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Los Angeles Urban Transportation: Who Has the Power?

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In 1976, the California Legislature took a bold step toward untangling the transportation planning snarl that has characterized Southern California. Believing that only a new and innovative transportation policy planning and coordinating institution could solve the problems, the legislators adopted Assembly Bill 1246, which created transportation commissions in four Southern California counties: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino. Of the four, Los Angeles is the largest and faces the most complex and difficult-to-solve transportation problems. The development, structure, authority, and operations of the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission are described. The Commission is directed by 10 of the principal county and city elected officials and one citizen member. Its powers include short-range planning, policy and program development, project selection, new system development, and resource generation and allocation (power of the purse). For Southern California, this particular blend of powers and institutional form is innovative and has the potential for making significant public policy impacts. The Commission is fully operational and is involved with a solid schedule of activities. Not all of its major powers are being used, but most are, and the impact is slowly being felt on the decisionmaking process.

In 1976, the California Legislature took a bold step toward untangling the transportation planning snarl that has characterized Southern California. Believing that only a new and innovative transportation policy planning and coordinating institution could solve the problems, the legislators adopted Assembly Bill (AB) 1246, which created transportation commissions in four Southern California counties: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino. Of the four, Los Angeles is the largest and faces the most complex and difficult-to-solve urban transportation problems. Therefore, its Commission warrants particular study as an experiment in transportation problem solving.

The Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC) is directed by 10 of the principal county and city elected officials and one citizen member. Its political power base was a critical factor in the legislative intent of the bill. The state legislators, out of frustration with a transportation policy history often marked by disagreement and lack of coordination and progress, mandated that the county's key decisionmakers sit together as a single policy board to discuss, decide, and act in concert.

They gave the Commission powers for short-range planning, policy and program development, project selection and new system development, and resource generation and allocation (the power of the purse). This particular blend of powers and institutional form is innovative, has the potential for making significant public policy impacts, and could become a model for other urban areas. Reinforcing this perspective is an early Commission staff self-perception taken from an LACTC staff budget memorandum of April 26, 1978:

The Los Angeles County Transportation Commission is a creature of state law. Unlike some voluntary agencies, it has a legislative mandate--to coordinate transportation planning and development in Los Angeles County. Many different reasons are cited as motivating factors for establishing the Commission. They include the need to get the best value for the public's transportation dollar, the need for better integration of highway and public transportation development, the importance of developing a realistic transit program supported by this area's political leadership, and so forth.

The important fact is that the Commission exists. There are no precedents for this kind of transportation policy and programming agency. Unlike SCAG [the Southern California Association of Governments], we are not regional planners; unlike Caltrans [the California Department of Transportation], SCRTD [the Southern California Rapid Transit District], and other implementing agencies, we are not builders and transportation system operators. To the Commission is entrusted responsibility for policy-setting, programming of federal and state funds and priority-setting, among competing projects. In this sense, the Commission is truly an experiment in government.

This experiment in government is evolving; defining priorities, allocating funds, establishing relationships.

The LACTC work program focuses on institutional, financial, and service issues designed to improve urban transportation service in a county that is larger than 42 of the states (4000 miles²), has more than 7 million people, and serves more than 1.4 million daily transit trips. The FY 1979-1984 transportation improvement program (TIP) calls for more than \$4 billion. The Regional Transit Development Program (RTDP) includes transportation system management (TSM), freeway transit, downtown people mover (DPM), and a rail starter line for a total 1990 escalated cost of more than \$12 billion, of which the federal share is at least \$4 billion. The following comparison of the size and population of various major U.S. transportation service areas illustrates the enormous scale of the Los Angeles area:

City	Area (miles ²)	Population (000 000s)
Los Angeles	2200	7
Washington, DC	500	2.5
San Francisco	725	2.34
Baltimore	576	1.75
Atlanta	290	1.58

TRANSPORTATION BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Until the LACTC was established, there was only one institution charged with the overall coordination of urban transportation for the region: SCAG. AB 69, passed in 1972, required that regional transportation plans (RTPs), including short and long-range plans, be formulated by the regional councils of government. SCAG, as the A-95 agency (Office of Management and Budget Circular A-95, Evaluation, Review, and Coordination of Federal and Federally Assisted Programs and Projects), possessed coordination and approval power for federal programs, e.g., transportation.

The RTP was in turn based on the official input of the cities, counties, and operators. In the Los Angeles County area, there were several major sources for input to the plan and to the ongoing coordination necessary for planning and service: SCRTD, the seven municipal operators, the City of Los Angeles, and the County of Los Angeles.

The transportation institutions that existed prior to the formation of the LACTC numbered at least 25: Caltrans, SCAG, the County of Los Angeles, the City of Los Angeles, the municipal operators, and SCRTD, to name just a few. The transportation decision process reaches even deeper into the network of government institutions: to each of the 81 municipal governments in the County; federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; state agencies such as the Air Resources Board, the Public Utilities Commission, the Legislature, and the Coastal Commission; and local air pollution control and water quality districts.

Travel in the region exhibited the following profile at that time (1):

1. Eighty-five percent of all families owned one or more cars, and 44 percent owned at least two cars (in 1970).
2. Eighty-eight percent of all person trips in the region were by automobile.
3. About 25 percent of weekday person trips were work related.
4. Sixty-seven percent of weekday person trips were 5 miles or less.
5. Automobile registrations in the region had increased by 3-4 percent annually since 1955.

6. Public expenditures for highways in the region were 6 times greater than those for transit.

7. Private automobile expenditures were more than 25 times greater than expenditures for public transit.

Furthermore, several broad transportation policy forces were acting to set the stage for the perceived need for the Commission. The nation's newest, locally initiated, fixed-rail rapid transit system, the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system, was under construction and opening its first sections in San Francisco.

The Legislature in 1972 passed AB 69--the State Transportation Act--which represented an attempt to use the planning process programs. In what was known as a "bottom-up" approach, transit operators and city and county governments were to develop their needs for highways, transit, and aviation (and, to a lesser extent, harbors, pipelines, and freight) and their plans for the future and submit them to the regional councils of governments or metropolitanwide transportation planning agencies for coordination and approval. These, in turn, were submitted to the state DOT (Caltrans) for incorporation in the statewide plan, subsequent adoption by the legislature, and approval by the Governor. By 1976, the regional plans were adopted but the state plan and policy statement were not.

The fall 1973 energy crisis changed the whole financial picture of the state highway program. Highway gasoline-tax receipts attested to the decrease in revenues. Projections were lowered, plans were dropped or deferred, and a new piece of bureaucratic jargon joined the system: "downscoping".

Lower projections, tax receipts, and general expectations meant less need for state highway services. Engineers, road construction and maintenance crews, and other employees were laid off. At best, some were absorbed by other state and local governments. Morale sank quite low.

The Los Angeles metropolitan area tried three times (in 1968, 1974, and 1976) to persuade voters to add 1¢ onto the sales tax for development of a bus and rail mass transportation system. The SCAG-developed 1974 proposal, widely supported by local, state, and federal transportation agencies, was rejected by the voters for possibly several reasons: an SCRTD drivers' strike shortly before the election, inflation, rising taxes, and a plan developed too late to be effectively "sold to the public". Los Angeles County Supervisor Baxter Ward initiated the third try--the Sunset Coastline--in June 1976, and County voters again turned down a 1¢ sales-tax increase for mass transit.

Though this was not a true crisis, it can be said that, in the crucible of public policy formulation, the state transportation policy infrastructure was a little shell-shocked, in disarray, and demoralized. The citizens were less enamored with urban transportation, too. BART's experience somewhat tarnished the attractive image of rail transit; bus-driver strikes and increased taxes helped to "turn off" Los Angeles area citizens. And, perhaps most importantly, there was the growing legislative belief that the appropriate transportation policy institutions in the state, particularly in relation to the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area of the SCAG region (Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside Counties), needed some institutional help and policy "muscle".

STATE LEGISLATIVE INTERVENTION

The factors identified above seemed to provide the ingredients for change. By no means is it suggested

that these were the only ingredients, yet the perceptions of the policymaking participants did seem to suggest diverse themes moving often in parallel:

1. A transportation decisionmaking system that was vertically oriented (federal-state-local), not horizontally, and seemingly in direct contrast to the Los Angeles County political arena;
2. A system oriented to technical control with occasional ratification by elected officials on complex matters;
3. Decreasing resources and increasing demands for transportation system improvement as a result of air quality and energy factors; and
4. System development emphasis on large-scale plans requiring voter approval for local tax match for federal grants.

When the legislation establishing the Commission was drafted, local governments and agencies were sharply divided in their reactions. Assemblyman Walter Ingalls, Chairman of the State Assembly Transportation Committee, introduced the first draft of AB 1246 on March 29, 1975. Fourteen amendments and 18 months later, the bill was adopted by the Assembly and the Senate and signed by Governor Jerry Brown. Only 4 agencies were in support of the bill in the early days; 11 were against and 2 were neutral. By the time of passage, the roster shifted to 12 for, 12 against, and 6 neutral. The numbers, however, mask the actual relative power of the individual agencies. The final roster reaffirms the basic fragmentation of policy bodies that characterizes Los Angeles decisionmaking. The primary municipal operators of transit systems, the Mayor of Los Angeles, and the Chief Administrative Officer of the County of Los Angeles supported AB 1246. Against it were several smaller cities that were considering establishing their own transit systems (or operating very small services): the Los Angeles City Council, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, and SCAG. Neutral units included SCRTD, the League of California Cities, and Caltrans.

These groupings rather accurately reflect the pattern of institutional diversity and policy fragmentation of the period. To form the Commission, powers had to be given up, mostly unwillingly, by existing transportation agencies--SCRTD, SCAG, and Caltrans. Nor were these agencies even designated official members of the Commission. Subsequently, SCRTD has tried several times to obtain special legislation that would rectify the situation. Caltrans was made an ex officio member at a later time. SCAG has not tried to be a member of the Commission.

GOALS ESTABLISHED FOR THE COMMISSION

Legislative goals are often difficult to formulate. Authors often want to use the list of recitals or legislative findings as more than perfunctory statements. Yet, if legislative goals are enumerated too specifically, the implementing agency and the programs might not have sufficient flexibility to meet changing conditions.

Perhaps not uncommonly, the Commission goals stated by AB 1246 are a mixed bag of the general and the specific. For example, the goals (slightly abstracted for brevity) focused on

1. Improved decisionmaking institutions,
2. A coordinated and integrated transportation system,
3. Maximum effectiveness of existing resources,
4. Maintenance and increased effectiveness of the state highway system,

5. Low-cost transit system for all citizens,
6. Municipal involvement for local service,
7. Public involvement in decisionmaking, and
8. Recognition of environmental and urban effects.

A basic characteristic of a diverse metropolitan area would seem to be diverse decisionmaking institutions. Transportation agencies in the Los Angeles area reflect this basic pattern, too. Over a long-enough period, the diversity translates into very powerful and independent units of government, formally and informally. Centralization of power is essential.

Similarly, the second goal sought coordination of the system, with transit service immediately in mind. Much conflict and competition took place between SCRTD and the municipal operators as well as Caltrans, SCAG, and the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak).

By 1976, highway system construction costs, transit operating costs, diminishing gasoline-tax revenues, and inflation strongly suggested the need for the effective use of existing resources. Furthermore, this goal corresponded to the federal emphasis on TSM activities.

The state highway system was beginning to require substantial maintenance and repair. The fourth goal helped to highlight the importance of upkeep as well as the possibility of getting more use out of the system through the TSM type of projects and right-of-way use for rail systems. Some, though, believed very large, highway-oriented decisions could be based on this attitude (e.g., the Century Freeway and completion of critical gaps and segments in the freeway system).

Adequate and low-cost public transportation for all citizens (the fifth goal) was recognized from the start as difficult to achieve. It has become even more difficult.

The concept of local transit service (the sixth goal) was new. The smaller cities were dissatisfied with SCRTD service and were seeking new ways to meet their own needs. Some had already established systems. The composition of the Commission included several municipal operators (Long Beach, Gardena, and Norwalk) but not SCRTD.

Public involvement in decisionmaking (the seventh goal) was and still is limited to choices presented on the ballot. Though all agencies involved followed required procedures for public hearings, citizen committees, and public information, transportation decisionmaking by its very nature did not seem responsive to public values. Yet, when ballot opportunities were presented, the voting public definitely said "no". The most significant other public involvement has arisen during the energy crisis and SCRTD fare increases. Then, there was voluntary public action and outcry.

The last goal, which addresses environmental and urban impacts, anticipates new facility construction and operation as well as reversing the trend to urban form and condition. Vast freeway projects were still fresh in many minds. A long-term element was the first statutory acknowledgment that the majority of trips in the area are short, 5 miles or less, among multicenters.

COMMISSION STRUCTURE

Generally, the Commission meets twice a month. Each Commissioner serves on several committees and is quite active. An important element has been that the Commissioners, by working together, have developed a strong organizational memory and experience. Little membership change has occurred. They know each other well. Although the County Supervisors

and the Mayor of Los Angeles do not attend a majority of the meetings, their officially empowered alternates do. Full communication with principals is apparently accurate and effective. For important special meetings, the County Supervisors and the Mayor attend.

The committee structure of the Commission is shown in Figure 1. Note the dual memberships.

Almost all agenda items are prepared by staff and discussed at committee meetings prior to biweekly full Commission meetings. Commission staff has grown now to 27 full-time, 18 professional, and 9 clerical personnel. Figure 2 shows the staff organization. The annual operating budget for FY 1980-1981 was \$1.3 million.

AB 1246 requires a Citizen Advisory Committee.

Figure 1. LACTC structure as of 1980.

<p><u>County of Los Angeles</u></p> <p>Peter F. Schabarum Supervisor</p> <p>Baxter Ward Supervisor</p> <p>Kenneth Hahn Supervisor (Chair 1978)</p> <p>Edmund D. Edelman Supervisor</p> <p>Yvonne B. Burke Supervisor</p> <p>Governor's Representative (ex officio)</p> <p>Heinz Heckeroth District Director, Caltrans</p>	<p><u>City of Los Angeles</u></p> <p>Tom Bradley Mayor</p> <p>John Ferraro Council President (Chair 1977)</p> <p>Wandell Cox Citizen Representative^a</p> <p><u>City of Long Beach</u></p> <p>Russell Rubley Councilman (Chair 1981)</p> <p><u>Other Los Angeles County Cities (chosen by League of California Cities)^b</u></p> <p>Edmond J. Russ Mayor, Gardena (Chair 1979)</p> <p>John Zimmerman Councilman, Norwalk</p>
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COMMITTEES

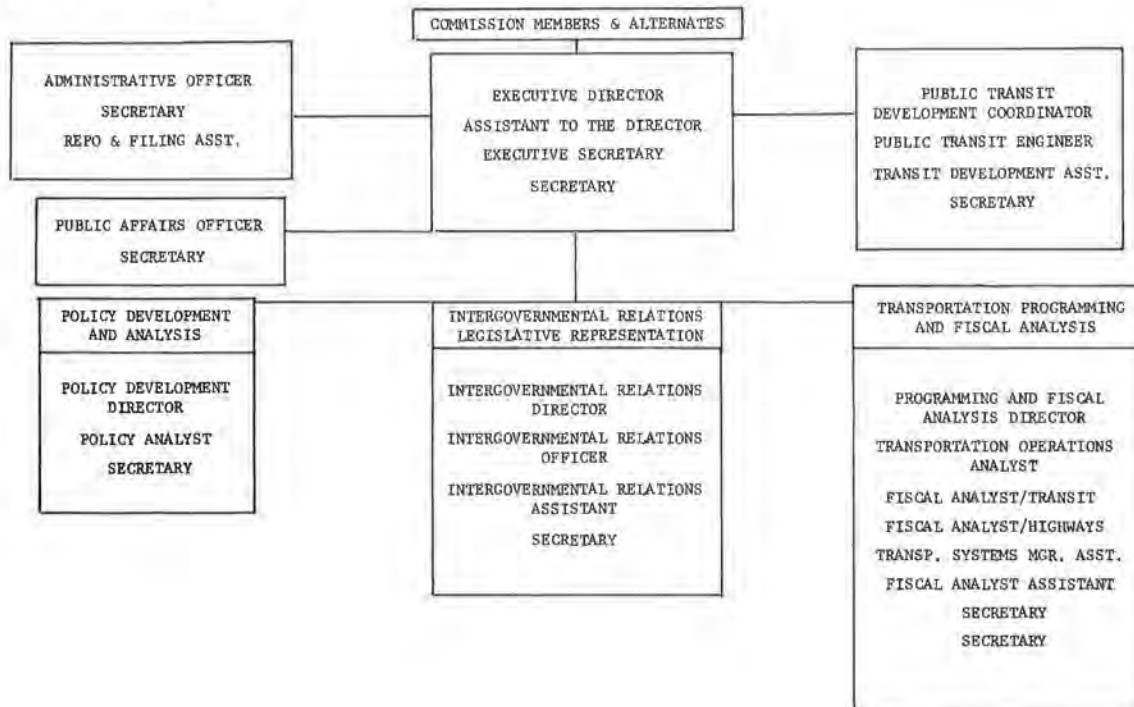
<p><u>Finance Review</u></p> <p>Rubley (Chair) Edelman (Vice Chair) Schabarum Ferraro Cox Russ</p>	<p><u>Service Coordination</u></p> <p>Cox (Chair) Zimmerman (Vice Chair) Edelman Baxter Russ</p>	<p><u>Intergovernmental Relations</u></p> <p>Bradley (Chair) Burke (Vice Chair) Hahn Rubley Zimmerman</p>
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^aCitizen representative for the City of Los Angeles is chosen by the Mayor.

^bRepresentatives for the small cities in the County are selected by the League of California Cities, Los Angeles County section.

Note: The Chair of the Commission serves one year. Each January the Vice Chair is elected and automatically is the Chair for the next year. As with many joint county-city commissions, the two positions always have one representative of the county and one from the cities serving, thereby alternating the chair every other year.

Figure 2. LACTC staff organization.



The Commission appointed 55 members (5 per Commissioner), only 15-20 of whom participate regularly. Their role to date has been to advise the Commission on selected matters and serve on financing studies, freeway route hearings, hearings on unmet (rural) transit needs, and the RTDP hearings.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Commission's authority (AB 1246, as amended) is strong. Its primary powers are in short-range capital and service planning, programming, budgeting, implementation, and coordination. However, its long-range responsibilities for new system development and operation are (as of AB 1429, August 1979) equally strong.

Yet LACTC still sees itself essentially as a programmer, a monitoring agency. It is not a builder or operator. For those activities, memoranda of understanding with the existing agencies have been developed.

Briefly put, though, the self-perception of the Commission (2) is that its main authority is to be "responsible for allocating \$540 million each year in state and federal transportation dollars flowing into Los Angeles County. This 'power of the purse' authorizes the Commissioners to establish policies, performance standards and future plans for transportation systems in the county."

An effective way to understand the official short- and long-range powers of the Commission is in relation to other transportation agency powers. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the relative roles and responsibilities. The LACTC is placed at the third level because of the hierarchical nature of the work. Local highway and transit agencies have operational responsibilities. In turn, the Commission at the county level coordinates their work. SCAG coordinates the similar activity of the six Southern California counties.

For final action, the CTC must approve, along with the Legislature, many funding activities. Caltrans plays a dual role. Its local district for Los Angeles (District 7) has operational planning, building, and maintenance activities. For example, in addition to freeway work, it is involved in the acquisition of Union Station as a multimodal transportation center.

ACTUAL USE OF AUTHORITY

Somewhat like the proverbial child in the candy shop, with what should the Commission begin? The Commission started out with substantial powers and received even more specific mandates in subsequent legislation. What was actually used and how?

In the Commission's own words (2),

What has the Commission done?

In its three years of operations, the Commission has made progress toward solving problems which have frustrated Los Angeles' citizens and transportation officials for decades.

-The Commission was involved in breaking the deadlock which had blocked construction of the Century Freeway (I-105).

-The Commission successfully developed a local financing package for construction of the Wilshire Subway without the need for new taxes. This marks the beginning of a new rapid transit system that had eluded Los Angeles for many years.

-The Commission determined that Southern California was being shortchanged in state highway financing, and successfully won the return of \$66 million to our region for highway projects.

-The Commission has negotiated several service coordination agreements between bus operators to insure more efficient and convenient service for the public. Service coordination efforts are an ongoing activity of the LACTC.

-The Commission developed and helped get funding for a county-wide capital improvement program for the county's bus systems. The four-year program, which required the largest single bus improvement commitment in federal transit financing history, will add 1,300 new buses to our fleets as well as new maintenance facilities.

These items represent a summary list published in the widely disseminated Commission newsletter. To a knowledgeable transportation official, this seems to be a fairly impressive list. To the mythical person in the street, little materially has changed in the provision of transportation service in Los Angeles.

Because the Commission represents a novel, hybrid organization that is a new layer of local government, a slightly different perspective is necessary for considering Commission accomplishments. The nature of much governmental work is often quite complex: split jurisdictions and responsibilities, numerous rules and regulations, and little funding. All of these add up to classical "red tape". And the transportation sector has its own particular blend of these attributes. Therefore, these activities in a sense are the "tip of the iceberg" of continuing supporting activities.

Planning, Programming, and Budgeting

For almost all of the major Commission activities, the primary document to follow is the TIP. Developed first in 1978 for FY 1979-1983, the \$4.051 billion budget stated in line-item form the Commission's intent in the areas of highway, transit, and new service. TIP assumptions were constantly shifting because of changes in estimated revenues and state and federal funds. When adopted, the TIP reflected more hope than certainty that financial needs were realistic given general estimates of revenue.

For example, although neither the Commission nor state and federal agencies had officially approved major projects, these projects became new policy because the TIP officially sanctioned and budgeted them. The Century Freeway (I-105) and other freeway projects were frozen. The Commission spent considerable staff time in securing government approval of these projects, getting previous funding commitments honored, actually receiving the funds, and starting construction. Funds are now beginning to trickle in.

Transit capital improvements depended on a major infusion of new buses and support facilities. The Commission TIP approved such plans, programmed the money, and budgeted funds in annual TIP updates. Two years later (1980) the federal funds were awarded.

Similarly, in major transit system development, \$1.1 billion was earmarked in 1978 for new construction, primarily for the Wilshire Subway line. Yet the Commission did not officially approve the Wilshire plan until August 1979. Federal design funds were awarded in June 1980.

These key allocation decisions do then represent Commission intent. Although the TIP is a planning and programming document, its budgetary role serves as an official statement of policy. Oddly enough, the policy may not be officially discussed and adopted until much later. But the TIP seems to serve the dual role of a statement of planning intent and an actual major budgetary commitment to program concepts. The annual TIP update includes

revisions to the implementing program and project-level commitments.

Other planning activities fall under the short-term service coordination and long-term system development phases. In 1978, the Commission initiated a series of transit service coordination studies designed to study the entire range of operations in the county. Recommendations to consolidate several lines and eliminate others came forward and were intensely discussed at the technical level. In some cases, service-zone disputes were arbitrated and resolved by the Commission.

Another major planning activity is the RTDP, or

four-part plan. Stressing rail rapid transit (Wilshire Corridor), freeway bus transit, the DPM (Los Angeles), and local bus service improvement, the RTDP has been in existence since 1975. Each part of the plan had different agency leadership. The Commission slowly moved in and took control of the policy planning aspects and spent much time discussing the elements. The Commission supported most of the staff technical decisions. It endorsed the DPM of the Los Angeles City CRA. It supported RTD and the expansion of municipal-operator local bus service. What remained to be decided at the Commission level was whether to present to the public a full-

Table 1. Official short-range powers of LACTC in relation to powers of other agencies.

Agency	Planning	Programming	Budgeting	Implementation and Operation	Coordination
SCRTD	Develop service, routes, technology	Prioritize	Determine costs and revenues and manage; may apply for funds under LACTC terms	Operate; implement TIP and TSCP	Via LACTC
Municipal operators ^a	Develop service, routes, technology	Prioritize	Determine costs and revenues and manage; may apply for funds under LACTC terms	Operate; implement TIP	Via LACTC
City of Los Angeles ^b Los Angeles County Road Department	Develop paratransit service Develop service, routes, technology	Prioritize	Determine costs and revenues and manage; may apply for funds under LACTC terms	Operate; implement TIP	Via LACTC
LACTC	Short-range capital and service planning Develop and approve 3- to 5-year TIP, with annual update reflecting priorities; determine or approve location and capacity of all capital development projects (exclusive mass transit guideway systems, state highway projects, and federal aid highway projects) except highway projects on routes of "statewide significance"; select and give specific approval to mass transit hardware and technology funded by TIP; determine and approve staging and scheduling of construction and development of TIP projects; determine FAUS projects to be funded; approve all plans for design, construction, and implementation of public mass transit systems or projects; adopt formula for TDA allocation		Determine annually potential funds available Adopt annual TIP	Conduct productivity and performance audits of operators; adopt rules and regulations to resolve transit service disputes in County (decision is final and binding); adopt criteria for municipal establishment of new service; adopt criteria for definition of included municipal operators	Develop TIP in coordination with SCAG and Caltrans, consistent with adoptive SCAG RTP; coordinate and approve all public mass transit service within jurisdiction; resolve jurisdictional disputes; may establish local transportation zones and adopt guidelines; required to adopt TSCP; required to submit report and action plan to Secretary of Business and Transportation for coordination of social service transportation services
SCAG		Approve Commission's TIP recommendations as part of regional TIP; may revise recommendations of Coms. TIPs; develop RTP (short-range components)	Administer regional program fund expenditures; determine regional programs for use of FAUS funds and adopted Coms. TIPs federal funds		Resolve conflicts among TIPs or with adopted RTP; convene at least two meetings per year of Coms., Caltrans, and SCAG to review and discuss TIPs after development but prior to Coms. adoption and RTP adoption by SCAG; approve multicounty transit plan from Coms.; must respond in 60 working days after submission
Caltrans		Determine projects, plans, and programs necessary for safety and maintenance of highway system; determine with Coms. significant rebuilding or rehabilitation projects Determine routes of statewide significance	Determine costs and funds available; prepare proposed state budget; make annual and 5-year estimate of available funds		Develop TIP and coordinate, to extent feasible, with Commission; develop jointly with Commission; resolve TIP disputes between SCAG and Coms.
CTC		Develop 5-year state TIP and submit to Legislature and Governor; develop State Transportation Report (formerly, State Transportation Plan)	Evaluate Caltrans proposed budget and submit recommendations to Legislature; make annual and 5-year estimate of funds		Adopt state TIP guidelines in cooperation with SCAG and Coms.; resolve TIP disputes between SCAG and Coms.

Note: TSCP = Transportation Service and Coordination Program; FAUS = Federal-Aid Urban System; TDA = Transit Development Act (SB 325); RTP = Regional Transportation Plan; Coms. = joint-power entity (legislation permits the Commissions to enter into joint-power agreements with each other for the provision of multicounty systems or to create a separate joint-power entity for multicounty system).

Based on California statutes AB 1246 and 1237 (established LACTC); AB 402 (establish CTC); SB 213 (authorizes special election for 1¢ addition to state gasoline excise tax for construction and improvement of mass transit guideways); SB 759 (transit operator productivity and performance audits); AB 103 (strengthens county commissions); AB 1429 (Proposition 5 funds), and SB 120 (social service transportation coordination).

^aNon-RTD, e.g., Long Beach, Norwalk, Santa Monica, Gardena, Torrance, Culver City, Commerce, Montebello.

^bThrough Department of Airports (airport people mover).

Table 2. Official long-range powers of LACTC in relation to powers of other agencies.

Agency	Taxes	Planning	Design	Construction	Implementation and Operation	Coordination
Operators RTD		Service, routes, technology	Manage		Designated operator for Commission-approved transit guideway system	Via Commission
Non-RTD municipal City of Los Angeles ^a (LAX, CRA)		Service, routes, technology May apply for federal and state highway or transit funds with prior Commission approval	Manage May design, construct, and operate a point-to-point transportation system for Los Angeles City airports; manage DPM through CRA.		Operate	Via Commission Via Commission
Coms.		To be formed for proposed multicounty, exclusive public mass transit guideway system; shall design, select technology, determine cost, route locations, and access points, and supervise construction, operation, and management of system; designate guideway system operator; submit plan and contract for operation to Legislature at least one year prior to operation				Via Commission and must be coordinated with Caltrans and SCAG
Los Angeles County Road Department LACTC	May levy 0.5¢ sales tax or 1¢ gasoline excise tax if authorized by countywide public vote	Routes and technology	Manage	Manage	Operate	Via Commission
SCAG		If public vote approves tax, Commission shall have RTD authority and power to plan, design, and construct an exclusive public mass transit guideway system; take more active role in determining development of transit guideway systems, including route location, station location, joint development opportunities, land use impacts, selection of appropriate hardware, and coordination and integration into existing transportation operation and community development objectives				All plans for design, construction, implementation of public mass transit systems or projects, federal aid, and state highway
Caltrans		Develop RTP; identify travel corridors; define corridor transportation problems and goals; define land use goals supported by corridor investment decisions; recommend priority corridor for major resource allocation; recommend mix of alternative transportation modes of corridors; recommend environmental, economic, energy, social policies to guide corridor investment decisions; determine regional priorities and an annual regional program for use of FAUS and adopted TIP priorities; administer regional program funds expenditures; develop annual unified work program for all transportation planning activities in region	Manage	Manage	Operate	Coordinate and/or resolve disputes between plans, TIPs, and Commission; plans must conform to adopted RTP; approve within 60 working days multicounty transportation system project; coordinate plans and TIPs; resolve conflict between such plans and programs
CTC	State gasoline excise tax	Determine projects, plans, programs necessary for safety and maintenance of state highway system May help to develop and construct approved exclusive public mass transit guideway system or rapid transit system if requested by Commission				Joint coordination with Commission on plans if feasible
		Determine that RTD public hearing process for guideway route was open and fair and that LACTC final decision on guideway route was based on accurate information				

Note: LAX = Los Angeles International Airport; CRA = Community Redevelopment Agency (DPM).

Based on California statutes AB 1246 and 1237 (established LACTC), AB 402 (established CTC), SB 213 (authorizes special election for 1¢ addition to state gasoline excise tax for construction and improvement of mass transit guideways), SB 759 (transit operator productivity and performance audits), AB 103 (strengthens county commissions), AB 1429 (Proposition 5 funds), and SB 120 (social service transportation coordination).

^aThrough Department of Airports (airport people mover).

scale rail transit system (as proposed by County Supervisor Ward) or to go with the incremental starter line philosophy (City of Los Angeles) for the Wilshire Subway. The Commission chose the incremental approach after spirited debate. Following a series of public hearings on the draft four-part plan, the Commission decided on August 20, 1980 (by a six to five vote), to ask the citizens to approve a 0.5 percent sales tax increase to serve as local match for the plan. Interestingly, the Chairman of the Commission signed the ballot argument against the proposal. Approved by the voters on

November 4, 1980, the proceeds (\$225 million) will underwrite transit fares by guaranteeing a 50¢ maximum basic fare for three years, provide funds for municipal transit projects, and start a 160-mile rail system. Of the approximate 2.4 million voting for President in the County, about 2.1 million voted on transit, which passed by 54 percent. Yet, the proposition 13 requirement for two-thirds majority on tax measures may be in effect. The matter might be resolved only in court.

Additional significant Commission planning powers that govern new rail system development (routes,

modes, technologies, station locations, and fares) have been reemphasized and strengthened by AB 1429 (September 1979). These will be discussed under coordination.

Implementation and Operation

As stated above, the Commission does not actually build or operate facilities. It is an overseer. State and federal performance and managerial audit requirements provide an opportunity to manage policy implementation. These devices are beginning to take effect now, for studies are under way that may provide information for important changes.

In accordance with AB 1429, the Commission has chosen to exercise its strengthened role through memoranda of understanding with the cognizant agencies: SCRTD, the City of Los Angeles, and Caltrans. Its statutory responsibilities are kept intact, but it does not get caught in day-to-day operations.

Coordination

What Los Angeles transportation lacked prior to the Commission was one policy body with the power and inclination to represent all the highway and transit agencies in the County. The creation of the Commission filled that void. In steadily working to fulfill that role, the Commission has gotten stronger, coordinating the diverse activities. In fact, most of its efforts have gone into coordination. According to Chairman Schabarum, speaking at a hearing on SCRTD in October 1980,

The teeth of AB 103 lies in the Commission's authority to implement the actions included in the final TCSP, to be adopted early next year, even if this means overriding existing protections in state law for the various operators' service areas.

In each of the major activities discussed above, the Commission coordination effort was central to further progress. At first, the Commission had to get other agencies outside the County to recognize and listen to the Commission. However, to accomplish unfreezing of the Century Freeway project and closure of some freeway gaps and to secure promised funding (\$66 million shortfall), the Commission had to coordinate internal policy positions for its constituent transportation agencies. Once it demonstrated the ability to deliver at that level, more effort went into securing federal funding approval for buses.

Thus, the representation role through coordination, internally and externally, has been a large accomplishment. But not all local agencies would accept formal Commission representation and coordination responsibilities. Some still represent themselves, which in part leads to the continued belief that Los Angeles transportation remains fragmented.

Major coordination, yet to occur, will be required to implement the memoranda of understanding with the RTDP lead agencies. There appeared to be sufficient fund commitments for the DPM and the Wilshire Subway to proceed, but the Los Angeles City Council questioned inflation estimates on the DPM and may stop the project. If new local tax funds are generated, the remainder of the plan will be governed by the memoranda of understanding, too. At this time, memoranda of understanding have been signed with the RTD (Wilshire Subway) and the City of Los Angeles (DPM). The memoranda of understanding with Caltrans for commuter rail and Union Station is not yet signed.

Transit service coordination is progressing. More routes are being studied, and consolidation is anticipated. Assemblyman Ingalls (now Chairman of the Joint Commission on Audits) has proposed eliminating the RTD Board of Directors and merging its planning functions with the Commission. Currently, it is only an idea, but legislation might be introduced in the next session.

Again, much of the coordination activity is identifying the issue or problem, getting the principals together, and making a workable policy decision. As the Commission has experienced with local operators and external state and federal funding agencies, it is rather hard to implement policy decisions. This kind of coordination did not take place very often before the Commission.

CONCLUSIONS

It would appear that, for an urban area facing many of the issues now visible in Los Angeles--including institutional fragmentation and a wide diversity of elected official and public opinion--a strong, unified transportation policymaking body at the local level would be useful. A body with the basic characteristics of the LACTC would be a good model to consider.

Other urban transportation decisionmaking bodies in the nation show a rich array of structural types. Some do have greater centralization of power to coordinate transit service, establish intergovernmental agreements, allocate funds, propose tax measures for the ballot, construct and operate fixed rail systems, and do some degree of highway planning. The LACTC is clearly among this group, although it is not the legal metropolitan planning organization and does not have sign-off decision-making power on the TIP or A-95 review power. Several scenarios exist that represent choices on a continuum, or centralization to decentralization of authority and responsibility. If the Commission were to select a strong centralized approach, it would make the LACTC among the nation's strongest transit planners and give Los Angeles County every opportunity to provide, for the first time, a coordinated and integrated transit service. There is indeed a host of possibilities, and they are under active consideration by the Commission and the California Legislature. As it stands now, the Commission is singular and proves to have been a good guess by the Legislature of the appropriate institutional arrangements for the area, a guess made in 1976.

The Commission is fully operational and involved with a solid schedule of activities. Not every one of its major powers is being used, but most are, and the impact is slowly being felt.

In a town with a complex transportation arena and many participants, policies and programs often seem hydra-headed. Now, one accomplishment is that it is less so. The actors are now accustomed to dealing with and through the Commission as an integral part of the intergovernmental vertical power structure. Since it has established itself by, at first, unfreezing old projects, obtaining additional and new money, achieving major capital project approval, and coordinating some municipal bus service, a plateau has been reached. The list of responsibilities and activities is long and heavy.

The LACTC has now completed its fourth year. Chairman Schabarum's goal of focusing on implementation and monitoring of prior accomplishments was well timed, and 1981 appeared to promise more institutional rearrangements. The Legislature will continue to play a key role.

However, the local elected official leadership, or lack of it, will be of utmost importance. Tech-

nical staff leadership can only go so far. Currently, the new election returns and change of County Supervisors suggest a stronger infusion of conservative philosophy. The emphasis appears to be on implementation and no new system starts except the Wilshire Boulevard rail corridor.

The Commission is fully established. It has significant authority in all areas to act. The elected officials of the area, responding in part to external environmental events (inflation, the economy, energy, and the role of government), have the power to direct major decisions through the Commission. If they in turn do not make decisions satisfactory to the Legislature, more legislative intervention may occur that requires more Commission activity.

For the moment, the people have spoken: 54 percent "yes" on the November 1980 ballot. But the Proposition 13 two-thirds majority requirement may conflict. And local elected officials and the Legislature may not agree so well on some items.

Yes, the Commission has the authority, but it only has the political power or clout granted by elected official consensus. It appears uncertain now whether the Commission will be permitted to exercise its statutory responsibility. Policy still depends on the extent to which elected officials agree or disagree on what urban transportation

improvements to undertake and how to accomplish them. As one County Supervisor suggested, even stronger centralized elected official leadership in Los Angeles urban transportation decisionmaking is necessary to overcome the diverse points of view. A single person might be elected by a countywide vote and constituency.

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Intergovernmental Relations in the Transportation Sector: Problems of Misperception

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Many of the intergovernmental problems identified by transportation officials occur in the program implementation process. The hypothesis that many of these problems can be related to an implicit model of the implementation process held by the key actors in policy and program adoption is examined. Three indicators of conflict that are related to implementation are (a) policy or program objectives that do not coincide with the primary objectives of the implementing agencies, (b) a misunderstanding of the implementation decision-making environment by those who formulate the policy, and (c) disregard of implementation considerations in the policy formulation process. Examples from recent research projects that evaluated program implementation in the transportation sector are used to illustrate these conflict areas. A set of guidelines is proposed for policy and program implementation to minimize intergovernmental conflict.

The intergovernmental structure that relates to the provision of transportation infrastructure and services has changed significantly over the past 20 years, not only in the interaction between federal transportation agencies and their state and local counterparts but also between the multiple levels of government that have evolved in most American cities. At the federal level, there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of funding for state and local transportation purposes from a growing number of different federal agencies, often agencies that are not primarily concerned with transportation. In a recent report (1), for example, the National Transportation Policy Study Commission identified 64 federal agencies and 30 congressional committees that had "jurisdictions which affected the supply of and demand for transportation services."

At the state level, increasing costs of urban transit operations and the construction of transportation facilities that cross several jurisdictions have often resulted in increased state involvement (and hence influence) in local transportation issues. This involvement is likely to increase given the importance that the Reagan Administration is placing on the state role in administering transportation programs. And at the regional level, the emergence of the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) has added a new dimension to intergovernmental relations in the transportation sector that has created both problems and opportunities for intergovernmental action.

The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the characteristics of intergovernmental relations that result in perceived intergovernmental "problems" in policy and program implementation. This discussion will be based on the results of a number of recent research projects that have analyzed in detail the institutional characteristics of transportation policymaking and implementation and the means by which one group of actors can influence the behavior of others. These research projects have covered a wide range of topics, including the implementation of and governmental response to the federal planning regulations on transportation system management (TSM), the roles of federal and state transportation agencies in encouraging urban development and revitalization, the institutional structure relating to the formulation of metropolitan