

# COLTS riders look for answers

*Authority holds a pair of public hearings on revised routes, new downtown hub.*

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Administrators with the County of Lackawanna Transit System fielded questions about planned changes to bus service and the new centralized transit center at two public meetings Thursday.

More than 20 bus riders

gathered at the Lackawanna Transit Center at noon to ask questions, many of which regarded clarification on altered routes. Some in attendance raised safety issues and other concerns they've noticed while riding on public transit.

Bob Fiume, COLTS executive director, Mark McClanan, director of operations,

and others spent a half-hour answering questions Thursday afternoon. Pamphlets for each route with schedules and maps were available in the center's lobby.

COLTS plans to merge two routes into others, alter its shoppers' special and modify routes or schedules of other routes to operate more efficiently. The changes go into effect Jan. 4, the same day the transit center becomes the downtown hub for bus routes.

For information on routes, visit [www.coltsbus.com](http://www.coltsbus.com).

Joan Hodowanitz, 66, of Scranton, questioned why Dec. 7 was listed on some of the schedules available at the center. Mr. Fiume clarified that they initially were going to change the schedules for Dec. 7 but they could not operate out of the transit center until Jan. 4. They just didn't reprint the schedules.

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John Fecina, 66, of Mayfield, questioned how the transit center would work. Mr. McClanan said it would be very similar to how the transit center in Wilkes-Barre operates.

"What we're doing is designating different bays for different routes," Mr. McClanan said.

Mr. Fiume motioned to television monitors mounted on the walls and said they would display information for each bus coming through the center.

At a second meeting, held at 6 p.m., Mr. McClanan said the screens would show real-time information about buses, their locations and expected arrival time at the center.

A handful of people, including Leigh Redmon, 61, of Scranton, attended the evening session.

"Since neither I nor my wife drive, we wanted to see

how these changes could affect us," Mr. Redmon said.

Mr. Redmon asked questions about the routes they frequently use, Martz Trailways' impending move to the center and the status of the installation of another bus stop on Lackawanna Avenue. Currently, the only stops on that street downtown are at the station and the Radisson at Lackawanna Station hotel.

Martz is expected to move into the center the same time as COLTS, Mr. McClanan said. As for the additional stop, COLTS officials met with city and Mall at Steamtown staff earlier in the week about putting one near an entrance to the mall, Mr. McClanan said.

"We haven't got anything figured out yet, but we'll keep looking for another spot," he said.

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