

It also seems that most of the persons involved in attempting to promote these particular schemes understand that they should not a priori assume that the reactions of the community and the ultimate rejection of their proposals were not appropriate responses, and that better "marketing" would have made the proposal acceptable. While we must be cautious in how we judge public response and not become obsequious to notions of the infallibility of these demonstrations of feelings, at the same time we had better be sensitive and politically perceptive about the information that is being communicated by such community responses.

We should realize, for example, that the objective of the use of pricing schemes to constrain vehicle use is counter intuitive to the past body of experiences of most people. They probably wondered how it would be possible to maintain (and even increase) activities in the community and, at the same time, reduce the number of vehicles. This is certainly the concern of business people, who associate traffic with store volumes, and ultimately, their own profits. The proposals also could be perceived to be discriminatory use of a public good directly used to improve the mobility of the more affluent who could afford to pay the "price", although I am not sure that such distributional equity problems were associated with these particular proposals.

It is interesting that we provide substantial resources to develop plans and devise abstract models of consumer behavior but neglect to, a priori, consider with any elegance the behavioral response of communities, especially in relationship to such sensitive and potentially controversial issues as transportation planning. We seem to be willing to learn "after the fact" about citizen response and that is very expensive on-the-job training.

Earl Robb, Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation

The experience of Berkeley and Madison has been an interesting situation. It reminds me of my first experience many years ago with public participation. We held a project public hearing in a small rural farming community concerning a secondary road improvement. The public hearing took place in a local high school auditorium with about 50 farmers and their families in attendance. Arrangements for the hearing included the display of detailed engineering drawings, the dissemination of technically oriented study reports, and placement of a microphone for recording purposes. The contingent of highway engineers paraded before the audience presenting superb dissertations on the merits of the proposed improvement. The presentations were followed by an invitation to the citizens to move forward, speak into the microphone, and comment on the proposal. An elderly farmer rose, walked to the front of the audience, passed the microphone, positioned himself in front of one of the sound speakers used with the public address amplification system, and proceeded to give his comments.

In one respect this could be perceived as a very humorous situation. In reality it drove home the point that we often assume too much in preparing for public participation. If the old farmer had difficulty distinguishing between the microphone and the speaker system, how much did he really understand of our superb engineering presentations?

Sound communication techniques are the basis of any public participation program. We must attempt to identify the values and expectations of the citizens. We must ensure that our plans and terminology are understood. We must, as a prerequisite for public participation, attempt to identify community goals and objectives and to relate those goals and objectives to our proposals.

There is a great danger in assuming that the local political structure speaks for the citizen in every situation. Many in the public sector view public administrators and elected officials with a degree of distrust. While the public demands service from government officials, it does not relinquish its right to be properly informed and to be included in the decision making process.

Public participation must be initiated during the earliest stages of the program planning. The existing organizational structures should be employed as a mechanism for accomplishing meaningful citizen involvement and great care should be taken to avoid a segmented concept in the introduction of a new project. Any proposal as complex as transportation pricing should be incorporated with regional or areawide planning. It is difficult to justify radical new concepts without first relating the benefits of such concepts to a total transportation package.

The study presented has a great deal of merit; however, it should now be obvious that implementation of such projects will be extremely difficult in the absence of public support.

Robert Hixson, Federal Aviation Administration

I feel that the key to your problems may be that of confusing planning with implementation. Citizen participation is not a public relations tool. It is not intended as a tool to sell a preconceived plan. It is instead an integral part of the planning process.

You have a product to sell, road pricing. It is a possible solution to the problems of congestion and air pollution. But it is only one from among perhaps many possible solutions. Your approach, with citizen participation, should have been problem oriented. You should have enlisted the participation of the citizens to solve the problems at hand, including your product -- road pricing -- as one of the alternatives for their consideration. Your solution was being imposed upon rather than being assumed by the citizens. The solution was preconceived rather than growing out of the citizen participation activities.

A good example of this was the Gruen Plan for downtown Fort Worth, Texas. It was a good plan, which significantly advanced the concepts of what a city center could be and which is still having positive effects upon

urban planning. Everyone thought that it was just great; that is, everyone except the citizens of Fort Worth. They wondered who was this guy Gruen and what business did he have in redesigning Fort Worth. No one had asked them if they wanted an auto-free downtown. In reaction, they turned down the whole concept.

I cannot overstress the importance of early involvement. Citizens should be involved before even the basic directions are set -- they may want some other direction. You first present the problem as you perceive it and then listen to the citizens' perception of the problem. Then you and the citizens, working together, seek the solution. You present your product -- road pricing -- as one of the alternatives; but you must also present all the other viable alternatives, including those of no action and of building an alternate by-pass route. Then you must make your best estimate of the social, economic, and environmental costs of each alternative. Then you ask the citizens to make the tradeoffs and select the alternative that suits them best. If it is the best solution in the circumstance, with all of the factors considered, then they will probably select your road pricing scheme.

You can perhaps influence the citizens' choice by offering a big enough carrot -- perhaps grants for a big improvement to the public transit system to improve service, buy new buses, or reduce the fares or perhaps a grant for a people mover system -- linked to approval of your road pricing scheme.

In any case, you must recognize that you are taking away what citizens view as rights they already have and which are highly visible in return for benefits of low visibility -- air pollution, fuel savings, or capital not spent on new roads. Further, some "privileged" groups are hardly impacted at all -- they may actually benefit through less congestion and less air pollution, all for the price of a sticker. The cost of the sticker can be quite variable according to income or to values gained. It is even possible that, with a large, gas hungry car, a \$5 a month sticker might save that much in gasoline if the congestion were removed.

In summary, you have a very sticky situation in trying to find a problem to suit your solution. Citizen participation is certainly a viable tool to help determine whether your solution fits a particular community's problems, provided that the citizen participation is an integral part of the planning process and is not merely a P.R. tool used to sell your solution to a community upon which you feel it fits.

#### SUMMARY

Realizing that dealing with different people at different times under different circumstances yields an infinite number of situations, it becomes obvious that any rules governing citizen participation have to be dynamic. Therefore, the intent of this session was not to postulate solutions to the problems experienced in the Berkeley and Madison pricing projects: rather, the purpose

was to identify the factors contributing to the demise of the pricing schemes and to formulate specific observations which would serve as caveats to those embarking on similar adventures in the future. The issues listed below are the product of the synthesis of the ideas expressed by the session speakers and the panelists with those expressed by the audience.

#### Issues

1. The pricing concept should be compatible with the comprehensive traffic plan for the study area; that is, it should strive to help solve the overall traffic problem and not just to prove that an isolated project is successful.
2. The project should be seen by the community as one of their major problem areas. If the community perceives crime to be a major problem area they cannot be expected to enthusiastically support the city spending money on a traffic problem. Even if the community senses that there is a major traffic problem, the focus that the project takes must be explained. For example, if the community perceives that the traffic problem has to do with parking, will they really support a project which is aimed at lessening the problem?
3. Limitations should be set on the project to allow a high degree of success. That is, it has been suggested that a toll bridge would be an ideal place for attempting pricing controls to regulate congestion because, with the toll bridge, dramatic results can be recognized without too much change in individual habit patterns and with minimum of investment.
4. The public must be made aware of the details of the project. The expectations should be clear and the benefits that are to be derived should be realistic.
5. Proposals must be sufficiently flexible to allow them to be changed to better respond to community concerns, needs, and political climates.
6. Input from the public should be solicited and all efforts should be made to incorporate public opinion into the project to the extent possible. However, in attempting to modify the concepts of pricing to meet the public's expectations, care must be taken that we do not lose sight of the original objective of using pricing as a control and begin to think generally about "ways to reduce traffic congestion."
7. What are the best community interaction strategies that can be used to inform a broad section of the population about the elements of a program?
8. Given the type of projects explained in this session what will be the best time to involve citizens in the program -- during the study phase, the pre-implementation phase, the implementation phase, or throughout the whole project development period?
9. What are the ways of finding, developing and keeping a constituency for the projects?
10. What measures can be taken to prevent biased press coverage?
11. What is the best time to inform the press, and what channels of information can