



Transit Research Update

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SPECIAL

HUD and DOT Announce Interagency Partnership to Promote Sustainable Communities

WASHINGTON - March 18, 2009. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Secretary Ray LaHood, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan announced a new partnership to help American families gain better access to affordable housing, more transportation options, and lower transportation costs. The average working American family spends nearly 60 percent of its budget on housing and transportation costs, making these two areas the largest expenses for American families. Donovan and LaHood want to seek ways to cut these costs by focusing their efforts on creating affordable, sustainable communities. More Online [<http://www.hud.gov/news/release.cfm?content=pr09-023.cfm>]

The Secretaries discussed their plans for sustainable communities on March 18 at a U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing hearing titled, "Livable Communities, Transit Oriented Development, and incorporating Green Building Practices into Federal Housing and Transportation." To read the full text of Secretary Donovan's testimony, visit [HUD's website](#).

The Transit Wire Website

Transportation Research Board's (TRB) Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) has developed a new website designed to highlight state-of-the-art technologies used in the public transportation industry. The goal of the new website is to present timely information useful to transit properties, government agencies, researchers, consultants, and vendors. The Transit Cooperative Research Program is sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and administered by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies. More Online [<http://www.thetransitwire.com>]

U.S. DOT Launches Web-Based Clearinghouse of Transportation and Climate Change Resources

The U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) has launched a new, web-based clearinghouse of information on transportation and climate change. The Transportation and Climate Change Clearinghouse is designed as a one-stop source of information on transportation and climate change issues. The site provides an introduction to climate change and transportation and related information on greenhouse gas inventories and forecasts, methodologies for analyzing greenhouse gases from transportation, climate change and adaptation, and federal, state and local actions on transportation and climate change. The site also includes a calendar of events and will soon be enhanced to provide an opportunity for users to post and respond to discussions and receive updates by email. Online [<http://climate.dot.gov>].

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Develop and Maintain Transit Standards

Project DC-26-7257-02

FY 2009 Funding \$190,000 Schedule: April 2008 - September 2009

Performer: American Public Transportation Association (APTA)

1666 K Street NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20006

Contact: Jeffrey Hiott Phone: 202-496-4881 Email: JHiott@apta.com

FTA Project Monitor: Patrick M. Centolanzi Fax: 202-366-3765

Email: [Patrick.Centolanzi@dot.gov]

Description. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is providing assistance to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in developing, implementing, and maintaining transit standards, some of which will enable communities across the country to buy safer, more accessible buses and rail cars at a better price. The funds provided will support activities by APTA and the U.S. public transportation industry to develop important standards that will improve the efficiency, safety, productivity, accessibility, and quality of American transit systems.

Since 2006, FTA has provided more than \$3 million for public transit standards development. Some of the specific standards to be developed for rail include emergency vehicle features and transit roadway worker protection. For buses, APTA will develop standards for maintenance facility design, in-plant inspections, and bus rapid transit operating practices and design guidelines. Standards for bus and rail vehicle procurement, accessibility, urban design, information technology, and multimodal performance will also be developed. The Federal Government, transit agencies, and professional and trade associations have recognized that transit standards are an important management tool to minimize capital and operating costs, promote interoperability, increase transit system safety and performance, and improve customer convenience, as well as promote international trade opportunities for American transit products and services. Online [\[http://rip.trb.org\]](http://rip.trb.org)

KEYWORDS: Transit buses, Transit operating agencies, Transit safety, Rail transit, Commuter cars, Cost allocation, Research projects

Missouri Transportation Institute

Project FTA-MO-26-7010

Funding: \$1,667, 837.00 Schedule: August 2008 – September 2009

Performer: Missouri Transportation Institute,

300 W 12th Street 202 University Center, Rolla, Missouri 65409

Contact: Angela Rolufs Phone: 573-341-4234 Fax: 573-341-4126

FTA Project Monitor: Sean Ricketson, TRI Fax: 202.366.3765

Email: [Sean.Ricketson@dot.gov]

Description. The objective of this project is to enable the Missouri Transportation Institute to engage in research on alternative sources of energy to power transit vehicles. The research will include (1) implementation of an electric vehicle (EV) and plug-in electric vehicle (PEV) demonstration project in partnership with the City of Kansas City

and KokamAmerica, Inc., and (2) expansion of the on-going research project that integrates hydrogen-powered shuttle buses into a rural transportation commuter service between the City of Rolla, Missouri and the Fort Leonard Wood military installation.
Keywords: Alternative Energy Source, Electric Drive Vehicle, Plug-in Electric Vehicle, Hydrogen-Powered Shuttle Buses, Rural Commuter Service
<http://www.thetransitwire.com/>

Travel Management Coordination Center

Project SC-26-7003-00

FY 2009 Funding \$680,000 Schedule: January 2009 - September 2010

Performer: Lower Savannah Council of Governments

PO Box 850, Aiken, South Carolina 29802

Contact: Lynda Bassham Phone:803-649-7981 Email:

FTA Project Monitor: Aletha D. Goodine TRI Fax: 202-366-3765

Email: [Aletha.Goodinei@dot.gov]

Description. The objective of this cooperative agreement is to enable the Lower Savannah Council of Government (LSCOG) to develop a replicable and scalable Travel Management Coordination Center (TMCC) as part of the United We Ride (UWR) and Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) Initiative—Phase 2. The expected results from this phase of the Initiative is to have three replicable and scalable TMCCs that will demonstrate enhanced human service transportation across a variety of operational environments and scenarios. The MSAA Initiative aims to improve transportation services and simplify access to employment, healthcare, education, and other community activities by means of advanced ITS technologies. LSCOG is a planning and development agency serving a six-county region.

KEYWORDS: *Transportation Management Coordination Center, United We Ride, Mobility Services for All Americans Initiative, Transportation Disadvantaged, Human Service Transportation, Intelligent Transportation Systems Technologies*

Wayside Charging and Hydrogen Hybrid Bus

www.fta.dot.gov/research

Project FTA-TN-26-7034

Funding \$2,203,500 Schedule: January 2009 – December 2011

Performer: University of Tennessee, Chattanooga

615 McCallie Avenue, Department 4905

Chattanooga, TN 37403

Contact: Ronald. J. Bailey Phone: 423-425-5536 *Email: Ronald-Bailey@utc.edu*

FTA Project Monitor: Patrick M. Centolanzi Fax: 202-366-3765

Email: [Patrick.Centolanzi@dot.gov]

Description. This project will: (1) Deploy a Wayside Inductive Power Transfer (IPT) Charging System at the University of Kansas; (2) Demonstrate Hydrogen-Powered, Battery-Centric, hybrid Shuttle Bus in Partnership with CARTA, UTK and KAT; (3) Assist with Capital Equipment for Emory University Electric Vehicle Program; and (4) Provide Support for a Dedicated Hybrid Transit Vehicle Technician to Ensure Sustainability of the Sevierville Hybrid Electric Vehicle Program.

KEYWORDS: Hybrid Vehicles, Buses, Hybrid Shuttle Bus, Hydrogen Fuels, Electric vehicles, Wayside electrical distribution, Research projects

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

US Stimulus Projects to Feature New Emblem

Link to story in the Washington Business Journal:

<http://washington.bizjournals.com/washington/stories/2009/03/02/daily42.html>

Middle Class Task Force Holds Town Hall Meeting on the Recovery Act

March 19, 2009. In St. Cloud, Minnesota, the Middle Class Task Force is holding a town hall meeting, titled "Road to Recovery: Building a Strong Middle Class through the Recovery Act." The town hall discussion will focus on ways implementation of the Recovery Act will help the middle class. The Task Force is holding its meeting at the New Flyer of America Bus Company in St. Cloud, Minnesota. More Online

[\[http://www.dot.gov/affairs/MiddleClass.htm\]](http://www.dot.gov/affairs/MiddleClass.htm)

Recovery.gov Linked to Other Stimulus Tracking Sites

Feb 27, 2009. The White House's *Recovery.gov Website* for tracking the anticipated \$787 billion outflow of economic stimulus law spending is getting more connected: It has begun adding links to federal agency and state Websites that are monitoring their own share of spending under the law. As of today, *Recovery.gov* is providing links to 10 state Websites and 19 federal agency Websites. More states and agencies are expected to participate soon. More Online [\[http://fcw.com/articles/2009/02/27/recovery.gov-posts-state-links.aspx?s=fcwdaily_020309\]](http://fcw.com/articles/2009/02/27/recovery.gov-posts-state-links.aspx?s=fcwdaily_020309)

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Integrating U.S. Climate, Energy, and Transportation Policies: Proceedings of Three Workshops

The RAND Corporation has released its conference proceedings from three workshops that examined the intersection between climate change mitigation policy and the transportation and energy sectors. The conference proceedings explore key themes and perspectives from climate change, energy, and transportation officials. More Online

[\[http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/2009/RAND_CF256.pdf\]](http://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/2009/RAND_CF256.pdf)

Planners Energy and Climate Change Database

The American Planning Association has launched a new database of energy and climate change activities in planning. You can search the database by a variety of criteria such as state, topic, planning tool, timeframe, or geographic scale. This database provides examples of communities that have taken steps to integrate energy and climate change issues into planning, states that have addressed climate change issues in plans or policies, and other relevant documents to help planners understand and address energy and climate change. Database website is available at [\[www.planning.org/research/energy/database\]](http://www.planning.org/research/energy/database).

Summit on America's Climate Choices, March 30-31 in Washington, D.C.

Congress has tasked the National Academies with setting the stage for national action on climate change. In response, the Academies have launched [America's Climate Choices](#), a suite of activities that will provide policy advice, based on science, to guide the nation's response to climate change. The [Summit on America's Climate Choices](#), to be held March 30-31, 2009 in Washington, D.C., provides an opportunity for study participants to interact with major thought leaders and key constituencies to frame the questions and issues that the study will address. More [<http://americasclimatechoices.org/index.shtml>]

FROM THE TRI RESEARCH CORNER



Contact [Sean.Ricketson@dot.gov]

35' Hybrid & Battery-Electric Transit Bus Display at US DOT, Friday, April 3

A hybrid fuel cell/battery electric bus, built under FTA's National Fuel Cell Bus Program will be on display at the US DOT 1200 New Jersey Ave Entrance, Friday, April 3, 9:30 a.m. – 10:50 am. It is a purpose-built bus, not a retrofit. Pictures of the bus are on the manufacturer's website, [<http://www.proterraonline.com/transit.asp>]. The bus version that arrives here at FTA will have the FTA mark on it, among other sponsors/partners, as well as the following profile:

- 35 ft Hydrogen Fuel Cell Hybrid Bus
- Developed under FTA's National Fuel Cell Bus Program
- Totally new design, low floor composite construction
- Can be configured for battery-electric, hydrogen fuel cell or diesel-electric power
- Uses new fast charge Lithium-Titanate batteries
- Braking system also recharges the batteries (regenerative braking)
- Built with 50% local match by Proterra, Inc.,
<http://www.proterraonline.com/transit.asp>

The bus will undergo complete systems testing this spring and will be delivered to Columbia, SC this summer for driver and maintenance training. A ten month demonstration will start in Columbia, October 2009. The project is being evaluated by the National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL). Contact [Sean.Ricketson@dot.gov]

FTA Conference with UTCs on Transit Workforce Planning and Developing a Safety Culture

Lisa Colbert, FTA Office of Technology, planned and organized a one-day working conference for the University Transportation Centers and the public transportation industry. The purpose of the conference was to identify significant transit research issues and to lay out tasks and milestones for both topics. Ms. Colbert invited ideas on the two topics from the transit and university communities. The conference took place on March 11, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Roslyn in Arlington, VA. Contact [Lisa.Colbert@dot.gov]

FTA-NHTSA Discussion on Fuel Cell Research

At the suggestion of Acting Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs Susan McDermott, NHTSA will meet with FTA representatives on April 8 to discuss mutual areas of interest in fuel cell research. The USDOT International Policy Council met in the Fletcher Room on Friday, March 13. During that meeting, NHTSA announced that they were working on fuel cell research and it was suggested that since FTA was already working in that area, NHTSA should get with FTA to review each others activities. It is envisioned that the April 8 meeting between NHTSA and FTA will be the first of a continuing dialogue on fuel cell research. Contact [Ronald.Boenau@dot.gov]

International Policy Council Meeting

The International Policy Council (IPC) will meet in the Fletcher Room on Friday, April 10. This periodic meeting of the IPC is convened by Susan McDermott, Acting Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs, and provides an opportunity for OST to review the Secretary's international activities and to hear of the various international activities of the modal administrations with a goal of developing awareness and for appropriate coordination. Contact [Ronald.Boenau@dot.gov]

Professor Leon Dash from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Michael Winter has been contacted by the Professor of Journalism Leon Dash from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, College of Media, in regards to a documentary the professor is creating. Professor Dash's film will include the founding of a program at the University in 1948 that supports students with disabilities. The documentary will also feature the founder of the program, Mr. Timothy Nugent.

Professor Dash has requested to interview Mr. Winter about the history of transportation issues for persons with disabilities and any ongoing issues. Professor Dash is hoping the completed documentary will be aired on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Contact [Julia.Eason@dot.gov]

FEDERAL PUBLICATIONS

A Report on Hydrogen Bus Demonstrations Worldwide, 2002-2007

In March 2009, the Federal Transit Administration released a Report on Hydrogen Bus Demonstrations Worldwide 2002 – 2007. Since 2002, hydrogen-powered buses have been deployed in transit fleets of more than 20 cities around the world. These demonstrations represent a major investment in moving fuel cell and hydrogen transit technologies toward commercialization. This report summarizes interviews with demonstration participants in North America, Europe, Japan, China and Australia. The report examines the performance and reliability of bus and refueling technologies, describes experiences in the design and permitting of maintenance facilities, and offers recommendations to help move hydrogen buses toward mainstream viability. Transit agencies and other demonstration participants generally had positive experiences with hydrogen-powered buses and expressed a strong desire to continue advancing the technology. This report will be of interest to transit agencies, bus and drivetrain manufacturers, policymakers, and others interested in low and zero-emission mobility

options. Available Online under “Sustainable Transit “
[http://www.fta.dot.gov/assistance/research/research_8850.html]

Best Practices in Transit Service Planning

The National Center for Transit Research at the University of South Florida has released a report that identifies existing best practices in transit service planning, and develops a generic model approach that could be adapted and used by public transit agencies for fixed-route bus transit service planning. This research effort provides a summary of best practices and provides a “template” process tool that can be adapted and customized for use by all sizes public of transit agencies.

The provision of cost efficient and effective bus transit service is the basic premise upon which transit service is developed and the goal that all public transportations agencies strive to achieve. To attain this goal, public transit agencies must design their services around clear and defined principles, as well as a process to monitor the results achieved and to respond accordingly. This requires service design standards, an effective performance measurement system, and a systematic and continuous service evaluation methodology. Read Online [<http://www.nctr.usf.edu/pdf/77720.pdf>]. *Note:* In September 1999, the [National Center for Transit Research \(NCTR\)](#) was approved for funding by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Research and Special Programs Administration.

Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program: A Status Report 2009

TRB's *Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program (CTBSSP) Research Results Digest 7: A Status Report* describes the progress and status of the Commercial Truck and Bus Safety Synthesis Program (CTBSSP). CTBSSP is a cooperative research program sponsored by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and administered by the Transportation Research Board. The program was authorized in late 2001 and began in 2002 in support of the FMCSA's safety research programs. Online [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/ctbssp/ctbssp_rrd_7.pdf]

Cost Estimating and Assessment Guide

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has released a guide designed to help federal, state, and local government agencies develop more reliable cost estimates for government projects of all sizes. According to a GAO press release, the guide is intended to help agencies produce well-documented, comprehensive, accurate, and credible estimates. Online [<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d093sp.pdf>]

Local and Regional Funding Mechanisms for Public Transportation, TCRP Report 129

TCRP Report 129 is intended for use by local officials as a basic reference in examining potential local and regional funding sources, their characteristics, their advantages and disadvantages, and the considerations that go into efforts to enact new sources of local or regional transit funding. *TCRP Report 129* contains general descriptive information about funding sources in five major categories: (1) traditional tax- and fee-based sources; (2) common business, activity, and related taxes and fees; (3) revenue streams from projects; (4) new “user” or “market-based” sources; and (5) financing mechanisms. *TCRP*

Report 129 identifies transit systems that are currently using funding sources in the first two categories and provides references to more detailed literature and research efforts on the use of funding sources in the last three categories. A user manual for the database is also available online. Note: The database is a very large file and may take some time to download. [\[More\]](#)

FHWA's Successes in Stewardship" March Newsletter

The March 2009 issue's feature story is: "*Balancing Infrastructure Improvements with Historic Preservation: The Front Street Rehabilitation Project.*" Send your feed back on the Environmental Review Toolkit website to the FHWA. Please share your thoughts by taking a brief survey located on the FHWA Environmental Review Toolkit Homepage (<http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/index.asp>). It is designed to tell FHWA how users, use the Environmental Review Toolkit, and how the website could be improved. More Online [\[http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/newsletters/mar09nl.asp\]](http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/newsletters/mar09nl.asp)

Major Legal Issues for Highway Public-Private Partnerships

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Legal Research Digest 51: Major Legal Issues for Highway Public-Private Partnerships explores legal issues that are likely to arise in the implementation of public-private partnerships in the U.S. highway sector. Read Online [\[http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_browse.asp?id=9\]](http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_browse.asp?id=9)

Rail Magazine: Current Issue

RAIL Magazine, Connecting Communities by Moving People, is a quarterly publication produced by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). It chronicles the resurgence and revitalization of the passenger rail in all its forms - intercity, commuter, subways and metros, light rail, streetcars and trolleys, and more - across North America. The focus is on how communities of all sizes build innovative, cost-efficient and successful rail operations to better mobilize people. The stories of these vital rail systems are told not only in the kind of equipment they operate or the stations that they build, but the equally important elements of community partnerships, intermodalism, land-use and development, investment strategies, and other aspects that are essential to vital passenger rail networks. The latest issue 21 of Rail Magazine is Online [\[http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=159&z=36\]](http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=159&z=36)

Tool for Planning and Monitoring Railroad Traffic Supports Visualization of Railroad Operations

The U.S. Federal Railroad Administration has released a *Research Results* report that explores the potential of the railroad traffic planner visualization tool as a means to help improve safety and productivity in the railroad industry. The *Railroad Traffic Planner* application is a visualization tool with stringline diagrams that show train positions over time. It provides near real-time traffic position information when associated global positioning system (GPS) tracking devices have been installed. Online [\[http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/Research/rr0902.pdf\]](http://www.fra.dot.gov/downloads/Research/rr0902.pdf)

TRB Conference Proceedings 42, Innovations in Travel Demand Modeling, Volume 2: Papers

Volume 2: Papers includes the full papers that were presented at a May 21-23, 2006, conference in Austin, Texas. The conference was sponsored by TRB, FHWA, FTA, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, and others. The papers examined advances in travel demand modeling, explored the opportunities and the challenges associated with the implementation of advanced travel models, and reviewed the skills and training necessary to apply new modeling techniques. *Volume 1: Session Summaries* is also available online. Online [http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=9872].

Urban Partnership Agreements: Congestion Relief Initiative Holds Promise; Some Improvements Needed in Selection Process, GAO-09-154

The Government Accountability Office reported on the *Department of Transportation's Urban Partnership Agreements*, namely, its support for integrated approaches to help reduce congestion. As part of a broad congestion relief initiative, the Department of Transportation awarded about \$848 million from 10 grant programs to five cities (Miami, Minneapolis, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle) in 2007 as part of the Urban Partnership Agreements (UPA) initiative. The UPA initiative is intended to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of comprehensive, integrated, and innovative approaches to relieving congestion, including the use of tolling (congestion pricing), transit, technology, and telecommuting (4Ts). Congestion pricing involves charging drivers a fee that varies with the density of traffic.

This GAO-09-154 report addresses congressional interest in (1) how well the department communicated UPA selection criteria, (2) whether it had discretion to allocate grant funds to UPA recipients and consider congestion pricing as a priority selection factor, and (3) how it is ensuring that UPA award conditions are met and results are assessed. GAO reviewed departmental documents, statutes and case law, and interviewed department officials and UPA applicants. Online [<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d09154high.pdf>]

INTERNATIONAL

Lessons Learned From International Experience in Congestion Pricing

August 2008. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. To further understanding of international pricing, "Lessons Learned from International Experience in Congestion Pricing" provides a summary of selected operational areawide congestion pricing projects outside of the U.S. The report draws lessons from a sample of projects with the most relevant experience, focusing on three comprehensive area wide projects—Singapore, London and Stockholm. Each received in depth attention during planning, design, implementation and operational phases and have been monitored and evaluated carefully. These projects should be of particular interest now that several U.S. cities are beginning to examine similar area wide pricing strategies to address congestion, environmental, energy and funding problems in heavily congested downtown areas. Read Online [<http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop08047/foreword.htm>]

ERTICO-ITS Europe Talks to Anne Jensen

Date: 27 March 2009. Anne Jensen MEP is the Parliament's reporter on the ITS Action Plan and the accompanying Directive. She talks to ERTICO about the challenges of ITS deployment and the solutions proposed in her report on the ITS Action Plan.

Question posed --What is the added value of an ITS Action Plan? Read Online

[http://www.ertico.com/en/news_and_events/ertico_newsroom/ertico-its_europe_talks_to_anne_jensen]

Public Transportation's Role in Addressing Global Climate Change: TCRP Research Results Digest 89

Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Research Results Digest 89 provides an overview of an International Transit Studies Program mission that investigated public transportation's role in addressing global climate change in several cities in Ireland, Germany, Italy, and Spain. This work was sponsored by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and conducted in the Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP), which is administered by the Transportation Research Board (TRB). Read Online [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_rrd_89.pdf]

U.S. and International Approaches to Performance Measurement for Transportation Systems: Conference Proceedings 44

A Transportation Research Board (TRB) conference on U.S. and international approaches to performance measurement for transportation systems was conducted in September 2007 at the Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center of the National Academies in Irvine, California. It was sponsored by TRB, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. The conference was designed to explore the opportunities for and experiences in using performance measurement as a strategic tool to better communicate goals, objectives, and results to a wide range of stakeholder groups. Conference Proceedings 44 documents full copies of the papers presented during the 5 plenary sessions and the 5 Breakout Sessions, along with the 3 resource papers.

This September 2007 conference attracted 180 participants from Canada, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States and featured 70 transportation specialists offering real-world expertise—from the application of performance metrics to case studies drawn from six countries. This range of experience provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of the performance measurement techniques and approaches being applied to transportation systems in the United States and abroad. Throughout the program, presentations highlighted cases in which performance measures have proved useful in guiding resource allocation decisions, improving day-to-day operations, establishing and demonstrating agency competency and accountability and more. Online [http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=9952]

RESEARCH NEWS & RESOURCES

APTA launches public transit advocacy campaign

The [American Public Transportation Association \(APTA\)](#) recently announced a new advocacy campaign aimed at building congressional support for increased federal investment in public transportation. SAFETEA-LU, the current surface transportation bill, is set to expire on Sept. 30. Entitled "*Public Transportation Takes Us There,*" the

campaign includes advertising, public relations and grassroots outreach efforts. The main goal: to ensure Congress recognizes the significant role public transportation plays in finding solutions to any of today's challenges, such as creating jobs, improving the environment, becoming energy independent and improving quality of life. To go along with the campaign, APTA launched a new Website, www.publictransportation.org, which features newspaper articles about transit, as well as transit facts and figures, videos, reports and links to transit agencies throughout the country.

California DOT's New Monitoring Systems to Speed Traffic Flow

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has started installing a system of 204 new sensors on I-215, I-15, I-10 and Highway 91, which state and county transportation officials say will help speed traffic flow and avert jams. Electricity generated by solar panels will power computers on series of poles, linked to magnetometers embedded in all lanes and a system of radar sensors installed along the freeway shoulders. Both units will collect information on car and truck speeds and size, as well as traffic congestion. Link to story in *Traffic Technology Today*:

[\[http://www.trafficechnologytoday.com/news.php?NewsID=11441\]](http://www.trafficechnologytoday.com/news.php?NewsID=11441)

Fourth Bus Rapid Transit Conference

TRB is cosponsoring the *Fourth Bus Rapid Transit Conference* on May 4-6, 2009, in Seattle, Washington. The program is designed to examine how specific bus rapid transit (BRT) projects are providing transit solutions to their communities, explore the development of BRT recommended practices, highlight ways to make BRT as accessible as possible, and more. Five special technical tours include the Community Transit BRT Line, South Base Operations and Vehicle Maintenance Facility, Downtown Seattle Transit Tunnel, Transit Communications and Control Center, and the ACCESS Control Center. BRT vehicles and equipment will also be on display. The conference is coordinated with the APTA Bus and Paratransit Conference, May 1-6, 2009. Online

[\[http://www.trb.org/conferences/2009/brt/\]](http://www.trb.org/conferences/2009/brt/)

Geospatial One-Stop Update: More Filters, Formats and Figures

The United States Geological Survey announced an update to Geospatial One-Stop (GOS)—the federal government portal for geographic data, services and more. Executive Editor Adena Schutzberg puts the updated features through their paces and is especially pleased to find easy access to filtering of data types and tools to indicate the status of online map services. Online

[\[http://www.directionsmag.com/article.php?article_id=3069&trv=1\]](http://www.directionsmag.com/article.php?article_id=3069&trv=1)

Hampton Roads Transit Plans Marketing Blitz as Light Rail Takes Shape

VIRGINIA - As construction of The Tide extends into downtown, Hampton Roads Transit's light-rail public outreach campaign will move in as well. Over the next few weeks, downtowners will start seeing "The Tide is Rising" displays containing light-rail informational brochures inside shops and businesses. A video simulation of the train moving through Norfolk will run on televisions in the federal building, on the big screen before Tides baseball games and inside some retail stores. HRT and Norfolk have partnered to build a \$288 million, 7.4-mile light-rail line from the city line at Newtown Road, past Norfolk State University and Harbor Park, through downtown to the medical

center on Brambleton Avenue. Online

[<http://www.masstransitmag.com/publication/article.jsp?siteSection=3&id=8244>]

MIT Takes on Global Transportation Challenge

March 4, 2009. *New initiative to pioneer 21st century solutions via greater coordination and interdisciplinary collaboration.* The Massachusetts Institute of Technology today launched [Transportation@MIT](#), a coordinated effort to address one of civilization's most pressing challenges: the environmental impact of the world's ever-increasing demand for transportation. Building on MIT's rich tradition of engineering research and interdisciplinary collaboration, the new initiative will knit together the wide-ranging, robust research already under way at the Institute and create new opportunities for education and innovation. Online [<http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2009/transportation-0304.html>]

National Resource Center for Human Service Coordination Website

Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) has the people, resources and partnerships that can help improve the linkages between public transportation and human services in one's state or community. *CTAA's National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination (NRC)* provides technical assistance to improve transportation services and coordination. Through the Ambassadors, staff, and network of technical assistance centers, CTAA provides information and advice about public transportation and coordination of transit and medical care, employment, education and services for senior citizens and people with disabilities. Often NRC can provide a roadmap of what assistance and resources are available to help out your community or program. The National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination is operated by the Community Transportation Association under a cooperative agreement with the Federal Transit Administration. Online [<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=8&z=40>]

New University Transit Center and Regional Traveler Information at University of Massachusetts Amherst

The new transit and traveler information center at University of Massachusetts (UMass) Amherst is now complete. The new facility will help the driver in Western Massachusetts know what road conditions are like before they head out. Eleven (11) cameras are linked to the new 5 million dollar *University Transit Center and Regional Traveler Information center* at UMass Amherst. The center provides a place to manage the university's bus system and provides the public with regional traffic reports. Congressman John Oliver is proud of the new facility. He helped secure a nearly 4 million dollar grant for the project. Oliver said, "It's part of the intent through the RTIC, the regional transportation information center that's co-located here on the campus, so that should provide Transportation information in real time all over the Western part of the state."

Visit [<http://MassTraveler.com>] and

[<http://www.cbs3springfield.com/news/local/40987437.html>]

Obama Wants Contracting Overhaul: President Calls for Limiting Outsourcing and Restricting Contract Types

Mar 06, 2009. The way government agencies acquire the goods and services needed to carry out their responsibilities will take an abrupt 180-degree turn if President Barack Obama gets his way. Obama made it clear last week that he wants to abandon the previous administration's drive to push more federal work into the private sector and, at the same time, toughen on contracts that he considers prone to exploitation by companies and wasteful to agencies. More Online

[\[http://fcw.com/articles/2009/03/09/obama-wants-contracting-overhaul.aspx?s=fcwdaily_100309\]](http://fcw.com/articles/2009/03/09/obama-wants-contracting-overhaul.aspx?s=fcwdaily_100309)

Portland Metro Unveils an Online Planning Tool

Build-a-system tool is designed to involve public in transit corridor development.

Point and click is what Metro wants the public to do with its online build-a-system tool, which allows visitors to step into a planner's shoes. As part of the public input process for Metro's *High Capacity Transit System Plan*, the online tool is intended to help the public better understand the region's 15 transit corridors that the agency is studying. Link to story in the *Daily Journal of Commerce*:

[\[http://www.djcoregon.com/articleDetail.htm/2009/03/30/Metro-unveils-an-online-planning-tool-Buildasystem-tool-is-designed-to-involve-public-in-transit-cor\]](http://www.djcoregon.com/articleDetail.htm/2009/03/30/Metro-unveils-an-online-planning-tool-Buildasystem-tool-is-designed-to-involve-public-in-transit-cor)

San Francisco's Transbay High-Speed Rail Station Hits a Snag

CALIFORNIA - San Francisco's planned [high-speed](#) rail station in the new Transbay Terminal would be obsolete within two decades, state transportation officials warn, forcing them to rethink the design. The proposed station would not be large enough to accommodate half the passengers expected to be using the system by 2030. In addition, the current scheme poses engineering challenges for a Caltrain extension to the Transbay Terminal downtown, officials said. More Online

[\[http://www.masstransitmag.com/publication/article.jsp?siteSection=3&id=8076\]](http://www.masstransitmag.com/publication/article.jsp?siteSection=3&id=8076)

South Florida's Tri-Rail Starts 'Fund or Fail' Campaign

The [South Florida Regional Transportation Authority](#) (SFRTA) is mounting a major grassroots effort to bring the financial plight of the Tri-Rail commuter rail service to the attention of the Governor and the State Senators and Representatives. The "Fund or Fail" campaign is being organized to inform the public of the impact the impending revenue shortfalls will have on service and to encourage them to contact the Governor and their elected representatives in the House and Senate with the message that Tri-Rail service is critical to the livelihood and welfare of the people of South Florida and it must be saved.

Link to story in *Metro Magazine*: [\[http://www.metro-magazine.com/News/Story/2009/03/Tri-Rail-starts-fund-or-fail-campaign.aspx\]](http://www.metro-magazine.com/News/Story/2009/03/Tri-Rail-starts-fund-or-fail-campaign.aspx).

Link to more information from Tri-Rail: [\[http://www.tri-rail.com/FundOrFail/\]](http://www.tri-rail.com/FundOrFail/)

Obama Names National Health IT Coordinator

President Barack Obama today named Boston physician David Blumenthal as the national coordinator for health information technology in the Health and Human Services Department (HHS). He will direct the department's efforts to spend \$19.5 billion in economic stimulus funds for health IT to advance implementation of the Nationwide

Health Information Network (NHIN). The health IT infrastructure would let health care professionals share clinical data about patients with security and privacy protections, HHS has said. [http://fcw.com/articles/2009/03/20/health-it-coordinator.aspx?s=fcwdaily_230309]

New Era Dawns for Community Transportation Expo 2009 - Brochure

Community Transportation Association of America is sponsoring *Expo 2009, A New Era Dawns for Community Transportation*, in Providence, RI • May 31-June 5. The Expo features outstanding training, technical assistance and networking opportunities for all who attend. EXPO is a learning conference first and foremost. CTAA has scheduled a series of one-, two-, and three-day Intensive Training Sessions designed to offer full immersion in the topic at hand, taught by experts. More Online <http://www.ctaa.org> [<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/articlefiles/expobro.pdf>]

Rail Magazine: Current Issue

RAIL Magazine, Connecting Communities by Moving People, is a quarterly publication produced by the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA). CTAA is sponsored by the FTA. The magazine chronicles the resurgence and revitalization of the passenger rail in all its forms - intercity, commuter, subways and metros, light rail, streetcars and trolleys, and more - across North America. The focus is on how communities of all sizes build innovative, cost-efficient and successful rail operations to better mobilize people. The stories of these vital rail systems are told not only in the kind of equipment they operate or the stations that they build, but the equally important elements of community partnerships, intermodalism, land-use and development, investment strategies, and other aspects that are essential to vital passenger rail networks. The latest issue 21 of Rail Magazine is Online

[<http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=159&z=36>]

The Challenge of Using Public Transport: Descriptions by People with Cognitive Functional Limitations

This paper describes the findings of a study aiming to achieve deeper insight into reasons people with cognitive functional limitations cease to use public transport. Semi-structured interviews in combination with a qualitative content analysis were performed with nine participants. Results showed that reasons not to use public transport were to some degree a usability problem—both real and imagined. Other reasons were that participants had changed from buses or trains to other modes of transport or had psychologically adapted themselves to a new situation which meant that they did not miss using public transport.

Link to article in the *Journal of Transport and Land Use*:

[<https://www.jtlu.org/index.php/jtlu/article/download/97/42>]

Transportation and Climate Change Newsletter - February 2009

The Federal Highway Administration Office of Planning, Environment and Realty released the latest edition of its monthly newsletter designed to keep transportation stakeholders up-to-date on various issues related to transportation and climate change

[<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/climatechange/newsletter/index.htm>]

