Evolving Urban Mobility—A New Regulatory Environment

Workshop held on March 27, 2014 in San Francisco, co-sponsored by:

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Summary

Overview

This unique and timely workshop brought together urban mobility leaders from public and private sectors, as well as academia. The overall framework and vision for the workshop was developed and led by Gerry Tierney, Senior Associate with Perkins + Will, and Susan Shaheen, Co-Director of UC Berkeley's Transportation Sustainability Research Center (TSRC). They were joined by these workshop leaders:

* Peter Albert, Manager—Urban Planning Initiatives, SFMTA

* Carli Paine, TDM Project Manager, SFMTA

* Dan McCoy, Associate Director, Genentech

* Rick Hutchinson, CEO, City CarShare

* Paul Schuette, Director of Design Strategy, Perkins + Will

* Michael Cunningham, VP of Public Policy, Bay Area Council

After introductions by all workshop participants, Gerry Tierney, Susan Shaheen, Peter Albert, and Michael Cunningham made introductory comments to identify some of the critical challenges and

opportunities for urban mobility. Three simultaneous breakout groups were then organized around: 1) The User, 2) The Public Agency's Role, and 3) Integrating the Private Provider. The breakout groups identified numerous distinct, and some less distinct, challenges to urban mobility.

Overall Themes from Breakout Sessions

Users

Gerry Tierney, with the full group reconvening after the breakout session, identified the key points made by workshop participants in his workshop thought experiment designed to provide insights on how and why users make the choices, and take the actions, which lead to their mode(s) of urban mobility. Given the choices available, which included all options except the personally owned car, the majority of participants gravitated towards either public transit or private employer shuttles for the main portion of their daily commutes, while the use of shared mobility options were important for the trips associated with the beginning and end of their work days, However there was a consistent reiteration by the participants of the importance of land use decisions, particularly where people choose to live, work, the adjacency of shops and schools/universities. Users are accustomed to, and prefer, seamless mobility, which currently is difficult to achieve without using a personally owned car. Urban mobility must strive for seamless mobility, and encourage land use decisions which lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and congestion.

Integrating the Private Provider

Susan Shaheen, in summarizing results from the Integrating the Private Provider breakout group, noted the importance of land-use and transportation planning, reiterating Peter Albert's opening comments regarding the impact on mobility options from personal choices of where to live and work. She conveyed the frustrations evoked by private sector participants who have sometimes been unsuccessful in their efforts to obtain public sector transportation-related data. Participant suggestions for addressing this frustration included creation of a government innovation officer, who would possess the expertise to efficiently and proactively engage with the private sector to obtain and understand public transportation data. Other participants suggested that government officials could benefit from additional training in managing and interpretation of data.

Susan also referred to Dan McCoy's revelation, after several years of perceiving government as part of the problem in Genentech's efforts to expand their employee transportation service, that working with government and sharing Genentech's transportation information, could actually be beneficial, and even reduce liability.

Yet another idea from the breakout session called for local government to incubate mobility startups and facilitate their development at the early stages.

Finally, Susan noted there is a clear need for the private sector to become more involved in accelerating social equity and environmental goals.

<u>Public Agencies</u>

Carli Paine, reviewing the main points made in the Public Agency group, indicated a strong demand from urban mobility companies and organizations for open data from municipal government, which is currently a problematic endeavor.

Another critical issue requiring greater public-private partnership is safety, as exemplified by recent incidents, which have highlighted the holes in current local transportation regulations.

This led to another regulatory area in need of modification: in some instances there is lack of enforcement, and in others regulations may not produce the most effective and equitable outcomes. For example, Carli asked whether incentives to encourage and reward clean vehicles in corporate and other private sector transportation fleets might be preferred over regulation. Also, involving the private sector in the early stages of municipal government policy development could yield more efficient and equitable alternatives for clean urban mobility, as both public and private sector would benefit from each other's expertise.

Regarding the recurring related theme of land use planning's impact on urban mobility; Carli encouraged the private sector companies to demand much-delayed upgrades in public infrastructure.

Peter Albert next highlighted a few overarching themes from the breakout group discussion. The need for incentives for Users was emphasized, as current regulations fail to provide substantive rewards for utilizing transportation modes (and land use decisions) that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. He also supported the idea of public-private joint pilots, as they can simultaneously help the government overcome political obstacles, while creating and funding a useful database for both public and private sector stakeholders. A further factor supporting public-private collaboration: when both share responsibility for the safety and liability of transportation, there are less likely to be "gray areas" which are neglected due to lack of attention from either public or private stakeholders.

<u>Private Providers</u>

Susan Shaheen began her summary of the Private Provider discussions by proposing that the results of collaboration between users, public agencies, and private providers could and should be advantageous and beneficial for all stakeholders. She supported the concept of public agencies offering a safe piloting and incubating environment for urban mobility start-ups, which would enable sufficient scale to provide the invaluable experience and information to give the companies a validated "proof of concept," which could increase the likelihood of commercial success.

Very much related and just as importantly, she reflected on the groups strong interest in modifications of current government and private provider programs and processes to facilitate the exchange of data with each other. Currently, according to the breakout group discussion, both public and private sector stakeholders are asking each other: "Why do you want *my* data?", and "Why is it so difficult to access *your* data?". Sharing data would augment the currently low level of cooperation and trust, while magnifying the benefits that could come from greater data sharing. This would also effectively elucidate

why they need each other's data and why partnership is vital, fostering further openness, equity, and collaboration.

Concluding Thoughts

Susan summarized the workshop, pointing to the inability of current land use and transportation demand models to reflect recent changes in technologies, business applications, land use, consumer preferences, government policies, and related factors when forecasting 15-20 year plans for urban mobility. Having greater collaboration among Users, Public Agencies, and Private Providers by sharing information and data openly, could substantially improve modeling to optimize urban mobility over the long term.

She then highlighted the need for multi-stakeholder collaboration to address the critical safety and liability issues, which often and prospectively do not receive the right levels of attention.

Alluding to the group discussions about regulations, she called for adapting (where appropriate) or supplementing regulations with incentives that reward users and providers whose urban mobility choices and actions maximize social and environmental benefits.

Susan briefly summarized her concluding thoughts with six bullet points:

- The need to create a "safe place" in which mobility pilot programs can be carried out.

- The need for greater data sharing to support understanding of innovative mobility options for planning and public policy purposes.

- Equity. The ability to access any form of innovative mobility through digital means needs to consider the fact that not all segments of our population have the hardware [phones, etc.] or data plans, which will support this. This needs to be addressed so as not to disenfranchise segments of our population.

- Current planning models do not have access to the data being generated by the private employer shuttles or the shared mobility environment, for instance. Since these innovative modes represent an increasingly larger part of the transportation environment their data needs to be included and integrated into transportation and land use planning models. Sharing of data as noted earlier could help to address that.

- Safety and Liability. Innovative mobility options should provide the same level of safety and liability as is currently provided by public transit or other modes controlled by public agencies.

- How do we incentivize innovation and good behavior?

The workshop ended with a collective concurrence that there is much room for improvement in urban mobility, and a follow-up workshop should start with the above insights and recommendations as a basis for focusing on the critical areas upon which all stakeholders in urban mobility can collaborate for mutual benefit.