

Administrator Speeches 2005

Date	Subject		
7/20/2005	APTA Conference on Sustainability, New York City - July 20, 2005		
7/1/2005	Luncheon Remarks for Portland, Maine - July 1, 2005		
5/16/2005	APTA Bus Paratransit Conference, May 16, 2005		
5/3/2005	MIT Transportation Seminar		

MIT Transportation Seminar

05-03-05

Remarks: Jennifer L. Dorn

Cambridge, MA

Public Transportation: Get Ready for the Ride of Your Life!

Thank you for that kind introduction. It is so rejuvenating to be in a room with aspiring transportation professionals.

To all of you who are transportation students and prospective students: Congratulations. In transportation, you've chosen a great field and an unparalleled program here at MIT. Few, if any, other fields give you access to so many challenging tasks and draw upon so many talents and skills.

Transportation is a prerequisite for almost everything that we do in life -- from housing to health care to the economy and our civic life. And your career in transportation will keep you on your toes, because you will be learning something new all the time. You'll learn about 20-year planning horizons, tunnel excavations, risk management, and human services... about economic development, local politics, media relations, and zoning laws. Then, on your SECOND day on the job!... you'll learn entirely different things.

When I started at the FTA, someone told me, "When you've seen one transit agency... you've seen one transit agency." And they were right ...in public transportation, you'll never see exactly the same challenge twice. That's one of the beauties of Federal transportation policy - it is rooted in local decision-making. So, get ready to be surprised, challenged, enlightened, and invigorated by your profession, wherever it leads you.

You will also find a keen demand for the expertise that you can develop here at MIT. In the next five years, no less than FIFTY percent of the workforce that currently plans, develops and manages our transportation systems will be retiring, taking decades of experience and skill with them... So, keep hitting the books — because we need you!

I want to do two things in my brief time with you today. First, I want to tell you a little bit about the Federal Transit Administration and what we do. You can consider that just a little recruitment effort on my part... because we are always in the market for talented professionals like yourselves. And, second, I want to share with you some of my own observations about leading and managing change in the public sector - observations that I hope you may find useful in whatever sector you land!

Each year, Americans travel over 9.7 billion miles on transit — by bus, rail, trolley, and ferryboat. During the 1990s, transit ridership increased over 28 percent. In fact, transit was the fastest growing of all transportation sectors.

In our capacity as the steward of Federal funding for public transportation investments, the Federal Transit Administration provides over \$7 billion in grants to build, renew, and maintain transit systems throughout the nation – in every State and thousands of communities. The bulk of that money — \$5 billion — is distributed by formula to cities and States.

But, another two billion, including our New Starts program, is distributed through discretionary grants each year. The New Starts program provides over \$1.5 billion each year for major capital investments in new “fixed guideway” transit systems or extensions to current transit systems, like the Silver Line BRT and the “T” in Boston. In our terminology, “fixed guideway” transit generally means subways, light rail systems, electric trolleys, or commuter rail lines.

Through this program, FTA helps to shape transit investments – ensuring that they produce cost-effective results for passengers, communities and the nation, by enhancing mobility, reducing congestion, improving air quality, and, importantly, by spurring economic development and growth.

As you know, the real estate market has been hot for the past decade ... and so has transit. In fact, you might say that transit is in a building boom. Since 1993, new rail transit systems have opened in 17 cities, and growing transit systems in the U.S. have added over 3,000 miles of track – an increase of more than 45 percent in just 10 years.

Today, the Federal Transit Administration has full funding grant agreements with 27 communities that are building new fixed guideway systems or extensions to current systems. Under these agreements, both the Federal government and the community commit to a particular funding level, and agree upon the specific design of the project. Another 24 communities have already begun the system design process necessary to qualify for Federal funding. And, incredibly, another 120-plus communities are undertaking a public deliberation process to consider major new investments in transit.

How much will all of these projects contribute to the economy? How many more jobs will be created? How much will families save on transportation expenses? How much new local tax revenue will be generated? The simple answer to these questions is: we just don't yet know.

But here are some things we do know:

- Developers are pouring millions into office buildings, sports facilities and entertainment venues near transit stops right here in Boston, as well as Virginia, Portland, San Diego, Denver, and elsewhere –

boosting property values and generating millions in additional tax revenues.

- Fannie Mae, the nation's largest source of financing for home mortgages, is testing a program that recognizes the financial benefits of transit and makes home buying more affordable for families locating near public transportation.
- And, each year, public transportation saves over 1,500 gallons in auto fuel consumption ... offering America the single most effective strategy for achieving significant energy savings and improving air quality without imposing new taxes, government mandates or complex regulations.

Increasingly, as we evaluate proposed transit projects, FTA looks for a commitment that goes beyond transportation... Before we will jointly fund major transit projects expects, we ask communities to make commitments to transit-friendly land use policies. We look at issues like zoning regulations, transit-supportive parking policies, a commitment to walkable communities, and economic incentives for transit-oriented development. We want major transit investments to produce real dividends for the community -- in terms of more transit riders and in terms of economic growth.

And we have backed up these intentions with action. In early 2001, FTA's senior management team developed a strategic business plan to guide our work. It identifies 5 major goals - and each year we identify about 15 specific objectives associated with those goals. Each of the objectives is assigned to an individual who is responsible for overseeing its implementation. And we meet regularly to discuss progress, identify problems - and celebrate successes.

We've gone a step further, though, in our efforts to improve. As a management team, we have stepped up to the plate by agreeing to be held jointly accountable for 4 specific accomplishments - all of which are key to the success of our strategic plan. We all sink or swim together - and performance bonuses depend on our success. These we call our "core accountabilities."

President Bush's Management Agenda called upon government agencies to become more outcome-oriented and customer-focused...and that's precisely what we have done in our core accountabilities. Rather than hold ourselves accountable only for the day-to-day things over which we have direct control, we have set standards that will impact and reflect the success of the transit industry overall.

For example, we are "on the hook," so to speak, for increasing transit ridership on a per market basis in the 150 largest urban areas - areas that now represent about 95% of all transit ridership in the U.S. So it's our collective intent - our job - to make sure that transit agencies are focused

on their customers and have the tools and information they need to attract riders.

You will probably be surprised to learn that this goal – increased ridership – was not eagerly embraced by the transit industry. Frankly, many transit agencies – which are generally public agencies that report to either a mayor or regional board – were much more accustomed to measuring success by counting the number of buses they had or the number of trains they operated. Actually increasing the number of people riding those buses and trains was a bit of a scary proposition.

But an interesting thing happened ... once we started measuring ridership on a system-by-system basis, ridership began to matter. It began to matter to the transit agency CEOs...to their boards of directors...and to the communities they served. And last fall, the industry's largest association – the American Public Transportation Association – made “increasing ridership” its number one strategic priority.

So let me transition here to my first lesson of leadership and management: What's measured, matters. Lofty goals can be inspiring, but if you really want something to happen, you must set measurable objectives, measure the results, and make those results widely available and known. Whether you end up celebrating success or inspiring improvements, the simple act of measuring results will drive success.

Now, I certainly don't pretend to be a management guru, but I've had the great fortune to learn by osmosis from some of the sharpest, most astute leaders around, including U.S. Senators and Cabinet members.

So let me explain my second observation about leadership and management by sharing with you a story about my first job in public service 25 years ago – working for Senator Hatfield, who was then Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. After experiencing frustration that I and other women weren't being treated as professionals in the advertising industry, I had taken my newly minted masters degree in public administration and headed for Capitol Hill, ready to change the world.

Soon after joining Senator Hatfield's staff, I eagerly became a member -- and later became the chair -- of the Capitol Hill Women's Political Caucus. In that capacity I was pursuing what, at the time, was an important issue for many of my colleagues – that is, women's pay equity on the Hill.

You may remember – though most of you are probably too young to remember – that Congress had exempted itself from the laws requiring that women and men be paid equally for equal work – laws that, of course, applied to every other profit and not-for-profit entity in America. Stories about gender discrimination were plentiful, but not often told-on-the-record, for obvious reasons.

With what seemed then to be a tremendous amount of money from an anonymous foundation grant -- \$5,000 - our small band of renegades sorted through the publicly available, though largely unexplored, pay records of Congressional offices. We were fully armed with information that - surprise, surprise - showed that overall, Congress had a pretty poor track record in hiring, promoting and paying women in professional jobs. We scheduled a press conference. And, as chair of the organization, I was to be the spokesperson.

The day before the press conference, it occurred to me that I should probably let my boss know of this plan, so in I walked to Senator Hatfield's office. I explained to him that the following day, I would be making this announcement to the press - and that some of his colleagues might be embarrassed by the disclosure. "I just wanted to make sure that wouldn't be a problem," I innocently explained. He paused for a moment, and quietly considered the bomb I had just dropped on his desk. Then he looked at me, sighed softly, and said, "Jenna, if you believe it's the right thing to do, then do it."

Since that time, I'd like to think that I've gotten a little more politically savvy, but Senator Hatfield's response has stayed with me as a guiding light for all the tough decisions of my career: He created an environment where it was safe to take a risk...to do what I believed was the right thing to do.

As a corollary to that lesson, I'll reveal the bias of my age and my gender by telling you this bit of disquieting news: Doing the right thing is probably not going to get you elected homecoming queen! Getting something important done usually means you'll be breaking some china, as we used to say...

So if you are a leader who is focused on measurable results that really matter, you'll undoubtedly encounter resistance from people who are more comfortable with the way things have always been done.

Which brings me to my final point - when you are managing people, become a talent fanatic. Some of you probably play chess - and a recent article in the Harvard Business Review might resonate with you, as it did for me. It's about what good managers actually do. Author Marcus Buckingham interviewed some of the great leaders and managers in business in the course of his research.

His research found that truly great managers do not try to make their employees conform to inflexible job descriptions or tasks. Instead, they sense, appreciate, and then utilize the unique talents of each individual. Buckingham believes that, unlike the game of checkers, where every piece has the same abilities and personality, great management is like a game of chess, where each employee has particular strengths. "Great managers,"

he concludes, “don’t try to change a person’s style” to fit a job description. Instead, they find creative ways to utilize that style for performance.

When I read Buckingham’s analysis of the chess game of modern management, it reminded me of the principle that has guided me at the FTA and in my previous management positions. To manage and lead today, you must become a talent fanatic, as Tom Peters has said. Collect it, hoard it, amass it, compete for it, reward it, and never waste it. Treat talent as the most precious resource you have -- because it is.

There’s no point being a fanatic for talent unless you are willing to let talent be talent, and resist the urge to homogenize all of the unique, idiosyncratic gifts of your employees into one amorphous similarity. Don’t try to make a square peg fit in a round hole. Instead, when you need different competencies working together, form teams -- and let talent decide who does what.

And, speaking of talent, I’d like to take a just a moment to talk directly to the women students here today -- who will be trailblazing in a profession that is still predominately male. We’re making progress, but it is slower than in many other fields. An industry survey conducted five years ago found that women comprise only 13 percent of management positions and 26 percent of professional positions in the transit workforce. So it is pretty clear that many of you will be forging paths where none existed.

But remember that you are joining a long line of American women trailblazers. Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice has said that, while role models are important, you can’t sit around waiting for them. “If I had been waiting for a role model of a black female Soviet specialist,” according to Rice, “it would have been a while.” So, instead of waiting for a role model, Rice became the role model. And you, too, have that tremendous opportunity in the transportation sector.

And, for *all* of you here today, keep in mind that you are entering an exciting, dynamic time in the transportation industry -- a time that will require a new appreciation of the mobility challenges in our communities and of the unique talents of your employees.

I have said more than enough to get us started on our dialog. Most importantly, I am delighted to be here to recharge my batteries with aspiring professionals at the beginning of what I know will be illustrious transportation careers.

Congratulations, welcome aboard.... and enjoy the ride of your life!

APTA Bus Paratransit Conference, May 16, 2005

05-16-05

Remarks: Jennifer L. Dorn, Administrator, Federal Transit Administration

Thank you. It is a pleasure to be in Columbus again, and a pleasure to have this opportunity to address this important gathering of bus and paratransit service providers and industry representatives.

Who would have thought that we would be here in May 2005, still waiting for Congress to reauthorize transit legislation that expired in 2003?! As Bill [Millar] and Dick [White] noted, things seem to finally be moving, but we may all have to deal with one more extension before we get a final bill. We've certainly had a lot of practice over the last two years with partial apportionments! And I want you to know that FTA will continue to do all it can to ensure that your transit agencies have access to funds if we must deal with yet another extension.

I don't know how many of you know this, it was three years ago at this conference that I had the opportunity to drive my first bus, and I've done it a few times since then. As FTA Administrator, I thought you might like a few tips to pass along about driving buses Tip #1: Bus drivers should never wear 4-inch heels. Tip #2: Never apply eye make-up at speeds over 35 miles per hour. And Tip #3: If Bill Millar gets on your bus, always remember to say "Good Morning!"

But, seriously, since I've been at FTA, I've learned that the best tips always come from you - the people who are the heart and soul of American public transportation...bus and paratransit providers. America depends on you to get to work, get to health care, and get around. Over 60 percent of all transit trips each year are taken on buses -- roughly 6 billion rides a year. And your communities need you more than ever.

As a Nation, we have been investing more and more in America's bus systems. This investment in new buses is paying off. The average age of the transit bus fleet has fallen by almost two full years over the last ten years - and we know that attractive and reliable buses are important to our riders.

But, we also know that attracting new bus riders takes more than an attractive new bus.

In fact, bus and paratransit systems - especially small systems - are leading the way in developing and implementing innovative ridership programs that are producing terrific results. Nowhere in the public transit

family is it easier to see the dividends of a little creativity. The challenge, really, is an entrepreneurial one.

In our fast-paced, “its all about me” world, we need to do even more to reach out to new groups of potential riders, inviting them on board earlier in their lives, and on their terms.

Research has shown that if people ride transit early — as students, or as newcomers in the community, for example -- they are more likely to choose to return to buses later in their lives.

This has important implications for our paratransit systems, which are already feeling tremendous financial strain in trying to meet the demand for service. We need to attract riders to fixed route bus service, before it becomes more difficult for them to adjust to transit. If we do, we may be more successful in helping people delay the use of more expensive paratransit services until it becomes a real necessity for them. Making an investment in new groups of transit riders will pay off in the long term, as well as the short term.

As you know, for the last nine months, FTA has sponsored a special webpage that gives you an opportunity to share and learn about successful ridership initiatives from each other. I’m sure many of you have browsed through them...perhaps looking for a program similar to one you are thinking about, or maybe just to get some new ideas.

Well, we’ve looked carefully at them, too. And, along with other information and ideas we’ve examined, we’ve tried to find patterns and trends. In doing so, three core ideas emerged. To paraphrase a best-seller, I like to think of them as “the three habits of highly successful bus agencies!”

The first habit: **Speak to your audience!**

While nothing substitutes for reliability and convenience, even the most reliable service will attract more riders if they feel personally invited.

You’ve all heard the research results -- students perceive buses to be uncool; workers who think riding the bus compromises their image as professionals.

Creative, fun marketing can give bus transit a makeover. And successful marketing strategies start with understanding a slice of the community. They zero in on one or two groups of potential bus riders. Then, they find ways to speak to those groups’ interests and perceptions. Speak directly to the audience that you want to attract.

The Utah Transit Authority targeted young professionals, for example, who are looking for deals, and are accustomed to getting “cash back” or “airline miles” when they make a purchase. To attract this demographic,

UTA created the “Rider Rewards” program. If you ride a UTA bus or paratransit van on Wednesdays, you get a sheet of \$1 coupons that can be spent like cash at participating businesses.

The strategy created a buzz around buses, and resulted in a 10 percent increase in ridership at virtually no cost to the transit agency. At the same time, the Rider Rewards program built a bridge to the business community as a transit partner.

Research also shows that immigrants are more likely to use public transit than the rest of the population. That means that some of you are sitting on a very promising demographic bubble.

Portland, Maine set out to win this population over to buses. The METRO bridged the linguistic and cultural divide by producing a rider’s guide in 14 different languages, ranging from Khmer and Somali to Farsi and Bulgarian. They saw a 3 percent overall ridership increase over two years. It wasn’t a terribly expensive venture, but it has created what will undoubtedly become a lifelong familiarity—and even affection—for bus transit.

But make no mistake. Some of the most important untapped markets of “new” riders are not “new” (as in “young”) or recent immigrants. They are older individuals, many recently retired, who, if introduced to buses now, are more likely to feel comfortable with fixed route bus service later in their lives.

In Miami-Dade County, they introduced the “Golden Passport” program, which offers free unlimited rides and transit passes to income-eligible seniors. That system has reported an annual increase of over 125,000 riders.

And Jackson, Mississippi took the simple but highly effective step of publishing a “Senior Transportation Brochure.” The brochure focuses exclusively on routes of particular interest to seniors, and helps the town’s older but still active population get the most out of the bus system.

Those are just a few ideas from your colleagues for reaching out to specific audiences that may have potential in your community, as well. Let’s talk about habit number two: **Using information technology strategically.**

The Internet and other electronic technologies have changed our collective expectations. Today, Americans do more and expect more, faster than ever before. We press the “door close” buttons on elevators compulsively, we speed-dial on our telephones, and in most cities we drive cars and talk on the phone at the same time! [Hopefully, we don’t drive our buses and talk on the phone at the same time!] In the most advanced cases of what is now called “hurry sickness,” we set the microwave button to 88 seconds instead of 90 because it is faster to push the same digit twice.

While waiting may always be a part of the commuter experience – in a car or on a bus – commuters appear to be less affected by “hurry sickness” if they simply know how long they will be waiting.

Some of the most successful transit agencies have taken advantage of technology to deliver real time transit information to riders on their palm pilots or cell phones. Others have created web-based trip planners. A great example of this is on our ridership web page. In Ithaca, New York, the local transit agency (Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit) added trip planning software to its website in March 2002. The trip planner lets customers select routes and schedules 24 hours a day, 7 days a week based on mode, need for a bike rack, wheel chair accessibility, and traffic conditions. Within one year, fixed route bus ridership increased almost 4 percent.

In Ventura County, California, the Ventura Intercity Service Transit Authority (VISTA) has seen real results from adopting new technology. In August 2002, they contracted with NEXTBus on behalf of VISTA and five other municipal transit operators in the county to provide bus tracking and arrival prediction services. Approximately 100 buses have been equipped with tracking equipment. Now, arrival times and related information is provided on electronic signs at 26 transit transfer points and via the internet. The result? Between 2003 and 2004, ridership increased over 15%.P>

Clearly, the strategic use of information technology can be an important tool for attracting new riders – especially among today’s hurried commuters. Our agency found that the third habit of highly effective transit agencies is **partnering**.

I know that many transit agencies are feeling the strain of increased demand for paratransit service. In 1990, when the American with Disabilities Act was enacted, public transit spent about \$443 million on paratransit nationwide, and provided about 40 million trips annually. By 2003, the cost had quadrupled and paratransit service had doubled. Public transit spent \$1.8 billion to provide over 80 million trips.

Paratransit service is absolutely necessary – and it is absolutely the right thing to do – but we must work with community partners to be sure that we make the most of all of the transportation services and every transportation dollar that is available.

At FTA, we are committed to doing all that we can to help. The United We Ride program provides resources, tools, and technical assistance to help you on the ground in your community. >At the Federal level, we have made the most of the President’s Executive Order on Human Service Transportation Coordination to bring together all of the Federal departments that have a stake in transportation. We have been working

together to find ways to make our programs work better for your communities.

I'm pleased to be able to tell you that, next week, the White House will be releasing the Council's Report to the President, which responds to the President's Executive Order. It demonstrates real progress and a solid plan for moving forward to simplify access, remove barriers at the Federal level, and help communities better meet the needs of transportation-disadvantaged individuals.

But you don't have wait until the Feds have finished all their work to get started in your community. If you haven't done so already, now is the time to begin the dialogue....Are you working with your potential human service transportation partners? Do you know the director of your State or local Agency on Aging? Do you know the person in charge of rehabilitation services? Have you contacted the Workforce Investment Board?

We have lots of tools available for you to use...from planning guidebooks to best practices ideas. And we even have dedicated United We Ride Ambassadors, who are ready and willing to help you make the most of these opportunities. Take a look on the FTA website, or just give your regional office a call.

We know that many communities are already ahead of the game ... like Sweetwater County, Wyoming, where the transit agency serves a sparsely populated area of 10,400 square miles. They have found a way to pool the funding, vehicles, and transportation resources of a variety of health and human service agencies to provide 6,500 trips per month. That's four times the number of trips provided by all of the agencies before they began their coordinated transportation system - and they are saving taxpayers an astounding \$1.6 million dollars a year in transportation costs.

As the Sweetwater example demonstrates, coordinated human service transportation can help a community do more with the resources they have. It is key to boosting ridership and delivering paratransit service above and beyond the ADA requirements.

I would be remiss not to recognize Central Ohio itself as a trailblazer in coordination. This region has pioneered the transportation coordination effort. Before United We Ride was a twinkle in the eye of Washington DC, the Ohio DOT was already encouraging the coordination of federally funded programs in the State. And, last year, Secretary Mineta recognized the State of Ohio with a Human Service Transportation State Leadership Award.

It is clear that throughout the country, buses are on the move. In every community, there are potential new riders — students, immigrant families, seniors, tourists, people concerned about the environment.... They are just waiting for an invitation to ride.

Thank you for all you do every day to make America feel welcome on the bus, and to get everyone wherever life takes us! Have a wonderful conference, and may God bless!

Luncheon Remarks for Portland, Maine - July 1, 2005

07-01-05

Remarks: Jennifer L. Dorn, Administrator, Federal Transit Administration

Phone: 202.366.4043

Thank you Commissioner Cole. I appreciate such a warm introduction. And Chairman McGovern, thank you for inviting me to this wonderful gathering.

When Americans think of Maine, they might first think of lobsters, a beautiful, jagged coastline, the breathtaking Acadia National Park, or historic red and white lighthouses.

But to a self-proclaimed "transit geek" like myself, Maine calls to mind... transportation innovation, imagination, intermodalism, and exemplary local coordination.

You have come up with created transit solutions that help the economy grow, manage population growth, and at the same time preserve all of the irreplaceable things that make Maine, Maine. They include the your state's natural beauty, clean environment, and breathtaking coastline.

In Portland, you have found elegantly simple ways to invite new passengers on board. And, to adapt transit to the new faces in Maine.

Current research shows that recent immigrants are more likely to use public transit than the rest of the population. The problem, however, has been that transit agencies have not always been able to make new arrivals aware of the services.

The Greater Portland Transit District (METRO) was able to help bridge this linguistic and cultural divide by producing a rider's guide in 14 different languages, ranging from Khmer and Somali to Farsi and Bulgarian. The result was a 2% to 3% ridership increase over two years.

Speaking of new faces.... You also have found ways to welcome seasonal visitors to Maine while respecting year round residents. The Casco Bay Island Transit District comes to mind. Its floating transit fleet is a lifeline to island residents. Casco Bay takes that job very seriously. They make sure that the needs of those residents are taken care of even when the tourists and recreational riders (and the occasional FTA official!!) descend on the Island in summer. In order to lessen the burden of the higher peak summer fares, the transit district makes deeply discounted annual fares available to Island residents.

And I am impressed with your plans for a truly intermodal family of transit services that allows Maine to invite the tourists but encourage them to leave their cars at home. The Maine DOT Strategic Passenger Transportation Plan contemplates a network of rail, intercity, bus and ferry services that will allow visitors to go car-free.... The partnership with Acadia National Park that created the Island Explorer bus system means that tourists have an alternative to driving their cars when they come to see the Maine's natural wonders... wonders that their cars threaten to compromise!

By pulling together, you have made the most of the resources that you have. I know that you are keenly anticipating the Atlantic Shoreline Service going into effect next year. This service will weave one seamless system out of the patchwork of services currently available along the scenic southern route. It takes the isolated, self-contained buses and trolleys operated by each community and coordinates them so that the passenger can roam the entire southern coast, without being limited by municipal boundaries, or divisions between public and private service.

In all of these initiatives you've taken steps to preserve Maine even as the face of Maine has changed.

Maine has a reputation for self-reliance and independence... These characteristics are also part of your great natural resources! And they show in your transit solutions.

Today, transit is facing a new challenge here in Maine and nationwide – determining how to provide the best, most comprehensive transit for our communities as the population grows older. And you will be challenged to draw on your strengths as a State dedicated to coordination and common sense to find the answers.

Maine is getting older—that's not really news. Except that the change is going to be dramatic. Currently, about 14 percent of Maine citizens are aged 65 and over. By 2025, that percentage is going to increase to almost 22 percent. Among seniors, the "old old," as demographers call them—those are people over 85—will grow by 33 percent in the next five years. I probably don't need to spell this out with national or State statistics. I imagine that many of you see our population aging in your own lives each day. Many of us have parents who are aging, who fear nothing more than being "burdens" on their children, and who would benefit dearly from more and better transportation options.

Across the country, our seniors, people with disabilities and individuals with low incomes struggle to answer the question, "how can I get there?" And, as you know, answering that question is a prerequisite for almost everything else in life. Without reliable transportation, independence and opportunity remain frustratingly out of reach for many.

It is not that the government hasn't tried to help. In fact, a 2003 report found that there are over 62 Federal programs that provide or fund transportation services for one or more of these groups. And some might think that our customers are lucky to have so many options!

But not quite.... With so many programs, we have created what Secretary Mineta calls a "maze of good intentions." I am pleased to report, however, we are beginning to sort out that maze. In February of 2004 President Bush issued an Executive Order on Human Service Transportation. In essence, the Executive Order calls for tearing down barriers between Federal programs in order to create comprehensive, seamless, and accessible transportation services for those who rely on them the most—our seniors, people with disabilities, and our neighbors with low incomes.

Coordination is a fiscally responsible way to improve service—to reduce overlaps and close gaps—without raising taxes or spending more money.

Imagine one-stop shopping for transportation services. Instead of a senior spending an hour getting transferred from agency to agency to find a ride to a medical appointment, they can call one central number, or visit one website, to find transportation. Imagine a truly integrated, seamless transportation network, where van services can pool their resources and vehicles to benefit a range of clients. Imagine technology that clears out the weeds and creates more efficient, frequent service.

United We Ride is a nationwide initiative led by the FTA that will help meet the goals of the President's Executive Order. It helps community leaders find common sense transit solutions through coordination of service.

United We Ride and the President's Executive Order on coordination invite you to continue the work of coordination that Maine has already begun, especially as a way to ensure that our seniors have true independence and opportunity in the coming decades.

Just this past May, Secretary Mineta released a report on transportation coordination that made five key recommendations. The first is coordinated transportation planning. We need to have all of the grantees of various federal programs sitting at the same table to plan collectively how to meet the community's needs. We can't have coordinated transportation without coordinated planning.

Second, the report recommends vehicle sharing. We need to make it easier to use the same vehicles for more than one federally supported transportation program, to reduce duplication and close service gaps. I don't need to tell this audience how bureaucratically complicated vehicle sharing can get. We are committed to making it less so.

Third, the report recommends sharing resources and services between programs by developing a standard cost allocation procedure for federal agencies.

Fourth, to allow communities to test new approaches, the report recommends a new demonstration program, to see how communities could set up a single transportation system. Nothing substitutes for the laboratory of real hands on, community experience.

Finally, the report recommends that we develop a method to track and evaluate the progress of our coordination efforts. This recommendation shows just how serious we are about coordination. In transportation as in all else, what matters is measured, and what's measured, matters.

I suspect you may be ahead of the Feds in coordination. And you know that it is not simply the responsibility of your local transit agency. Making transportation work for all Americans – residents and tourists – is the responsibility of State and local elected officials, community business leaders, non-profit leaders, community planners, parks officials...and transit leaders.

Now is the time to deepen your dialogue with each other about meeting the transportation needs in Maine. Think, especially, about seniors, as Maine gets older. Are your potential human service partners involved? Do you know the director of your State or local Agency on Aging? Who should be involved from the rehabilitation services arena?

United We Ride has lots of tools for you to use to get human service coordination going. Take a look at the website, or give Dick Doyle a call at FTA's regional office. Most importantly, just start the conversation.

One of the best things about coordination is that it creates real opportunities for communities to control their own transit futures. Nowhere in transportation are there so many opportunities for true local leadership and innovation.

You have a head start on local coordination leadership with PACTS, the Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Study. As a proactive transit planning organization, PACTS has already helped to coordinate a patchwork of transportation services, both public and private, and has led the way in implementing Intelligent Transportation Solutions.

In our work on coordination, we have found that it often has a positive ripple effect in the community. The more communication we have between and among human service agencies, the more we start to see connections and solutions across our narrow specialties.

Which is to say, the potential and the value of coordination do not stop with the van ride.

For example, you in the transit community who work closely with seniors and serve that community have unique opportunities to spread the word on the new prescription drug program established by the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003. This new program, which will go into effect on January 6, 2006, can benefit many of your customers who have been struggling with high medication costs. You can help inform your community and help the people you serve get help to pay for costly medication.

Effective service delivery, whether it is transportation or health care, is all about coordination and working outside of our individual silos to make sure that people are getting the help that they need.

When we tear down barriers, surprising, innovative solutions can emerge. But I don't need to tell Maine this. You have already seen that in action. Thank you for having me here today. Truly, it is my pleasure to visit a state with such an exemplary portfolio of transportation innovation and coordination.

APTA Conference on Sustainability, New York City - July 20, 2005

07-20-05

Remarks: Jennifer L. Dorn, Administrator, Federal Transit Administration

Telephone: 202.366.4043

Let me begin today by acknowledging the tragic and despicable terrorist events in London just two weeks ago. Secretary Mineta and I were very proud that this industry responded with vigor to the "orange" threat level, even before it was officially declared at the national level. You promptly increased public awareness announcements, stepped up security patrols and visibility, and used bomb detection canine teams where available.

Unfortunately, these events are a grim reminder that we cannot afford to become complacent about our security obligations... and the costs of doing business in this potentially dangerous world. They also reinforce the importance of the security priorities that both FTA and the transit industry have identified - public awareness, employee training, emergency preparedness.

Many of you have taken "Transit Watch" and adapted it as your own. Frankly, the "See something, say something" tag line that originated in New York and that has been adopted by several large transit systems is a great way to get our key message across. But, as we now know, the London bombers were suicide bombers...and there were some people who noticed them before the bombs went off. Yet no one reported the suspicious behavior...clearly reinforcing the "say something" component of our public messages.

FTA will, of course, continue to develop and offer new security courses for your employees - over 66,000 of whom have been trained since 9/11. But with a nationwide transit workforce of more than 350,000 - and normal staff turnover - it is imperative that you find the time and resources to send your employees to these free training courses. I urge you to take a look at the security offerings on FTA's website, and begin now - if you haven't yet done so -- to put together a systematic security training plan for your employees.

I also want to reassure you that we are working closely with the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that funds for emergency drills and preparedness activities are available to you, so that you can implement key priorities in emergency preparedness, employee training, and public awareness.

Finally, I want you to know that we in FTA have already experienced that the new leadership in the Department of Homeland Security and the Transportation Security Administration, in particular, is making a big difference for transit. Many of you participated in joint conference calls with me and the acting director of TSA following the London events.

I am extremely grateful for your candid advice and consultation... and I trust that you, too, felt the renewed emphasis on collaboration that was so clearly evident to me.

Thank you, Fred (Hansen), for your leadership in sustainability, and for inviting me today to APTA's first-ever conference on this important topic. I guess it's no surprise that Fred is from that widely noted "green" State of Oregon - my own home State, I am proud to say. Your reputation and experience as a state and national leader in the environment, and your business savvy as Portland Metro's CEO make you a natural champion of sustainability - a concept I hope is warmly embraced by this industry.

But, to be honest, I do feel a little out of my element here. The complexities of achieving sustainability in construction and operations is a bit beyond my comfort zone. It reminds me a little of a friend of mine who was in the market for a new car. When the salesperson enthusiastically inquired if she'd like to look under the hood at the engine, she asked, "Why? Does it come in different colors?"

In all seriousness... I am so pleased to be here... and to endorse the idea that energy conservation, sustainable development, and alternative fuels are not the sole province of the Sierra Club. These concepts - these values - belong to all of us.

And I am proud to be part of this Administration, serving under a President who has so clearly articulated his vision on this issue. In a recent radio address to the nation, President Bush declared, "We must find smarter ways to meet our energy needs, and we must encourage Americans to make better choices about energy consumption."

Right behind walking and cycling, transit has long been the nation's most sustainable mode of transportation. Indeed, our reputation as an environmentally-friendly form of transportation has for many years attracted "choice" riders who care about the environment. And with good reason.

A recent APTA-sponsored study concluded that, for every passenger mile traveled, when compared with private automobile use, public transportation -

- Uses about half the amount of fuel;
- Produces only 5 percent as much carbon monoxide; and
- Produces less than 8 percent as many volatile organic compounds.

Today, environmentalists are joined on our transit systems by people who feel just as strongly about reducing America's dependence on foreign oil. Public transportation use saves more than 855 million gallons of gasoline a year - or 45 million barrels of oil. That, the APTA study concludes, is the equivalent of one month of oil imports from Saudi Arabia...three months of the energy that Americans use to heat, cool, and operate their homes... or half the energy used to manufacture all computers and electronic equipment in America.

It is clear that increasing transit ridership is an environmentally sound and energy-efficient policy goal - and, as you know, that is one very important reason that FTA and APTA have made increased transit ridership our number one strategic objective.

But, as you'll hear throughout this conference, there is much more that we can do as an industry to promote sustainable communities, energy independence, and environmental stewardship. It is time for us to think more broadly - as all American businesses must do - about how we can conserve energy and protect the environment.

The good news is that there is also a powerful business case for doing what I like to think of as "the right thing." Companies used to think that sustainable business practices were a drain on profits...that they had to choose between "going green" and going "for the green." Today, technological advances have turned this paradigm on its head. We now recognize that sustainable business practices can actually enhance the bottom line.

There is no better indication of that paradigm shift than the keen interest in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index.... an investment portfolio that includes 300 companies from 24 countries that lead their industries in terms of sustainability. Each company must earn its place annually based on a thorough assessment of its economic, environmental and social performance. Currently, over \$3 billion is now invested in these sustainability-driven portfolios. When quantifying sustainability makes it to the Dow Jones, you know the concept has become more than just trendy.

According to the President and CEO of an aluminum manufacturer [Alcan] that has earned its place on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, "There is no doubt in my mind that sustainability makes good business sense and our business progress this year demonstrates the point. Sustainability", he says, "drives us to become a better investment, a better employer, a better neighbor, and a better company - creating value today and preserving it for tomorrow."

In other words, sustainability is good business... no matter what business you are in.

Here in New York, FTA knew that we would need a proactive strategy to deal with the environmental complexities of rebuilding the transportation infrastructure that was destroyed on 9/11. One major challenge is the cumulative effect that numerous simultaneous construction projects – transit, highway, and office buildings – would have on the environment and the community.

Working hand-in-hand with the Environmental Protection Agency, FTA's Lower Manhattan Recovery Office convinced project sponsors to use a common approach and methodology to analyze the environmental impact of their projects – an approach that gave us the ability to simultaneously assess the cumulative effects of all the projects scheduled for construction. This approach has not only expedited the environmental review, but it has made it easier for us and the public to understand the impacts...and manage them.

There are numerous project sponsors – including the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Metropolitan Transit Authority, the New York State and New York City Departments of Transportation, and the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation. And, to their great credit, they have all agreed to a baseline set of environmental mitigation and conservation measures.

For example, they will all use ultra-low sulfur fuel construction equipment, and special processes to prevent dirt particles from escaping into the air. They have also agreed to use sustainable design – utilizing renewable energy sources, like solar panels, wherever possible, and recycling demolition waste to avoid adding to municipal and industrial landfills. And the MTA has agreed to demolish buildings by deconstructing them, instead of imploding them, to minimize negative effects on air quality.

There is still much work to be done to minimize the environmental and community impacts of the construction that will occur over the next several years in Lower Manhattan. But we are all working together to coordinate construction schedules that will minimize noise, dust and vehicle emissions.

I know that you can appreciate the tremendous complexity of rebuilding Lower Manhattan. In light of the number and variety of stakeholders involved, it is all the more breathtaking that sustainable design and environmental stewardship are consensus values... part of the Lower Manhattan Environmental Performance Commitments to which every project sponsor has made a commitment.

New York, of course, is not the only transit community that has committed itself to sustainable design and environmental stewardship – and reaped financial benefits in doing so. In Portland, Oregon, TriMet pioneered new construction practices that save money by protecting the environment. Completed four months early and millions under budget in May 2004,

TriMet's construction of the Interstate MAX Yellow Line was a model of green construction practices.

TriMet estimates they saved \$3 million in construction costs by going green.

How did they do it? By recycling everything they could. They used recycled plastic bollards, instead of steel, in the paved track-way. They reduced their demolition, trucking and disposal fees by nearly \$2.4 million – that's million – by grinding up the existing road base and adding a new layer of asphalt on top of it. And they saved over \$185,000 by similarly recycling pavement and track.

Sustainable design and construction practices are vitally important. But I know that many of you have limited opportunities to put those strategies into play. Major construction projects are not undertaken every year by every transit agency. So, many of you are likely to find your greatest opportunities for sustainability in operations, maintenance and administration.

We all know, for example, that maintaining the tire pressure on our cars improves gas mileage... and the same is true for your buses. Out in Portland, Fred is saving an average of six-tenths of a mile per gallon – and millions of dollars a year – by implementing three simple strategies.

In addition to keeping the tires properly inflated and checking that daily, they have also modified the software to change the engine shift points sooner, and reduced the play in the front wheels of their buses by reinforcing the tie bars and reducing tire drag. [Now, I didn't look under the hood, so to speak, to know how, precisely, to do that...but Fred's operation chief knows!]

Some transit agencies utilize recycling opportunities in the context of bus maintenance. Surely it is possible – and perhaps even (dare I use the word?) profitable – to recycle used oil, tires or other parts. In fact, some transit agencies have even made it a practice to use re-refined oil in their vehicles – this practice has proven to be cost and performance neutral, but there is a clear benefit in terms of sustainability, with no new oil required.

Of course those are just a few of the things that we, as an industry, can and should do every day – because they make good business sense and because they make good environmental sense. Throughout this conference, you'll hear general managers and consultants from properties of all sizes and from all over North America talk about how sustainability is helping them improve performance. By the end of these three days, I trust that you will leave convinced, if you are not already, that good sustainability practices are actually good business practices ...and that you will have significant new ideas and tools to integrate these practices in your own agency.

But if we do only this, we will have missed a key opportunity to maximize the true benefits of sustainability in our communities. Those benefits translate even beyond our own industry...and transit agencies are in a perfect position to leverage them. Transit agencies across the country are making real progress in transit-oriented development. And FTA is trying to spur those efforts through studies, workshops and community forums.

By getting involved at the design stage, agencies can not only influence the demand side of transit by ensuring that communities build to offer attractive transit, but they can also reduce the need to use any motor-powered vehicles at all by designing high quality pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

By working closely with governmental and business partners to develop viable mixed-use neighborhoods that fully integrate effective transit options, transit can influence where people choose to live, retaining residents in areas that both support and are supported by transit. This approach increases ridership and community livability, while promoting energy conservation, as people do not have to use a quart of gas to get a quart of milk.

As a side note, let me say that we are trying now to figure out a way to quantify these benefits... as Fred would say, to measure the "trip not taken" as one benefit of transit-oriented development.

Some of you may be familiar with the long-standing community of West Hyattsville, in the suburbs of Washington DC. While there is a "strip center" to the larger area of Hyattsville, including a county courthouse and police headquarters, the arrival of a subway station at West Hyattsville has provided the opportunity to create a true "town center" for the first time in over a century.

West Hyattsville's transit-oriented development strategy will transform approximately 80 acres of underutilized land and aging commercial space near the Metrorail station into a compact, mixed-use, state-of-the-art "transit village." The park-and-ride area is re-conceived as a town square, and natural areas surrounding the station are enhanced and well-maintained. The adjacent community is integrated into the new transit village, with the station acting as an anchor. It will feature approximately 3,600 new residential units, offering a diversity of housing choices, and approximately one million square feet of commercial space...creating more than 4,000 jobs. Community officials plan to use the project as a case study before pursuing a similar strategy near other Metrorail stations throughout the system.

Opportunities like this do not just occur in large urbanized areas. Rapid Central Station in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Washoe County in Nevada are two notable examples in smaller communities. Each has combined innovative technology and cutting-edge design in their stations to create a

truly people-oriented space. Each contributes to the “auto trip not taken,” as well, because they have thoughtfully and systematically planned their joint development...not as individual projects, but as a user-friendly network of community services and amenities. This approach has been shown to improve the quality of a consumer’s trip, and the value of the transit center to the community.

In a large community or small, success with this macro-view of sustainable development is not only possible, it is imperative if we are to realize the full potential that transit offers to communities.

As transit leaders, you have a unique opportunity to achieve a win-win for your transit agency and for the environment. Those kinds of opportunities don’t come along very often.

And, in that spirit, I hope that as you attend the conference sessions over the next several days, you will each commit to identifying three things that your transit agency can do to save energy, protect the environment, or promote sustainable community development.

In the words of President Bush, let’s “harness our innovative spirit in this new century, and ... leave our children and grandchildren a cleaner, a healthier, and a more secure America.”

Thank you. Have an enjoyable and productive conference.