

## **PUBLIC TRANSIT ENGAGEMENT**

**Oct. 10, 2007**

**Location: Southtown Council**

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Facilitator: Debra Wilson

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### **Do you use public transit?**

- Yes, it's easier. I live by Oak and they have ramps. It is easier to get on the bus without dismantling my scooter.
- I live downtown. It's easier than using a car to go to Midtown.
- (Two respondents agreed) I use it in every town but Kansas City.
- There is a problem with schedule convenience and the nature of a person's work.

### **Where would you go, what would you change, do you have friends or family who use it?**

- No responses.

### **Do you see differences in other cities?**

- It's too limited here.
- There is accurate scheduling in other places like in Europe.
- Other places are very multi-modal and also have pedestrian walking spaces, lighter rail than in the video we watched, and it's better on the environment.
- If it went to the airport, I would use it.
- We are really not that dense, and we have so much land. We may make five to six stops in a car. I have friends in other locations/countries that don't even know how to drive — there is no need to.
- We just need to get into the mindset.
- There are no connections to the suburbs.
- Some clients have ridden and it works out good.

### **How many of you currently use the transit system?**

- (Three people said yes)

### **What would you do if you had no access to a car? What are the top three places you need to go?**

- Independence.
- Work (Valentine Road and Broadway). I would have to take the bus or hitch a ride.
- Wal-mart, Target and Walgreens. I would take the bus if I had to.

### **Do you know the bus schedule?**

- I don't think there is a bus in Blue Springs.
- I have to go to Wal-mart, the pharmacy and to church. I would carpool.
- I go to work.
- I would take the bus; I can go anywhere except to Grandview and Belton.
- I go to work and would take the Metro.
- I went through the entire Police Academy using the bus. Back then it was at Penn Valley. There is no bus access now at the new location.
- There is no service in Lee's Summit. I would have to find another job.
- There is no way to get to the supermarket.
- I wouldn't be able to go see my mom, there is no transportation there.
- It would be difficult not seeing my family and friends.

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

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**(Participant question) Which came first? The mindset for mass transit, or did mass transit change the mindset?**

### **What interests are against transit?**

- The automobile industry, land owners.
- It was the auto industry that ruined Los Angeles.
- We used to have trolleys.
- Kansas City is kind of insulated from the economic reality of having to do it.
- It's a struggle taking one hour just to go across town.
- Until the parking spaces run out there will be no issue.
- Land sprawl is unique to Kansas City.

### **What about when gas prices increase?**

- Yes (they would use transit).
- Thoughts of consolidated travel.
- I would change vehicles.
- I have MS, the reason I moved was because of the bus system. I sold my house and now can take my scooter and use the bus. It is a safety issue as well.

**(Participant question) What if there were no buses, like when the trolleys were discontinued?**

- Build it and they will come.
- Do we have the will to pony up the dollars?

**If you could design it, what would it look like, where would it go, what would the schedule be, would it be close to your residence? Wait time?**

- You mean Kansas City today?
- It would be like the map on the video. It would have park-and-rides, it would go into suburban areas. It would go to far areas.
- It would be like a vascular network and run very early (4:30 a.m.) and also very late like midnight.
- I would be willing to wait 10–15 minutes. In the middle of the day, I would be willing to wait longer or to go to outlying areas.
- The airport destination is a low priority. First would be employment, hospitals, schools and universities.
- It should include from downtown out to Bannister, include the 435 loop and be non-disruptive to the neighborhoods.
- The light rail should feed to the buses.
- It should be more like Chicago: On the highway and buses the routes go east and west, the train goes north and south. You can get from the farthest point in 45 minutes.
- It should parallel the highway.
- The airport is a priority for visitors.
- Paying for the cost to get it to the airport would be too expensive. Those in the city really need it and should be the priority.
- It should be light rail with arteries to downtown, with a bus or something in the middle.
- Maybe BRT to the airport instead of light rail.
- Cincinnati has the Jet Port to the airport that anyone can use. You can be picked up at the hotels.
- The airport is not in the middle of nowhere; that area is rapidly growing and developing.

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- Denver, San Diego and Chicago — there is no high priced parking. They have park-and-rides.
- This may displace some cab companies who charge too much.
- We must look out for everybody.
- It should go to Arrowhead and the Chiefs Stadium.
- There should be more studies around the people counts and airport-goers. Those going to the airport may not all be travelers; they may be employees and short-distance frequent travelers.
- You can check the long- and short-term parking lots; they stay full.
- Business versus vacation versus employees at the airport differences need to be considered.

### **What would make you use it?**

- Safety.
- Cleanliness.
- Dependability.

### **(Participant question) Is there a problem with the buses and crime now?**

- No.

### **(Participant question) What were voters thinking who voted for the rail?**

- Light rail is a driver of development. North Kansas City could be development that brings in taxes.
- All over the country developers flock to light rail — it's a known fact.
- Kansas City was developed and built around the streetcar lines.
- To keep the taxes down, you'd better bring the developers in.
- What I want is not as important as what is best for the common people. We must ask: Who are we building this for? The people of Kansas City who live work and play in Kansas City. We need some figures: cost per mile, cost to build and maintain it, etc.
- You hear people say "it never runs when I need it," so if it's not going to serve the people, then it's of no use.

### **Would you use an improved public transit system?**

- I probably would.
- Yes.

### **(Participant question) How would we pay for it? Corporations? Employees?**

- We are building this not for us but for our grandkids.
- When gas prices go up and car prices go up, don't worry, we will ALL ride it! Dirty or not.
- I think I would use it, but in the back of my mind it's like in Seoul, Korea: Someone is having to drive the bus, and you have to believe they slept good.
- We should expect development on the bus route.
- It will help to stabilize the businesses on the routes.
- I have to pay \$75 a month to park downtown; I would rather not have to spend that.
- I think the medium- and upper-level income-earners would use it as well.

### **What destinations would be included?**

- Central locations, downtown.
- Largest employers in the metro, such as hospitals, which would also help with the patients. I would ride this as an older person much more.

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### **(Participant question) Why buses instead of light rail?**

- Buses are not infrastructure; rail is.

### **What amenities would it have?**

- Starbucks, bathroom.
- Park-and-ride, bookstore.
- Doughnut shop, child care.
- Vendors would automatically show up.
- The differential in increased price per square foot charged to vendors could help pay for the system.
- There is dynamic explosive development around good systems.
- It would be attractive and increase tourism.

### **What would be some of the benefits and values of public transit?**

- The younger population could now create wealth.
- It would cut down on DUIs.
- Economic development.
- More exercise.
- Reduce pollution.
- Decrease highway deaths.
- Decrease wear and tear on highways.
  
- We have skirted around who is going to front the dollars!
- Who will agree it should be like this?
- We as a region don't cooperate with each other.
- We just need to do it! The costs of doing it keep going up.
- Use federal matching funds.
- It needs public support.
- We keep talking about Clay Chastain's system. We need to forget about "his" system and move on and develop what WE need for our plan.

### **(Participant question) How much are you willing to pay in increased taxes?**

- Right now, it's 3/8-cent for light rail. How much MORE are you willing to pay for a different system?
- It needs a combination of funds (city – state – county).
- Are you willing to pay 3/8 + 3/8?

### **What would be the benefits of public transit?**

- The taxes would decrease with the new businesses.
- Low-income population would be served better.
- Lower automotive insurance.
- It would help those with special needs.
- Would only need one car per family.
- Better roads and highways.
- More people would choose to ride and be able to use their laptops.
- The ride is the most stressful time of the day.
- More community/ we would know each other.

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- It would increase disposable income – save on cars etc.
- Lower gas usage and decrease oil wars.

**What would be the ideal system?**

- Underground.
- That would quadruple costs.
- In New York there is no room for automobiles.
- We must maintain the bus system and let it be a compliment to the buses.
- Buses have done poorly with the 3/8-cent tax.
- Sixty shuttle buses were in the plan that they voted for.

**Who stands out as being a leader in transit planning?**

- MARC.
- MARC did it back in 1974, so it's hard to say MARC is the leader if 35 years later all we are still doing is talking.

**What is your role in this now? Did your participation today make you want to use it?**

- We need to support it.
- I don't see the "go get it" leadership.
- We need to get data so we can decide.

**(Participant question) How many of us try to use it as much as we can? Are we supporting it by making the effort?**

- If it's built, we will.
- The current system is just not convenient.
- We could use smaller buses for hours when it is less used.
- We can't criticize it if we don't use it. And by the way, the answer is yes (did participation make you want to use it).