From Dustbowl Days to a Smarter Future-Part One

Presentation for the New Partners for Smart Growth Conference

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OVERVIEW

• Smart Growth Taking Root in a Former Dustbowl
• MAPS3 and its Smart box of retrofits for OKC
• Why urban retro-fits, layout, transit, and tax initiatives are so important to public health and smart growth
• Public Health and Urban Planning: Frat. Twins
• Mainstream Partnerships are key: health equity, disability advocates, Q.O.L. promoters
• Leadership and building alliances
• Fixed Guideway Transit Plan & Okla. Streetcar
• The Path Ahead
USA Today, October 12, 2010

More Californians reverse course and head to Oklahoma

• Reverse Migration: Moving from CA to OK!

Net migration — Californians moving to Oklahoma minus Oklahomans moving to California — based on federal tax filings:

Source: IRS
By Karl Gelles, USA TODAY
MAPS 3- What is It?

It’s about TRUST: Revenue over 7 Yrs=$750+m

Modern Streetcar $120 Million
70 acres Grand Park $130 Million
57 mi of paved trails & 70 mi of sidewalks $50 M
Rail/bus Transit Hub, etc. $10 M
Senior Wellness Centers $50 M
Convention Center $280 M
River/kayak projects $60 M
Fairgrounds Additions $60 M
Can City Retro-fit Promote Health?

- Yes, Bricktown in OKC as an example
- Addition of trails and sidewalks
- Adaptive reuse of buildings: cleaner/greener
- Transit and clean air
- Health is not just about obesity, hearts, diabetes:
  - Add arthritis
  - Add depression/mental health
- Retrofit for all: universal design/disabilities
Could Disciplines Promote a Shared Aim?

- Many groups promoted MAPS
- Planning and Public Health: fraternal twins
- They evolved differently
- Note the reconvergence
- Be creative and find partners who gain sympathy or are seen as mainstream
- Communicate
Public Transportation: “Centsible” Vehicle for Sustainability

- Such as MAPS 3
- Social justice benefit
- Environmental benefit
- Transit Health Benefits: walking, clean air, etc.
- Transit + Sustainability + Health = T.O.D.
- Funding for transit = Equity
Oklahoma City Metro

- “I’ve never been to Spain, but I’ve been to Oklahoma…”
- Innovation: invention and first use of parking meter
- 600+ sq miles in one city! The value to the sustainability movement
- Birthplace of the shopping cart
- Big oil and gas companies
- Pioneer culture, and Native/Tribal influences
- America’s Olympic Training Site
- 2005 Fixed Guideway Plan; 2010 Plan OKC
2030 Employment Density

Legend
- OKC Metro Area
- 1 Dot = 200 Employees/Square Mile
- 2030 Employment Density

Source: Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
2030 Population Density

Legend

- OKC Metro Area
- 1 Dot = 200 Persons/Square Mile
- 2030 Population Density

Source: Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

Urban Retrofit + Health + Sustainability
Enhanced Bus Service

- More frequent bus service
- Extend span of service hours
- Expand service area and paratransit
- More express routes
- Bring region up to par
- Rubber Tire Helps Rail
Modern Streetcar

- On-street with mixed traffic, ADA Accessible
- Electric Powered (LRT Style) Vehicles: CNG?
- Sustains air quality
- Portland, Tacoma, Seattle, OKC (Max. Speed Needed = 45mph)
- Designed for Urban Downtown Areas
- Supports Many Uses and Visitor Destinations

Metro Transit
Streetcar: Transformational

- Economic Development
- Attracts the hip and creative
- A boost to people with disabilities
- Helps unify people as they talk and travel
- Needs bus service support
- Extends walkability
- More
Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

- BRT lane on-street
- Signal priority
- Alternative fuels
- Short stops
Bus Rapid Transit
Potential Financial Strategy

• All Require Alliances and Trust
• Modern Streetcar
  – Local Benefits; Local Implementation
  – Up to 50% Federal (for Construction)
  – Requires Local Match Funding Source
• Enhanced Bus, BRT, and Commuter Rail
  – Regional Benefits; Regional Implementation
  – Funded by Multi-jurisdictional Tax Initiative
  – Some Federal Funds for Capital Costs
2010 Streetcar Route Concept

Example: Phased Implementation of Tier 2 Option 4 and Option 5 (4th and Kerr Couplet)
Report Card on Next Steps Identified in Late 2005

- Upgrade MPO’s Regional Travel Demand Model
- Initiate “Starter Corridor” Alternatives Analysis (AA) Study
- Plan for a MAPS 3
- Seek Federal $ for Preliminary Engineering Phase
- Develop Regional Citizen Support for $
Estimated Implementation Schedule for Downtown Circulator Project
Closing Thoughts

- OKC is doing it - You can too!
- Plan to address existing “gap” in service, equity, and future growth needs
- Some projects have local benefits; others have regional benefit
- Implementation requires vision and commitment
- Make alliances and maintain momentum
  - Each of us has an important role
No Resting on Past Laurels...

- Region still needs better bus service
- Health outcomes are still bottom 5
- Help people and leaders see that the work is not done
- Build alliances and collaborations with “NEW PARTNERS
- Add to regionwide citizen awareness and support
The Path Ahead

- Read more: www.letstalktransit.com
  www.planning.org
  or www.apta.com
- Know your Planning Commissioner!
- Get involved in Pro-Health Groups and pro-community groups
- Start networking for transit and/or Livability
- Move Mainstream
Even if you are on the right track, you will get ran over if you sit there long enough.

Will Rogers, Oracle and Oklahoma Humorist
Thank You

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