Driving Equity, Now!

Carlton C. Eley
PBCD’s Equity and Public Transportation Webinar
June 12, 2020
Racism, injustice, and disparities in the built environment have never been resolved through policies of avoidance, color blindness, or bureaucratic neutrality. Los Angeles (1992); Ferguson (2014); Baltimore (2015); Minneapolis (2020).
Defining Equity

Equity: A condition of parity...that is achieved by being intentional about improving quality of life for populations that are underserved, under-resourced, and vulnerable.

Informed by three questions

1. Are there deficits?

2. Who experiences the burden of the deficits?

3. How do we make sure well-intentioned interventions do not make deficits worse?

Source: Danielle Coke
“Planning at its best takes account of the social implications of land use and economic development decisions.”

The Practice of Local Government Planning
Timeline: Parallel Initiatives

- Advocacy Planning (1965)
- Equity Planning Practice (1969 – 1979)
- Equity Development (1983 – 1987)
- Fair Growth (2000)
- Equitable Development (2000)
Trending Upwardly

Attended for the Equity Summit (2002 - 2018)

- 2002: Los Angeles
- 2005: Philadelphia
- 2008: New Orleans
- 2011: Detroit
- 2015: Los Angeles
- 2018: Chicago
An Abbreviated Chronology: Who is Talking about ‘Equity and Communities’?

2005

APA
American Planning Association
Planning and the Black Community Division
Making Great Communities Happen

2015

APA
American Planning Association
Planning and the Black Community Division
Making Great Communities Happen

2015 LOCUS LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

PolicyLink
2015 Community Involvement Training Conference
Equity Summit 2015
All in for Inclusion, Justice, and Prosperity

EQUITY 15
October 27-29, 2015, Los Angeles, CA

Greenbuild 2015
Communities & Affordable Homes Summit
Washington, D.C. November 17

Funders’ Network
For Smart Growth and Livable Communities

Brownfields 2015
Sustainable Communities Start Here

One DC
Organizing Neighborhood Equity

Local Government Commission

RISE
Social Justice by Design

Structures for Inclusion
Detroit

On Care for our Common Home
Pope Francis

“Find a way to get in the way and get in good trouble, necessary trouble when you see something is not fair, not right, or not just.”

Congressman John Lewis
“Vision for Broadway is a labor of love. The technical assistance team did not produce an advisory service report that the community could afford. Instead, they delivered a report that the community deserves.”
Equity is the Outcome of Ethical Practice

You will never change anything that you are willing to tolerate.

Myles Munroe
Cleveland State University’s celebration and tribute to Norman Krumholz (1927 – 2019).

February 29, 2020
Tools and Resources

- APA Planning for Equity Policy Guide

- Planning for Equitable Development: Social Equity by Design (Planning Advisory Service Memo)

- Equitable Development and Environmental Justice

- EPA’s Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

- UL2.0: A Channel for Equitable Development Champions
  - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCC_8_VbzsMDQmWR5hgxZ06A
My Story…
Transit equity matters

Transit fits well into the increasingly socially-oriented agendas of many big-city mayors. For an example of how advocates were able to provide a well-timed transit agenda to a candidate interested in advancing social equity, look to Chicago’s Active Transportation Alliance and its sister organization, Active Transportation Now. In the 2019 Chicago mayoral race, local advocates helped to set the terms of the debate on transit with a candidate forum and questionnaire covering topics like bus and bike lane expansion, reduced transit fares for people with low incomes, and the creation of a transportation equity plan. The winner of the race, Lori Lightfoot, championed many of the groups’ recommendations during her campaign and has continued to advance them as mayor.
Transition to RTA Board
Spaces to talk more about transit equity?

• When designing streets and sidewalks
• When implementing transit priority
• When incentivizing economic development
• When developing micro-mobility
• When investing in new technologies
• When procuring vendors and contractors
Why equity is essential to transit?

- Devasting Transit Losses in Katrina
- Post-Katrina City in Rebuilding/Planning Overdrive
- Slow Transit Service Recovery
- Big Plans for New Stuff but where is the bus?
- Changing Land Use and Demographics

“Service has declined more in areas that need transit most, including low-income neighborhoods, areas where people have less access to personal vehicles, and communities of color.”
Is Equity a priority?

• As of 2016, the RTA has recovered only 42 percent of the pre-storm weekly bus trips, but 103 percent of the pre-storm weekly streetcar trips
• The only major post-Katrina capital investment – the Loyola/Rampart/St/Claude streetcar – cost $75 million in public money and led to no connectivity gains
Peak time frequency comparison

2005

2016
Jobs Accessible in 30 minutes Transit v Driving
Planning with Equity in Mind
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Be Equitable.
Provide mobility services in a just and fair manner. Be accessible to all.

Objectives:
- Reduce the amount of household income spent on transportation.
- Improve access to jobs by transit.
- Ensure stops are ADA-compliant.
Concept A: Coverage + Consistency

Service Frequency
- 15 Minutes or better
- 20 Minutes
- 30 Minutes
- 31 Minutes or less

Concept A Weekday Service Frequency - RTA Bus Other
Concept A Saturday Service Frequency - RTA Bus Other
Concept A Sunday Service Frequency - RTA Bus Other

Concept A Weekday Service Frequency - JET Bus (AI)
Concept A Saturday Service Frequency - JET Bus (AI)
Concept A Sunday Service Frequency - JET Bus (AI)

Pages 16-19 show frequencies and spans of service for Concept A.

Concept A includes more late night, overnight, and weekend service than the existing system. The "owl loop" routes have been eliminated, and most New Orleans East and West Bank RTA routes now run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All JET routes run 7 days a week, and the majority of JET routes run until midnight on weekdays.
Concept B is shown on the left. Routes are color-coded by weekday frequency. Red routes are bus and streetcar lines that come at least every 15 minutes. Purple routes come every 20 minutes.

In Concept B, most resources are allocated towards ridership goals, meaning that there are significantly more routes with high-frequency, all-day service.

These routes create a high-frequency bus network connecting the East and West Banks of Orleans and Jefferson Parish, with frequent bus service connecting to New Orleans East, the Lower 9th Ward, and Kenner. However, there are fewer bus routes overall in this concept than the existing system.

Map via WSP USA Inc.
Concept C: Access + Speed

Concept C Overview

Concept C is very different to make longer trips faster:

- New express bus routes run during the day. They make only a few stops and travel faster to get people across town quickly.
- Some bus routes stop every 4-6 blocks instead of 1-3 blocks. They will travel faster, but some people will have to walk farther to get to the bus.
- Many local bus routes connect riders to “hubs” where they can transfer to express routes for the rest of their trip. Hubs are in downtown, New Orleans East, Algiers, Metairie, the Lower 9th Ward, Gretna, Kenner, Elmwood, and other places.

Access to Transit

The charts below compare the percent of people in the New Orleans urban area living or working within a five minute walk of any transit and high-frequency transit, for the existing system and Concept A.

“High frequency transit” includes bus and streetcar routes that come at least every 15 minutes, all day long.

Example Commutes

Rita lives near Reed Boulevard and Morrison Road in New Orleans East. She rides the bus to her job waiting at a CBD restaurant on weekday afternoons.

Like in the other concepts, Rita’s typical commute starts with a short walk to the 62 bus. However, in this concept, the 62 arrives every 20 minutes. The bus takes Rita to Ella Place, from where she walks to her job.

When Rita is working late, she is able to catch the downtown late-night shuttle, which runs every 15 minutes from 6pm-6am. This shuttle gets her to the downtown transfer hub where she can catch the 62 home.

Antonio lives off General de Gaulle and Holiday Drive in Algiers. He rides transit to his apprenticeship at a manufacturing center in Elmwood late weekday mornings.

In this concept, Antonio has choices: he can take the 114 (every 15 minutes or less) to the CBD and transfer to the 38 (every 15 minutes or less) to Elmwood. Or, if traffic is bad on the Crescent City Connection bridge, he can instead take the 114 to Willy Terminal and transfer to the 300 express route to Elmwood via the Huey P. Long Bridge. This route is fast and runs every 30 minutes. Once he arrives in Elmwood, he can either walk or take a shuttle bus to his destination.
Recommendations

1. Investment in transit service and capacity should directly address inequities in access to transportation.

2. Transit access practices such as fare policies should target high-need communities.

3. Dialogue between transit leadership and communities can build clearer understanding of needs and reduce resistance to transit projects or changes.

4. Transit planning should account for housing affordability, and improve access to and from affordable housing.

5. Transit operations and capital projects should support employment in low-income communities and communities of color.

6. Transit agencies should decriminalize fare evasion.
Thank You PBCD!

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San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency
MUNI Service Equity Strategy
Planning and Black Community Division
June 12, 2020
MUNI Service Equity Strategy

• SFMTA Board of Directors Adopted MUNI Service Equity Policy in 2014
• Goal: improving Muni routes most critical to communities with high concentrations of low income and people of color
• Service tied to budget
• Bi-Annual Review required
• Completed: 2016, 2018
Equity Strategy Background

- Rooted in Muni Service Equity Policy
- Builds on Title VI requirements
- Neighborhood based approach with accessibility addressed city-wide
- Policy developed in collaboration with transportation equity and affordable housing advocates
- Ensures that investment in Muni system benefits people who rely on transit and need it most
- Updated every two years and timed to inform the SFMTA’s biennial budget
Recommendations Informed by Quantitative Data

**Headway Adherence**
% of trips with gaps

**Crowding**
% of trips over capacity

**On Time Performance**
Meeting the schedule

**Transit-Auto Time Ratio**
to key destinations such as SFGH

**NEW METRIC: Service Delivery**
% of scheduled service hours delivered
Recommendations Informed by Qualitative Data

Engaging with existing commissions and community-based groups

Feedback via SFMTA community processes

Field visits

Operator feedback

311 comments and patterns

Feedback via elected officials
# Service Trends and Feedback Inform Equity Strategy

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Customer Feedback</th>
<th>Service Delivery</th>
<th>Ongoing Community Work and Engagement</th>
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| New dashboard tailored to extract patterns of customer-reported service issues for Equity Strategy routes | Prioritized Equity Strategy lines for service delivery in the face of operator shortage | • Bayview CBTP  
• HRC Bayview Open House  
• SF Youth Commission  
• Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) |
Building on Two Previous Reports

FY 17-18
Focus on operationalizing equity policy

FY 19-20
Focus on outreach and program awareness

FY 21-22
Focus on all aspects of transit planning being informed by equity policy principles
Equity Strategy Informs all Aspects of Service Planning

Equity Policy Principles
- Relevant metrics
- Consider all hours & days of service
- Ensure same or better service outcomes

Equity Strategy
- Trends
- Key needs
- Recommendations

Transit Planning
- Service and operations decisions
- Community engagement and response
- Feedback from riders
- Capital and quick build projects
Other Public Transit Equity Initiatives in the San Francisco Bay Area

• Community-Based Transportation Plans (CBTPs)
  • Funded by Regional Transportation Agency (Metropolitan Transportation Commission - RTPA/COG)
  • Prepared by local agencies (City/County DOTs)
  • San Francisco: completed Bayview CBTP
Post COVID-19 Equity Questions

• How do we plan for equitable public transit during a pandemic?
  • Using an Equity Lens on Service Impacts
  • Safety / Transit Capacity Challenges
  • Funding constrains with economic downturn
  • Ability to Pay/Cashless Options
  • Impacts from mode shifts
Thank You!

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