

Streetcar Institutional Models

A Comparison of Experience with Transit Coordination

Chris Kopp

Transportation Planning Practice Lead

HNTB Corporation

Chicago, IL



13th National Light Rail & Streetcar Conference



Contributors

- Ashley Booth, HNTB Milwaukee
- Sue Comis, Sound Transit
- Shellie Ginn, City of Tucson
- Chris Kopp, HNTB Chicago
- Benjamin Limmer, Atlanta BeltLine
- Terry Nash, HNTB Seattle
- Jeff Polenske, City of Milwaukee
- Matt Webb, HNTB Detroit

Hypothesis

- Different institutional approaches to streetcar development lead to different coordination outcomes
 - Physical
 - Service
 - Fare
 - Information
 - Construction

Institutional Models

- City-led – Tucson SunLink, Milwaukee
- Agency-led – Tacoma Link
- Privately-led – Detroit M-1 RAIL
- Hybrid – Atlanta Streetcar

Physical Coordination

Ideal Outcome:

Ability to board a connecting transit service at the same station, plaza, and/or platform where one alighted the streetcar, or vice versa.

Physical Coordination

Atlanta



Tacoma

Few shared platforms,
connecting bus typically less
than two street crossings
away.



Service Coordination

Ideal Outcome:

Ability to have a connecting transit vehicle waiting when the streetcar arrives to facilitate a timed transfer from streetcar to the connecting transit service, or vice versa.

Service Coordination

Streetcar headways of 10-15 minutes were considered frequent enough not to require schedule coordination.



Tucson

Fare Coordination

Ideal Outcome:

**Reciprocal transfers with full credit
for previous fares paid between the streetcar
and all connecting services using all valid fare media.**

Fare Coordination

Best where streetcar implementer = operator.

Atlanta



Only Tucson offers full integration with regional transit fare system.

Tucson



Atlanta, Tacoma accept regional smartcard media.

Streetcars frequently introduce proof-of-payment to regions.

Information Coordination

Ideal Outcome:

Clear presentation of streetcar services and all connecting transit services on all maps, schedules, mobile apps, and other transit service information materials, as well as wayfinding signage showing the way from streetcar stops to boarding platforms of nearby transit services, and vice versa.

Information Coordination



Atlanta



Tacoma

Construction Coordination

Ideal Outcome:

**Required utility relocations occur
prior to active construction of rail and system elements.**

Construction Coordination



Detroit



Atlanta

Findings

- Hypothesis: Different institutional approaches to streetcar development lead to different coordination outcomes

Rejected

A common goal of integrating a streetcar into the regional transit network overcomes institutional challenges