

George Gray, Division of Mass Transportation, California Department of Transportation

There are 28 state transportation agencies that aid local communities or transit districts with planning guidance and funding. About half have definite groups that are involved in public transportation and about a fourth are involved in DRT services. In providing these services Michigan, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Florida are the most active; Michigan is far ahead of other states. Several states have some involvement, but usually on a single project. New Jersey, for example, has funded the Haddonfield project to the extent of some \$420,000.

California is not directly involved in DRT. The Transportation Development Act of 1971, better known as the 325 Program or the sales tax on gasoline, makes funds available for local use, and some of it goes to DRT services, but as local option money. Local communities may do what they wish with it.

State assistance programs are bound to proliferate as new programs of resource allocations, pollution problems, and other impacts of transportation facilities become more apparent. Almost all the states with public transportation units provide technical assistance of some kind to the agencies within the state. The California Division of Mass Transportation provides this type of technical service, but our studies are general in nature. We identify the potential for new services only after a detailed study is called for once the local decision-making body has established evidence of real interest in a public transportation program.

The DRT activities in the Orange County Transit District and the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District have no state involvement. DRT in La Mirada and El Cajon are city sponsored. The Santa Clara County DRT, which I think is going to be one of the bell ringers, is a county project with 325 Program funding.

As most other states do, California provides technical assistance to establish a variety of services where DRT may already exist, e.g., marketing, information systems, equipment specifications, and special services.

Claude J. Klug, Administrator, City of La Mirada, California

I am not a transit person and do not regard La Mirada DRT as being totally committed to transit; in fact, I consider its second objective to be transit.

We marketed DRT not as just transit but as a new innovative service in a dynamic city; it was part of the normal public relations program of the city.

When we started operation, we were overwhelmed with customers and had to back off. In fact, I still have 10,000 free tickets in my desk that we never gave out. We were one of the first cities in our area to start DRT (La Habra had started about 2 months earlier), and we really did not know what we were getting into. Basically people were concerned that it was a boondoggle because we had committed a subsidy of \$100,000 a year for 5 years; the first year was for setting up and the remaining 4 years were for operation.

After we began operation, we found that we had oversold the system not only in the volume of people we could serve but also in what the people expected. They expected that they were going to get a vehicle at 8:02—not 8:00 and not 8:05. So we found that most people turned to the taxicab service, but you do not get a cab at 8:02 either.

Our vehicles are brightly covered, and our control room is all glassed in and in a prominent place in the City Hall. Almost anyone who comes in City Hall can watch the DRT in operation.

We found a bit of irony with regard to our public relations techniques. We put packets together for TV stations and made personal visits to all the right people, but got absolutely no coverage at all. About 6 months after we were in operation, the New York Times did an article on us. It was picked up all over the world, and since then we have had tremendous coverage.