“Transit at the Table”
MPO Support of Land Use/Transit Coordination

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- Interviews with Transit and MPO CEOs in 25 Large Cities
- Diverse Geography, Size, Modes, Revenue Base, AQ Status - Transferable Results
- Benefits/Strategies to Achieve
- Policies, Funds, Project Scope

--- Recommendation ---
- Proactive, Persistent, Personal
Notable Observations

- Most Believed Transit Was a Strategic Player
- Some Viewed ONLY as “Service Providers,” Not Interested in Broader Policy Formation
- Many Unaware of Potential Additional Benefits
- Unaware of MPO Support for Local Planning
- Institutional and Program Barriers to Overcome
- Federal Law/Regulation/Staff Can Assist
- Many Venues and Strategies for Participating

Influencing Urban Growth: Seattle

- Seattle Metro's flex funding negotiations with the MPO focused on projects that support urban centers.
- Seattle Metro Transit received an Urban Center Development Grant of $5.5 million in CMAQ funding, sponsoring physical transit-related improvements
**Influencing Urban Growth: Albany, NY**

- UPWP funds supported an improved local land use planning - master plans, zoning processes, and corridor studies.
- The transit agency helped influence through their seat on an MPO Committee

**Influencing Urban Growth: Columbus**

The MPO, with City and transit operator, sponsored a TOD study that produced

- an education booklet to assist COTA in bringing TOD to the community
- sample TOD site plans, including model plans for a range of suburban and urban settings
Influencing Urban Development: Denver

Redevelopment of Denver’s Union Station
- Ownership by RTD, per Intergovernmental Agreement among City/County, RTD, State, and DRCOG
- Funding includes CMAQ $
- Collaborative effort benefiting from extensive coordination and support from MPO
- “Metro Vision” set context for MPO Plan and programming priorities in TIP
- Key Role – venue for coordination and consensus (Bob Johnston’s “Poster Session” yesterday)

Influencing Urban Growth: San Francisco

- Transportation for Livable Communities Program” (TLC) was developed in collaboration with MPO Citizen’s Advisory Council
- TLC offers three kinds of assistance: planning grants, capital grants, and housing incentives
- BART station at 16th and Mission Streets received funding to rehabilitate the adjacent plaza
- Bay Fair station in San Leandro, where a TLC grant created access improvements concerning safe pedestrian passage from BART to an adjacent mall.
Influencing Urban Growth: Charlotte

- Successful sales tax issue helped by the land use vision behind the transit element of MPO’s 2025 Transit Land Use Plan
- “Centers and corridors” vision plan focused office & residential growth to transit, established rail/BRT corridors, and increased buses to stations

Why Should Transit Be “at the Table”

1. Influence Regional Economic Growth Policy
2. Promote Image as an Indispensable Priority
3. Promote “Transit-Friendly” Local Govt Policy
4. Support Transit Funding Needs - FTA Grants, Flexible (FHWA) Funds, Non-traditional Funds, Opportunistic TIP Monitoring
5. Can Promote Transit Everywhere (policies, plans, programs, projects, safety/security, systems performance MOEs)
6. General – Get Transit on Everyone’s Agenda
Four Categories of Strategies

1. Get Involved
2. Be a Strategic Player in Shaping the Region
3. Take Financial Planning Seriously
4. Participate Actively in TIP Development and Follow-Through

Strategies for Getting Involved

1. Secure Voting Membership on Policy Bd and Committees
2. Leader (GM) is Personally Involved
3. Feel Free to “Crash the Party” if Necessary
4. Help Identify and Frame Priority issues and Influence Funding Decisions
How to be a Strategic Player

1. Offer Transit as Solution to Broader Goals (e.g. Growth Management, Job Retention and Growth, Environmental Quality, etc.)
2. Participate in “Context-Setters” (e.g. Metro Plan, Corridor Studies, Congestion Management Process, Safety/Security Plans)
3. Use UPWP to Put Transit in Future Studies
4. Tap Media, Stakeholders, Business, Public

Serious Financial Planning Strategies

1. Ensure that Transit Revenues are Included in Regional Cooperative Forecasts
2. Make the “Regional” Case for Flexing Funds
3. Promote the Need for “Dedicated” Revenues
4. Aggressively Explore Potential New State and Local Revenue Sources
Take the TIP Process Seriously

1. Collaborate in Project Prioritization
2. Insist on Mode-Neutral Evaluation Criteria that Treat Transit Fairly (Level Playing Field)
3. Request Timely Status Reporting of Project Implementation Progress
4. Suggest a “Reasonable Progress” Policy

Product: Self Assessment Checklist

- **Not** an FTA Oversight Tool or Process
- Relates to Tangible Activities and Products
- Four Categories of Participation/Involvement:
  1. MPO Board, Committees, Task Forces
  2. Ongoing Planning Process & Special Studies
  3. Funding and Implementation Deliberations
  4. FTA/FHWA “Certification” & Other “Oversight”
Next: Small/Mid-Sized Areas

Distinguishing Features of Small/Mid-Sized Areas

- Resource Needs and Available Resources
- “Operational” Duties of Transit Managers
- Relative “Power” Roles of State DOTs/MPOs
- Type / Level of FTA Staff Involvement
- Role and Organization of Private Providers
**Preliminary Findings: Similarities to Larger Areas**

- Voting Membership on MPO Board is Essential
- Many of the Same Key Strategies:
  - Engaging in broader issues
  - Creating supplemental advisory / advocacy groups
  - Cultivating relationships with Stakeholders
  - Developing Relationship with State DOT reps
- Utilize Flexible Funding Opportunities

**Preliminary Findings: Distinction from Larger Areas**

- Transit Operator / MPO / FTA Relationship
- Less Understanding of Federal “Rules”
- Fewer Corridor Studies Conducted
- Staffing of Transit Operators
  - Limited Staffing of Planning Function
  - Difficult to Attract/Retain Skilled Professionals
  - Contracted (vs. Staff) Operation Management
Preliminary Findings:
Distinction from Larger Areas

- Less Formal Decisionmaking Necessitates Stronger Interpersonal Relationships
- State DOTs Exert More Funding Influence than MPOs
- Greater Reliance on Non-Traditional Funding for Capital Fund Match

Notable Observations

- ½ of Transit Operators Vote on MPO Board
- Staff-Sharing with MPO, Municipality, County Includes Planning and Operations Functions

Stay Tuned . . .

Study Completion Expected November 2007
On Web: Transit at the Table

See - - -
www.planning.dot.gov/Documents/tat.htm

Transportation Planning Capacity-Building Program (TPCB) – www.planning.dot.gov