

Capitol by bus?

Business trio launches luxury service to Harrisburg to fill US Airways' flight void

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By [Sadie Gurman](#), Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

A trio of local businessmen plan to launch an upscale Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg bus service that will also link travelers to Amtrak destinations farther east.

The service is designed as an alternative to driving and to fill a void created by US Airways, which eliminated flights to the capital this summer.

"Having been at the receiving end of what air service has proven to be in the last several years, there has to be a better way to do things," said Henry Posner III, chairman of Railroad Development Corp. in Green Tree. "This might be the better way for Pittsburgh."

Mr. Posner teamed with his business partner, Robert Pietrandrea, who is RDC's president, and George DeBolt, of DeBolt Unlimited Travel, to develop the bus service, which they've named the Steel City Flyer.

Service is slated to start Nov. 24 and will operate out of a Downtown station, stopping in Monroeville before heading to three stops in Harrisburg. From there, travelers can connect to high-speed Amtrak service to such destinations as New York City, Philadelphia, Lancaster and Trenton, N.J., among others.

A one-way ticket costs \$69. The group is also working on a through-ticketing plan with Amtrak, he said.

The bus, a 50-passenger Mercedes model with business class amenities, including WiFi service, will depart twice daily.

"This is going to be designed to connect from a schedule and ticket perspective, and it will be a good example of intermodalism," Mr. Posner said. "We're taking the best of two modes; the speed east of Harrisburg on the train, and the speed west of Harrisburg on the bus."

The service is the first of its kind in Pittsburgh, Mr. Posner said.

The men each are deeply rooted in transportation. Mr. DeBolt heads the Homestead-based tour bus company DeBolt Unlimited Travel, which provided bus service between Pittsburgh and neighboring communities in the days before the Port Authority was formed to cover the entire county.

Mr. Posner and Mr. Pietrandrea run Railroad Development Corp., a small rail management and investment company that privatizes former state-run railroads in Latin America, Africa and Eastern Europe.

The Pittsburgh-Harrisburg bus service is a joint venture between RDC and an affiliate of DeBolt Unlimited, Le Grand America.

"I'd had this idea for years, but with the flights I never really pushed it," Mr. DeBolt said. Mr. Posner approached him in August with the same idea. "We see this as the future of short-distance, intercity travel from Pittsburgh."
