



## Memorandum

**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Michael Zeller, Principal Transportation Planner  
**Meeting Date:** May 24, 2017  
**Subject:** 2017 California Transportation Planning Conference

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On May 3 through 5, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), in partnership with the Institute of Transportation Studies at University of California, Berkeley held its annual California Transportation Planning Conference in Walnut Creek, California.

The forum attracted representatives from transportation agencies throughout the state, including Caltrans, the California Transportation Commission, other regional transportation and transit agencies, local jurisdictions, and transportation-focused non-profits and think tanks. Below is a summary of the sessions that I attended while at the conference.

**Welcome Session.** **Janette Sadik-Khan** was Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation from 2007–2013 under Mayor Michael Bloomberg. During her tenure, New York City added nearly 400 miles of bike lanes and the first parking-protected bike paths in North America. The department she led set in motion more than 60 plazas across the city, including the historic plazas that shut Broadway through Times Square, sparking economic recovery throughout the area. She worked with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority to launch the city's first six rapid bus lines and oversaw hundreds of intersection and street redesigns that contributed to the city's record-low traffic fatalities. Sadik-Khan oversaw the 2013 launch of Citi Bike, the nation's largest bike share system, which to date has been used more than 22 million times and is doubling in size to 12,000 bikes. During her presentation, Ms. Sadik-Khan highlighted these successes and discussed these examples to show how we can re-imagine our streets to help create public spaces.

**Investing in Transportation.** A growing state needs a transportation system that meets the needs of its citizens. This transportation system should provide choices for different users and address the needs of businesses, super-commuters, issues in rural parts of the state versus unique challenges in urban regions. The panel provided their views and perspectives on both current and future trends for funding transportation. **Susan Bransen**, Executive Director of the California Transportation Commission, discussed the funding programs in Senate Bill 1 and the role of the CTC in implementing the bill. **Carrie Hamill**, Bay Area Rapid Transit, presented on how BART has embraced the concept of self-help to fund their system, and the use of new technology (such as Facebook town halls) to engage with the public. Finally, **Nadine Lee**, Los Angeles METRO, discussed the benefits of public-private partnerships to expedite project delivery in a cost-effective manner.

***Transportation and a Vibrant Economy.*** There is a concerted effort to expand economic analysis into transportation infrastructure planning, design and programming processes. Newly adopted legislation, regulations, executive orders and policies that are requiring the State and local transportation agencies to incorporate economic analysis, including benefit-cost analysis, life-cycle cost analysis and economic impact assessment into long-term planning development, project prioritization and selection. **Jim Miller**, San Diego Association of Governments, presented on his agency's efforts to develop an economic analysis of their regional transportation plan. SANDAG wanted to highlight the regional plan as an economic development program. To do this, they conducted a benefit cost analysis, economic impact analysis (using REMI Transight), and an economic competitiveness analysis. They developed their own benefit cost model and fully integrated it with their activity-based travel demand model. Since it's integrated with the model, they are able to do more detailed analysis, such as looking at social equity. Using REMI Transight, SANDAG translated the benefit cost results into job creation impact attributable to the proposed transportation improvements. For the economic competitiveness analysis, a qualitative review was done through focus groups with business industry groups.

***Drivers of Change.*** California's transportation system is rapidly changing through innovative technology, shifting demographic trends, new public policy, and increased economic development. This panel provided their views and perspectives on both current and future trends in transportation. **Stuart Cohen**, TransForm, discussed his research into using high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes to move more traffic rather than road widening, specifically in the US 101 corridor in the Bay Area. **Tilly Chang**, San Francisco County Transportation Authority, highlighted the top 10 trends that she sees: Rapid growth and demand for walkable and transit development; Chronic congestion; High demand for public transit; Prioritizing transit and high occupancy vehicle modes; Complete streets and place making; State of good repair / modernization; Active transportation and vision zero; Transportation funding and innovative finance; Transportation equity; and Clean transportation. **Maura Twomey**, Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments, discussed the region's efforts to tackle climate resiliency through the Elkhorn Slough project, which identifies sea level rise along Highway 1 and will present potential adaptation solutions.

***Rural Transportation.*** The rural areas of California are critical to the economic and social health of the state. As the state struggles with issues of drought, groundwater management, climate change, and fire prevention, its diverse rural regions provide opportunities to improve California's sustainability. In order to realize statewide environmental, health and economic benefits for all of California, the state needs to invest in rural communities around transportation infrastructure and systems that support mobility, access and active living. During this panel, both presenters (**Jamie Dean** with the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Project and **Caroline Rodier** with UC Davis) highlighted the benefits of looking for grants to perform shared mobility pilot projects in rural areas that can be easily replicated and scaled. In particular, they discussed the use of ride sharing applications and micro transit.

***California Demographic Trends.*** Demographic, technological and economic trends in the State of California are changing rapidly and will influence transportation and community planning needs. Where people choose to live and work and how they will make choices about transportation will change the future landscape of our urban, suburban and rural areas. This panel explored the dynamic between economic, demographic (diversity, age, income factors) and population distribution and their effect on the future of California.

***Planning for Extremes.*** This panel discussion provided the audience with first-hand experiences and lessons learned in preparing for climate change from the perspectives of the state, local, regional, and private organizations. Presenters highlighted the plans, actions, partnerships, and policies developed to protect the traveling public and the transportation system. In particular, **Liz O'Donoghue** from the Nature Conservancy presented on their efforts working with Caltrans, AMBAG, and the Transportation Agency to develop adaptation strategies for Highway 1 through Moss Landing and the threats to the roadway and eco-system from climate-change related flooding.

***Transit / Rail Connectivity and Accessibility.*** As California works to deliver quality, cost-effective mobility choices that help meet our climate goals, the need to support a seamless network for rail, transit, walking, and biking will continue to grow. We can physically link these “allied modes”, but the devil is in the details. “Network Integration” is the term that is often used to describe how these modes will work together, but what does it mean, exactly? The panel discussed three aspects of Network Integration – physical connections, service coordination, and first/last mile access – by describing current investments, plans, and policy efforts. First, **Jennifer Donlon Wyant**, City of Sacramento, discussed the city’s efforts to provide safe and comfortable access to their downtown rail station without needing to drive. They have focused their efforts on developing a network of bicycle facilities, including buffered bike lanes, as well as safe bicycle storage at the station to encourage the public to use active transportation to get to the station. Next, **Ulrich Leister**, SMA, described how network integration works in Switzerland. With consistent schedules and integrated routes for long trips, intercity, regional, and local, the Swiss system is able to accomplish headways of 30 to 60 minutes with buses and trains all arriving and leaving the station at the same time. This allows for quick transfers, and the knowledge that another train will be scheduled shortly if a transfer is missed. Finally, **Arielle Fleisher**, SPUR, discussed the effects that fare policy can have on transit adoption. She highlighted the multiple transit operators in the Bay Area and how that can lead to a negative experience for transit riders trying to figure out transfers and the fares between them. She discussed the efforts in other areas, such as Portland and Seattle, to create a single transit card that works with multiple operators, how they coordinated their fares, and how they offer specials to encourage ridership.