

Using the
Federal Transportation Law
to Meet the Mobility Needs
of Your Community

**Report on Workshop
Discussions, Findings,
and Next Steps**

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Executive Summary

In the first six months of 2006, the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership (STPP) conducted seven workshops on how to use the federal surface transportation law to expand transit, increase pedestrian and bicycle travel, improve the safety of all system users, and conform transportation investments to the context of various communities. The workshops, held in seven cities in different regions of the country, were structured to give the more than 700 participants the insights and face-to-face opportunities to learn more about the federal transportation law and forge strategic partnerships to help them make progress on needed transportation improvements in their communities, regions and states.

Each workshop included plenary sessions on funding, planning, and livable communities. These plenary sessions were followed by breakout sessions that charged participants with refining their ideas and presenting suggested practices, as well as practices to avoid.

The plenary discussions and action-step sessions that took place during the seven workshops revealed a number of overarching themes. These themes appeared to resonate with the broad array of transportation professionals, advocates, and other participants from urban, rural, suburban, and exurban areas. Among the most noteworthy:

- A variety of audiences need education and training about the nature of our transportation issues and ways to build broad-based support for change;
- Broad and deep alliances are critical to expanding travel choices – transit, walking, bicycling, intercity rail, and ridesharing;
- Finding successful ways to integrate transportation, land use, and community development is a priority;
- Citizens want agencies to involve them in transportation decisions affecting their communities; and
- A more transparent, user-friendly description of funding availability and eligibility will help the public achieve more travel choices.

This report serves as a companion to the publication *From the Margins to the Mainstream: A Guide to Transportation Opportunities in Your Community*. This publication recounts discussions and findings from a series of seven workshops. The findings in this report are derived from a review of workshop notes, workshop evaluations, and conversations among participants and organizers.

This report is organized into four main sections. Section I offers background and context for the workshop series, namely the enactment of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A*

Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Section II describes workshop structure and logistics. This section provides a snapshot of the organizers' goals and objectives and the tools they used to meet workshop goals. Section III, the heart of the report, documents the proceedings of the plenary sessions, and it offers a detailed account of discussion topics. Finally, Section IV lays out a series of action steps that can underlay future strategic planning efforts, and reform campaigns. Appendices are referenced in the document; these include a listing of workshop sponsors, session worksheets, and the workshop evaluation form.



I. Preface

Enactment in August 2005 of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU) has provided an opportunity to re-shape the nation's transportation investments over the next several years. To maximize that opportunity and to achieve significant change over an even longer term, however, a broad array of interested parties must meet the challenge of ensuring that the resultant transportation investments produce the outcomes that the public wants to see.

Although the public has voiced what outcomes they want, it is often different from what they have been getting. They know that today's traffic problems won't be solved by yesterday's solutions. In most urban areas today, they live with worsening congestion, and the usual answer of more road capacity isn't improving the situation, at least not for the long term.

A growing number of people working in transportation agencies recognize this. The issues have garnered increased attention and resources from a broader array of organizations, including advocates for older adults, such as AARP. The public increasingly understands the linkages between land use decisions and transportation investment, and the impact of those decisions and investments on the quality of life in their communities.

A 2003 STPP poll found that if given a choice between "walking more" and "driving more," 55 percent of adults would choose "walking more," and 84 percent support using state transportation dollars for street design projects that calm traffic in residential areas, even though it means they may have to drive more slowly themselves. A December 2005 Harris Interactive poll shows strong support for rail travel – both for commuter and intercity trips.

Although the past 15 years have brought about some transportation reform in communities, the proportion of funding devoted to designing safe, healthy, livable communities, creating greater transportation choices, and enhancing access for people and freight remains well below what the public is demanding.

With a goal of expanding the national dialogue about transportation decision-making, STPP conducted a series of seven regional workshops, entitled *From the Margins to the Mainstream*, from January through June of 2006. The workshops – sponsored by a diverse partnership of federal agencies, non-profit organizations, and private

foundations (see Appendix A for a complete list) – sought to bring together a variety of audiences that are concerned about transportation issues, and to organize their ideas and opinions into strategies that could help agencies find ways to deliver transportation investments that better meet public needs and are responsive to public opinion. Led by STPP staff and other resource experts, the workshops encouraged participants to identify ways to overcome impediments to change, and to promote new thinking and actions to meet today’s transportation challenges – at the national, state, regional, and local levels.

This report recounts the major themes that emerged from discussions among the workshop participants during their two-day meetings. The workshops highlighted many of the most pressing challenges that advocates and agencies face in promoting change in transportation investment, and this report offers suggestions for next steps that STPP’s partners and others can take to help ensure that mainstream transportation investment provides communities with appropriate transportation choices.



II. About the Workshops

From January to late June of 2006, STPP conducted seven transportation workshops nationwide entitled *From the Margins to the Mainstream*. The workshops were sponsored by a variety of governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and private foundations. This section provides background information about the workshops, as well as findings from the workshop evaluations.

A. Workshop Goals

The workshops were an initiative of STPP and its coalition partners to help community and state leaders understand and use the federal surface transportation law to create more transportation options. The workshops were designed to address provisions under SAFETEA-LU that can be leveraged to expand transit, increase pedestrian and bicycle travel, improve the safety of all system users, and channel transportation investments to achieve community objectives. Specifically, the workshops' goals were to:

- Broaden understanding of what SAFETEA-LU allows by demystifying some of the complexities of the law's programs and processes;
- Demonstrate how to take advantage of the flexibility, eligibility, and processes defined in the law;
- Generate strategies to balance investment in roads and motor vehicles with other options to create multiple travel choices in communities;
- Disseminate examples of how organizations and communities are taking actions to broaden transportation choice in their communities and, thereby, to support the development of livable communities where people want to live, work, and play; and
- Foster new alliances and partnerships in states and communities to change the course of transportation investment, teach new techniques, and define joint opportunities for those allies and partners to further the vision for transportation's role in their communities and economies.

To meet the workshops' goals, the discussions were organized around a series of plenary topics, including funding, planning, and livable communities. Section III provides a detailed account of these sessions.

B. Participants

All seven workshops were designed to draw participants from a wide range of advocacy organizations and agencies. These included state and local governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, consultants, consumer advocates, transit providers, and planning organizations.

More than 700 individuals participated in the seven workshops. Prior knowledge of transportation issues varied significantly among workshop participants. While some individuals worked daily on transportation planning and implementation of transportation projects within their states, others had no prior understanding of transportation funding or planning, but understood that transportation choices, including walking and biking, were an essential part of building a livable community. Thus, participants brought a rich mix of perspectives and insight to the workshop conversations.

C. Location

With the exception of the Los Angeles event, workshop invitations were extended to individuals from multiple states within the six regions. The workshop in Los Angeles focused largely on agencies, organizations, consultants and advocates from the LA region, given the scale of California, local interest in an STPP partners workshop on the new law, and the unique features of the state's law, which passes most federal transportation funds to metropolitan planning organizations and counties.

LOCATION	DATE	STATES INVITED
Charlotte, NC	January 19-20	AL, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, TN & VA
New Haven, CT	February 9-10	CT, DE, MA, ME, NH, NJ, NY, RI & VT
Denver, CO	March 16-17	AK, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA & WY
Minneapolis, MN	April 11-12	IA, IL, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD & WI
Columbus, OH	May 4-5	IN, KY, MI, OH, PA & WV
Albuquerque, NM	June 7-8	AR, AZ, KS, LA, NM, MS, OK & TX
Los Angeles, CA	June 27-28	CA

D. Workshop Structure

Workshops were designed to promote participation by attendees, regardless of their level of knowledge about general transportation issues, or specifically about SAFETEA-LU. To encourage active participation by all attendees, STPP took several actions:

- Sent advance registrants an electronic copy of the workshop Guidebook on transportation planning and funding;
- Requested that registrants complete a brief e-mail survey about transportation challenges and their own goals for the workshop (see Appendix B for email survey questions). Survey responses were shared with workshop attendees during the opening sessions in order to provide a frame of reference for concerns and interests;
- Largely restricted formal speaker presentations to luncheon remarks;
- Organized workshop activities around moderated plenary sessions and smaller breakout sessions. Plenary sessions featured a panel of five or six resource experts;
- Directed moderators of breakout groups to charge the groups to transform discussion topics into a series of “dos” and “don’ts,” which were shared with the full group of participants during a plenary session;
- Ensured that representatives of diverse advocacy and agency perspectives were present in each of the breakout session groups; and
- Developed worksheets for each of the three major plenary sessions as a paper-and-pencil outlet for attendees to express interests and concerns about the plenary session topic that they may not have had the opportunity to voice to the group as a whole.

To further promote understanding of the issues and to encourage the formation of new alliances on local and state transportation issues, STPP held an off-site reception after the first day’s sessions.

STPP partners played a key role in encouraging their members to participate in the workshops. All participants, including local governments, regional agencies, transit operators, and community groups, shared relevant examples that sparked dialogue among themselves.



E. Workshop Support Materials

STPP developed a comprehensive package of materials to support workshop attendees, to inform STPP about concerns and priorities of participants, and to document follow-on actions participants would like STPP to pursue in response to their concerns. The materials included:

- STPP Guidebook entitled *From the Margins to the Mainstream: A Guide To Transportation Options in Your Community* that provides a basic explanation of the planning process, funding programs and eligibility, and new tools in SAFETEA-LU for turning ideas into projects that get built to help advance community priorities;

“The material prepared and distributed by the STPP are excellent tools to gain an insight into the flow of funding, the process of planning and the opportunities for public participation and influence into the process.”

— *CTAA Ambassador*

- An appendix to the Guidebook that includes a comprehensive glossary of transportation-related terms as well as a listing of key national resources;
- Plenary session worksheets completed by individual participants to highlight discussion issues they found noteworthy, issues that should have been part of the plenary discussion, and challenges to state and/or local action on the plenary session issues;

- A workshop evaluation form on which participants could provide feedback on such topics as how to enhance attendees' participation, knowledge of SAFETEA-LU and networking, and the top two areas attendees would have liked more information about during the workshop; and
- Transportation-related resources such as handouts, brochures and CDs, which were provided by FHWA, FTA, partner organizations and stakeholder groups.

F. Workshop Evaluations and Participant Feedback

Plenary and breakout sessions provided workshop participants several opportunities to share their views with colleagues. STPP also sought to capture participants' concerns, questions, and needs through plenary session worksheets (see Appendix C) and an overall two-day workshop evaluation form (see Appendix D). Key findings related to workshop content, materials, and structure, and ways in which participants would like to access resources and information are discussed in the following section.

Workshop Content, Materials, and Structure

A relatively small percentage of workshop attendees (about 21 percent) completed the overall workshop evaluation form. There were many participants who only attended the first day of the workshop, and thus did not submit their evaluation form. Of those who did complete the evaluation, however, more than 85 percent noted that the amount of time spent on each of the key topic areas was generally appropriate.

Workshop participants overwhelmingly reported positive responses to the content, materials, and structure. Two areas that respondents would like to see covered in more detail are funding issues and specific case studies of transportation projects. Several individuals called for development of a primer on how the funding works as spelled out under SAFETEA-LU, with special attention to audiences without any background or experience in transportation investment or planning. The call for use of case studies throughout all three major topic areas of the workshop was widespread. Although resource panelists and others in the plenary sessions often referred to examples of effective practices, the evaluation made clear that there is interest in a more systematic compilation and distribution of such case studies. Said one participant: "We need more positive examples of plans/projects where the goals of complete streets and federal law are being integrated and implemented. In short, more success stories and how they did it!"

Participants requested best practices or guidelines on a host of topics including:

- Fostering broader, more robust community participation in the planning process;
- Building coalitions and advocating for policy change; and
- Promoting discussion among decision makers and advocates or, as one participant wrote: "Negotiating with the political structure."

Participants also were asked to rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, how helpful they found the workshop materials, including the Guidebook. A rating of 1 indicates that the material is "not helpful at all" and a

Score for Workshop Materials	% of Overall Responses
5	36 %
4	42 %
3	17%
2	3 %
1	2 %

rating of 5 indicates that the material is "very helpful". In addition to the Guidebook, workshop materials included handouts of key issues for each session, one-pagers on planning and Context Sensitive Solutions, and a federal agency memorandum on flexible funding guidelines under SAFETEA-LU.

Although the majority of respondents noted that they had not had time to read the entire Guidebook in advance of the workshop, many echoed one participant's comment that it was "very well written in language accessible to non-professionals." Other workshop participants said supplemental materials were needed for those without a background in transportation or federal transportation law. Still other participants, particularly those who attended the workshop in Albuquerque, asked for more examples focused on rural problems.

Finally, participants were asked which of the three types of sessions was most helpful to them: the plenary sessions with resource panels and a moderator; the breakout sessions in which people from various disciplines and perspectives met to discuss practices to follow and to avoid; or the feedback sessions at which the breakout group highlights were reported back to all workshop participants.

On the whole, the mix of sessions seems to have met the learning needs of participants. Each type of session had its champions. Participant comments:

- "Breakout sessions provided for discussions that were personal and learning was easier between individuals."
- "The feedback and plenary sessions were equally as helpful because the plenary [resource people] were knowledgeable.

That stimulated valuable input from the people in the trenches [the other workshop participants].”

- “The breakouts along with the plenary did a good job of engaging the entire room.”
- “The feedback sessions were good because I could hear how other communities are doing in navigating their efforts to get funding.”

Access to Information

Evaluations revealed specific ways that participants would like future information delivered to them. More than three out of five participants (63 percent) asked for Web-based technical assistance, followed by educational programs (48 percent) and in-depth presentations to state colleagues (46 percent).

Web-based technical assistance could provide a convenient, searchable means for sharing success stories, and establishing a nationwide base for a community of advocates. Noted one workshop attendee: “We need access to technical assistance and resource experts on funding, how to navigate through the process, etc., especially... in understaffed communities.” Participants wrote that such assistance combined with additional educational programs could effectively broaden understanding of issues and possible actions not only for advocates but also for agencies, such as State Departments of Transportation (DOTs), transit operators, and planning organizations.



III. What We Learned

Participant discussions and follow-up evaluations during the seven workshops generated creative strategies for tackling transportation investment challenges, and also informed STPP about participants' needs for additional information on various topics.

The following section presents workshop proceedings, including key themes and notable issues raised during plenary sessions, followed by participants' suggested practices and practices to avoid when trying to move *From the Margins to the Mainstream*.

A. Workshop Discussions

The workshops provided in-depth information about opportunities provided by SAFETEA-LU to expand mobility choices. Participants shared their perspectives on actions that communities, regions, and states can implement to change historic patterns of transportation investment in their communities. This account of workshop discussions is informed by written notes captured at each meeting, information supplied through evaluation mechanisms, and dialogue among participants, facilitators, and workshop organizers. At each workshop, the mix of participants varied, with lesser or greater representation of local transit agencies, MPO/regional governmental entities, or issue advocates (e.g., environmentalists, senior advocates, multi-modal activists, etc.). Consequently, the emphasis of discussions varied somewhat at each of the locations.

The plenary sessions for all of the workshops were designed to provide an overview of the federal funding programs, the planning process as well as the tools and resources in the law that support livable community-type investments.

Insights from the plenary sessions are organized around three topics:

- **Funding**
- **Planning**
- **Livable Communities**

All of the workshop sessions were designed to give participants an opportunity to learn from knowledgeable experts on the session topic, and then to provide for an open discussion among participants with the panel of resource experts.

The sessions were facilitated at each workshop by a transportation consultant or non-profit leader, and senior planning staff from the

Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations as resource experts. These panelists were joined by state and local planners, and national non-profit advocates whose work addresses both highways and transit issues.



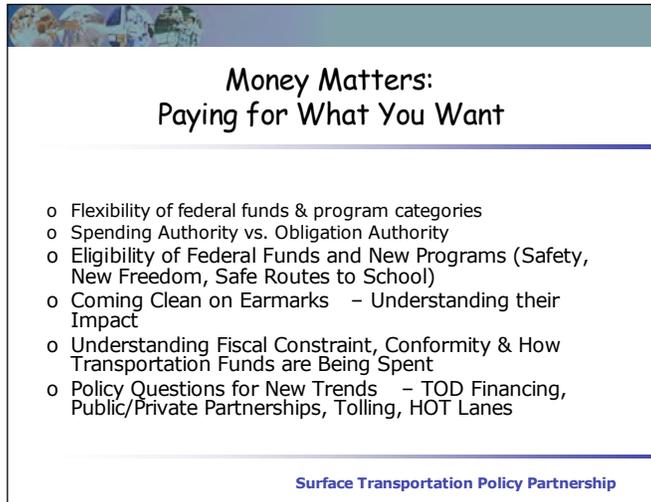
Plenary: Money Matters

Introduction

The sessions on Money Matters focused on the many ways federal highway and transit program resources can be used to fund transportation solutions in communities, regions, and states. The sessions provided participants with insights on federal transportation financing, which helped inform the subsequent sessions on

planning and design choices. In addition, there was discussion of state and local financing strategies, as well as public private partnerships. Topics for this session related to Chapter III of the Guidebook.

Participants received information on the key federal programs, with attention to funding eligibility and flexibility rules. New SAFETEA-LU program initiatives, including Safe Routes to School and Small Starts, were featured throughout the sessions. In addition, the funding implications of the new requirement to coordinate transit and human services transportation were discussed. Also noted were changes in how funds are allocated under the Jobs Access and Reverse Commute program (JARC); under SAFETEA-LU, funding decisions are now made by state DOTs and larger transit providers, not by Congress during the annual appropriations process.



**Money Matters:
Paying for What You Want**

- o Flexibility of federal funds & program categories
- o Spending Authority vs. Obligation Authority
- o Eligibility of Federal Funds and New Programs (Safety, New Freedom, Safe Routes to School)
- o Coming Clean on Earmarks – Understanding their Impact
- o Understanding Fiscal Constraint, Conformity & How Transportation Funds are Being Spent
- o Policy Questions for New Trends – TOD Financing, Public/Private Partnerships, Tolling, HOT Lanes

Surface Transportation Policy Partnership

“There is a direct link between our conversation about money and the conversation about planning. The federal transportation planning process is your opportunity to have a say about how federal monies are spent, but keeping up with it can be a full-time job.”

— *New Haven Workshop Presenter*

At each workshop, STPP President Anne Canby provided a brief overview of federal transportation funding, directing participants to the workshop Guidebook for more information. At the sessions,

participants received a financial report summarizing how states in each region had expended available federal highway funds over the fourteen-year period (FYs 1992-2005) since ISTEA took effect in 1991. See: <http://www.transact.org/2006workshops/statespending92-05>.

Representatives of the Federal Transit Administration and the Federal Highway Administration participated in each of the sessions, helping explain the basics of the federal funding process, calling attention to key changes under SAFETEA-LU, and acting as resource experts as questions arose. Both agencies provided key information that was distributed at the workshops, such as a joint FHWA/FTA Memorandum (2/06/06), *Flexible Funding for Highways and Transit and Funding for Bicycle & Pedestrian Programs*¹, which explains the funding flexibility rules under federal law.

Specific goals for this session were for participants to understand:

- New programs in SAFETEA-LU;
- Flexibility and eligibility of federal funds, including financing options for participant priorities (e.g., “fix-it-first” but fix it right, transit, walking, bicycling, and transit-oriented development);
- Project prioritization and selection and funding allocation, including project earmarks;
- Fiscal constraint and financial reporting requirements; and
- Innovative financing, such as public/private partnerships, tolling, hot lanes, and value pricing.

The plenary discussions and breakout sessions were wide-ranging, but a few common themes emerged at each workshop. These themes included:

- The need for transparency/ understanding of the transportation funding process;
- Changes per SAFETEA-LU and new programs;
- Innovative financing opportunities; and
- Getting involved in funding decisions.



Discussion Topics for Money Matters

- o Using **Flexibility and Eligibility** of Federal Funds and **New Programs** (Safety, New Freedom, SRS)
- o Packaging Multiple Funding Sources to Support **TOD**
- o **Incorporating New Priorities** into the Capital Program
- o Coming Clean on **Earmarks** – Understanding their Impact
- o **Policy Questions** for New Trends – TOD Financing, Public/Private Partnerships, Tolling, HOT Lanes
- o **Understanding Fiscal Constraint, Conformity & How Transportation Funds are Being Spent**

Surface Transportation Policy Partnership

¹ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/flexfund.htm>

Participants learned that a basic knowledge of the funding rules is necessary for engaging states and MPOs in the planning and funding processes. Many participants expressed frustration that the process is not more transparent, and they expressed interest in having easily understandable information about the federal funding process and programs. This was generally expressed as a call for more transparency at the State level regarding what funds are available, where dollars are expended and what types of project types are funded. This was especially evident at the Charlotte and Minneapolis workshops.

Another major topic was the importance of the public gaining access to and influencing the decision-making process. Participants affiliated with community groups as well as officials with MPOs, regional and transportation agencies, State DOTs, and other organizations shared this general sentiment. While advocates sought more information about how to become involved in the decision making process, State DOT and MPO representatives sought suggestions for ways to better disseminate information about transportation funding, as well as ways to engage the public in the process.

There were instances where selected issues received considerable attention in certain locations. In New Haven, participants focused on project earmarks. At the Denver, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis workshops, people wanted to know how federal dollars could support transit-oriented development. Participants in the Columbus and Charlotte workshops talked often about funding flexibility and how this might be applied to fund more travel options. Tolling and public-private partnerships were key discussion topics in Columbus and Denver. In Albuquerque, rural transportation, especially rural transit services, was a priority. Finally, directing more federal dollars to walking and bicycling projects was a priority at the Los Angeles workshop.

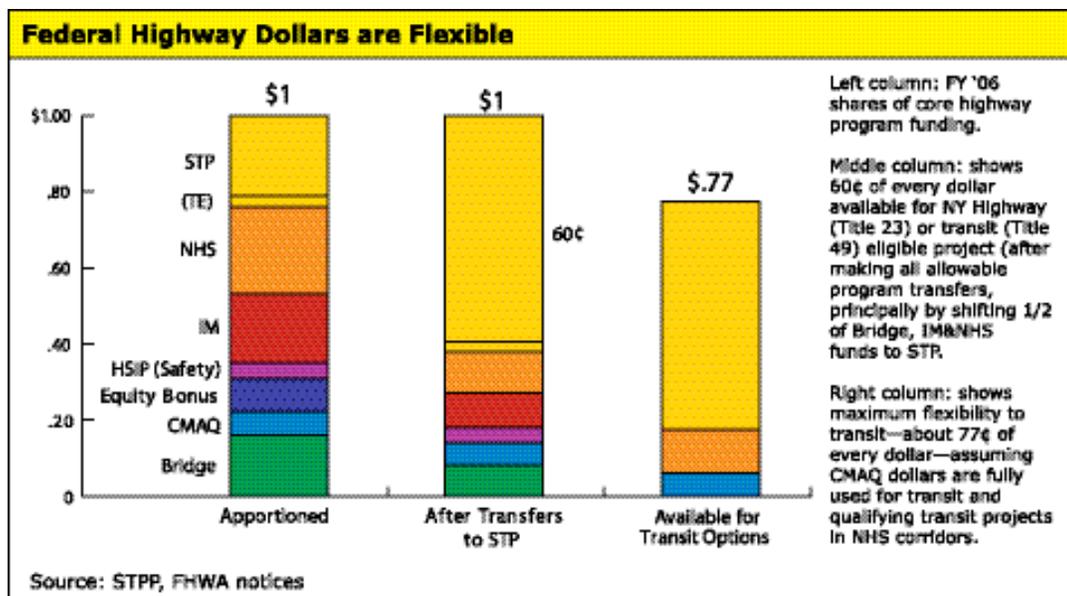
What We Learned

The following section summarizes many key points and insights expressed during these sessions. Major discussion topics related to funding included:

- Funding flexibility;
- Project earmarking;
- Accountability, financial performance, and reporting;
- Fiscal constraint, project prioritization, and criteria; and
- Innovative financing (including tolls and public-private partnerships)

Funding Flexibility

The passage of ISTEA in 1991 created new flexibility in the use of federal transportation funding. Speakers highlighted the opportunity to use that flexibility to move beyond traditional roadway projects, and to increase investments that promote intermodalism and multimodalism (e.g., walking, bicycling, and transit). Federal dollars can be used for many purposes, including bus and rail car purchases, timing traffic lights, pedestrian and bicycle access and safety, van and carpooling, stormwater system improvements or even localized planning initiatives to promote transit-oriented development, redevelopment or traffic demand management.



Participants often indicated that making more use of the law’s flexibility to expand travel options was a top priority. They also expressed frustration that these flexibility features are not more widely known and utilized, indicating that current state and local investment priorities and financial constraints are making it difficult to access the law’s flexibility to fund more travel options. Attendees were also largely unaware that federal law enables their state to direct 100 percent federal funding to certain types of projects, which include traffic lights, including signal preemption systems for transit services, pavement markings, and traffic circles. A number of participants were interested in exploring how 100 percent federal funding could help advance travel options, especially smaller projects that promote more transit use, walking and bicycling. It was noted that broader use of

this authority by the states for these types of projects could help promote more travel options.

Some participants noted that federal resources are the only realistic source of capital funding for alternatives to auto travel (especially in the many states that limit the use of state revenues to highway maintenance and expansion). They viewed the availability of federal resources, given the flexible nature of federal highway funds, as an important tool for changing current investment priorities, while acknowledging impediments.

Resource experts at the plenary sessions noted that some state DOTs may find it easier to do road improvements with transit benefits than to shift highway money to transit, particularly for states with transportation funding problems. Participants learned that state DOTs can undertake transit projects with highway funds without always having to formally transfer funds to the Federal Transit Administration (local agencies must transfer federal highway funds to FTA for transit projects). In addressing the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities, participants learned that a relatively small amount of a state's highway funds shifted to transit translates into significant increases in available services.

A New Haven Workshop presenter summarized the flexibility features of federal law in this way: "I still don't understand everything, but I do understand that there is a lot of money, and it is very flexible. I've learned that if the DOT wants to do a project, they can find a way."

Project Earmarking

Participants discussed how earmarks in federal legislation often don't translate into increased federal funding to the state, region or even local community. Participants heard some examples of the negative impacts of this practice, such as the effect of earmarked projects on other local priorities as well as restrictions on the use of earmarked funds. Resource experts and facilitators noted that earmarks rarely cover the total cost of a project – often, only a small share of the total project costs. It was also pointed out that earmarks do not necessarily result in construction of projects, as these often-limited funds are simply used to advance further planning and study. Some participants viewed this growing practice as symptomatic of a process that is not working. At the same time, there were participants who indicated that earmarks were beneficial to their communities and regions, since their efforts to secure state and/or MPO support for alternatives to automobile travel were unsuccessful in the regular prioritization process.

Accountability, Financial Performance and Reporting

New SAFETEA-LU reporting requirements were seen as useful in making the process more transparent, and in making decision makers more accountable. These provisions include: annual reporting by FHWA on state spending via the World Wide Web; annual posting by MPOs on funding commitments (i.e., annual listing of projects); and providing certain planning products to the public in an electronically accessible format (such as on the Web). Similarly, new requirements for financial plans for larger projects were seen as positive changes. Resource experts reminded attendees that the federal law has few requirements for performance measures; advocates were encouraged to press for more accountability and outcome-based decision making within their states and regions.

Participants learned the difference between highway authorization levels and the annual obligation authority, and how this “gap” (about 13 percent in FY’06) has influenced state spending priorities, especially funding commitments to programs supporting project investments in walking, bicycling and transit. As a result, some participants, for example, noted reduced state funding commitments to improving air quality under the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program.

Fiscal Constraint, Project Prioritization, and Criteria

Fiscal constraint is the requirement that MPO plans and Transportation Improvement Plans (TIPs) as well as each state’s TIP (or “STIP”) must be developed based upon

The Federal government could be stricter in getting unfunded projects out of TIPs and STIPs. We should have constrained plans, not wish lists.

— Charlotte Workshop Participant

reasonably expected revenues. Some participants noted that fiscal constraint can be a powerful tool in forcing more debate on priorities and the prioritization process. Fiscal constraint requires states and MPOs to make prioritization decisions in their capital programs based on more realistic estimates of available resources. However, statewide long-range transportation plans are not subject to federal fiscal constraint rule, which means that often capital programs in local areas served by MPOs are subject to much more financial scrutiny than projects in other regions of a state.

Participants generally agreed that more work is needed to make the planning process more accessible to the public. This is discussed in

greater detail in the Planning proceedings. Some participants noted that the MPO process remains difficult to navigate and is not always responsive to the changes sought by the public or stakeholder groups. Similarly, participants indicated that the state processes, especially funding allocation practices, were difficult to comprehend or influence. Participants expressed the need to find ways to bring multi-modal criteria into the decision-making process, and were concerned that capacity alone is often used to select and fund transportation projects, especially highway expansions.

Innovative Financing

Discussions on innovative financing, including tolls and public-private partnerships, underscored the need for MPOs and more stakeholders, to get involved in the initial stages of state and regional deliberations on new policies in this area.

At several workshops, concerns were raised about public-private partnerships, with warnings that these arrangements can distort or even subvert existing planning, programming and prioritization processes and undermine public involvement. It was noted that confidentiality agreements with private parties on asset sales and tolling agreements may not provide for adequate public review and debate and can bypass longstanding planning and programming practices.

A more positive message delivered at the Columbus workshop suggested that these public-private partnerships offer market-based approaches to traffic demand management in key corridors, with the potential that these arrangements could stimulate more travel options, especially transit improvements. Participants suggested that these partnerships could offer the potential to bring more innovation to the management of corridors and might provide additional revenues to support multimodal travel options in congested corridors, but only if the agreements call for revenue sharing to support these options.

At the Denver workshop, several key points were made about tolling. Some participants pointed out that anti-tax interests have a favorable view of tolls. Others noted that tolls may bias the distribution of existing federal resources away from urban areas and distort program priorities. Still other participants observed that tolls might only benefit certain segments of a community without improving access for those who are not able to drive. It was also noted that tolls could help to shift demand for more travel options. Participants indicated that MPOs need to be more involved in these discussions.

The discussions included some specific examples of successful initiatives in states and regions that may be good candidates for further study, or which may be disseminated to other transportation planners as “best practices.” These examples include:

- A partnership between the Colorado DOT and the Denver Regional Transportation District helped build a segment of light rail as part of a highway expansion in the corridor, showing there are ways to move away from funding only highway or transit projects, and instead, funding projects that consider the transportation system as a whole.
- In Oregon, every road project must provide for bicycle use, with a separate lane or not, depending on the type of road, a policy that moves towards the “complete streets” concept.
- California has enacted a law devolving both federal and state transportation dollars to MPOs and counties. The law, which allocates about 75% of all federal (and state) highway funds available for capital investment to local agencies, has resulted in more multimodal investments, increased “flexing” of highway program funds to transit, and increased local government investment in transportation, mostly through county sales taxes. (It was noted that California accounted for about half of all federal highway funds flexed to transit during TEA-21.)
- In Pennsylvania, leaders of the disability community built upon a small pilot program on transit in rural areas and succeeded in launching a full-blown program for 26 counties, by taking their message to state legislators, prompting new resources for these services.

Plenary: Planning is Fundamental

Introduction

SAFETEA-LU—the most recent federal transportation legislation—includes planning provisions that build upon the two previous transportation bills (ISTEA and TEA-21) to strengthen the links between transportation planning and other planning activities (e.g., land use, economic development, security, etc.). SAFETEA-LU promotes the use of new and innovative tools and techniques during the planning process, and requires a comprehensive and long-range approach to environmental consideration and mitigation.

The federal transportation law provided the context for the plenary discussions on planning; many presenters and resource experts highlighted the ways that state and local MPO planning entities carry out federal provisions to achieve planning goals. Importantly, facilitators emphasized that while the federal legislation can define and describe the planning process, MPOs and other local transportation decision makers are charged with successfully implementing the process and adhering to the regulations.

“Planning is Fundamental” sessions focused on providing facilitators, panelists, and participants with a forum to gain a better understanding of the public participation process, the role of MPOs and state agencies in generating public participation, and the different methods for public engagement.



Getting in the Game: Planning is Fundamental

- o Session Goals
 - o Getting Desirable Planning Outcomes
 - o Linking Planning Outcomes to Capital Investment
 - o Getting Community Involved in Defining Outcomes

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The framework for planning discussions largely followed Chapter II of the Guidebook. Planning themes central to the plenary sessions included:

- Improving the public involvement process through the sharing of best practices, implementation of new rules and regulations, etc.;
- The desire to close the gap between visioning efforts and developing measurable, actionable, fiscally-constrained plans;

- The evaluation of other, non-transportation considerations (such as environmental quality, human services, land use, etc.) in the transportation planning process; and
- The value of taking an end-user or customer perspective during the state and metropolitan planning process.

“People need more choices to stay active members of the community when they can no longer drive.”

— *Denver Workshop
Presenter*

These themes appeared throughout more detailed and specific discussions of various topics, such as travel modeling, creation of State Transportation Improvement Programs (STIPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) by MPOs, and even rising gasoline prices.

The plenary discussion focused on:

- A review of the federal transportation planning process and new planning provisions in SAFETEA-LU;
- The relationship between transportation planning and other types of planning (such as land use and economic development planning);
- Strategies to better engage the public in the planning process; and
- Ways to define, measure, and achieve desirable planning outcomes.

What We Learned

This section provides an account of specific discussion topics that were raised by participants. In some cases, issues of concern were tied to local projects or situations faced by community leaders in particular locations.

Significant topics and areas of interest related to planning included:

- Public engagement tools and tactics;
- Development of transportation plans (e.g., long-range transportation plans or LRTPs) and capital programs (i.e., TIPs & STIPs);
- Consideration of land use in the transportation planning process;
- Transportation costs; and
- The transportation planner’s tools and methods.

Public Engagement Tools and Tactics

New SAFETEA-LU consultation provisions are intended to improve the ways transportation decision-makers inform the public and engage stakeholders in the transportation planning process. These new provisions as well as the topic of public engagement generally garnered significant attention throughout the sessions, with participants repeatedly emphasizing the importance of engaging the public in transportation decision-making. Resource experts, panelists, and facilitators also reminded participants that when it comes to transportation planning, there may be stakeholders and community members who are not aware that they are able to participate in the process. Several attendees suggested that transportation decision makers at all levels of government should assure stakeholders that their participation can and does influence decision making.

TIP: "Try to have public involvement that really gives the public decision-making power."

— *New Haven Workshop Participant*

Resource experts noted that the requirement for participation plans (which are to be developed in consultation with stakeholders) represents a particularly important SAFETEA-LU provision, and one that can enhance the level and quality of public involvement in regions served by MPOs. Several participants agreed that dialogue about the planning process has value in itself.

Scenario planning was singled out as an effective tool for bringing public and private leaders together with the public around a shared vision for the future. In Denver, participants discussed how the Envision Utah process has redirected the debate on future development and transportation priorities in the greater Salt Lake City area. Concerns were raised, however, that while scenario planning was effective in generating a broader public debate and forging a consensus, leaders in that region were challenged in finding ways to link resource allocation decisions or project selection to scenario planning outcomes, noting that the 'old way' still dominates investment decisions.

Attendees shared some best practices about public engagement tactics, including the use of non-traditional methods for engaging the

public. Suggestions included holding public meetings about transit projects on transit vehicles, scheduling meetings after traditional business hours in order to maximize public attendance, and considering the need for childcare, translation services, disability services, and similar techniques that promote public input. The key recommendation was to select public involvement methods that focus on a customer or stakeholder perspective.

Additional alternative public engagement methods included the use of Webcasts and other Internet-based strategies, and the use of focus groups to gather information from specific stakeholder groups.

“When the only people at the table are the ones who are paid to be there, the process suffers.”

— *Charlotte Workshop Participant*

Creative tactics for promoting public meetings and involvement include offering incentives for attendance (such as gift certificates from local businesses), contracting with third parties to promote public meetings, and involving colleges and universities, schools and even faith-based

groups in broader outreach efforts.

Participants wanted to see more innovation on the part of high-level transportation decision makers, especially in adopting new approaches that build consensus with the public on transportation solutions. A notable example of innovation by a state agency was mentioned at the New Haven workshop where the New Hampshire DOT Secretary explained how she partnered with a community foundation to lead a statewide planning effort. The exercise produced a plan that has brought together a broad range of the state’s key stakeholders around a shared vision for the future. The plan also includes specific measures of performance and accountability and was provided to the public in a user-friendly format that was easy to read and understand. Learn more about the plan at <http://www.nhtranplan.com/>.

Development of Transportation Plans, TIPs, and STIPs

Throughout the workshops, presenters and attendees suggested that long-range transportation plan development should involve stakeholders at the earliest stages, and that it is good practice to continually update stakeholders and the public throughout the duration of the process. Some attendees suggested that plans and programs (including STIPs and TIPs) should be crafted by way of a “bottom-up” approach, where initial ideas for transportation projects are generated

by community members, rather than with state or metropolitan transportation planners. Some resource experts suggested that the federal planning requirements are, in some cases, sufficiently “fluid and dynamic” that community members can engage in the process at different stages and to different degrees.

In reviewing these issues, presenters discussed new SAFETEA-LU provisions that will shape the development of future long-range transportation plans. For example, states and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) must now “promote consistency” with growth and development plans, use visualization techniques and electronically assessable formats (e.g., Web) to engage and inform the public, describe environmental mitigation measures, and consult with other state, local agencies and tribal agencies responsible for land use, natural resources, environmental protection, and historic preservation.

Further, several participants expressed concerns about how to incorporate innovative and multimodal/intermodal thinking into the long-range transportation planning process. Some participants felt that commitments made to stakeholders during the planning process were not honored in the allocation of resources. This was especially true for bicycle and pedestrian activists, who cited instances of “mismatch” between funding decisions and shared public visions. Some participants, who had actively taken part in the drafting of regional and statewide transportation plans, noted cases where transportation plans did not alter actual state and MPO investment decisions. A number of participants discussed the rising costs of “pipeline” projects and how this delays efforts to move forward with other projects that promote broader travel options.

Participants learned that there are continuing challenges in ensuring that final STIPs/TIPs actually achieve the stated goals of long-range transportation plans. Experts suggested that advocates closely monitor plans and STIPs/TIPs and hold state and regional leaders more accountable for investment decisions. Resource experts noted that SAFETEA-LU does not define performance indicators or other measures that require transportation leaders to strengthen the links between plans and investment programs.

Committing to a vision but not following through with funding decisions was also seen as harmful to agency efforts to engage the public in the planning process. Such practices had caused people to shift their efforts away from planning to funding, either influencing dollars in the transportation improvement program or seeking Congressional earmarks. Others suggested that transportation leaders and advocates have to do a better job in articulating how to implement

visions set forth in the plans, through investments and other actions. The number of statements and discussions on this topic strongly indicated the need for additional emphasis on these issues, although participants did not clearly verbalize what they needed to be more successful.

“Endless pressure, endlessly applied.”

— *New Haven Workshop Presenter*

Participants were advised to base their state and MPO plans on end results and outcomes, with measurable goals. Resource experts and moderators suggested that the public should

closely monitor and follow both the statewide and MPO planning processes to “ensure that your issues are moving forward in the way that you want.” However, experts acknowledged the state and MPO processes can be dense and confusing for the public.

Participants learned that there is a need to pay more attention to asset management, particularly as rising costs of energy, materials and other inputs drive up the costs to maintain what is already in place. Focusing on “fix it first” policies means “fixing it right,” such as including policies that promote “complete streets.” Fix it first and complete streets are discussed in greater detail in the next section (proceedings of the plenary session on choices, access, and design).

At several workshops, the need for more planning to expand walking and bicycling was discussed. Participants were reminded that there are important linkages to be made between transit and investments in bicycle and pedestrian facilities since many transit trips rely on walking and bicycling to bus stops and transit stations. Access to transit is particularly important to areas with air quality problems. In these areas, real benefits can be seen by taking the automobile entirely out of the trip.

At the Albuquerque workshop, participants heard about the importance of tribal transportation planning and the need for participants from rural areas to organize together in order to work more effectively with state transportation departments. Participants at the New Haven workshop were advised to pay closer attention to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which is prepared by each MPO and updated every year or two in most areas. In Delaware, local agencies and the public are given the opportunity to comment on and provide feedback on the UPWP.

Consideration of Land Use in the Transportation Planning Process

In many of the workshops, participants representing MPOs, councils of governments (COGs), transit agencies, state transportation agencies, and transportation issue advocates agreed that it is important for the transportation planning process to evaluate land use impacts, and to consider selecting projects based on land use considerations.

Participants routinely sought advice on how to link the transportation planning process with land use and development decisions, especially within the context of transit-oriented development.

In New Haven, one DOT participant suggested that the congestion issues that most areas face today are more a result of land use decisions than the lack of transportation investment. The states have opportunities to guide local governments and regions in making land use and transportation connections². Fast growing areas in Arizona, such as Buckeye and Goodyear, are being encouraged by the Maricopa Association of Governments in Phoenix to address transportation issues in their land use plans.

Highlighting the need to connect land use and transportation decisions, Charlotte Mayor Pat McCrory told the Charlotte workshop attendees that “you are wasting your money if you are not willing to deal with land use.” Others pointed out that because there are few regional entities authorized to regulate land use in the same way transportation projects are regulated, and even fewer statewide land use planning regulations, some participants suggested that it was incumbent upon transportation decision makers to consider land use impacts and development opportunities in their planning processes.

The effective integration of land use and transportation remains a significant challenge for states and local agencies throughout the country. Participants heard that land use has to be the first consideration when thinking about transportation projects. One participant noted that there is now 50 years of experience putting in roadways first before thinking about the impact on land use patterns.

While participants wanted more technical support and assistance from federal agencies, they learned that there is more that has to be done at the state and local level as well. For example, the new law requires states and MPOs to “promote consistency” with land use and

² Resource: NJ DOT's NJ FIT toolbox, located at <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/njfit/toolbox/>

development plans, which should prompt state and local decision-makers to examine these linkages in more detail. Several participants indicated the need to put more teeth in existing land use regulations. At the New Haven workshop, participants learned that the State of New Jersey is funding workshops, led by a university, to help communities understand the transportation impacts of their land use decisions.

A number of attendees emphasized that regions and states could be more effective transportation planners by developing a comprehensive policy and framework that addresses issues of sustainability and livability in addition to efficiency, mobility, and other transportation planning factors.

Transportation Costs

Transportation cost issues surfaced at several locations. This was especially true at the Minneapolis workshop where research by the Center for Neighborhood Technology showed how transportation costs burden family budgets in the region, the benefits of location efficiency and the interplay between housing and transportation costs. Agency leaders were urged to pay more attention to end user costs, especially for families, track the true costs and other impacts of various scenarios and alternatives and learn to talk about how choices can reduce transportation costs. It was recommended that agencies consider household transportation costs in their planning process in this era of higher energy costs, especially gas prices.

Participants noted how rising transportation costs affect families and how higher fuel and material costs are affecting maintenance and capital programs. They heard that the planning process does not really speak to transportation costs and that there is not much being done to develop plans and investment programs to reduce the impact of transportation costs on families. Participants learned that in this era of higher construction costs, current projects are more expensive and consume a larger share of available resources. One result is that planned projects to support more transit, walking and bicycling that can help people lower transportation costs are often delayed.

At the Minneapolis workshop, participants questioned why the planning process does not directly consider end user costs, which are many times greater than what governments expend on highways and transit. It was recommended that the planning process consider the implications of these cost increases, particularly on taxpayers and investment programs, in this era of higher gas prices.

Planning Tools

Participants at the various sessions delved into some of the technical aspects of the planning process, including discussions on the quality and use of models, assumptions in plans and models, design criteria for traffic speed and safety, design manuals and context sensitive solutions.

On modeling practices, they heard that historic trends are unlikely to continue in the face of changing energy prices and supply concerns and, as such, models need to account for these and other externalities. With few exceptions, the basic model has not really changed much since the 1960s and lacks feedback loops, such as how different transportation investments affect land use and development decisions. One presenter warned participants not to rely too much on models, particularly given the many documented shortcomings; instead, he told them to be clear about their vision and make it happen.

On design criteria, participants were told to question design standards and assumptions about speed and traffic, which have the effect of essentially mandating high capacity roads. In addressing design issues, speakers praised the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's new highway design manual, which is a nationally recognized effort to be truly multimodal and truly flexible on design speed, lane width and other criteria.

Participants frequently discussed strategies for deploying context-sensitive solutions (CSS), with many noting the value of the Guidebook in framing many of the issues. The one point that stands out in these discussions is that CSS is a process that engages stakeholders from the beginning in finding the right solution, not just a project with added features.



Plenary: Creating Better Choices and Access, and Designing Safe, Healthy Communities

Introduction

Building on the funding and planning discussions, this plenary session focused on ways to improve project design and provide greater transportation choice and access for all users.

SAFETEA-LU established new and revised existing programs that can enable greater travel options, such as Safe Routes to School, New Freedom, and Small Starts. The new law emphasizes the use of context sensitive solutions and recognizes the strong relationship between transportation and land use plans and development patterns, including transit-oriented development.

Plenary facilitators encouraged state and regional transportation agency staff in attendance to take advantage of new and existing federal transportation rules to use the law’s flexibility to design places that support travel options and strengthen local economies. It was noted by facilitators and resource experts that the new law elevates the importance of safety, and that new programs and resources are



How the Law Supports Safe, Healthy, Livable Communities

- o Design flexibility encouraged and context sensitive solutions affirmed
- o New Transit and Human Service coordination plan and Safe Routes to School program
- o Federal transportation funds Flexible
- o Planning funds eligible for land-use planning
- o New Safety Program and Strategic Plan
- o Emphasis on reinvesting in existing facilities

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available for safety and traffic calming investments (e.g., 100% federal funding for roundabouts). Some attention was given to freight issues.

SAFETEA-LU includes a number of specific methods

and tools that may facilitate access to travel options and help meet the needs of special populations. These include land use and development patterns, visualization techniques and enhanced public engagement. Many of these issues were discussed during the “Planning” plenary. The discussion topics for this plenary were drawn from Chapters IV and V in the Guidebook. The goals for this session included:

- Discussing ways to move beyond projects and identify ways the federal law can address the mobility needs of people and enhance the livability of our communities through a systems approach; and
- Understanding ways that context sensitive design principles and related land use practice and site plans can achieve greater transportation choices.

There were several overarching themes that emerged throughout this plenary discussion. These include:

- Advocates, community members, and other attendees share the perception that many State DOTs view transit, walking and bicycling as peripheral or alternative modes, and do not seriously consider them when developing plans and projects;
- There is a critical need for strong regional commitments to integrate land use, transportation, economic development and housing plans to support walkable communities and foster transit-oriented development patterns;
- It is important to focus on solutions and outcomes before projects;
- The design of transportation facilities should be flexible and reflect the values and character of the communities which they serve;
- There is value to be found in building partnerships and collaborating on many levels – agency to agency, government to government, stakeholder to government and agency, stakeholder to stakeholder; and
- A wide range of interests—aging, rural, disability, health, immigrant—and disciplines (planning, engineering, finance, environment, housing, etc.) intersects with transportation.



**Discussion Topics for Creating
Better Choices / Better Designs**

- o Approaches that are working best to get **roads designed** to serve transit, walking and bicycling and to the scale of the community;
- o Steps being taken to integrate **land-use and transportation** decisions;
- o Getting started on **small starts**;
- o Ways to make sure the travel needs of **all types of users** are addressed;
- o Strategies to make sure **pedestrian and bicycle safety** are addressed;
- o Making **'Fix It First'** a high priority.

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The themes referenced above, as well as others, appeared throughout the topical discussions at the plenary session. The next section

provides a detailed account of the items that were addressed and the issues that were raised.

What We Learned

The workshops were designed to first give participants an opportunity to learn from a presenter knowledgeable on the session topic, and then to provide an opportunity for participants to have an open discussion among one another, and with a panel of resource experts. This section provides an account of specific discussion topics that were raised by participants.

Significant discussion topics related to planning included:

- Land use and transit-oriented development (TOD);
- Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS), Complete Streets, and design guidelines;
- Creating better choices through collaboration; and
- Providing choices for special stakeholder groups.

Land Use and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Participants at all the workshops are ready and eager to move beyond talking about the need for better integration of land use and transportation and start implementing campaigns and projects. In Albuquerque, a resource expert made the point that it is not possible to create a multimodal/intermodal transportation system without

“We know now that we cannot just fix the ‘problem’ by building more lanes.”

— *Los Angeles Workshop Participant*

addressing land use changes. One of the main concerns expressed throughout the workshops was how difficult it was to get meaningful growth management legislation enacted at state and regional levels. An alternative to this approach suggested at the Albuquerque session was to

use the project selection and prioritization processes to support transportation projects that support livable communities and non-auto travel options.

Resource experts made several suggestions relating to addressing the land use aspects of transportation choices, including the following:

- Become familiar with your community’s zoning and development regulations. The width of streets was used as an example of a regulation that can support walkable transit-oriented communities;

- Consider the creation of new zoning districts to encourage changes in land use around transit stops and stations;
- Consider adopting form-based zoning codes³;
- Make sure that regional or local development policies and strategies specifically focus on land use around transit stations or transit systems; and
- Tax-increment financing (TIFs), a financing tool that uses the increased tax increment from development to finance improvements, can be a good tool for financing TOD projects. See FTA website for examples under “innovative financing” at – http://www.fta.dot.gov/funding/grants_financing_173.html.

At the Los Angeles workshop, one resource expert made the point that transit-oriented development (TOD) is, in fact, the link between land use and transportation. Transit-oriented development is the concept and practice of facilitating development around transit resources, or developing transit resources in high-density areas. TOD can provide living and travel options for mixed-incomes, the elderly, and the young, while reducing household budgets, congestion, and dependence on foreign oil. TOD can provide better choices – especially for aging populations – by fostering links between transportation and land use decisions.

During the discussion, the concern was raised that TOD is often targeted at higher-income communities, and does not address the needs of people who do not have access to vehicles. Attendees noted that stations along the Pasadena Gold Line in Los Angeles serve large segments of low income populations because the rail line was integrated with the existing urban form.

Representatives from the FTA noted there are some funding sources that could be tapped to support TOD and livable communities, and it is important to leverage all of these resources.

It was noted that a source for alternate revenues for transit-oriented development can be found in the Statewide Transit-Oriented Development Study⁴ prepared for the California Department of Transportation. A source of ideas for smaller communities may be initiatives by the Washington State DOT to help smaller communities in innovative ways by packaging resources for them through the agency’s CSS work. See: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/TA/Operations/LocalPlanning/contextsensitivesolutions.html>.

³ For more information see: <http://www.formbasedcodes.org/>

⁴ *Statewide Transit-Oriented Development Study: Factors for Success in California*

During the plenary presentation, participants learned about the value of “placemaking.” Some experts and panelists shared their beliefs that transit only works if it takes the rider where he/she wants to go, and development patterns can limit or expand access and create new demands for transit. Panelists also recommended that communities develop transit facilities and resources where the demand is high, not necessarily where the right of way is cheap.

Panelists also suggested that TOD can significantly increase the user benefits from a new fixed guideway investment, which is an important consideration for areas seeking federal transit dollars in support of new fixed guideway projects (i.e., New Starts). In Charlotte, an FTA representative pointed out that New Starts projects are required to demonstrate that land uses support the transit project. Land uses attract the riders, which make the project work. An example was provided from Dallas of the retrofitting of the Mockingbird Station area on the light rail system. The project combined residential, office, retail, and entertainment uses at a highly accessible location reducing the amount of parking generally required. At the Minneapolis workshop, a resource expert pointed out that the Regional Transit District in Denver is implementing a multi-corridor plan for new transit lines as a single program. See: <http://www.rtd-denver.com/fastracks>.

“In one corridor in New Jersey, we calculated that the environmental process for one project would cost about five million dollars. Instead, we funded local land use planning for the communities at one-fifth of the cost.”

— *New Haven Workshop Participant*

Supportive land use is being enforced by compacts signed by the communities where new service will be located. The Regional Transportation District in Denver provided grants to localities using CMAQ funds for local governments to do transit station area planning.

Attendees at the sessions learned that TOD can also be successful around bus stops/stations as well as rail stations. It was suggested by some participants that FTA become more involved in joint development, an important driver for TOD. See: http://www.fta.dot.gov/planning/programs/planning_environment_2364.html.

The link between housing and transportation costs was raised at several of the workshops, particularly in Albuquerque and Los Angeles. Some participants also suggested that location efficient mortgages could offset housing costs of those who live near transit. Another possible source of assistance is the federally supported Commuter Choice program (<http://www.commuterchoice.com/>), which provides tax incentives to employers and their employees for commuting costs, including transit fares. Participants recognized the importance of planning transit services and housing development in concert to ensure that those who are unable to drive have access to community services via transit. Attendees suggested that advocating for policies that link housing and transit projects can help address housing needs and reduce transportation costs. One example of an attempt to overcome this challenge is the San Francisco Bay area's Metropolitan Transportation Commission program, which provides additional transportation funding to local governments that increase the availability of housing within walking distance of transit stations.

Alongside discussions of livability, housing, and TOD, attendees expressed an interest in the FTA's new Small Starts program. Resource experts indicated that projects funded through this program could be designed to foster better use of the transit village concept, encourage greater densities around transit stations, and promote pedestrian-oriented design in transit-served areas.

Other TOD issues that emerged during these plenary discussions included the need to examine telecommuting and car sharing as alternatives to increasing parking capacity at transit stations or in urban cores.

Finally, there was a general interest in sharing good examples of transit-oriented development projects, particularly those that address the needs of an aging population and families in need of affordable housing.

Context Sensitive Solutions, Complete Streets, and Design Considerations

Context sensitive solutions (CSS) and design was another focus which generated considerable interest at all of the workshops and appealed to both urban and rural participants, as well as representatives from advocacy

"Context sensitive solutions is a PROCESS, it is NOT highway designers putting "lipstick" on a roadway that doesn't work."

— *Columbus Workshop Presenter*

groups, State DOTs, MPOs, transit agencies and others.

Many participants suggested that context sensitive design makes good common sense, and that CSS principles should be applied during the planning as well as the project design process. Participants agreed that flexibility in planning and design guidelines was a cornerstone of adopting context sensitive solutions and developing projects with a community.

Many resource experts and participants agreed that adopting a context-sensitive approach provided opportunities to incorporate broader travel options. At the Denver workshop, three guiding principles were proposed for context sensitive solutions: choices and access, context sensitive design, and fitting the project into the area. Key points about CSS from the workshops include:

- Public involvement is not separate from the technical work;
- Stakeholders should be part of the project team;
- Stakeholders and multiple disciplines must be involved early and continuously;
- Participants want agency staff to reach out to communities and engage citizens in developing context sensitive approaches;
- A context sensitive solutions process should be used to determine if added lanes or new highway capacity is needed;
- Access to intersections is important for all users, not just those driving an automobile; and
- Leverage other infrastructure investments to improve the streetscape and add traffic calming elements for a small marginal cost.

In terms of context sensitive design issues, the points from all of the workshops focused on making context sensitive concepts and approaches a routine part of the ongoing planning and design processes. Participants also discussed the importance of project scale in context sensitive approaches. Understanding the scale of projects (neighborhood, town, region, etc.) helps planners address varying degrees of design detail, and helps them better understand the values and cultural diversity of project areas. Participants also suggested that engineers have a lot of flexibility in using the American Association of State and Highway Transportation Officials' "Green Book" (*A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*).

References to the "Green Book" periodically sparked discussions by advocates about how to affect designs for roads. As local governments and

TIP: Do not be bound by assumptions.

other entities revise their design standards, stakeholders should take advantage of the opportunity to advance inclusion of pedestrian, transit and bicycling provisions.

Many participants were interested in obtaining good examples of context sensitive processes and designs for all types of surface transportation. Resource experts provided the following examples:

- Massachusetts Highway Department's design manual incorporates a number of context sensitive design principles. See: http://www.vhb.com/mhdGuide/mhd_Guidebook.asp.
- Vermont adopted flexible and context-sensitive design standards, that incorporate a "scoping process" in the early planning stage to identify project elements instead of starting with design standards;
- The ITE/CNU publication, *Context Sensitive Solutions* in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities, provides many useful ideas and design strategies for building more vibrant communities with multi-modal transportation options. See: <http://ite.org/bookstore/RP036.pdf>.
- In Lexington, KY, the state's Transportation Cabinet attempted to put five lanes in a section of road that was not wide enough. Community members organized and indicated that they wanted sidewalks and bike lanes. The project team analyzed travel time difference between five lanes and three and decided to modify the project to three lanes. Traffic engineers were doubtful, but the project is a success—it fit the environment and provided a transportation solution.
- In Minnesota, the corridor management plan for Highway 38 is an example of a collaborative effort to improve a substandard section of highway at the same time preserving the unique beauty of the area. The improvement resulted in a reduction of accidents in the five years since it was redesigned.

TIP: Design speed is a major component of the design manual. Ask what the design speed is. A lower design speed allows more flexibility.

Some workshop participants affiliated with community groups or issue advocacy groups repeatedly expressed concern that project staff members (at State DOTs, MPOs, or other entities) either do not have the authority to be flexible or are resistant to trying new ideas. Resource experts

TIP: Challenge Levels of Service targets: The Highway Capacity Manual is built on a "free-flow" premise. Those kinds of standards don't fit for Main Street.

highlighted that stakeholders and community members should ask questions and raise issues because there can be a great deal of flexibility and often project staff need to be encouraged to re-examine assumptions.

A good resource for CSS is the joint website developed by the Project for Public Spaces and Scenic America for CSS <http://www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/>. And, FHWA's guide to using CSS in the planning process is available to stakeholders at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/csd/020703.htm>.

One participant pointed out that there is still a lot that we don't know about the impact of incorporating CSS into project development and design. For example, in Toronto, streetscape project costs were offset by a reduction in accidents and property damage that had not been anticipated.

Aligned with the discussion of context sensitive design and solutions was the concept of 'Complete Streets.'⁵ The view at many of the workshops was that all streets should be complete streets and that more effort should be given to addressing pedestrian needs. At the Los Angeles workshop, one resource expert made the point that a transit rider is first and foremost a pedestrian and walking is a very important element of the transit trip. Landscaping and traffic management are important elements for the pedestrian. In addition to street design issues, others made the point that local design guidelines for buildings and their placement are also key elements in successful context sensitive design as well.

Some participants thought that since projects can take a long time to be funded for construction, it would be a good idea to re-examine a project once funding became available to review the appropriateness of the proposed solution. Another idea was that it is helpful for all involved in planning or developing a project to have a finite amount of funding to keep expectations in line with financial realities when working through a context sensitive solution.

"A city built based on the automobile is no longer visible to the pedestrian."

— Los Angeles Workshop
Presenter

A number of concerns were raised by participants in terms of getting agencies to adopt a more flexible and context sensitive approach, or to

⁵ *Complete Streets provides that the needs of all users, of all ages and abilities – driver, pedestrian, bicyclist, goods deliverer, transit rider – be addressed.*

include pedestrian, bike or transit elements in a project. Attendees shared their views that quite often, the desired additions are declared to be 'beyond the scope' for a particular project. Attendees noted that it is important to ask how the 'scope' was developed and whether stakeholders had any role in helping to define it. Another challenge that a number of participants identified is that quite often pedestrian, bike and transit facilities are viewed as an 'amenity' and easily dropped when funding gets tight or others object. Advocates for context-sensitive solutions and expanded transportation choices suggested the following ideas in order to overcome challenges to implementation:

- Get state and regional agencies to establish and use task forces to involve advocates in all aspects of project planning and development;
- Make sure agencies identify the problem being addressed by the proposal;
- Suggest better alternatives and argue for their inclusion in the analysis;
- Work with non-traditional partners to fight for better alternatives,
- Be willing to compromise;
- Do your homework: understand what stage of the process a project is in to enable effective intervention; and
- Make effective use of the media to raise an issue.

One good example is the "Can't Wait to Bike and Walk the Bridge" campaign (Carolina Coastal Conservation League, Charleston, SC), which worked to get bicycle and pedestrian elements included on a new bridge project.

Participants discussed the value of incorporating the needs of all users (pedestrian, bicyclist, transit rider, and auto driver) into a 'fix it first' strategy. 'Fix it first,' a term that generally applies to repairing existing roads before adding new capacity, was viewed at most of the workshops as a high priority that should be embedded in legislation. Discussions about 'fix it first' explored different interpretations of the term from replicating what had previously existed, retrofitting infrastructure to serve present demand, or upgrading existing infrastructure to respond to future needs. Some examples noted that wide suburban streets could be re-configured to accommodate bikes, pedestrians, and transit. Some participants noted that a 'fix it first' strategy is especially helpful in rural areas that may be unlikely to receive funds for new capacity investment if their transportation demands have not grown. It was noted that some DOTs are beginning to understand their agencies serve multiple users and modes and are

adapting policies to respond to a more diverse array of needs and public priorities.

Creating Better Choices through Collaboration

Resource experts and participants agreed that agency leadership has to recognize and acknowledge that a collaborative relationship with stakeholders produces better results than an adversarial one. Reaching a successful outcome requires receptivity on the part of agency staff as well as a willingness on the part of

“When the only people at the table are the ones who are paid to be there, the process suffers.”

— *Charlotte Workshop Participant*

communities and stakeholders to engage with each other. The consultation process, which was enhanced in SAFETEA-LU, helps build the trust between staffs and stakeholders necessary to reach a transportation solution in the best context for all.

Participants agreed that building relationships is critical to effectively addressing issues when they arise. Relationships should be based on trust and on decision-makers’ genuine and meaningful interaction and engagement with stakeholders.

TIP: Sometimes advocates need to learn to take yes for an answer.

This suggestion applies to the agency-to-agency relationship, government-to-government relationship, and agency- and government-to-stakeholder relationships. This is important regardless of one’s affiliation or position on an issue. The key is to get buy-in for projects or principles as early as possible in a process. Specific recommendations for building relationships appear in the next section, “Suggested Practices and Practices to Avoid.”

Resource experts, facilitators, and attendees recognized the challenges of building consensus among diverse groups of stakeholders and engaging people in a genuine partnership effort, including greater sharing of financial resources with local officials.

One helpful example is the Status of Seniors Initiative in Mecklenburg County, NC, which established a task force to represent the total community. Five issue areas were identified, and work groups composed of community members were tasked with studying each area and preparing a report. The Status of Seniors Initiative wanted

to engage stakeholders early in the process, and wanted community members to generate recommendations. The effort has been making a difference in the community and improving the quality of life for stakeholders⁶.

In the short term, transportation advocates need to have empathy – they need to understand the context and pressures faced by MPOs, State DOTs, and local transit agencies. Resource experts pointed out that it is difficult for state DOTs and MPOs to engage the public when advocates are fractious or have many different opinions. Hence, there is a great value in having advocacy groups coming together around a clear agenda.

TIP: Understand what the rules and regulations are, what policies and realities are, and deal with those in the short term.

Several resource experts were candid about the need to escalate an issue if stakeholders feel agencies are not following the public participation process, they are not being granted access to information, issues are not being addressed, or agencies are not listening and responding to their concerns. This may mean going to elected officials or higher level staff at various transportation agencies to hold agencies accountable for following the spirit as well as the intent of the federal law.

TIP: Find someone with experience to help go around the bottleneck either on the outside or within the bureaucracy. But be aware that this approach should be used sparingly - so do it when it counts.

Another piece of advice offered at one of the workshops was: “Don’t

make assumptions about how people are going to react, or what they’re thinking. Engineers may surprise you.”

Finally, one unique opportunity for collaboration on design issues arose at the Albuquerque workshop. While not a dominant topic at other workshops, tribal and rural planning and design issues are important for many transportation advocates and decision-makers.

Several participants wanted to learn about sources of funds for transit and TOD support for tribal governments. Resource experts noted that the U.S. Department of Agriculture provides funding for tribal

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<http://www.chameck.org/Departments/DSS/Services+for+Seniors+and+the+Disabled/statusofseniors.htm>.

initiatives, including a program coordinated by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). Additionally, FTA representatives pointed out that SAFETEA-LU funds received by the state DOTs, in particular funding from the Section 5311 non urbanized formula program, are eligible to be used for transit in rural areas. FHWA's Tribal Technical Assistance Program⁷ is another source of assistance.

One challenge is that some discretionary transit programs outlined in SAFETEA-LU do not provide for planning activities. This can create problems in defining a project for capital funds unless other sources can be identified to support planning activities. In New Mexico, tribal efforts to address transit needs led to the formation of a transit district in the Los Alamos area of the state through an agreement with five pueblos and a number of local governments. See <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/tribaltrans/ttpcs/newmexico.htm> for a description of the creation of the transit district.

Providing Choices for Special Stakeholder Groups

This topic includes discussions on transportation choices for older adults, and how transportation agencies and advocates can work with the human services community to expand transportation choices to disadvantaged populations.

SAFETEA-LU offers both new opportunities and creates new challenges by requiring the coordination of public transit and human services transportation provided by transportation agencies and human services agencies in those cases where entities seek discretionary funds through certain FTA programs.

The requirement recognizes that many community members, including the elderly and the disabled, make use of transit and paratransit services provided by social and human services organizations.

Resource experts noted that paratransit services are costly to provide and are unlikely to keep up with demand for trips. Participants agreed that it will be important to find ways to make fixed-route service more accessible (to the elderly, disabled, and others), and to ensure that fixed-route

"Creating accessible communities isn't mutually exclusive to providing regional transportation."

— *Minneapolis Workshop Participant*

⁷ <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/opd/#programs>

transit services can accommodate more people, while stretching limited funds further.

In addition to integrating services, participants thought it important to make sure that the experience of getting to and from the bus is addressed as part of making the whole system more accessible. Participants agreed that having a pedestrian-friendly community is necessary for transit to be truly useful.

Resource experts introduced the idea of the “community within a community” for elders, which is a popular concept in a number of locales. Lititz, PA is engaging in this kind of development. Other communities that have both embraced the concept of “livability for all” include Columbia, MD and the South Sound area of Washington State. Englewood, CO has also redeveloped its downtown, and Springfield, IL is in the process of retrofitting their community to keep their neighborhoods vibrant. Arlington, VA now has a task force for “livability,” and city planners and officials encourage developers of retirement communities to build in transit accessible areas of the county.

In addition to discussing a range of topics related to access, transportation choices, and design, participants also raised some concerns and questions about the transportation decision-making process. Members of the advocacy community and those outside of MPOs or State DOTs discussed the process by which states and regions realize outcomes that support livable communities. Some participants expressed confusion about the process by which projects are prioritized, how states set up funding categories, the sharing of control of funds between the state DOTs and the MPOs, and the process by which the existing pipeline of projects is reviewed.

Many participants expressed frustration over the limited availability of funds for sidewalks, bike paths and transit projects even with the new funding provided in SAFETEA-LU. In light of this, participants urged that existing projects in the pipeline should be re-examined after some period to determine their relevance and priority.

With little transparency in the process or opportunity to fund their priorities, many participants are suspicious of the process and unwilling to support greater investment.

B. Suggested Practices and Practices to Avoid

Each plenary session was followed by a breakout discussion that allowed participants to pursue ideas in more depth with a diverse group of attendees. Groups blended advocates, engineers, and others, as well as those with various local, regional, or state-level affiliations.

Breakout groups were asked to identify particular practices related to each plenary discussion topic that should be followed or avoided (“dos” and “don’ts”). Participants’ suggested practices (“dos”) are organized around the following themes:

- Citizens want agencies to involve them in transportation decisions affecting their communities.
- A variety of audiences need education and training about the nature of transportation issues and ways to build broad-based support for change.
- Broad and deep alliances are critical to expanding travel choices — transit, walking, bicycling, rail and ridesharing.
- Finding successful ways to integrate transportation, land use, and community development is a priority.
- A more transparent, user-friendly description of funding availability and eligibility will help the public achieve more travel choices.

The suggested practices reported below appear as they were put forth by participants during the workshop sessions. Workshop participants were not charged with directing their suggestions to particular actors (such as agency staff or community activists) and the specific context of each suggestion is not fully conveyed in the summary below. However, in many cases, it is clear that some of these practices could only be carried out by those entities with final funding, planning, or decision-making authority.

Topic: Citizens want agencies to involve them in transportation decisions that affect their communities

To do

- Keep the public engaged in the process at every step of the way.
- Consider new approaches for involving the public in the process – hold facilitated meetings, go where people are, pay focus groups, give incentives (e.g., gift certificates from local businesses, etc.), contract with third parties (e.g., universities, colleges, community groups and others) to help with outreach, and get creative with meeting locations.
- Include everyone – those in favor and those who oppose project plans.

- Involve non-traditional groups, including senior, faith-based organizations, parents (through schoolchildren), kidney dialysis directors and discharge nurse associations.
- Use community participation in project design so the community understands the project and shapes decisions.
- Use visuals to help people understand the impact of a project, how their money is being spent, and the outcomes from investment.
- Use the Internet to communicate with stakeholders.
- Show stakeholders how their input has been used or addressed.
- Use progress reports to decision-makers to help them stay abreast of projects and issues.
- Translate materials into multiple languages.
- Help communities navigate the funding system and learn about the funding flexibility and guidelines.
- Seek help and guidance from transportation departments.

Not to Do

- Expect people to understand the process or transportation jargon.
- Apply a “one-size-fits-all” solution and overlook community-driven projects that may not align with the agency’s vision.
- Make the process so daunting that the community is afraid to get involved with the project.
- Reach out only to the “usual suspects.”
- Settle for a process that accepts minimal public participation.
- Ignore technology – a great deal of communication, idea sharing, and involvement can be carried out through email and the Internet.
- Forget to let people know what happens after they provide input.
- Wait until the end of a project or process to involve community members.

Topic: A variety of audiences need education and training about the nature of our transportation issues and ways to build broad-based support for change

To do

- Work to improve communications programs to educate and keep the public and key stakeholders informed.
- Develop strong, clear messages on sustainability and health.
- Be aware of the political will in a community and balance long term goals with short term political reality.
- Explain what the current level of revenue can buy.
- Use the media to help tell your story.
- Use advocacy groups to do the ‘political footwork’ that a public agency sometimes can’t do.
- Keep elected officials and citizens informed of funding needs.

Not to Do

- Build more until you are maintaining the existing system.
- Sacrifice long-term goals for immediate objectives.
- View transportation as only moving cars and trucks.

Topic: Build partnerships to strengthen your constituency and make your message more effective**To do**

- Build broad and deep alliances to expand travel choices — transit, walking, bicycling, rail, and ridesharing.
- Cultivate strong partners and champions.
- Work with human service agencies on projects of mutual benefit.
- Be open to new alliances and spending priorities in going to the voters for new resources – use a citizen’s committee.

Topic: Finding successful ways to integrate transportation, land use, and community development is a priority**To do**

- Find out what a community wants and then use flexibility to fund it.
- Develop a regional vision.
- Examine the connections between plans and STIPs/TIPs, land use and transportation, and transit services and human service transportation.
- Make sure state and regional plans incorporate all transportation needs and modes.
- Take a mode neutral posture in determining how to provide new capacity.
- Challenge design standards so they fit your community’s needs and make design outcome driven.
- Focus on small projects that can relieve stress on the larger system.
- Begin projects as “all-inclusive” projects, including all modes as possibilities to move people and goods.
- Look for ways to expedite and facilitate pedestrian and bike projects.
- Re-examine the validity of the 20-year planning horizon.

Not to Do

- Think of modal solutions as mutually exclusive.
- Delay in confronting land use and development challenges.
- Act like the process is just about funding projects, while overlooking a vision.
- Ignore the long-term impact of high energy prices.
- Let major projects overshadow the smaller ones, especially those with a strong neighborhoods impact.

Topic: A more transparent, user-friendly description of funding availability and eligibility will help the public achieve more travel choices.

To do

- Be willing to experiment and try new approaches.
- Hold MPO and State leaders accountable for their decisions/projects.
- Take advantage of flexible funds to break down the barriers between the modes and agencies.
- Change the MPO structure to spur innovation, encourage regional thinking, and bring others to the table (business, civic, other).
- Give the MPO greater say over funding allocation.
- Take advantage of flexibility to bundle improvements and piggyback on other projects.
- Consider joint projects with FTA and FHWA.
- Be accountable through a formal evaluation and assessment process.
- Use funds to penalize what you don't want, and incentivize what you want.
- Make program finances more transparent – give the public useful information on how money is being spent.
- Look at the state and local funding picture, not just federal dollars.
- Examine alternatives to the gas tax.
- Make sure that any regional pricing structure includes support for all modes.
- Build on public/private partnerships to leverage additional resources such as TIFs.
- Address need for local match with legislators.
- Create local and regional funding mechanisms.

Not to Do

- Fund projects that exacerbate sprawl.
- Ignore performance measures.
- Let the travel demand model be the decision making tool.
- Complicate the planning process.



IV. Action Steps

At several junctures during the transportation workshops, participants had the opportunity to offer suggestions for follow-up actions that community-based and national organizations could take to help transportation agencies improve overall planning, design and access, and better align the expenditure of transportation dollars with desirable outcomes.

The recommended action steps listed below are drawn from various participants' workshop evaluation forms and comments during plenary discussions. Moreover, the action steps provide logical next steps to support the five overarching themes that emerged from the numerous workshop discussions. Those themes appeared to resonate with the broad array of transportation professionals, advocates, and other participants from urban, rural, suburban, and exurban areas. Themes included:

- Citizens want agencies to involve them in transportation decisions affecting their communities;
- Finding successful ways to integrate transportation, land use, and community development is a priority;
- A more transparent, user-friendly description of funding availability and eligibility will help the public achieve more travel choices.
- Broad and deep alliances are critical to expanding travel choices — transit, walking, bicycling, rail, and ridesharing; and
- A variety of audiences need education and training about the nature of our transportation issues and ways to build broad-based support for change.

The action steps are reported here as they were put forth by participants. Workshop participants were not charged with identifying target audiences, implementers, time-frames, or priority levels for these action steps. Participants also did not tie specific actions to specific themes as has been done below. In some instances, recommended action steps could be taken to support more than one of the five themes.

Citizens want agencies to involve them in transportation decisions affecting their communities

- Community members should establish relationships with state DOT and MPO staff members and leaders
- Make transit about quality of life and cost of living

- Agencies (MPOs and State DOTs) should use advocates to help carry their message
- Map the vision for state, regional, community, and neighborhood transportation resources and facilities
- Help MPOs and DOTs improve outreach and engagement with the wide variety of stakeholders
- Make transportation part of the “livable communities” agenda
- Work with federal transportation planners to establish criteria for prioritization of transportation investments
- Include “opponents” in working groups
- Hold more workshops for advocates
- Share examples of effective transportation planning processes that involve advocates and the public sector
- Use the Internet to hold interactive meetings
- Go to the places or forums that are frequented by people you want to reach rather than expecting stakeholders to attend meetings in your venues

Finding successful ways to integrate transportation, land use, and community development is a priority

- Develop and share best practices for land use and travel demand modeling, for engaging elected officials, and for working with non-traditional stakeholders
- Gather and share success stories for transit, bike, pedestrian, and complete streets projects, and case studies on the integration of land use with transit, bike, and pedestrian modes
- Campaign to strengthen state land use laws
- Work with local and regional leaders to create urban revitalization criteria

A more transparent, user-friendly description of funding availability and eligibility will help the public achieve more travel choices

- Provide a summary of the current federal transportation law (SAFETEA-LU) for non-professionals
- Analyze return on different investments
- Analyze cumulative effects of transportation projects from various perspectives (economic, environmental, health, etc.)
- Require reporting on how funds are spent
- Focus more research on state/local situations
- Create local tie-ins as part of national research
- Make the travel forecasting models transparent to non-planners and the general public
- Help non-professionals understand design parameters and design/engineering requirements

- Compare maintenance costs of all modes of transportation (highway/roadway, transit, bicycle, etc.)

Broad and deep alliances are critical to expanding travel choices – transit, walking, bicycling and rail

- Identify and engage new partners – 4H, youth, agriculture
- Get assistance from universities (professors and students)
- Build diverse alliances, recruit new allies - health, aging, developer interests
- Strengthen marketing and communications skills
- Build political relationships
- Partner with university research centers (including federally funded University Transportation Centers [UTCs])
- Share examples of effective partnerships between private, non-profit, and public sector transportation advocates and decision makers
- Provide models for statewide and regional networks or coalitions
- Provide financial support for advocacy organizations

A variety of audiences need education and training about the nature of our transportation issues and ways to build broad-based support for change

- Inform the public on aging and health issues as they relate to transportation
- Educate agencies and stakeholders on transportation funding programs and processes
- Educate the public, local governments and community leaders about the transportation impact of various land use decisions, and about the transportation impacts on development patterns
- Offer peer-to-peer exchanges with diverse representation
- Hold state level forums
- Conduct community audits for walkability, transit services, access to bike paths, pedestrian safety, etc.
- Have a clear message for the public
- Get to know the local media
- Provide a summary of the current federal transportation law (SAFETEA-LU) for non-professionals
- Create and distribute materials that explain technical issues to non-technical people
- Create a clearinghouse for easy access to information

Many of these action steps may be carried out by advocates and/or agencies. STPP and other transportation advocacy organizations also may use these suggestions as the basis for ongoing strategic planning.

Appendices

Appendix A: List of workshop partners and sponsors

Appendix B: Email survey questions

Appendix C: Plenary session worksheets

Appendix D: Two-day workshop evaluation form

Appendix A: Workshop partners and sponsors

STPP National Partners

AARP
American Planning Association
American Public Health Association
American Public Transportation Association
American Public Works Association
American Society of Landscape Architects
Amalgamated Transit Union
Association for Commuter Transportation
Community Transportation Association of America
Congress for the New Urbanism
Rail-to-Trails Conservancy
Smart Growth America

Federal Partners

Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration

Foundation Partners

The Joyce Foundation
The George Gund Foundation
The McKnight Foundation

Other Partners

Alliance for Transportation Research Institute (University of New Mexico)
CH2M Hill
Parsons Transportation Group
City and County of Denver
City of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County
City of Los Angeles
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (Columbus Metro)
New Mexico Passenger Transportation Association
Ohio Association of Regional Councils
Regional Development Corporation (New Mexico)
Regional Transportation District (Denver Metro)
Transit for Livable Communities (Minneapolis-St. Paul Metro)
1000 Friends of Connecticut

Appendix B: Email survey questions

(Please complete as soon as possible and email to — kmccarty@transact.org)

I. Transportation Challenges

Please note the top two transportation challenges now before your community, region or state.

- 1.
- 2.

II. Workshop Expectations

What are two outcomes you would hope to see as a result of participating in this Workshop?

- 1.
- 2.

Appendix C: Plenary session worksheets

Day 1 Morning: Money Matters

Based on the discussion in this session, were there particular issues or points you found noteworthy or helpful?
1.
2.
3.
Are there other issues that that you think should be part of this discussion?
1.
2.
3.
What additional information or assistance would be helpful to you get more investments that expand our travel options?
1.
2.
3.

Top Challenges to State/Local Action on these Issues
1.
2.

(Location and date of Workshop)

Day 1 Afternoon: Planning is Fundamental

Based on the discussion in this session, were there particular issues or points you found noteworthy or helpful?
1.
2.
3.
Are there other issues that that you think should be part of this discussion?
1.
2
3.
What additional information would be helpful to you to have a better understanding of these issues?
1.

2.
3.
Top Challenges to State/Local Action on these Issues
1.
2.

(Location and date of Workshop)

Day 2 Morning: Creating Greater Transportation Choice and Access & Designing for Safe, Healthy, and Livable Communities

Based on the discussion in this session, were there particular issues or points you found noteworthy or helpful?
1.
2.
3.
Are there other issues that that you think should be part of this discussion?
1.
2.

3.
What additional information or assistance would be helpful to you to ensure better plans, links to capital programs, and collaboration with citizen stakeholders?
1.
2.
3.
Top Challenges to State/Local Action on these Issues
1.
2.

(Location and date of Workshop)

Appendix D: Two-day workshop evaluation form

Workshop Evaluation

Thank you for participating in the workshop, **Moving from the Margins to the Mainstream**. This workshop in (workshop location) is one of a series of workshops that the Surface Transportation Policy Partnership and its coalition partners will be holding this year. Your feedback on this workshop will help STPP to revise the workshop sessions so they are more responsive to the needs of future workshop participants.

1. Which type of session – plenary, breakout or feedback – was **most helpful** to you?

2. How, could the workshop sessions be changed to enhance —

- Participation:

- Skills:

- Knowledge of the law:

- Networking:

- Other:

3a. **On a scale of 1 to 5, how helpful** were the **workshop materials** (including the “Guidebook”). (1 being “not helpful at all” and 5 being “very helpful”).

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

3b. How should this material be revised, if at all?

3c. Is there additional information that would have been helpful?

4. For each of the following workshop and breakout sessions, please mark whether future workshops should allocate "less time," "the same amount of time" or "more time" to each of the areas.

- *Money Matters*
 Less Time ___ Same Amount of Time ___ More Time ___
- *Paying for What You Want (Luncheon Session)*
 Less Time ___ Same Amount of Time ___ More Time ___
- *Planning is Fundamental*
 Less Time ___ Same Amount of Time ___ More Time ___
- *Planning for What You Want (Breakout Session)*
 Less Time ___ Same Amount of Time ___ More Time ___
- *Creating Transportation Choice & Access and Designing for Safe, Livable & Healthy Communities*
 Less Time ___ Same Amount of Time ___ More Time ___
- *Making Better Design, More Travel Options a Priority (Breakout Session)*
 Less Time ___ Same Amount of Time ___ More Time ___

5. What are your top two areas that you would have liked more information about during the workshop?

- Priority Area #1: _____
- Priority Area #2: _____

6. Having completed this transportation workshop, what follow-up actions by STPP would help you next? (Mark all that apply. Provide details, if possible.)

- ___ Give in-depth presentations to colleagues in your state
 - ___ Provide you additional materials on specific topics
 - ___ Provide web-based support and technical assistance
 - ___ Develop additional educational programs
 - Other _____
- _____

Finally, please complete the following:

NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION/STATE

Again, thank you for your time and efforts in making this workshop a success.