look at various types of public transportation," said Murawski, "Particularly 'fixed route service' and 'demand responsive service.'"

NCPPTT



Save The Date For These Upcoming Events!

Export 101 - November
3

Energy Management
Planning Pays Off -
November 4

Moving Up in State
Contracting -
November
7

Doing Business with
the Commonwealth -
November 9
(Harrisburg)

Introduction to
Government
Contracting -
November 10

Government
Contracting Express -
November 16

Fixed route service is operated over designated routes, follows a published schedule, and is available to the general public. Demand responsive services are based on individual requests for transit service, and are tailored to the date, time, and location of those requests.

"We need a public transportation plan that meets local and regional needs in our six counties, whether it's fixed route, demand responsive, or some other approach," Murawski said, "Anyone who can provide input to such a plan — local officials, major employers, the general public — is encouraged to take part in Transit Summit 2011."

The conference begins with a continental breakfast at 8:30 am. Lunch will also be provided. For more information, contact Kay Aikey at 570-522-7333 or e-mail kaikey@seda-cog.org.

Sponsors of Transit Summit 2011 include Albright Footcare Center and SEDA-COG, with special recognition to Geisinger Health System for their sponsorship of the venue and meals.



PA Receives \$1.7 Million Federal Grant to Increase Small Business Exports



The Department of Community and Economic Development received a \$1.7 million State Trade and Export Promotion grant from the federal Small Business Administration (SBA) to increase export assistance to Pennsylvania's small businesses. "Providing small businesses with the tools they need to grow and create jobs in the state is a top priority of the governor and our agency," DCED Secretary C. Alan Walker said. "Export assistance is a great resource for small businesses interested in selling their goods and services to new markets." The SBA's State Trade and Export Promotion Grant (STEP) Pilot Grant Initiative provides grants to states for small business exporting assistance programs. The STEP Initiative works to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting, and boost the value of exports for those small firms already exporting.

Pennsylvania's Center for Trade Development will provide funds to qualifying companies to participate in multiple international trade events and projects. Industry categories will focus on food, energy, medical and wood/building. Countries include Taiwan, UAE, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Japan, Chile, Germany, Korea, India, China and others. The STEP project will hold at least two virtual buyer events with the Commercial Service and Pennsylvania universities. From 2005 to present, the Center for Trade Development directly generated over \$2.1 billion in new export sales and supported over 14,200 jobs in

Transit Summit 2011 -
November 18

Doing Business with
the Commonwealth -
November 15
(Carlisle)

Government
Contracting Express -
November 23

Interested in Energy Financial Assistance?

Need technical assistance with a particular energy-related loan or grant?

SEDA-COG now offers assistance to businesses interested in pursuing grant and loan opportunities for renewable energy and energy efficiency and conservation projects.

For more information about the types of financial assistance services SEDA-COG can provide, contact Betsy Lockwood at elockwood@seda-cog.org or Ray Haden

the state. In the last fiscal year alone, the program generated over \$526 million in new export sales for Pennsylvania companies, supporting more than 4,000 jobs.

The Center for Trade Development, housed within the Department of Community and Economic Development's Office of International Business Development, helps Pennsylvania exporters expand their reach, capacity and capability to sell into new markets by providing clients with access to market research, partner search services, grants, and a full schedule of international trade shows and missions.



SEDA-COG Receives NADO Award



Dennis Robinson, Executive Director, SEDA-COG, recently accepted the organization's 2011 Innovation Award from the [National Association of Development Organizations \(NADO\)](#). The award was presented by Tim Ware, NADO President, and Executive Director of the Mid-East Commission in Washington, North Carolina.

NADO awards honor projects in a variety of regional development areas including environmental initiatives, regional

innovation strategies, and sustainable development. The award to SEDA-COG is for the Community-wide Energy Independence Initiative (CEII), which the SEDA-COG Energy Resource Center (ERC) is carrying out in New Berlin, PA.

CEII is an effort to conserve energy and use it more efficiently throughout the Borough of New Berlin. ERC is managing the project with funding from PPL Electric Utilities and the federal Appalachian Regional Commission, in addition to SEDA-COG. The model which is being developed will be replicable for use in other Appalachian communities as they pursue energy independence. The project is beginning its third year.

For more information on the CEII, click [here](#).

at rhaden@seda-cog.org or by phone at 570-524-4491.



SEDA-COG Working on QR Codes for Small Businesses



SEDA-COG's Information Technologies Group is working on a project to help small companies implement QR (quick response) codes, a type of bar code which, when scanned with a mobile telecommunications device like a Smartphone, can bring up product information, videos, web sites, etc. Having this information available at the point of purchase can help to differentiate products and vendors to the consumer and provide important marketing information to the vendor.

We've found a local firm to help test our project, after which we hope to secure grant funding to further develop it and make it available to the local business community. We want to be able to offer our QR expertise to local governments and non-profit organizations, as well as there are numerous applications in those areas.

For more information on the QR Code Project, contact Jim Baker, Chief, Information Technologies Group, tel. 570-524-4491, e-mail jbaker@seda-cog.org.



SEDA-COG's Annual Trade Conference Attracts 24 Area Companies



With questions about everything from international markets to trade shows and regulations, individuals from 24 area companies met with foreign trade representatives at the 13th Annual Central Pennsylvania International Trade Conference, held recently in State College. This signature event is hosted by the [SEDA-COG Export Development Program](#) and is part of the Pennsylvania International Week celebration.

Twenty of Pennsylvania's Authorized Trade Representatives attended, participating in over 145 one-on-one meetings with SEDA-COG's Export clients. One client, Kim Richardson of Boalsburg's [Two Sisters Fina Cocina](#), later posted on Facebook, "Spent a very interesting and informative day speaking with international trade reps from around the globe. It will take some time, but World:

Here we come!" Two Sisters Fina Cocina is one of SEDA-COG's newer clients.

Topics discussed with the Trade Representatives include market entry strategies, distribution agreements, trade shows, and regulatory requirements. Following the Conference, Ms. Richardson said, "This is such a great service for small businesses and I am grateful that a company as small as mine is able to dream this big." For many individuals, the Conference was a chance to discuss ongoing projects, while for others it was their first time meeting with the Trade Representatives.

According to Noelle Long, Director of SEDA-COG's Export Development Program, "Pennsylvania's network of Trade Representatives represents a great opportunity for local companies. The Commonwealth has contracted with private consultants around the world who are at the beck and call of companies interested in starting and expanding their international reach." Trade Representative services include in-depth market research, agent/rep/distributor searches, foreign company background checks, market entry strategy development, pricing analysis, translations, trade event support and assistance, in-country appointment scheduling, and much more.

"These individuals are seasoned professionals," said Mrs. Long, "who speak the languages, understand how business is conducted, and have the contacts to help Central Pennsylvania companies develop their international presence." Pennsylvania's Authorized Trade Representatives are based out of 21 offices worldwide, providing assistance and expertise for 67 countries. [Click here for a list of the Trade Representatives' locations.](#)

Sponsors of SEDA-COG's 2011 Trade Conference included The TeamPA Foundation, McNeese Wallace & Nurick LLC, M&T Bank, UPS, The Industrial Modernization Center, and Pennsylvania's Center for Trade Development.

The SEDA-COG Export Development Program provides international business consulting and services to companies located in the Central PA region. For more information, contact Noelle Long at 570-524-4491, or e-mail export@seda-cog.org.

