

Memorandum

December 12, 1996

To: Special Transportation Advisory Committee
From: Stewart Nelson
Ref: Vision for transit

Joint meetings of MARC's **Transit Committee** and the **Public Transit Planning Study Task Force** have experienced difficulty in reaching consensus about the Transit/paratransit environment in both the short-range (5 year) and long-range (20 year) futures.

STAC will be requested to consider preparing a recommendation to the Joint Committee regarding STAC's long range transit vision.

Background: A consulting firm, Weslin Consulting Services, Inc., was hired to prepare a Transit/paratransit Element of MARC's larger Long-Range Transportation Plan. After reviewing a Draft Report of a Final Plan prepared by the consultant, the joint committee/task force decided to provide input to the last three chapters of the Draft Report. Presented below are the titles of the last three chapters and subject-areas where some members of the joint-committee desired additional input:

Chapter IV-**Transit Service Concept Development** - The joint committee requested additional time to review and comment on the attraction of "buying into" and "adopting" the planning concept of a regional system constructed upon initially disaggregated building blocks i.e. Transit Centers.

The concept of a Multi-Center Based Transportation System capitalizing on existing (and future) "Community Centers" be they shopping areas, employment attractors, or service concentrations, was inherently questioned as being the joint committee's preferred avenue to the Kansas City regions transit future.

Chapter V-**Plan Elements** - The transit/paratransit condition in the Greater Kansas City Area will likely remain "Status Quo" i.e. no comprehensive widely accepted Regional Strategy until MARC's committees identify an acceptable Plan either within the Consultant's Draft Report, or by modifying it. Without consensus on a commonly accepted direction for Long Range transit, there are no individual elements because there is no plan.

Without general acceptance of a central strategy (planning foundation) upon which to approach the construct of a "Regional" Long-Range Transit Plan, the elements provided in the Consultants Study, i.e. Trunk line and Express transit connectors between various selected Community Transit Centers probably will not be pursued as viable options. Instead, the status quo of independent and largely unconnected transit communities such as the Liberty Access, or Excelsior Springs Omni, or KCK "The Bus", or Johnson Counties Special Services will likely be maintained. The development of future small Community and Special Transit systems will likely continue largely as isolated responses to meeting localized needs and likely confined to political boundaries and/or specific populations. In addition, the treatment of light-rail in this chapter generated discussion.

Chapter VI-**Possible Institutional Arrangements** - the issue in this chapter appeared to be the suggestions that alternative arrangements should be evaluated among the Regions institutions as they relate to the provision of transit and paratransit services.

Concerns expressed by individuals on the joint committee resulted in the joint membership electing to construct its own “Vision” of transportation in the future. The process selected to accomplish this objective is to receive written input from members and to employ a professional “facilitator” to assist the group in reaching consensus.

STAC Considerations - To preface some suggestions to STAC in considering a “Transit/paratransit Vision”, three factors for input as you consider mobility services in the next five to twenty years should include the following questions paraphrased from the Community Transportation Reporter, 11/96, Vol. 14 No.8, pg.29:

1. Is the Price Tag for the Vision “reasonable?”
2. Does the Vision make “good business sense?”
3. Does the Vision “allow everyone (business, taxpayers, employees, administrators) to win?”

Staff’s Suggested STAC Recommendation - The following scenario (Vision) conceivably addresses the concerns identified under the three chapters in question of the Draft Final Report as well as the three questions re. vision identified above. Although enumerated below for clarity, the entirety of the individual recommendations should be viewed in their totality to constitute a single recommendation for the structural foundation of a “Regional Mobility System” within which all geographical, political, employment, and social institutions may participate at levels of their own choosing:

1. Fully adopt the concept of Community Transit Centers at high activity locations that accommodate all transit modes e.g. auto, transit, pedestrian, bicycles, taxi cabs, social service, etc.
 2. Establish boundaries for the Community Activity Areas that are consistent with groupings of existing empowered entities, i.e. municipal boundaries.
 3. Initiate the implementation of the vision using existing institutions i.e. KCATA as the Bi-State Transit Authority and Primary provider of Fixed-Route Line Haul Transit and ADA Complementary Paratransit.
 4. Re-align Fixed-Route transit to connect Community Transit Centers where jurisdictions and other funding sources permit with both trunk lines and commuter express lines i.e. urban to suburban as well as suburban to suburban connections.
 5. Encourage an expanded use of federal capital funds to procure vans and small vehicles on behalf of Municipal governments, social service organizations, employers, van poolers, etc. willing to “feed” into Transit Centers.
 6. Encourage the proliferation of local neighborhood van systems to link with Transit Centers.
 7. Encourage the proliferation of employer sponsored transportation systems i.e. vanpool, carpool, rideshare etc. also to potentially link with Transit Centers where and when feasible.
 8. Identify rider and operator incentives for schools, churches and other transportation providers to “feed” into and out of Transit Centers.
 9. Encourage social service funding sources to re-direct their funding support to neighborhood operators where feasible i.e. vehicles operated out of nutrition sites.
 10. Encourage “park and ride” facilities at transit centers and other areas with productive potential.
 11. Encourage the joint committee to develop an incremental plan to overlay a system as described.
- End

Memorandum

To: Joint Transit Committee and Public Transit Study Task Force

From: Alice Amrein-Underwood, Chairperson
Special Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: January 8, 1997

Ref: Committee Input to Develop a Regional Transit Vision

At its January 8, 1997 meeting, the Special Transportation Advisory Committee adopted the following recommendation as its Regional Transit Vision for presentation to the Joint Transit/Plan Task Group:

Although enumerated below for clarity, the twelve individual actions should be viewed in their totality as a single Vision which recommends the creation of a comprehensive **structural foundation for a “Regional Mobility System” within which all geographical, political, medical, employment, and social institutions may participate at levels of their own choosing:**

1. Fully adopt the concept of Community Transit Centers in high activity areas that accommodate all transit modes as appropriate i.e. rail, bus, auto, pedestrian, bicycles, taxi cabs, social service, etc.
2. Establish boundaries for the Community Activity Areas around transit centers that are consistent with groupings of existing empowered entities, i.e. municipal boundaries.
3. Initiate the implementation of the “Regional Mobility System” using existing institutions and policy mechanisms i.e. Designated Recipient, Bi-State Compact, Transit District, (13c), and relationships between Primary and secondary providers of Fixed-Route Line Haul Transit and ADA Complementary Paratransit.
4. Re-align and develop Fixed-Route transit to connect Community Transit Centers where jurisdictions and other funding sources permit with both trunk lines and commuter express lines i.e. urban to suburban as well as suburban to suburban connections where appropriate.
5. Encourage the combined use of Federal, State, and Local funding sources to procure vehicles in support of local services and transit centers.
6. Encourage the proliferation of local neighborhood van systems to link with Transit Centers.
7. Encourage the proliferation of employer sponsored transportation systems i.e. vanpool, carpool, rideshare etc. also to potentially link with Transit Centers where and when feasible.
8. Identify rider and operator incentives for schools, churches and other transportation providers to “feed” into and out of Transit Centers.
9. Encourage “park and ride” facilities at transit centers and other areas with productive potential.
10. Communicate to all governmental entities in the Region the propriety of transit considerations in the early planning stages of new construction e.g. bus and van parking, canopy heights, etc.

11. Initiate user-friendly systems such as central referral, community transit education, and staffed transit centers where possible.

12. Empower a Comprehensive Planning Committee to develop an incremental plan that overlays the structural foundation for a Regional Mobility System as described.

This recommendation is consistent with the goals and objectives identified in the Missouri Senate Bill 676 Special Transportation Coordination Study/Plan for the Kansas City Metropolitan Region prepared by MARC in 1991 with oversight provided by the Special Transportation Advisory Committee.