

Kristyn DeMarco

Green Design and the City

9/27/05

Transportation Paper

Public transportation is a vital key to keeping people coming to and staying in a city. If this element is missing, a city can not possibly be sustainable. There needs to be jobs in the city, as well as a way to get to these jobs. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority is a well run system which increase the sustainability of Philadelphia.

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, otherwise referred to as SEPTA, was established on the 18th of February in 1964. Since that date, SEPTA has acquired several smaller train companies which also provided service to the city of Philadelphia and its suburbs: Philadelphia Transportation Company in 1968, Philadelphia Suburban Transportation Company in 1969, Schuylkill Valley Lines (Frontier) in 1976 and the Commuter Rail — Conrail in 1983. (Septa) Combining these rail systems has enabled SEPTA to currently provide rail service to Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties, with selected rail service in New Jersey and the State of Delaware. (Septa)

Today SEPTA is the nation's 5th largest public transportation system with over 2,200 square miles of service, (Septa). The number of routes, vehicles and stations that SEPTA owns is astounding.

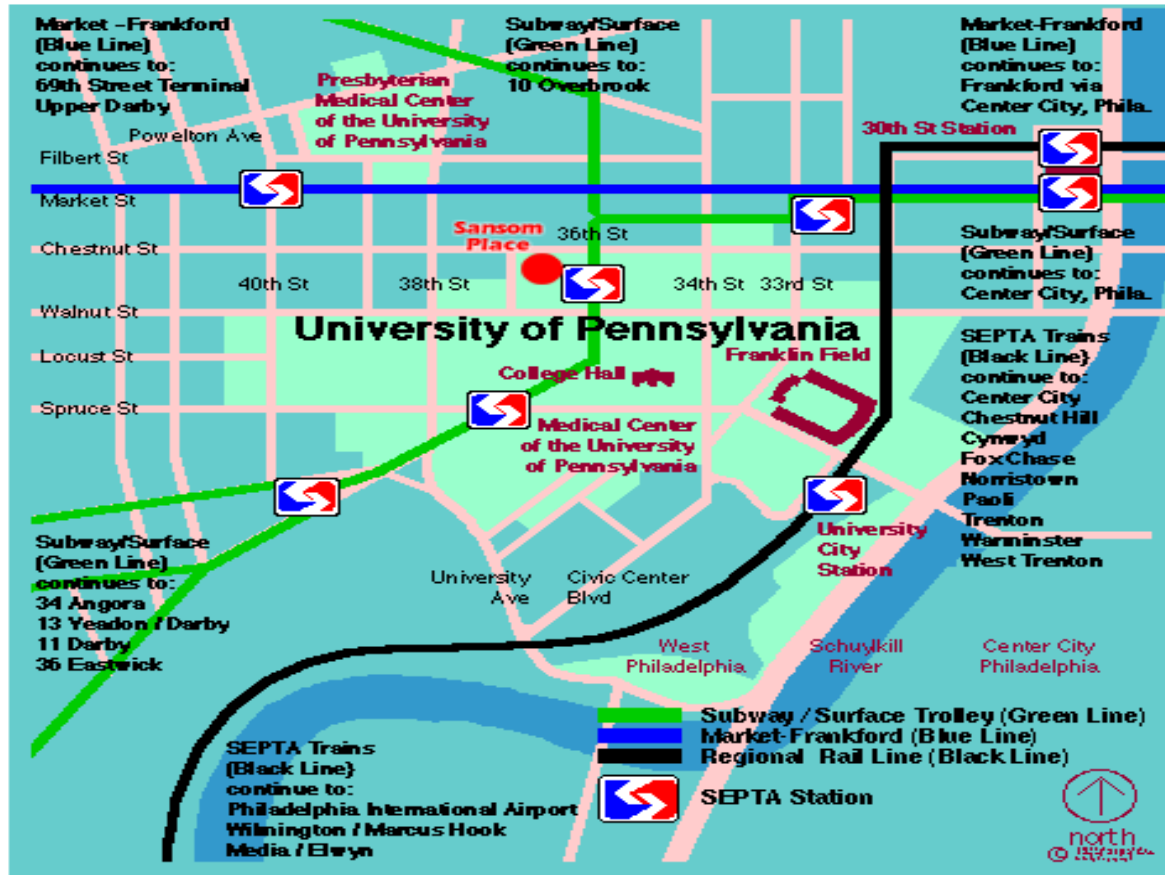
Number of Routes		Number of Vehicles (as of January 2005)	
Bus (City)	74	Bus	1389
Bus (Suburban)	40	Light Rail	185
Light Rail	8	Subway-Elevated	345
Subway-Elevated	2	Regional Rail	349
Regional Rail	13	Trackless Trolleys	65
		CCT Connect	424
		Total	2757
Number of Stations			
Subway-Elevated	52		
Route 100	22		
Media-Sharon Hill	45		

Light Rail 8
Regional Rail 153 (Septa)

Septa provides a great deal of transportation within the city with it's subway and bus lines, as well as to and from the city with its commuter trains.



As a student in the city of Philadelphia, it is extremely convenient to have many SEPTA stations on the University of Pennsylvania's campus, as shown on this map.



(“Septa Stops”)

With SEPTA’s expansive services it has added to the sustainability of the city of Philadelphia in many ways. The first and most apparent is the fact that it brings people to, and keeps them in the city. Septa’s Commuter Choice Program furthers this by encouraging employees to use their services with the advantages of discounted prices. “Assist your employees with commuting and take advantage of payroll tax savings up to \$100 per employee per month! This hassle-free benefits enhancer lets your employees avoid the hassle of traffic jams and expensive parking. They arrive relaxed and on time. And your productivity goes up!” (Septa). In a study conducted in 2004 it was shown that out of the city’s of 3.9 million people, 301 million use Septa’s services, (Septa). Not only that, but ridership has grown by about 10 thousand people a day since January of 2005, (“Ridership”).

Septa is also one of the region’s largest employers with a workforce of around 9 thousand, (Septa). Septa provides a variety of jobs to the people of Philadelphia, from rail vehicle body mechanics, electricians, carpenters, to passenger services

representatives and contract compliance analysts. (Septa) All these jobs and more are listed on SEPTA's official website.

In order for public transportation to work, the city must feel connected to it in a way. It must feel like it is a part of them. Septa provides a way for the city's business to benefit in a more direct manner by the means of advertisement. Septa works with businesses by allowing them to utilize traditional print advertisements on over 2,500 vehicles and 200+ stations and facilities throughout the area. There is also the opportunity for an advertisement wrapped bus. If a business puts a token machine on their property, Septa allows them to put up ads for free, as well as giving them other monetary compensations. (Septa) With these opportunities for advertisement, Philadelphia's businesses feel connected to Septa.

On more of a 'green' note, public transportation such as Septa, helps reduce the toxic chemicals emitted into the air by reducing the amount of vehicles on the road. One car puts 133-200 (g/pass. Km) of CO₂ into the air, where by one train only puts out 39-78 and a bus emits merely 35-62 (g/pass. Km). (Ritacca) In a testimony of the Clean Air Council in 2004, it was reported that 1 bus can remove around 40 cars from the roads, and one train can remove about 120 cars, (Minott). It is important to have a useful and extensive public transportation system, such as Septa, to decrease the air pollution. And this is just what Septa is doing.

Philadelphia is the first city I have ever lived in, and since the moment I walked onto Penn's campus, I was impressed by the extensiveness of Philly's public transportation. Not only do I find it extremely convenient for traveling inside the city, it is also a great way for me to commute to home when needed. Taking the train to my house in Exton during rush hour is much faster than trying to drive out of the city. I believe Septa has an incredible expanse of services, and in the long run will help keep people coming to and staying in the city, hence adding to sustainability.

Works Cited

Minott, Joe. "TESTIMONY OF CLEAN AIR COUNCIL ON SEPTA'S
CONTINGENCY FARE PROPOSAL AND PROPOSED SERVICE
REDUCTIONS: OCTOBER 19, 2004."
<<http://www.cleanair.org/Transportation/Clean%20Air%20Council%20SEPTA%20Testimony-October%2019,%202004.doc>>

"Ridership is up 10,000 on Philadelphia commuter trains." Brotherhood of Locomotive
Engineers and Trainmen. 2005 Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and
Trainmen. <http://www.ble.org/pr/news/headline.asp?id=14486>

Ritacca, Rita and Justin Veiga. "ACHIEVING A SUSTAINABLE
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO."
<<http://www.cquest.utoronto.ca/env/env421h/EnvPerformance/transportation.htm>>

Septa: Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority. 2005. SEPTA. 23 Sept. 2005.
< <http://www.septa.org/>>

"SEPTA Stops on and around Campus." ResNet 2000 University of Pennsylvania.
<<http://www.rescomp.upenn.edu/resnet2000/map-septa.html>>