The Community Perspective

Ann Becklund & Tom Shrout
Tom Shrout

- Executive Director Citizens for Modern Transit, St. Louis, Missouri since 1988
- Tom has served on the Rail~Volution steering committee since its inception and was chair of the 1997 Rail~Volution Conference in St. Louis.
Building Livable Communities with Transit

Thomas R. Shrout, Jr.
Executive Director
Citizens for Modern Transit
St. Louis
Organizing For Results

• Build an Organization
  – Develop a mission
    • Develop Goals and Objectives
  – Recruit people/organizations
  – Figure out funding
Make your case

• Know the process
  - STPP

• When is public involvement required?
  - Are you organized to provide effective input?
  - Have you recruited others with similar goals?
  - Are you working multiple strategies?
Making your case

• How do you make the case most effectively?
  - Working with the Media
  - Working with the new Media
  - Working with elected officials
  - Working with the transit agency/mpo
Funding

- Memberships
  - Local Government
  - Business
  - Educational institutions
  - Individuals

- Grants
  - Foundations
  - Government – EPA, Enhancements, CMAQ, Earmarks
Citizen Involvement

- Elected officials
- Neighbors
- Planners/Architects
- MPO
- Transit Agency
Creating a Vision
Creating a Vision
Citizens Selling the Big Idea
Final Product

• Final Result
  - A better community
Rail~Volution Sessions

• CO4 – Building Support Community Activism
  - Jacky Grimshaw – Chicago
  - Henry Kay – Transit Alliance - Baltimore
  - Kathleen Osher – Transit Alliance Denver
Rail~Volution Sessions

• **R27 Surface Transportation Policy Partnership**
  Moving from the Margins to the Mainstream
  - **Tom Shrout**, Executive Director, Citizens for Modern Transit, St. Louis, MO
  - **Geoff Hobin**, Special Projects Manager, TARC, Louisville, KY
  - **John Gideon**, President, Central OH Bicycle Advocacy Coalition
  - **Jacky Grimshaw**, Vice President, Center for Neighborhood Technology
  - **Kermit Wies**, Deputy for Planning, Chicago Area Transportation Study
  - **Elaine Clegg**, Co-Director, Idaho Smart Growth
  - **Representative**, AARP
• Working with the Media: Effective Communications
  (Wednesday 8:30)
  - **Chris Robling**, Principal, Jayne Thompson & Assoc., Chicago, Illinois
  - **John Farry**, Director of Community and Government Relations, Valley Metro Rail, Phoenix, Arizona
  - **Adella Jones**, Director of Communications, Metro, St. Louis, Missouri
  - **Diane Palmer**, Director of Communications, Regional Transportation Authority of Northeastern Illinois, Chicago, IL
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More Help

• American Public Transportation Association
  www.apta.com

• National Alliance of Public Transportation Advocates
  www.napta.net

• Center for Transportation Excellence
  www.cfte.org

• Surface Transportation Policy Project
  www.transact.org
Thanks!

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Ann Becklund

• Director Community Relations
  TriMet, Portland, Oregon

• Over the last fifteen years with the agency, she has worked on three extensions of Portland's light rail system and is currently directing community outreach for three additional new rail alignments.
Community Involvement
A Solid Project Investment

Ann Becklund
Director of Community Affairs
TriMet
Portland, Oregon
Building Livable Communities with Transit
Effective community involvement is essential.
Project Support for Community Involvement
Community Affairs Handbook
Rules of Engagement

• It’s gonna be a long conversation
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**Decision Making Structure**

- **TriMet Board**
- **Metro Council**
- **Local Councils**
- **ODOT**

**Steering Committee**
Elected officials - TriMet, Metro, ODOT and local Jurisdictions
Meet quarterly - hearings body

**Citizen Advisory Committee**
Citizens, property owners, business and civic groups. Hear public comment
Meet monthly

**Project Management Group**
Top level managers from TriMet, Metro, ODOT and local jurisdictions
Meet bi-weekly

**Technical Advisory Committee**
Technical staff from TriMet, Metro, ODOT and local jurisdictions
Meet bi-weekly
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**Project Planning Process**

1. **System wide Regional Plan**
   - Define problem and need
   - Potential strategies and alternatives

2. **Corridor level**
   - Mode - Bus, Busway, LRT, Hov, HOT
   - Alignment and Terminus locations

3. **Mode and alignment specific**
   - Draft Statement
   - Design Options impacts, benefit & cost

   - Final Statement
   - Commit to mitigation. Respond to comments

**Timeline**

- **1 to 1.5 years**
  - Engineering
- **1 year**
  - Sketch
  - 5 to 10%
- **6 - 8 months**
  - 30%

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**
Project Construction Process

Final Design
- Plan for utilities, fleet management, public outreach, and procurement method.

Funding Agreement
- US government commitment to the project. 60% fed/40% local

Construction
- Move utilities, civil and track, station finishes, system installation, mitigation, testing and opening

- 8 months
- 3.5 years

- 30%
- 65%
- 100%
- Engineering

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
Rules of Engagement

• Seek out your audience
Rules of Engagement

• Be clear about what you’re asking for
Project must be responsible and accountable
Build your project’s core constituency early
Early Warning System
Community Context:

• Remember it IS their project
Can Others Follow Tri-Met’s Lead?

Last year, we took Tri-Met’s task for not doing enough to help small businesses suffering through Interstate Avenue MAX construction.

This week, we want to pat them on the back. Not only did Tri-Met face the criticism, but the multi-faceted approach of the regional transportation provider - put together has accomplished more for small businesses over the past few years than any other agency in either the City of Portland or Multnomah County.

In fact, we want to suggest that other municipalities in Oregon pay close attention to Tri-Met’s support strategy, because the city is just the kind of program other regions should launch - a centralized, logical network to help entrepreneurs keep their doors open, using already-existing partnerships.

For the past year, big patches of North Interstate Avenue have been roped off, ripped up and rebuilt. That means all along North Interstate Avenue, businesses both large and small have faced financial hardship because their customers literally couldn’t get in the door.

In the face of growing criticism, the transportation agency put in an extra effort to come up with innovative solutions for the problems - remarkably, because in other urban areas across America such efforts were unknown.

The commitment bore fruit last month, when about 20 Interstate business owners sat down with mentors recruited through the University of Portland Center for Entrepreneurship.

Essentially, Tri-Met has created a support system open to every small business owner in the light rail zone, providing free advice and expertise designed to take them beyond just survival during construction.

Essentially, Tri-Met has created a support system open to every small business owner in the light rail zone, providing free advice and expertise designed to take them beyond just survival during construction.

Tri-Met Community Affairs Coordinator Greg Wolley recently told The Skanner, “We want to give something back.”

To date, the agency’s efforts included everything from posting great big “open for business” signs for Interstate Avenue storefronts, to promoting low-interest loans developed expressly for light-rail-impacted companies, to starting up the long-term business strategy program with UP entrepreneurial experts.

Tri-Met even chartered a “lunch bus” just so that local city officials and transportation workers would have no excuse not to eat at Interstate Avenue restaurants - which put money directly in the pockets of Interstate Avenue businesses.

Given the effort it took, our hats are off to Tri-Met Executive Director Fred Hanson for shepherding so many participants to the table.

The City of Portland, meanwhile, is struggling with some of the same criticisms that formerly plagued Tri-Met - most pointedly, that its operations are so unfriendly to businesses that the tax base itself has eroded.

Tri-Met's Interstate strategy — complex though it may appear — represents just one redevlopment effort in one part of town. Imagine activating that same business support network citywide. The example is set.

The question is, can our local government agencies follow their own lead?
Building Livable Communities with Transit

Today's Agenda

What is Rail-Volution 10:40
Earl Blumenauer

What is TOD 11:10
GB Arrington

The Benefits of Rail Transit 12:00
Todd Litman

The Community Perspective 12:45
Ann Becklund & Tom Shrout

The Developer Perspective 1:20
Katherine Perez & Marilee Utter

The Public Agency Perspective 1:55
Jack Wierzenski & Debra Campbell