

Closing Session

John A. Bonsall, Ottawa-Carleton Regional Transit Commission — presiding

TRB HOV Systems Committee Activities

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I would like to close the conference by covering a few highlights from the last three days. I also want to provide an overview of the activities of the TRB HOV Systems Committee over the past year. The committee continues to be one of the more active TRB committees and it continues to be a challenge to respond to the enthusiasm of the committee members.

I have been extremely impressed with the conference and with Ottawa. We all have learned a great deal from the information and exchange of ideas at the different sessions and from seeing the Ottawa Transitway system in operation. The National Conferences on HOV Systems continue to attract a diverse group of people—this year we have people from as far away as Saudi Arabia, Madrid, and Taiwan, and we are looking forward to attracting an even more diverse group at our next conference now being planned for Los Angeles in the spring of 1994.

Viewing the Ottawa Transitway system reinforced the important role buses play in HOV projects. This underscores the need to continue to focus on the most effective way to move people in our urban areas. Buses, vanpools, and carpools all contribute to improving mobility and reducing congestion levels in major urban travel corridors.

We have also heard about the potential of increased funding for HOV facilities through the various sections of

the ISTEA and other state and local programs. Although it appears that additional funding may be available in the future, transportation professionals need to ensure that these funds are wisely allocated. HOV facilities may not be appropriate in all corridors or in all areas. HOV facilities should continue to be planned, designed, and operated to address specific problems.

Recent experience further indicates the need to expand education and training programs related to HOV facilities. These programs should focus not only on the technical needs of transportation professionals, but also providing relevant information to policy makers. All groups will benefit from an enhanced understanding of the benefits of HOV facilities.

The workshop sessions on bus services, supporting facilities and programs, TDM strategies, and other elements continued to stress that HOV facilities by themselves may not be totally successful. HOV projects must be viewed as one part of a comprehensive package that includes a full range of components. HOV lanes provide the critical line-haul link, but other facilities, services, and programs are needed to help ensure success.

The workshop sessions also stressed the need for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of HOV projects. Information on the status and effectiveness of the different projects is critical for both local and national policy makers. Other important topics discussed at the conference included the air quality impacts of HOV facilities, arterial street HOV projects, and the use of advanced technologies. More research and studies are needed in many of these areas as well, and the committee is currently working on the development of a comprehensive HOV research program.

We have all benefitted from this exchange of information and I hope that you will take the information presented here and share it with others back home. This will help to expand the understanding of the issues associated with HOV facilities.

I would now like to highlight a few of the activities the TRB HOV Systems Committee has undertaken over the past year. The committee continues to be one of the more active TRB committees. Committee membership is limited by TRB to just 25 individuals, but we have more than 35 friends of the committee who contribute significantly to the committee's activities. There is no limit on the number of friends of the committee we can have, so I would encourage any of you who might be interested to sign up as a friend and help foster the development of the committee activities.

The HOV Systems Committee was the first TRB committee to develop a strategic plan, and this year we completed an update of the plan. This plan outlines the activities and objectives of the committee and provides a schedule as to how we plan to meet those objectives.

The committee has also focused a lot of effort on providing information on HOV facilities and helping to coordinate the sharing of information between diverse groups. Conferences such as this represent one of the major activities of the committee. Another activity has been the publication of a quarterly newsletter on HOV projects around the world. This has been developed under the leadership of Tim Lomax.

The HOV Systems Committee is organized into four basic subcommittees. The Information Development and Dissemination Subcommittee is responsible for organizing the international conferences, the sessions at the TRB Annual Meetings, and developing informational material on HOV projects. This group has been very active under the leadership of Katie Turnbull.

The Research, Planning, Design, and Operations Subcommittee is chaired by Adolf May. This subcommittee is responsible for identifying research needs and developing problem statements for consideration by different funding sources. This subcommittee has been very active and you will be hearing more about their recent efforts in upcoming publications.

Bo Strickland is Chairman of the Marketing/Outreach Subcommittee. This group has been exploring the development of a marketing training brochure for use in areas implementing HOV projects. This subcommittee is also exploring potential ways to enhance international outreach activities and to provide information to policy makers who make decisions on the implementation of HOV facilities.

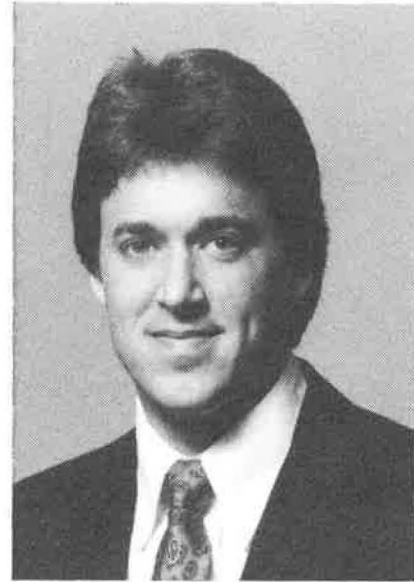
Finally the Strategic Planning Subcommittee is chaired by Chuck Fuhs. As I mentioned earlier, this subcommittee has just completed an update of the committee's Strategic Plan. It is also responsible for coordinating the committee's activities with those of other professional organizations.

In closing, I would like to thank John Bonsall who served as Chairman of the conference. John and his staff did an excellent job in organizing all the tours and activities during the conference, and in recognition of his hard work, I would like to present John with a plaque from the TRB HOV Systems Committee thanking him for his assistance. Katie Turnbull also did a great job as Chairperson of the Technical Program Committee and her efforts deserve notice. Rich Cunard, Angela Arrington, Reggie Gillum, and Catha Stewart from TRB have also done an outstanding job in arranging the hotel and conference accommodations.

HOV Facility Research Topics

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The Research, Planning, Design, and Operations Subcommittee met on Monday evening to discuss research needs related to HOV facilities. It was a very lively meeting and a number of good research topics were identified. The suggested topics have been grouped into three categories: planning and design, operations and enforcement, and arterial street HOV facilities. A number of specific topics were identified within each of those broad categories.

Within the planning and design category, topics suggested included connecting HOV facilities and HOV system planning, implementing HOV lanes in rail corridors, and HOV user trip purposes. Suggested research topics in the operations and enforcement category included examining the potential use of advanced technologies to assist with HOV enforcement, examining the cost-effectiveness of 24-hour versus peak-period HOV operation, analyzing time-series data, and examining lower-technology approaches to enforcement. Topics included in the arterial street HOV category included a state-of-the-art review of current experiences and projects, developing evaluation criteria, and identifying guidelines for arterial street HOV facilities.

Members of the subcommittee and others will be developing problem statements for each of these topics. The subcommittee will also identify possible funding sources for each of the research problem statements. The problem statements will be reviewed by the full HOV Systems Committee in January. Based on this review, the topics will be finalized and submitted to the different funding sources through the appropriate channels.