Transit’s New Paradox: Advancing Capital Expansion Programs in a Service Reduction Era

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FrontLines 2015

- UTA’s largest project in its history
- Sixth largest rail project (U.S. and Canada)
- Building 70 miles of rail in seven years
- One project that includes five lines
  - Mid-Jordan TRAX
  - West Valley TRAX
  - FrontRunner South
  - Draper TRAX
  - Airport TRAX
Local Job Creation

• Direct construction jobs: 2,700
• Indirect construction jobs: 2,600
• Subcontractors: 100 +
• New Operations/maintenance jobs: 350
Sales Tax Growth

- Down: $68,277,500
Economic Impact

The State of Utah:
• Forbes ranked Utah fiscally fittest state in America:
  – “AAA” bond rating
  – Employment rate 7.2% vs. the national rate of 9.6%
• UDOT - $5-7 mil/day
• Downtown - $1 mil/day

The Utah Transit Authority:
• No fare increase
• Less than 5-percent reduction in service (Scalpel vs. amputation)
• Capital Projects are ahead of schedule under budget
• UTA $4 mil/day
Finding opportunity in a down economy

1/3, 1/3, 1/3 Approach:
• Fares and Service:
  – Converted low performing fixed into high performing flex routes (combination of fixed and paratransit)
  – Reduced only low ridership trips, not routes
  – No fare increase ($2 mil fuel surcharge revenue)
• Capital:
  – Reduced contingency
  – Challenged contractors to be creative
• Administration
  – Internal efficiencies
  – Delayed capital

Results:
• Fares and Service:
  – Ridership continues to increase
• Capital:
  – Ahead of schedule/under budget
• Administration:
  – Manager’s challenges $1.5 mil
Family of Transit Options
Transit Ridership in Utah

Annual Riders (Millions)

- World War 2
- Rise of the Automobile
- Energy Crisis
- Creation of UTA
- Start of TRAX
- Projected with Y2030 Plan


1946
33 Million

2009
93 Million

Rise of the Automobile
Energy Crisis
Start of TRAX
Creation of UTA
World War 2

Projected with Y2030 Plan
Vision

90% of residents along the Wasatch Front within one mile of a major transit stop by 2030