

## CLOSING SESSION

### HOV Coalition



*Peter Peysner*  
*Peter Peysner Associates, Inc.*

I want to start by congratulating Bill Roach, the local conference planning group, and, the TRB committee for the great job they have done in planning and conducting this conference. I have found the conference very educational and I return to Washington, D.C. with a renewed sense of purpose on HOV facilities. A great american poet, Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "events are in the saddle and ride mankind." I think if you are promoting HOV facilities right now you probably feel this way. Just keeping up with the events relating to HOV facilities that are occurring in many areas, especially Washington, D.C., requires a great deal of effort.

The HOV Coalition represents an effort that began in the spring of 1989 as a way of bringing together a variety of groups interested in a more effective advocacy for HOV facilities at the federal level. Currently, members of the Coalition include Seattle Metro, Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas, Inc., Greyhound Lines, Denver RTD, Los Angeles County Transportation Commission, and the American Bus Association. In addition, the

Coalition made use of the white paper on HOV facilities prepared by the Texas Transportation Institute. This document has been very useful in our efforts in Washington, D.C.

I would like to provide an overview of the activities the Coalition is currently pursuing. In the broad sense, the Coalition is promoting incentives at the federal level for HOV development. After its formation in April of 1990, the Coalition initially engaged in a quick policy development process. The result of this process was the identification of a series of incentives for HOV facilities. These included preferential matching ratios for HOV facilities, a specific set-aside of funds for HOV development, and other techniques providing preferential funding for HOV facilities. We also wanted to ensure that there was broad eligibility among all categories of FHWA and UMTA funding for HOV projects.

Having set this fairly ambitious menu of potential federal action, we set off to work with Congress and the Administration to see how much we could put into effect. Initially we went to the Administration in the summer and fall of last year to provide input to their legislative proposal. The Coalition met with both the FHWA and UMTA Administrators, their staffs, and DOT Secretary Skinner.

These discussions did result in some positive actions. The first of these was the October, 1990 paper from Administrator Larson to the states providing some guidance on HOVs and encouraging the FHWA district offices to work with the states on HOV developments. This was an important policy statement. The Administration's proposal for the highway and transit reauthorization, released in February of this year, contained a preferential match, at a 90% level, in the

highway portion and broadly defined eligibility in both the highway and transit programs.

We have also been spending a good deal of time on Capitol Hill, especially in the last few months. We have been meeting with members from the House and Senate, their staffs, and the key committees. Our main focus last year was on the Clean Air Act, which is really driving transportation policy right now. We worked with a coalition of environmental groups, local governments, and public transit agencies to ensure that the transportation control measures and the sanction provisions included in the Clean Air Act emphasized HOV facilities as an acceptable form of highway construction. This was a very effective coalition. The environmental movement is a force to be dealt with in Washington, D.C. and around the country. We worked with them to ensure that HOV facilities were included in the 1990 Clean Air Act.

These activities proved to be a natural tie into the efforts this year focusing on the reauthorization of the highway and transit programs. The initial results of these efforts are evident in the legislation introduced last week by Senator Moynihan of New York. This legislation has turned the discussion in Washington, D.C. on its head and is worth a few minutes of discussion. I would not have guessed three weeks ago that this bill would have been introduced. In the broadest sense, the Moynihan bill puts 55% of the funds available through the federal highway program in the hands of metropolitan areas, through the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) mechanism, with cooperation from state departments of transportation. This represents a major change from the current process.

Under the Moynihan bill, one-half of the program would be in a category called the

Surface Transportation Program. Funds in this category would be allocated to the states with very tight pass-through provisions to ensure that the funds flow to metropolitan areas. These funds could be used for virtually any transportation project including public transit capital and operating expenses, subsidies for intercity bus and rail service, HOV facilities, and highways. Within the program, the federal match is proposed at 80% on maintenance projects and 75% on new construction. However, there is a provision for an 80% share on HOV facility construction. Thus, you can see that the preferential match idea for HOV facilities has been continued.

Another 5% of the program would be dedicated solely for air quality control and congestion mitigation. This program would focus on non-attainment cities and would allow only HOV projects, as opposed to SOV capacity improvement projects. The remaining portions of the overall program includes the National Bridge Program and the Interstate Completion and Maintenance Programs, both managed by the states. HOV facilities are also give preferential treatment in these two programs.

It would be difficult to imagine a piece of legislation more favorable to HOV facilities than this bill. It encompasses the priorities identified by the HOV Coalition and other groups. While this is a positive sign, there is obviously a long way to go in the process before any legislation is passed and signed by the President. I think it is important to note that the Moynihan bill does contain an "anti-sliding" provision. If the preferential 80% match rate is used for construction of HOV facilities and then metropolitan areas "slide back" and use the facilities for SOVs or don't adequately enforce the HOV lanes, the 5% bonus on the match has to be refunded to the federal government.

I think it is important to note that there is opposition to different parts of the Moynihan bill. The American Trucking Association and Highway Users Federation have objected to it and AASHTO has raised questions with some provisions. There has been generally positive reaction from local governments, transit agencies, and environmental groups. On the House side we are still waiting for the introduction of a bill and it is not known what approach they will take.

The Coalition is moving ahead with further outreach efforts to other organizations and the recruitment of additional members. We are encouraging these groups to express their support for the HOV provisions of the Moynihan bill to their legislators in Washington, D.C.

I would like to close by encouraging you to also contact both your local elected officials and your congressional delegates and express your support for HOV facilities. It is important to show that people care about this issue. I think the implications of the proposed legislation will result in a much higher level of interest in HOV facilities in many metropolitan areas and I would suggest that the next HOV conference will be well attended. The challenge to you will be to meet the future demand for planners, designers, and operators of HOV facilities.

Having opened with a great American philosopher, I would like to end with one. Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys wrote a song that started with the phrase "catch a wave and your sitting on top of the world." I think HOV facilities are on top of a wave right now. Although I am not much of a surfer, I do know that if you don't get in the right spot on the wave, you get wiped out. I think the challenge for all of us is to get in

the right spot on the wave, hang ten, and have a good finish.

**Preview of the 1992 Conference:**  
**The Ottawa System**

***Doug McCorquodale***



***Manager of Planning and Development  
Ottawa-Carleton Regional  
Transit Commission***

Thank you Bill. My job is to try to persuade you to come to Ottawa for the next HOV Conference in 1992. Given the success of this conference I don't think that should be too difficult.

Ottawa is the capital of Canada. The easiest way to get to Ottawa from here is simply to go north on the I-5 HOV lane until you get to Vancouver and then turn right. Alternatively, you can fly from most major cities in the U.S. or if we have an early winter, you can also come by dog-sled.

I would like to tell you a little about Ottawa and our transitway system. Overall, the Ottawa transit system handles 80 million passengers per year. Fare box revenues account for approximately 60% of our

operating costs, with 20% paid for by the municipality and 20% from the Ontario Provincial Government. Our capital cost sources are the municipality, which pays 25%, and the province, which pays 75%. We do not receive any federal funding, which may be a blessing in disguise. Our ridership of 140 to 150 annual trips per capita is high for bus systems in North America.

The Ottawa transitway is a bus-only roadway. Buses on the transitway provide all day and evening service. We offer both feeder service to the transitway stations, with transfers to the trunk line buses, and direct express buses from residential neighborhoods providing peak-period, no transfer service using the transitway. The latter service is especially popular with commuters and is one of the reasons our ridership is so high. We took the outside-in approach in developing the transitway system. That is, we built the transitways in toward the central area first, leaving the high cost downtown segments for the future second phase.

In addition to the transitway, we also use arterial street HOV lane applications and a bus-only mall. The bus mall handles about 100 buses an hour with approximately 40,000-50,000 passengers during the peak periods. In the downtown area, buses operate on the "Fast Acting Lanes." These handle about 200 buses an hour each or 400 for both directions. The bus lane is the second lane from the curb, leaving the curb lane for bus bays, parking, and loading.

We use what is called an LPD, or lane protection device, on these facilities to discourage non-transit vehicles from driving directly along the curb lane. The Fast Acting Lanes have been very effective. Unfortunately, they are still vulnerable to accidents, street repairs, and other incidences. As a result, even with our best efforts we still seem to have significant delays every few months. This can tie up the whole system.

A short segment of the transitway system operates on the paved shoulder of a freeway. Approximately 100 buses an hour use this lane and we have not had any problems with enforcement or safety. When a portion of the freeway was under construction a few years ago, we also utilized a "jump the jam" system by routing buses on a special HOV lane on a parallel arterial. We did experience some enforcement problems with the use of this lane. However, we were able to solve these problems by hiring off-duty police officers on a spot basis.

The bus-only transitway has been the key component to keeping ridership up and costs down on the Ottawa system. We have been very fortunate to have available rights-of-way in many areas and strong municipal support.

The Ontario Ministry of Transport is currently examining HOV facilities in

various parts of the province, including Ottawa. The results of this effort should be available for the conference next year.



In closing, I think this has been a great conference. We will do our best to outperform it next year in Ottawa. I think the coordination of transit and land use would be a good topic to include in our discussions. I also think we can enhance the conference by providing more of an international flavor.

**Activities of the TRB HOV Systems  
Committee**

***Donald G. Capelle***



***Chairman, TRB Committee on  
HOV Systems  
Vice President and Principal Associate  
Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and  
Douglas, Inc.***

I would like to share with you the background to the formation of the TRB HOV Systems Committee and a few of the activities the Committee is currently pursuing. It was almost five years ago when a number of individuals, who had been working with planning, designing, and operating HOV facilities, got together at a Transportation Research Board meeting to discuss the need for a TRB committee to provide a focus for the variety of HOV activities that were occurring around the country. At that time, there was really no forum for sharing ideas and providing information on HOV facilities. However, there was a great deal of interest in HOV

facilities, as evident by the many HOV projects that were being implemented.

This group agreed to develop a proposal for an HOV Committee for consideration by TRB's Executive Committee. Our first proposal, submitted in 1986, was initially turned down by TRB because it was felt HOV facilities were adequately addressed within the existing committee structure. In response, the group decided to pursue activities without TRB support. One of the first activities was to organize a conference, which was held in Orange County, California in 1986. Based on the success of this conference, we again approached TRB.

In response to this second request, TRB agreed to form an HOV Systems Task Force. This Task Force initiated a number of activities, including organizing a second HOV conference in Houston in 1987. This conference was also very successful and generated additional interest and support for the activities of the Task Force. In 1988, a third HOV Facilities Conference was held, this time in Minneapolis.

Based on the success of the three conferences and other activities, the Task Force officially requested a change to full TRB committee status in the fall of 1988. This proposal was accepted by TRB, along with the proposal for TRB sponsorship of future HOV conferences. I think these were major accomplishments. Demonstrating that there was a need for an HOV committee and receiving TRB approval was a significant milestone.

In the last two-and-one-half years, the committee has been extremely active. I think we have set the standards for other TRB committees to follow. We have developed a five year strategic plan, which identifies the specific goals we want to accomplish and the activities we are

pursuing. It is worth noting that TRB is now requesting other committees to complete five year strategic plans. The plan developed by the HOV Systems Committee is being used as a model. Even TRB is now developing a five year strategic plan.

Other accomplishments of the committee include the production of a quarterly newsletter, the HOV video you saw earlier in the conference, the development of an HOV glossary of terms, and continuing to hold HOV conferences. The credit for the success of all these activities really goes to the members of the HOV Systems Committee. I don't think I have ever been involved with a more enthusiastic and hard working group of people. They do not need any direction; rather I often feel like I am running to keep up with them.

It is a very invigorating and exciting time right now in the transportation field. As Peter mentioned earlier, I think one challenge we have is to meet the demands that are being generated around the country for expertise in the areas of planning, design, operation, and enforcement of HOV facilities.

This is the largest conference we have ever had, with some 310 people registered. I think this again shows the interest that exists in HOV facilities around the country and around the world. It has also generated a wealth of ideas and issues that need to be addressed. These include arterial street HOV applications, system-wide HOV plans, and the use of a variety of advanced technologies to better manage HOV facilities.

I don't envy the planners of the 1992 HOV Conference in Ottawa, as they have some high standards to live up to. However, I am sure they will be able to meet this challenge and I hope many of you

will be able to attend the conference next year.

It takes a good deal of time and effort to plan these conferences. I think we have been very fortunate that the conference committee chairs have done outstanding jobs in organizing interesting, challenging, and well run conferences. I think we have been remiss in the past in not recognizing the efforts of these individuals. At this time I would like to make up for these oversights. I would like to take this opportunity to present plaques to Paul Bay, Katie Turnbull, and Ron Kirby for their work as chairs of previous conferences. I would also like to recognize Bill Roach for the outstanding job he has done as chair of this conference.

## Closing Comments

*William T. Roach  
Seattle Metro  
1991 Conference Chair*

In closing, I would again like to recognize the other people who deserve a great deal of credit for the success of this conference. Les Jacobson was responsible for developing the technical program and other members of the local planning group helped out with numerous parts of the conference. I would like to thank Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas for sponsoring the Sunday night reception and Boeing Corporation for providing the transportation to and from the reception. Also, HDR Engineering, ICF Kaiser, and the Sverdrup Corporation all contributed resources to help make this conference a success. Finally, I would like to recognize two people on my staff, Eileen Kadesh and Carol Thompson, who have been instrumental in helping with a variety of activities. Thank you all very much and I look forward to the conference next year in Ottawa.