



Transfer

Surface Transportation Policy Project's Electronic Update

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Announcements

New Transportation Charter



We invite your organization to sign the Alliance for a New Transportation Charter (ANTC) and join the group of more than 450 individuals, organizations, public officials, government agencies and businesses from across the country who want transportation investments to better meet community needs. For more information, visit ANTC.net.

Quote of the Week

"The bottom line is for every other method of transportation the federal government steps up to the plate. We have to have a long term plan for Amtrak that's consistent with

June 26, 2002; Volume 8, Issue 12

AMTRAK SHUTDOWN AVERTED

Emergency meetings this week between the board of directors of Amtrak, transportation unions, and the USDOT have resulted in an "agreement in principle" to keep the rail carrier operating until the end of the fiscal year in September. The deal helps ease Amtrak's immediate financial situation with a loan of \$100 million from the Department of Transportation, and the prospect of an additional \$100 million from Congress. "We are confident that, with congressional support, Amtrak services will not be disrupted," Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta and Amtrak Board Chairman John Robert Smith said in a joint statement late Wednesday.



During a media briefing on Tuesday, June 25, company officials announced that passenger service would continue running for a week, but that the rail carrier would begin shutting down the network on July 4 or July 5 if it did not receive a federal loan guarantee or a direct appropriation of emergency funds.

Last week, Secretary Mineta announced an administration proposal that called for an end to federal operating subsidies, an increase in the amount states have to pay for train service, and the replacement of Amtrak as owner of the [Washington to Boston Northeast Corridor](#), Amtrak's most highly-traveled route.

Amtrak trains carry approximately 60,000 riders a day. A shutdown of the system could have a ripple effect, delaying or stranding hundreds of thousands of passengers whose commuter rail lines use tracks and tunnels owned by Amtrak.

For more information, [click here](#).

TTI CONGESTION REPORT OUT

STPP, Others Say Measure Falls Short

The Texas Transportation Institute issued its annual ranking of congested metropolitan areas on June 20, 2002 amid growing concern that the congestion measure is inaccurate. The Surface Transportation Policy Project announced that it would not issue a companion analysis of the TTI *Urban Mobility Report* because of doubts about the validity of the data in accurately measuring congestion and accounting for investments to combat it.



These doubts, which originally prompted STPP to issue its companion reports in previous years, were dramatically highlighted when the State of Washington (WSDOT) withdrew its financial support from the project a few weeks before the report was released. Washington DOT cited the TTI indices inability to take into account either operational improvements or the impact of transportation choices such as transit in easing congestion or travel delay.

"I sympathize with TTI and anyone else trying to better understand our transportation system," says Sarah Campbell, the chair of STPP's Board of Directors. "But in this case, as in many others, the data just isn't there. The transportation profession hasn't produced it, and even the recent Census numbers on Journey to Work are

the way we fund road and air transportation, which means the federal government pays for the infrastructure."

- Sen. Charles Schumer, D-New York

problematic."

After the report came out, the California state DOT, Caltrans, also expressed his concern. "I'm not prepared right now to say we're pulling out, but we're taking a real hard look," said Caltrans director Jeff Morales told the Sacramento Bee. "At a minimum, you're not getting credit for the improvements. At worst, you're getting dinged."

For STPP's full statement and other material, [click here](#).

For a Sacramento Bee article on TTI, [click here](#).

For a Los Angeles Times article on TTI, [click here](#). (free registration required)

HILL NEWS

Senate Subcommittee Continues Reauthorization Hearings

The Senate Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation held its third hearing on TEA-21 reauthorization on June 26, focusing on the benefits of transit. Similar to previous Congressional hearings on public transportation's performance, today's hearing addressed the outcomes of increased funding for transit under TEA-21. Unlike past hearings, however, witnesses represented a broader cross-section of public interests that gave uniform support for transit.



Speaking from the business perspective, Carl Guardino, Executive Director of the Silicon Valley Manufacturing Group, discussed how the business community has championed local sales tax initiatives to expand transit in the San Francisco Bay Area. Similarly, Herschel Abbott, Vice President of Governmental Affairs for Bell South; reported on Bell South's decision to relocate the company's offices to six major employment centers at or near MARTA's rail system in order to give its 9,800 employees a way out of Atlanta's traffic jams.

STPP Board Member Hank Dittmar also testified before the panel, providing a comprehensive look at the relationship between transit investments and ridership growth nationwide and demographic and business trends that forecast continued demand into the future. Dittmar, who is the President of the Great American Station Foundation, also spoke about transit's impact on economic benefits to users and growing market response. He also made some initial recommendations for reauthorization, most notably urging the panel to maintain parity in the matching share for highway and transit capital projects.

Michael Replogle, Transportation Director for Environmental Defense and the leader of STPP's policy team on energy and environment issues, emphasized the need for the committee to further strengthen the connection between transit investment and clean air goals in his testimony.

For testimony from this hearing, [click here](#).

House Subcommittee Holds Hearing on Intermodalism

Government officials and transportation professionals at a Congressional hearing on June 18, 2002 discussed the need to improve connections between our nation's various modes of transportation and create an overall seamless network that moves people and goods more efficiently.



The hearing by the U.S. House Highways and Transit

Subcommittee was one of a series being held in preparation for the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) next year. For more information, [click here](#).

Senate Subcommittee Holds Hearing on TEA-21 Renewal

On June 18, 2002, the Senate Banking Committee's Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation held a hearing entitled "TEA-21: A National Partnership." The hearing was part of an ongoing series of Congressional hearings laying the groundwork for next year's reauthorization of TEA-21. Witnesses included Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, Boise Mayor Brent Coles, and Dallas County, Texas Commissioner Kenneth Mayfield.



Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick discussed his interest in intermodalism, light rail and transit development overall and told this panel, "if a community has organized for a result, there has to be some language that has to make the states respond." Boise Mayor H. Brent Coles also talked about his plans for a commuter rail investment in his region and the challenges he faces in gaining state and federal support for his efforts. In other testimony, Mayor Kilpatrick and Dallas County Commissioner Ken Mayfield discussed their efforts to bring rail transit connections to their airports to deliver congestion relief along major highway corridors.

For testimony from this hearing, [click here](#).

House Committee Examines Capital Grants Program

The Subcommittee on Highways and Transit met on June 20, 2002 to receive testimony from transportation professionals on the Federal Transit Administration's capital investment grants programs and clean fuels grants program. The hearings explored the federal transit capital grants programs, which represent about 42 percent of total funding, and are primarily discretionary in nature. Representatives and witnesses discussed new starts project funding, bus rapid transit, rail modernization programs, ways to expand the core capacity of transit systems, and cleaner fuel options for buses.



For more information, [click here](#).

IN OTHER NEWS

Public Health Briefing Connects Transportation Choice, Physical Well-Being

STPP participated in the at the June 11th Congressional health fair and policy briefing, "Prevention Saves at Any Age," with Barbara McCann speaking on the links between physical activity and transportation and land use policy. STPP, supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is currently researching the link between the physical environment and obesity, looking to put numbers behind the common sense idea that people who walk more are healthier. The briefing, sponsored by the Congressional Prevention Coalition in cooperation with the Partnership for Prevention and the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, also covered topics of nutrition and obesity. Kelly Brownell, PhD, of the Yale University Nutrition Center, spoke on the environment as related to obesity, focusing on "Toxic Food Environment," and Rep. James Moran (D-VA) called on his fellow Members of Congress to consider policy solutions to health problems associated with poor diet and inadequate physical

activity.

For more information on the briefing, [click here](#).

Massachusetts Program Links Housing, Transit

The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency has announced the release of a new program which credits people who rely on mass transit to lower barriers to home ownership - helping to reverse the long term trend which gave financial impetus to sprawl. The "Take the 'T' Home Mortgage Program" is a partnership between MassHousing, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and community banks in the MBTA's service area to help qualified regular and frequent 'T' riders buy a home - with no down payment -- in close proximity to public transportation.



For more information, [click here](#).

LOCAL REPORT

Transit a Top Election Issue in Michigan

The Detroit Free Press last week carried a front-page article titled "Transit a Top Priority with Voters", focusing on the Michigan governor's race and where the voters and candidates stand on fully funding public transit. Of the four questions the Free Press posed, one was: Should the full ten percent be given to transit? Three out of five candidates said yes.



How did it come about that candidates in Michigan, home of the Motor City, are vying to be the most transit friendly? It didn't happen over night.

Back in 1999, the Michigan Transportation and Land Use Coalition identified and defined Ten Percent for Transit as a priority campaign, echoing the principle that more equitable investments in public transit is key to enabling all people to gain access to good jobs, education, training, and needed services. Research revealed that although Michigan law allows for ten percent of the Michigan Transportation Fund to be spent on public transportation projects, it was only spending about three-quarters of what's allowed, or \$159 million, compared to about \$2 billion for road projects.

Managed by the Michigan Land Use Institute and the Michigan Environmental Council, the Coalition began by publishing fact sheets and newspaper opinion articles to elevate the issue. The Coalition continues to work in partnership with groups such as the League of Conservation Voters to conduct candidate and voter education regarding transit funding over the past several years. Direct action includes an on-going strategy of raising the issue in lawmaker visits and getting support on the record.

The Free Press has made ten percent for transit a defining issue for candidates; the voters will determine whether or not they have the chance to follow through.

[Click here](#) for full text of the article.

For information on Michigan Transportation and Land Use Coalition membership and top priorities, [click here](#).

Submitted by Kelly Thayer

REPORTS & RESOURCES

National Academy of Sciences Report

The National Academy of Sciences has released a report on how the US should harness technology and science to combat terrorism. Of particular interest is chapter 7, which focuses on threats posed to our national transportation infrastructure and suggests ways to address those concerns (most specifically through the Transportation Security Agency). The paper is limited to direct threats to the transportation infrastructure, and does not address the need for transportation system redundancy as discussed after September 11 (to read more about this, visit http://www.napawash.org/pc_local_state/peirce_10_13_01.html).

To view the report, [click here](#).

Civilizing Downtown Highways

STPP, the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) and the Local Government Commission have teamed up to release a new report on how state highways that serve as main streets can enhance the community if carefully designed. "Civilizing Downtown Highways" highlights several California and national success stories, and is available for purchase for \$30 from www.cnu.org or by calling CNU at 415.495.2255.

[Click here](#) for a full PDF version of the new Caltrans policy on "Context Sensitive Solutions" (requires Adobe Acrobat Reader).

Transfer is written and edited by John Goldener of the Surface Transportation Policy Project, with contributions by Barbara McCann, Andrea Broaddus, and Leah Dawson. Readers are invited to reprint newsletter items; proper citation is appreciated. If you are not currently subscribed, please send us a note via e-mail to: transfer@transact.org. Be sure to include your full mailing address and name of your organization, phone and fax numbers. For comments and suggestions about Transfer's content, contact John Goldener at jgoldener@transact.org.

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