

PUBLIC TRANSIT ENGAGEMENT

Nov. 12, 2007

Location: Belton City Hall Annex

Facilitator: Airick West

Recorder: Karen Clawson

Staff: Aaron Bartlett, Gerri Doyle

Attendees: 4

Do you use transit?

- I would if I had it. Doesn't know if light rail will serve the purpose or not.
- OATS takes them once/month to the grocery store. Anymore than that costs \$35 per trip. They would like to have a taxi cab service.
- Asked how far south transit goes. Peculiar is growing south and transportation is going to be a real need.

Who do you think will need it?

- Older people; a lot of people who cannot drive anymore. The woman noted that she can't drive anymore and cannot bother neighbors anymore. She is able-bodied enough to walk a couple blocks, but more than that is difficult.
- Senior living facility that provides limited services.

Where do you need to go?

- Hardware store, Target, Wal-mart. Have to depend on children for rides; only on child left in the area. Don't want to be an imposition.

What would a solution look like?

- Small OATS buses. Once a week even would be a tremendous help.

Why smaller buses?

- Less expensive to run.
- Maybe a bigger bus too that could collect people here and take them to Kansas City.

If you could have a rail system would that be desirable?

- Yes. More regular system, dependable, regular schedule, reliability?
- Need access to facilities.

What other amenities would the bus need to have?

- Knowledgeable bus drivers, sometimes they don't know where they are going.

Are you on fixed income?

- Both participants said they were on fixed income.

What would need to be in place, given that, so that you could use transit?

- When OATS is scheduled, it is only \$2 a trip; an arranged trip would be more. Generally, they felt \$2-5 was good.
- Concerns over not being able to go see things like Plaza lights, other sites/events. No way to get there.

Where else in the region would you like to go?

- City market, art galleries — used to make trips there all the time. Shows, theater or opera.
- Gentleman does not see well enough to read. He uses a blind radio to read the paper.

Public transit engagements hosted by One KC Voice, a program of the Mid-America Regional Council,
with a grant from the Federal Transit Administration.

600 Broadway, Ste. 200 | Kansas City, MO | 64105 | 816/474-4240 | www.onekcvoice.org

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What amenities would help you ride transit with vision problems?

- Not sure.

What is the larger value of transit for a community?

- Could bring other people in — bringing relatives in.
- A lot of people coming in to town have to rent a car — it's expensive.

How else would a solid transportation system affect your community?

- It would be a good inlet into our community. Feelings that community was a bit isolated.

What impact would it have on economic development?

- If there was more than one day when they could shop — they could/would spend more. Now, they just do without. Wal-mart is the main place, also Kohl's.
- Also more diverse shopping choices.

What other impacts would it have on other low-income segment of the pop?

- Younger kids would have a chance to do more things — get around.

What is the impact of public transit on the environment?

- When you're moving more people than one- it should help the environment.

Other impacts?

- People who work in the care centers — no transportation really — they get dropped off.

(Comments from participants) Meeting was not publicized enough.

(Facilitator response) How could we better reach people for these meetings?

- Radio/TV. Newspaper might have too many ads.¹

(Reporter) A lot of people that park-and-ride — some limited access to that. What's the possibility of light rail coming here? The facilitator mentioned that the governance mechanism was in place — at other meetings we've have heard that there is interest in bringing rail.

(Reporter) Are there thoughts of increasing bus service in all parts of the metro? There is a concern of the funding and bottom line. [What about the] concern over taxes, especially in Belton and Raymore, as they are paying a good amount of it?

How do you think it should be paid for?

- Part of the cost should come from fare box — don't think that enough though.

How would we pay for the rest?

- Not sure — have not been in the workforce for a long time and do not know how things are being paid for?
- Could Richards-Gebaur be a hub for something like this?
- There is a new facility out by Honeywell.
- *(City employee)* Have there been any for-profits participating in planning and supporting light rail? The facilitator mentioned that the Chamber of Greater Kansas City is very supportive of transit.
- *(City employee)* Pointed out that Denver has had support from private sector.

What options are on the table for funding from Belton?

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- Transit Development Districts (TDDs) or Tax Increment Financing (TIFs).
- *(Reporter)* Are we talking Missouri or Kansas?
- They are a lot of people who live in Cass County ho work in Johnson County. How do we link cross-county? *(Facilitator)* People on the Kansas side have brought up the very some things.

Is there anything else about your needs or desires that you feel should be heard?

- *(Reporter)* Concerns of safety as Kansas City moves south. Safety standards and protection for people riding the bus during the day.

What impact would public transit have on safety?

- Rode street cars for many years — no problems with crime. You could travel all hours back then. Having the transit system was very important.
- The more people who are on the trail the better they feel — same with bus.

Where else have you ridden transit in other cities?

- New York — just a different mentality. Here, people just like their cars and can't give them up. Reduction in traffic, but we haven't experienced gridlock here. Gas prices may change people's feeling.
- *(Reporter)* Would there be policing on rail, security just in case?
- BART system — don't think they have police on there. Woman used this system a lot on enjoys it.
- *(Reporter)* How influential will these conversations be really?

Do you think that Raymore and Belton want public transit system?

- How would something like this get started? *(Facilitator)* Talk to your local elected officials and starting small if possible.
- Gentleman doesn't believe that a local tax here for this would pass.

ⁱ Engagements were advertised via three different radio stations. TV was not possible due to budgetary limitations.