

MAG Peer Region Evaluation Summary

November 19, 2008

Paul Jablonski, San Diego MTS
with Peer Region Input



Participating Peer Regions / Transit Agencies

- Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority
- Dallas Area Rapid Transit
- Denver Regional Transportation District
- Utah Transit Authority
- San Diego Metropolitan Transit System
- Seattle Sound Transit



Evaluation Process

- ***Existing Transit Services and Deficiencies*** working paper drafted in May-August 2008.
- Executive summary of ***Existing Transit Services and Deficiencies*** provided to peer regions' panelists in September 2008.
- Peer Regions Panelists discussed observations of ***Existing Transit Services and Deficiencies*** through teleconferences during September-November 2008.
- Process will conclude with summary report to be developed from peer observations discussed today.



Observations on Transit in the MAG Region



- Regional Transportation Plan: Regional Transit Funding
- Regional Transportation Plan: Transit Service Levels
- New Light Rail Transit Service: Opening Day Service Adjustments
- Regional Transportation Plan: Paratransit Service
- High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

Regional Transportation Plan: Regional Transit Funding

Discussion Points

- How are jurisdictional needs and regional needs balanced during the transit planning process in the peer regions?



Regional Transportation Plan: Regional Transit Funding

Observations

Establishing good relationships among transit providers and planning organizations at all levels of government (DOTs, MPOs, COGs, cities, other providers) can facilitate funding discussions.

Policy boards can affect funding priorities depending on how members are appointed/elected and who is represented.

Regional policy prioritization of funding should be role of MPO or COG.

Development and funding of transit services and facilities should be based on regional needs.



Regional Transportation Plan: Transit Service Levels

Discussion Points

- The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) transit element includes modest service levels in an effort to increase service area coverage.
- What transit elements in the RTP have the greatest potential to generate community interest in public transit?



Regional Transportation Plan: Service Levels

Observations

Market Demand vs. Jurisdictional Equity: Serving areas of demand, choice riders, and higher density provides greater ridership and overall more cost-effective use of public funds.

Effective planning of mode types and service levels can add to overall transit system efficiency. Consider what is needed and when and how it will provide overall regional connectivity. Demand responsive service can fill gaps in service. Park-and-ride lots provide opportunities for suburban access.



Regional Transportation Plan: Service Levels

Observations

Service standards and policies should be developed and used to determine and explain necessary service levels.

When service adjustments are being considered, process should include performance-based measures, local value of lifeline routes and maintenance of regional connections.

Need to commit to strengthening the relationship of land use to transit ridership and pursue local/regional policies that support transit.



New Light Rail Transit Service: Opening Day Transit Adjustments

Discussion Points

- Are there any concepts in the MAG region's transit service restructuring plan that have also been tried as part of adjusting existing transit services for new High Capacity Transit (HCT) corridors in any of the peer regions?
- What other concepts have been successfully implemented as part of a system restructuring plan to coordinate with new HCT services?



New Light Rail Transit Service: Opening Day Transit Adjustments

Observations

Ensure timed transfers through coordination of headways to ensure system convenience and overall regional connectivity.

Strategically reduce duplication of service and feed existing investments.

Maintaining express service was a positive decision.



Regional Transportation Plan: Paratransit Service

Discussion Points

- Are any of the peer regions operating required Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit service through multiple service providers?
- What are the peer regions' successes or achievements in ADA paratransit that could be considered by the Phoenix region?



Regional Transportation Plan: Paratransit Service

Observations

Multiple service providers are used in other regions to provide ADA paratransit service. Centralized reservations preferred approach for administering multiple service providers.

Paratransit services must meet ADA (comparability) requirements but should not outweigh other system needs. Human service objectives of the agency should be balanced with implementation of service that achieves overall regional mobility.

Certain degree of local choice, understand cost impacts.



High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

Discussion Points

- Do any peer regions experience, or have experienced high congestion levels in High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) facilities where transit service operates? Have any efforts been successful in improving HOV operations?



High Occupancy Vehicle Lanes

Observations

Consider converting HOV lanes to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes to maintain speed with increased congestion.

Increase carpool lane requirements from 2 to 3 people.

Excess toll revenues should support transit operations.

Consider applying variable passenger fare rates for transit services operating in managed auto lanes with congestion based pricing.

Enforcement is a key component to maintaining HOV speeds.



Future MAG Region Opportunities?



Consider what new transit services are needed and how the services will enhance overall regional connectivity.

Focus on transit market demand: Serve areas with high demand potential and attract choice riders.

Reliability and level of service trumps geographic coverage for attracting riders.

Commit to strengthening the relationship of land use to transit ridership and pursue local/regional policies that support transit.

Current transit system is a collection of transit routes and services. Develop a consolidated regional transit system.



Questions/Comments

