

TRANSPORT INNOVATOR

VOLUME 1, No. 1

January 2005

Table of Contents

<i>Editor's Note</i>	1
<i>Transport News From The United States</i>	2
Los Angeles Continues to Expand <i>Metro Rapid</i> Service	2
New Database and Film Available on Innovative Bus and BRT Projects	2
Pittsburgh Receives \$6.6 Million Grant To Purchase Buses, Including Hybrid-Electrics	2
EPA Launches Ad Campaign To Reduce Fuel Consumption and Diesel Emissions	3
Charlotte Light Rail Costs Continue to Soar	3
<i>Transport News From Around the World</i>	3
Asian Development Bank Launches New Program to Promote Bus Rapid Transit	3
Auckland to Break Ground on New Busway	4
Beijing Refuses to Limit Cars	5
Innovative Program Voluntarily Reduces Personal Car Trips ...	5
United Kingdom Establishes Two Sustainable Mobility Centers of Excellence	6
Hydrogen Fueling Station Nearing Completion in London	6
New Concepts in Recently Developed BRT Vehicles	6

Editor's Note

Welcome to *Transport Innovator*, a free newsletter dedicated to sharing information about innovative, cost-effective transportation solutions. These solutions are becoming increasingly important, because mobility is a growing concern in the world's cities, and transportation funding is becoming increasingly limited. We hope you enjoy *Transport Innovator* and find it useful. We welcome comments and ideas for future stories. Please feel free to contact us – we look forward to hearing from you.



1100 H Street, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005
Contact: Bill Vincent
(202) 785-4222 ext. 30; vincent@fuelcells.org

Transport News From The United States

Los Angeles Continues to Expand *Metro Rapid* Service

Los Angeles County continues to expand its innovative Metro Rapid bus service, demonstrating that significant mobility improvements can be achieved without massive capital investments. Two new corridors were recently opened for Metro Rapid service, bringing the total number of Metro Rapid corridors to nine.

One of the new corridors is 19 miles long and will run from Redondo Beach to downtown Los Angeles. The second corridor is 15 miles long and will run from Hollywood to Pasadena.

According to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, these corridors will provide service rivaling the speed of private vehicles. Metro Rapid service typically reduces travel times by up to 25 percent compared to traditional bus service. This is accomplished through a signal priority system, less frequent stops, and low floor buses that reduce boarding times.

New Database and Film Available on Innovative Bus and BRT Projects

The Breakthrough Technologies Institute (BTI) recently launched a free database of innovative bus and BRT projects around the world. The database includes detailed descriptions of each project, as well as cost and performance information, links and contacts, and photos and graphics. The database is available for use at www.gobrt.org.

BTI also released a film highlighting BRT in three major cities around the world: Bogota Colombia, Curitiba Brazil, and Brisbane Australia. The film includes interviews with mayors and other city officials, as well as detailed overviews of the projects. The film was originally produced in Chinese but also is available in English. A Portuguese version currently is being prepared.

To obtain a copy of the film, please contact Bill Vincent at the address listed on page one of this newsletter.

Pittsburgh Receives \$6.6 Million Grant To Purchase Buses, Including Hybrid-Electrics

The US Federal Transit Administration recently awarded a \$6.6 million grant to the Port Authority of Allegheny County that will enable the city of Pittsburgh to purchase its first hybrid-electric buses. Under the grant, six hybrid buses and fourteen conventional buses will be added to Pittsburgh's fleet.

Hybrid-electric buses are powered by both a small diesel engine and electric

motors. In addition to operating more efficiently and reducing emissions, the new hybrids provide a much quieter ride than traditional buses.

Of the fourteen conventional buses financed under the grant, two will be 60-foot articulated buses that will operate on Pittsburgh's Martin Luther King, Jr. East Busway. Pittsburgh has three busways that have roughly 51,000 weekday boardings. Pittsburgh also has a light rail system, which has roughly 24,000 weekday boardings and cost roughly twice as much as the busways to construct.

For more information, see www.portauthority.org.

EPA Launches Ad Campaign To Reduce Fuel Consumption and Diesel Emissions

The Environmental Protection Agency has launched an advertising campaign to promote its new Smartway program, which was launched in February 2004. Under the program, shippers, carriers, logistics companies, and others voluntarily seek to reduce diesel emissions by reducing fuel consumption.

To become a SmartWay partner, shippers must ship at least fifty percent of their goods with SmartWay carriers. Carriers become SmartWay partners by taking voluntary measures, such as reduced idling, to cut fuel consumption. EPA has developed a free software tool that enables carriers to assess the benefits of these measures.

For more information, go to www.epa.gov/smartway.

Charlotte Light Rail Costs Continue to Soar

The projected costs for Charlotte's proposed 11-mile light rail line continue to soar, approaching \$38 million per mile. Since 1998, the project costs have nearly doubled over initial projections, which were used to persuade voters to approve a half-cent sales tax increase dedicated to mass transit.

Critics argue that rail proponents consistently understate project costs in order to gain project approval. Rail advocates counter that most light rail projects are on time and within budget.

A variety of factors have been blamed for rising costs in Charlotte. These include rising commodity prices, particularly for steel and concrete, as well as the relatively few number of firms capable of providing certain light rail components, such as train control systems.

Transport News From Around the World

Asian Development Bank Launches New Program to Promote Bus Rapid Transit

The ADB-supported Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities(CAI-Asia) has launched a new program to develop a model for sustainable urban transportation in Asian cities. The

project is designed to demonstrate that innovative new technologies, like bus rapid transit, can offer better solutions than expensive rail systems. The project is being tested in Pune, Hanoi and Xi'an.

According to ADB Lead Transport Specialist Charles Melhuish, "this project will highlight that expensive rail systems are not the only solutions to public transport problems. There are other public transport possibilities, which these cities must consider. The Bus Rapid Transit system is one such solution."

A BRT system can be 10 to 100 times cheaper to carry out than a rail system. "It provides metro level service at almost 1% of the cost. It can be planned and implemented in just three years," says Karl Fjellstrom with the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy.

For more information: <http://www.cleanairnet.org/caiasia/1412/channel.html>

Auckland to Break Ground on New Busway

Transit NZ intends to break ground this month on the Northern Busway, an 8.5km, 5-station project expected to cost NZ \$290 million. The busway will be a two-lane buses-only corridor running parallel to the Northern Motorway and connecting with a bus-only lane. The busway and bus lane network are the first and core components of a strategy to create a bus rapid transit system in North Shore City.



**Model of
Proposed
Busway Station**

During peak hours, buses are expected to run every five minutes along the busway and every 15 minutes from most residential areas along the busway. The busway also has been designed to allow access to high occupancy vehicles (HOV's) during the morning peak. Between 7a.m. and 9a.m., up to 2,750 HOVs will be allowed to enter the busway and bus lane network at various points. Park and ride facilities and feeder bus routes also are being planned.

The busway was inspired by the successful busway project in Brisbane Australia. For more information, see www.busway.co.nz or the database at www.gobrt.org.

New Canadian BRT System Named "Viva"

The Regional Municipality of York recently announced that its new BRT system will be named "Viva." According to local officials, Viva service will be provided every five to fifteen minutes during peak periods, stations will be modern, bright and safe, tickets will be purchased prior to boarding, and passenger information signs will provide real-time information regarding vehicle arrivals.

Viva currently is under construction and is expected to be operational in September 2005. Viva will be developed in three phases over the next 20 years, ultimately linking the Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Newmarket along four major corridors.

Phase one will cost \$150 million (Canadian) and the costs are being split evenly among the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, and the York Regional Council. Phase one is expected to result in a 30 percent increase in transit ridership, the removal of 7,000 private cars per day off regional roads, and a 25% - 40% travel time reduction during peak periods.

Phase 2, which is expected to begin in 2006, will add dedicated transit lanes that will separate Viva vehicles from general traffic. Phase 2 also will include enhanced stations and new park-and-ride facilities.

For more information, see www.vivayork.com

Beijing Refuses to Limit Cars

According to China's Xinhua news agency, the government of Beijing has decided to improve parking lot management and increase parking prices, rather than limit car use in the city. There are roughly 1.5 million cars in downtown Beijing but only 1.09 million legal parking spaces.

At the same time, the government is encouraging public transportation and is investing in bus rapid transit and enhanced bus services. According to China Daily, the government intends to build free or low cost parking lots beyond the Fourth and Fifth ring roads, encouraging car owners to take public transport.

Currently, nearly 25% of the city's traffic flow is concentrated in roughly 12% of the city's total area. More than 90% of the roads are filled to capacity during peak hours.

Beijing also is examining changes in land use patterns. New urban centers are being planned to help distribute transport demand away from downtown.

British Cities Offered Mobility Management Incentives

The British government is attempting to encourage new thinking in transportation by offering additional funds to introduce innovative transport programs. Under the program, a Transportation Innovation Fund would support costs associated with implementing innovative transportation projects, including road pricing and enhanced bus service.

Central London currently has a congestion fee that is widely considered to be successful. The only city outside of London to have a similar program is Durham. However, that program is limited to one road and a charge of £2.

Innovative Program Voluntarily Reduces Personal Car Trips

An innovative project has successfully encouraged thousands of people across the United Kingdom to occasionally walk, cycle, or ride public transport instead of drive private cars. The program, known as TravelSmart, identified households interested in alternative forms of transportation and provided them with information and encouragement to change travel modes. According to project sponsors, car trips were reduced on average 10 and 14% per household, resulting in an average annual savings of roughly 650 car miles per household.

For more information, see <http://www.sustrans.org.uk>.

United Kingdom Establishes Two Sustainable Mobility Centers of Excellence

The UK's Industry Minister recently announced the establishment of two research centers to help promote sustainable mobility. One center will focus upon fuel cell and other low carbon technologies. Its purpose is to help reduce reliance upon fossil fuels and to increase energy efficiency. The second center will focus upon the development of intelligent transport system (ITS) technologies to make better use of the existing road infrastructure in the UK. The centers are being launched with a UK government grant.

For further information, contact: Phil Pettitt, pipettitt@QinetiQ.com (ITS center) or Geoff Callow, geoff.callow@turquoiseassociates.com (fuel cell center).

Hydrogen Fueling Station Nearing Completion in London

England's first hydrogen fueling station is nearing completion in Hornchurch, Essex. The station will refuel three hydrogen fuel cell buses that operate under the Clean Urban Transport for Europe (CUTE) program. CUTE, which is sponsored by the European Union, is designed to test hydrogen fuel cell buses in nine European cities.

New Concepts in Recently Developed BRT Vehicles

Volvo recently announced the development of the world's longest bus. At 26.8 meters, the bus has a maximum capacity of 300 passengers. An order of 30 buses has already been placed by Viação Campo Belo of Brazil, one of Sao Paulo's largest bus operators.

For further information see <http://www.volvo.com/bus/global/en-gb/newsmedia/press+releases>

UK's Wright Group has developed a new, futuristic public transport vehicle called the StreetCar. The vehicle features a driver's cabin separated from the main passenger cabin, a low-emission engine, global positioning system, real-time passenger information, integrated security, and more personal space. StreetCar is expected to be on the roads of Sheffield, Leeds and York, UK in 2005.



For more information see <http://www.wrightbus.com/archive.asp?type=News%20Release#>