

Session Summary

The workshop participants concluded that there is a need to improve the productivity of the planning process. Three keys to this are

1. Providing quick responses to decision makers,
2. Providing technical assistance to implementors, and
3. Identifying the most effective solutions.

These three areas are closely identified with establishing better credibility for planners.

The image of local planners is considered to be poor. Often, the local planner does not understand the decision-making process. Effective communication between local elected officials and planners is essential and, in general, is lacking in most areas. The workshop participants felt that planners should help the elected officials to identify the difficult issues and also the solutions (or at least the alternatives) in order to facilitate the decision-making process.

The mix of long-range versus short-range planning in a small urban area is quite often defined by federal and state regulations. Most of this, however, deals with administrative requirements. The comprehensive planning process provides an opportunity to develop a perspective of the future in order to facilitate the short-range planning decisions being made in the present. There is inherent flexibility and creativity available within the current planning process because the regulatory requirements deal primarily with administrative matters.

Long-range planning in many small urban areas has traditionally been highway oriented, but a significant change could be fostered by the effects of economic and energy-related issues, which could cause a major shift toward transit. Obviously, short-range planning is the major thrust in smaller areas; therefore, smaller communities may be more responsive to changes brought about by economic, environmental, and energy issues.

Techniques

George E. Gray, Mass Transportation Division, California Department of Transportation, Sacramento, Chairman
David M. Levinsohn, Office of Transportation and Land-Use Policy, Environmental Protection Agency, Recorder

The scope of this session workshop included an examination of all aspects of public transportation planning, implementation, and operation in small urban areas. Specifically, three issues were addressed:

1. Identification of the categories of techniques that are useful in the planning, implementation, and opera-

tion of public transit in small urban areas;

2. Assessment of the available techniques in the three areas and of the availability of these techniques; and

3. Assessment of the marginal improvements that may be needed to improve these existing techniques.

Transit Service Standards, Routing, and Scheduling

David Rynerson, Lane Transit District, Eugene, Oregon

The governments of Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County, Oregon, recently adopted a multimodal transportation plan that has forecasts to the year 2000. Serving this area is the Lane Transit District. The board of this district recently developed short-range objectives for fixed-route service designed to interface with the year 2000 plan. These objectives include a goal of a ratio of fare-box revenue to operating cost of 25 percent by 1982. Lane Transit District offers three types of service: urban fixed route, nonurban fixed route, and urban dial-a-bus. The service standards considered most important to the development program include coverage, travel time, availability, and accessibility. Route and schedule adjustments originate from public and employee suggestions, which are considered as part of a periodic route-and-schedule review. Surveys and passenger-opinion data are collected regarding any proposed

changes. Schedule changes are made three times a year, route changes are made annually. Routes and schedules are adjusted as necessary to achieve long- and short-range goals. The transportation plan for the Eugene-Springfield area calls for implementation of a bus rapid transit system supported by local buses. A key element of the plan is the construction of 10 major and 10 minor transit stations throughout the metropolitan area.

The Lane Transit District in Oregon operates a fleet of 61 transit coaches and six dial-a-bus vehicles in a ser-