

THE BOND ACT

Letter from the Editors

This past summer was a sweltering one, with temperatures regularly surpassing 90 degrees. We wished the New York baseball teams could have consistently stayed as sizzling!

The level of activity for transportation programs, however, was hot. Congress approved a Federal transportation program which will finance transportation programs through 2009. A new State transportation program was also approved. However, funding for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's key expansion projects will be dependent on the voters' passage of the Transportation Bond Act this fall. Our publisher, Elliot G. (Lee) Sander, has written an op-ed piece discussing the importance of the Bond Act to New York.

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On November 8, 2005, voters will go to the polls. Among the choices they will make, the State Transportation Bond Act will be one of the most important. **Elliot G. Sander**, Director of the NYU Wagner Rudin Center for Transportation Policy & Management, and Publisher of the New York Transportation Journal discusses how critical passage of the Bond Act is, not just for the New York metropolitan region, but for the entire State of New York.

BY ELLIOT G. SANDER

I was walking home from the Douglaston train station one Friday night in mid-March when my cell phone rang. It was a colleague from the State Legislature who wanted to know what I thought about including a \$2.9 billion Bond Act as part of the financing package for the proposed \$35.8 billion 2005-2009 State Transportation plan.

A few reactions raced through my mind.

First, the political context was pretty clear. The efforts of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) and a variety of external stakeholders – including the Empire State Transportation Alliance (ESTA), which I co-chair with Bob Yaro from the Regional Plan Association (RPA) – had been effective in helping convince the Legislature to consider raising some new revenues, in the range of approximately 6.7 billion dollars. However, we were encountering severe reluctance, particularly on the part of upstate legislators, to pass additional taxes or fees beyond that. Putting forward the Bond Act as a proposal at that stage of the discussions in Albany did not mean it would be part of a final

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package, but there was clearly a possibility that this could happen.

Second, in terms of the policy context, it was clear that funding a program smaller than \$35.8 billion was unacceptable. It would mean going down the road of disinvestment for our core highway and transit infrastructure program, and probably killing the first segment of the Second Avenue Subway (SAS) and East Side Access (ESA) project.

I responded to my colleague that while I was not doing backflips over the idea, I shared his assessment of the political and policy terrain, and thought a Bond Act was an acceptable suggestion given the alternatives.

Since that time, my support for the Bond

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Act has only intensified.

The Importance of the Bond Act

The need to sustain our core transit and infrastructure program and advance our system capacity expansion projects is clear cut. If the Bond Act fails, these will be dramatically affected. While a few elected officials and others have complained privately (and some may go public over the next several weeks) about the fact that their own county or borough has not done as well as others, there is no doubt that all the counties and boroughs will suffer both directly and indirectly without the Bond Act.

Regarding SAS and ESA, the inside opinion is that the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will proceed with full funding agreements for these projects if the Bond Act is passed. This would essentially lock in \$4 billion of Federal New Start matching money and, together with the unspent \$2 billion from the 2000-2004 MTA Plan for these projects, allocate approximately \$7 billion or 70 percent of the funds required for the first segment of SAS and ESA. Finding the remaining \$3 billion to complete these projects by 2013 or 2014 should be doable, given that substantial portions of these projects would commence if the Bond Act passes. It is unlikely that the next Governor and the State Legislature would walk away from these projects at that point, the precedent of the two relatively small SAS unfinished

tunnel segments abandoned during the 1970s financial meltdown notwithstanding.

While there are a few critics and skeptics concerning SAS and ESA, the vast majority of knowledgeable transportation, business, labor, and civic professionals view them as critical for the future of New York. The professional staff of the FTA and MTA are equally passionate about these projects. Using rigorous evaluation criteria demanded by Congress, ESA and SAS are the highest rated Federal New Start projects nationally. Making these projects a reality is not the only reason to support the Bond Act, but is certainly a good one. Having our \$4 billion in Federal funds go to support a rail system somewhere else in the United States is obviously another.

Time to Bridge the Upstate-Downstate Divide

I am pleased to say that as of the time of my writing, we have developed in the downstate region a uniform front of business, labor, environmental, and civic organizations that is working in unprecedented fashion to pass the Bond Act. A few have put aside the wounds of the West Side Stadium fight to come together (Kudos to them). Many of these organizations, including the majority of those in the ESTA coalition, such as RPA, the League of Conservation Voters, and Straphangers, were not active in supporting the last Bond Act. We have also added some new ones, like the American Cancer Society and 100 Black Men. We have also seen leadership positions taken by a number of key elected officials, which we expect to grow. Governor George Pataki, Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, State Senate Transportation Chairman Tom Libous, and Assembly Corporations Chairman Richard Brodsky have been particularly energetic and outspoken in their support.

Organized opposition downstate is minimal. The arguments cited by those not in favor, other than my friends in the "I didn't get my fair slice of the pie" group, tend to be more philosophical and ideological. One hears arguments like "All government debt is bad" or "NY State has enough debt" (even if the Attorney General and State Comptroller consider the Bond Act "good debt" and actively support the Bond Act). One

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also hears “We’re against the Bond Act because we should force the State to go back to the Dedicated Fund and because the current financing arrangement uses transportation revenues to subsidize other state expenditures.” However, a Dedicated Fund is politically dead on arrival in the near-term, if not the medium- and long-term, and others dispute the accuracy of the subsidy argument.

A little more troubling for me, though, is the absence of support for the Bond Act upstate.

On the one hand, this is not a surprise. With some notable exceptions like I-86 in the Southern Tier and the Peace Bridge that connects Buffalo and Canada, transportation and congestion upstate appear not to be the dominant political issues they are downstate. Second, even though the additional annual state obligation to finance the Bond Act is not large, taxes are a huge concern upstate, and the Bond Act gets caught up in this issue in terms of public perception. Third, and perhaps most influential, there is the perception, albeit inaccurate, that upstate sends more money downstate than the other way around. Campaigns waged by upstate highway supporters implicitly critical of the amount of money spent downstate on transit have not been helpful, however positive their objective is to secure adequate funding upstate. I am hopeful that the 2005 Vote Yes for the Transportation Bond Act campaign will allow the state transportation community to come together in a way that will make such strategies a thing of the past.

For the long-term, rather than rely on dominant majorities downstate, a conversation should take place about how to solicit greater upstate support for transportation programs, particularly as it relates to passing Bond Acts or similar proposals. We are one state, and should act as such. Issues of geographic equity and programmatic need, if these are obstacles to popular support – and it is not clear they are – should be addressed. If the past is prologue, this will not be the last Bond Act to be pro-

posed to the voters of New York State. Additionally, we need to make sure that those individuals who come out and vote and are inclined to support the Bond Act, know where to find the ballot question and pull the lever. The number of

“We are one state, and should act as such.”

people who voted downstate in the 2000 election and didn’t pull the lever for the last Bond Act was massive. It is likely if they were educated about the Bond Act and had pulled the lever, it would have passed.

Is the Bond Act a critical test of the transportation sector’s ability to convince voters, on the merits that transportation is crucial to the state’s economic development and quality of life? Is it also a test of the ability of our community to compete successfully at a political level for adequate funding? I believe the answers to both questions are yes. That makes the stakes for the Bond Act vote, which are already quite high, even higher.

So, as we head to November 8, I hope we will be able to celebrate the wisdom of the Governor and the State Legislature in making the Bond Act a central component of the State’s 5-Year Transportation Plan. The alternative is too bleak to talk about, and hopefully we won’t have to. ♦

Elliot G. Sander is Director of the NYU Wagner Rudin Center for Transportation Policy & Management, and Senior Vice President at DMJM Harris.

REBUILD & RENEW NEW YORK TRANSPORTATION BOND ACT OF 2005: AT A GLANCE

The Numbers

Total Bond Act: \$2.9 billion

MTA Projects: \$1.45 billion

- \$326 million - NYCT Core Program
- \$73 million - LIRR Core Program
- \$51 million - MNR Core Program
- \$450 million - East Side Access
- \$450 million - 2nd Avenue Subway
- \$100 million - JFK Rail Link

State DOT Projects: \$1.45 billion

- \$1,139 million - Highway/Bridge
- \$135 million - Port/Rail
- \$76 million - Aviation
- \$50 million - Non-MTA Transit
- \$50 million - Canal

The Geography

40% (\$1.15 billion) of the Bond Act is directed at projects directly within New York City, while 60% is aimed at projects throughout the rest of the State

Of the monies directed toward highway and bridge projects, the share is as follows:

- 40% - Upstate Region
- 23% - Long Island Region
- 23% - New York City Region
- 14% - Hudson Valley Region

Source: 2005 Transportation Memorandum of Understanding

To learn more about the Rebuild and Renew New York Transportation Bond Act, join the MTA Public Forum on October 25, 2005 at NYU from 5:30pm to 7:00pm.

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60 Washington Square South
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ISSUES AND PERSONALITIES

UP CLOSE WITH ENRIQUE PEÑALOSA, FORMER MAYOR, BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

BY JANETTE SADIK-KHAN

An urban expert who, as Mayor of Bogotá, Colombia, instituted a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system that is looked to as a model for other developing countries, Mr. Peñalosa offers his thoughts on the ingredients for a sustainable urban environment in which human beings can develop their full potential.

JSK: What motivated you to become so intensely interested in sustainability/social equity and improved urban life?

EP: Equity has been a life long interest. My father was the head of the Land Reform Institute when I was a child, and at the typical middle upper class schools I attended, there were many families that were threatened by the land reformists trying to take away land, often using eminent domain and against their will, and that got me into conflicts. Urban issues became a key interest to me after my father became the First Secretary General to the Habitat World Conference in the Vancouver in 1976 while I was in college. I had also been obsessed with economic development and how to solve my country's poverty problems. As I became more involved with urban design issues, it was apparent to me that economic development would come sooner or later — economic development was a means to an end while urban design is an end in itself. The way we were making our cities work would influence the way we would live for decades, maybe centuries, and determine to a large extent quality of life and social relationships. A park yields unending happiness to those near it; it's not anything else but happiness in itself.

JSK: What were the key elements in your view of successful changes you implemented in Bogotá?

EP: I would say it was a model which emphasized that a city should be for people, and particularly those most vulnerable members of society — children, the old, the handicapped, the poor. But our cities have been built over the last 80 years much more for cars mobility than for children's happiness. We must have wide sidewalks, the most important ingredient of a quality city, with bicycle ways — on all streets not just main streets — and I mean protected bicycle ways, not just painted lanes. And of course ideally, a whole network of pedestrian streets; not just a few blocks of pedestrian streets downtown, but whole networks of hundreds of kilometers; ideally we should have one square meter of pedestrian-only street, for one meter of car streets. But at least we should aim to have something like one

“A quality city is that in which human beings can most fully develop their potential, their nature and thus be happy....”

meter of pedestrian-only street for five meters of motor vehicle streets. We also need clean parks in all its forms and shapes, plazas, greenways, as well as nurseries, schools, libraries, and of course a quality public transportation system.

JSK: You are known for your leadership in transportation, particularly for developing Bogotá's BRT system. Why do you think it has become a model for other cities in developing countries? And what's your progress report on how it's doing?

EP: I am not proud to say that our democracy is not so sophisticated that our projects were community led. Most of the things we talk about were really conceived and set up by me. Of course, I copied or was inspired by other countries' experiences. That's the case with this giant greenway across the city or the 22 kilometer-long pedestrian promenade through poor neighborhoods of the city or the BRT which was of course copied from Curitiba. Transport is a very peculiar urban challenge because each case is different than all others. First, unlike health, or education, or culture, which get better with economic development, transportation tends to get worse as society progresses. After thinking and thinking, it was clear to me that the only possibility to solve the city's urban transportation challenge was a bus-based mass transit system. Transport is only a means to an end. The end is a high quality city for pedestrians and children. If you want a city for pedestrians and children, private car use must be restricted because there is clearly a contradiction between a quality city and private car use. It is not that I am a private car hater or any such thing. I like cars — to go to the countryside or out at night and all of that. But clearly, there is a contradiction between a city for people and a city for cars. You cannot have both. Either you have one or the other. And that's very clear, the wider the roads are, the faster the cars are going, the less friendly cities become for children and people in general. The only solution is quality public transportation. And for low income developing countries and cities, buses are the only possible form of public transport. Rail is too expensive.

In Colombia, we had a very poor quality bus and transit system as in many developing world cities. There were about 25,000 to 30,000 individually owned buses loosely affiliated to some organizing (or affiliating) companies and they would pick up passengers anywhere. The income of the bus owner and the driver, which often was the same one, would depend upon how many

passengers they would pick up. They would thus race madly to get passengers. They developed a fantastic ability to block three lanes of a main artery as they stopped to fetch one passenger so that the buses behind would not overtake them; they would dump people in the middle of a very congested road, even a woman with small children. Many people were killed in that mayhem. It was not only extremely slow but we had very old, poor quality buses. I had written articles advocating a BRT for decades before I became Mayor and was able to implement it.

JSK: Is there any country that you think has made the jump to a national level plan? Is there any particular community that stands out as a good shining example of sustainable development?

EP: I would say that we don't have many examples of perfect cities, such as those I hope we will have 300 years from now. Cars have devoured cities everywhere. So this type of dream city with very extensive networks of pedestrian and bicycle streets is not abundant. However, I would say the best urban design is to be found in the northern European cities: in the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and some German cities. Again, there are some cities which have dense urban centers which have many interesting characteristics such as people in the street, density, public transport, such as Manhattan. Manhattan is very fascinating in that sense.

I would say that the big challenge internationally is to put together people and the environment. Radical environmentalists often tend to overlook the needs of people and we don't usually put together the two things in the developing world. So, the first thing is to have a good definition of what a sustainable environment is. I would say that sustainable environment for a living creature is one where it is happiest, because it is where it can best fulfill its potential. A dark cave may be the best environment for blind birds or a bats' happiness; the Arctic is the best environment for a polar bear's happiness; the Galapagos Islands are the best environment for the Galapagos Islands' iguanas because in those environments they can most fully use their potential, whatever you understand that to be. A quality city is that in which human beings can most fully develop their potential, realize their nature and thus be happy, for example playing safely, walking, seeing and meeting other people. When we talk about sustainability, the first thing we must remember is that sustainability is measured by human happiness, not just by depletion of resources. So, a wonderful thing happens when one seeks to create an urban

environment for happiness and social integration, where the public good prevails over private interest, where there is inclusion not exclusion. When you do this, you end up with the same type of urban design that the most radical environmentalist would have dreamed up. When you are trying to do environmental design, you end up with the most socially equitable design and vice versa. Normally countries are timid establishing national laws, even parameters, as to what should be done at the local level. I believe there are some policies which could be defined by the law at the national level, such as the minimum width of sidewalks or a mandate that all streets and roads should have physically protected bicycle infrastructure alongside because mobility is a right and cannot be restricted to those who own a motor vehicle. In developing countries, most people do not own a motor vehicle. Therefore, a national law, almost at the constitutional level, should establish design requirements for cities and country roads such that pedestrians and cyclists can move about safely. For example the minimum width of a sidewalk should be one that can comfortably accommodate at least two people on wheel chair side-by-side. We should have requirements for how far a child should grow up from a park or a sports field and for easy access to basic shops. I do believe that many urban design parameters could go into national laws.

JSK: You lived in the New York region and you worked at an office at NYU for several years before returning to Bogotá to run for president. What recommendations would you have for improving the livability and accessibility of New York?

EP: New York is of course a fantastic city with so much life and intensity. However, I think there are many things that could be improved. For example, New York could become a very bicycle friendly city which it is not. We have this dumb parallel parking on streets which some urban designers have recently defended as wonderful for pedestrian protection! I'm not so convinced. I think you could substitute many of those cars parked alongside streets by very wide sidewalks and bicycle ways. They could be protected by some small concrete walk or barrier. With exceptions such as the magnificent Hudson River Park, bicycle ways in New York today are a joke. They are just painted lanes on the streets which no one respects. I have never seen a policeman give a ticket to a driver for violating a bike lane. You could

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Janette Sadik-Khan is Senior Vice President and Transit Director at Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc.



Enrique Peñalosa, former Mayor of Bogotá and a Presidential candidate in Colombia, is an accomplished public official, economist, and administrator. While Mayor of Bogotá (1998-2001), he led a number of transportation-related efforts, stressing access for the impoverished and the need for public spaces. During his tenure, he built or reconstructed hundreds of kilometers of sidewalks, bicycle paths, and greenways and added more than 1,200 parks. A firm believer in the needs of pedestrians, Peñalosa restricted peak hour traffic and convinced the City Council to increase the gasoline tax, directing the resulting revenues toward a new Bus Rapid Transit system that now serves 500,000 Bogotá residents daily. In 2000, he instituted the city's first "Car-Free Day," for which he received the Stockholm Challenge Award.

Peñalosa holds Masters and Doctorate degrees in Management and Public Administration from the Institut International D'Administration Publique and the University of Paris II in Paris. He was a Visiting Scholar at New York University where he worked on a new urban-development model for the Third World. He has been awarded the Eisenhower Fellowship and National Simon Bolivar Prize for Journalism. He has also traveled extensively with the World Bank and the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy.

IN THE REGION

TOWARD A NEW REGIONALISM IN METROPOLITAN NEW YORK

BY GERRY BOGACZ

Is a regional approach to planning and decision-making practical in our expanding, splintered region? The metropolitan region surrounding New York City is a complex, fractured jumble of hundreds of political, administrative, service and planning jurisdictions splayed out across parts of three states. Historically, a combination of increased economic potential and access to underdeveloped land has resulted in a cycle of growth and sprawl in the region that continues to the present. The cycle has spurred and in turn been fed by episodic improvements in modes of transport. When fully realized, each major transportation improvement unleashed development potential that had been building in the growth-sprawl cycle, spurring new economic and population growth that in turn built pressure for further transportation innovations and improvements. As the region grew through this cycle, it naturally fragmented as localities emerged, initially in step with access points to transportation modes. Locations of settlement and economic activity inexorably dispersed, fueled by growth pressures, social desires to leave crowded city environments for more localized control, economic speculation and the improved mobility and accessibility provided by improvements and changes in transportation technology, particularly the development of the roadway system.

Regionalism and Attempts at Regional Structures

Past attempts at developing regional governmental structures and jurisdictions in our region shed light on the question of the practicality of regionalism. The overall history of the region's growth and dispersal into larger and larger physical space is marked by sporadic efforts at large-scale political and administrative consolidation. The impulse toward regionalism can be glimpsed in the steady evolution of county governments in New York and New Jersey through the latter portion of the 19th Century and most of the twentieth, which slowly consolidated small municipalities within a more regional county structure. A particular apex in municipal consolidation was reached in 1898 with the creation of the Greater New York City structure. In this dramatic attempt at metropolitan governance and formal political regionalism, five counties (the five boroughs of New York City), two major cities (the pre-existing City of New York and the City of Brooklyn) and numerous other villages and hamlets banded together in what is now the modern City of New York.

Later attempts at regional governance generally took the

form of multi-jurisdictional compacts, councils, commissions, and districts, and special purpose quasi-governments known as public authorities or public benefit corporations, which either attempted to band municipalities together for specific purposes or, in the case of the authorities and corporations, to impose new administrative and governance structures on pre-existing jurisdictions.

Thus, the early part of the 20th Century saw the emergence of the Port of New York Authority (PANY) as a result of a bi-state compact to administer and improve a common resource, the region's major port. At roughly the same time, a privately-based organization, the Regional Plan Association (RPA), tried to impart a regional focus in metropolitan planning with the publication of the first of its

"...the size, growth and profound fragmentation of the New York Metropolitan region have effectively doomed attempts at large-scale regionalism."

three advisory regional plans. Toward the mid-point of the century, the Tri-State Transportation Committee came together for the purpose of taking a broad overview of the region's transportation resources. Partially in response to new planning requirements for the use of federal funding for housing, transportation, and community development, the Committee was formalized as the Tri-State Regional Planning Commission through a three state compact. Tri-State provided a broad planning framework for the entire region in which to formulate common socio-economic projections for the future and develop plans in that context for the development of communities and transportation resources that would help secure billions of dollars of federal assistance through new legislated programs passed into law in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the 1960s, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) was created to consolidate smaller authorities responsible for mass transportation operations and several bridge and tunnel crossings in a service district covering

New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. Similarly, statewide transit service districts were created in both New Jersey and Connecticut under the jurisdiction of public benefit corporations organized in those states. At roughly the same time, the PANY was reorganized into the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) and its jurisdiction expanded to include the region's airports and several bridge and tunnel crossings, while a statewide authority, the New York State Thruway Authority, was created to construct a statewide tollway that was itself an important part of the regional infrastructure.

The latter half of the 20th Century also saw the emergence of regionalism at a smaller scale. The rapid growth of suburban and later exurban areas in the region after World War II, brought about largely through the construction of regional and interstate roadways, bridges and tunnels, fueled the need for suburban municipalities to work together through special purpose districts to administer schools, sewers and common resources. Smaller scale commissions and councils were formulated to provide regional planning frameworks in suburban areas. Examples include regional planning boards in the Hudson Valley and on Long Island and smaller but still regional planning agencies and councils of government in southwestern Connecticut.

Impacts on Regional Planning

The attempts at regional structure outlined above have had mixed results in terms of the region's planning and overall governance. The more successful structures, such as Greater New York City, endure and continue to provide consolidated and comprehensive administration, planning and governance for a large physical area. However, the march of regional growth and sprawl eventually overwhelmed this attempt, as centrifugal forces deposited a ring of suburbs, and later exurbs, around the 1898 experiment. Similarly, the large regional public authorities have had success at bringing a regional focus to the areas under their jurisdictions. Some of their initiatives, such as the MTA's monumental efforts at rebuilding and restoring large portions of the region's transit infrastructure, are striking examples of successful regional planning and execution. However, the authorities and related public benefit corporations have not been able to generate a truly regional overview or vision since the focus of their planning and

administration has necessarily been on their areas of responsibility.

More broadly based attempts at regional planning have also had mixed results. The RPA has successfully published three regional plans since its inception in the 1920s, which have injected a great deal of regional thinking into the region's planning and policy dialogues. But as a privately-based group, RPA functions as an advocate for its view of regionalism and lacks any jurisdictional responsibility or weight. Its regional visions have not reinforced a stable regional forum for the execution of these ideas and concepts. Such a forum did exist in the guise of Tri-State. However, the Commission ultimately dissolved in 1982 because of these very characteristics and the perception that it had begun to supercede local and state planning and implementation.

The vestiges of Tri-State, ten smaller metropolitan planning organizations in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, have had a checkered history in terms of their impact on regional planning. Formed in the aftermath of Tri-State's dissolution, they were created largely as stop gap measures so that the federal requirements for metropolitan transportation planning could be fulfilled as a prelude to receiving federal transportation funding. The largest of these councils is the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), which serves an area of 12 million people in New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. Next in size is the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, which serves an area of 3 million people in thirteen counties in northern New Jersey. The remaining eight councils, two in the Hudson Valley in New York and six scattered throughout southwestern Connecticut, are much smaller organizations focused on either a single county (the two New York councils) or groups of local municipalities (the six Connecticut organizations). Each of these organizations has been successful in bringing local municipalities, state and federal agencies, and public authorities to a regional planning table for the past twenty-three years in order to fulfill Federal transportation planning mandates and maintain the flow of Federal funds. However, the scope of the collaboration of each of these councils' constituent members has been questioned over time and the impact of the working of the councils on the planning of

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Gerry Bogacz is Director of Planning for the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council.

Letter from the Editors (Cont.)

In this issue, Janette Sadik-Khan, interviews Enrique Peñalosa, former mayor of Bogotá, Colombia, where he created a much heralded Bus Rapid Transit system. He discusses important transportation elements for a livable urban environment.

Closer to home, we deal with another important issue for the region — the need for a unified approach to regional planning and decision-making. Gerry Bogacz contributes to the *Journal* with an article discussing the history of Regionalism in the New York area, lessons learned over the years, and approaches for informal regional planning and decision-making.

Moving from the region to the sub-region, we are following-up this year on our successful "The Boroughs of New York" series with a similar series of articles focused on the suburbs, aptly titled, "The Suburbs of New York." The initial article, by Linda Cooper, shares Westchester and Rockland Counties' experiences with Sustainable Development, a planning and decision making approach that brings together technical staff and communities to address specific transportation-land use issues.

Related is an article on Smart Transportation by Jon Orcutt that describes New Jersey's experiences in linking land use and transportation planning and suggests that similar efforts in New York could also prove successful.

Finally, Hurricane Katrina provided a reminder of the importance of the nation's ports, marine services and related intermodal facilities. Kevin Corbett depicts the need to upgrade this infrastructure throughout the United States, particularly in light of the freight volume forecasts. He outlines the efforts that will be required, focusing primarily on the Port of New York and New Jersey.

As always, we hope you enjoy reading this edition of the *Journal*.



THE SUBURBS OF NEW YORK: WESCHESTER COUNTY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO ADDRESS LOCAL TRANSPORTATION/LAND USE ISSUES

BY LINDA G. COOPER, AICP

"If you build it, they will come." [Field of Dreams] The perception of many in the New York metropolitan area is that once a roadway is expanded it will bring a greater volume of traffic to the community, thus overwhelming the quality of life sought by so many residents in the region. How then to understand and work within the politics of perception, and still maintain our region's mobility? How in this era of individualism with each community seeking to establish its own unique identity does any plan move beyond the confines of home rule to succeed in a regional setting?

One current mantra in transportation planning is to work with local communities in a bottom up "Sustainable Development" process. This blend of land use and transportation planning is rooted in the reality that with ever-dwindling resources to build transportation projects, technical forecasts of a community's development patterns may not be the best way to plan a system that will accommodate transportation demand.

An alternative approach, Sustainable Development incorporates visioning, stakeholder representation, workshops, public meetings and inter-municipal agreements to bring citizens together to ensure roads are not over-



Courtesy of <http://postcards.route-6.com/westchester.html>

whelmed with new development the moment they are built. The approach involves consideration of zoning, land uses, traffic forecasts, roadway system, community character, and environmental constraints to see if they can be reasonably reconciled for future planning scenarios.

During the time lag between funding and building of major roadway projects, there are ever changing faces in the political arenas as elected officials move in and out of office. Often the political identities of one community or another are all tied up in particular postures, which are at odds with neighboring communities. So how to maneuver through this sort of political morass? Sustainable Development studies give some clues as to how to manage this process.

In 1999, Thom Kleiner, Supervisor of Orangetown, Rockland County, and I first pitched Sustainable Development studies for our respective areas to the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC). NYMTC had been seeking interested local officials to take part in pilot tests of this new planning approach. We approached NYMTC to support our request to look at major roadways in our communities and determine how to improve the congestion plaguing us. Mr. Kleiner was concerned about Route 303, where a mixture of businesses existed along a heavily traveled commuter and commercial corridor that bisected Orangetown. I was concerned that three major state routes in the Yorktown vicinity had ceased to function in the way they ought, with constant backups, safety issues, and conflicts between through and locally destined traffic. We proposed looking at the future plans for the reconstruction of the highways (a state responsibility) with an eye toward blending it with land use controls (local municipal responsibility) to see if we could make them work together for a stronger, longer lasting, less congested road network that embraced each community's vision.

Enthusiastically received by NYMTC, these two pilot studies were funded and carried out with consultant support under the oversight and leadership of NYMTC's planning

"An important lesson learned from the experiences to date is the need to align the interests and perspectives of the technical staff with the public and stakeholders."

staff. Multiple charettes and meetings were held to develop draft plans for the Orangetown Route 303 study. Many of the recommendations generated from these sessions have already been implemented, such as signal additions and re-stripping of the roadway. A major intersection redesign has just been added to the most recent Federal transportation bill, which includes medians to control access. An overlay zoning district was adopted to restrict big box development (and the attendant traffic) and encourage smaller scale businesses that the community envisioned as a product of the study. Hamlet center guidelines are being developed as a result of the public input from the study to look at, among other things, site planning issues, architectural elements and community character.

The second study had a slightly more complicated set of issues, spanning three communities of diverse natures in northern Westchester County. The City of Peekskill (22,441 pop, 2000 Census) lies along the Hudson River and is encouraging economic development in an attempt to rejuvenate its tax base. Key to this effort is a plan for residential development along the Hudson River waterfront. The City felt that removing trucks and their related noises from the Main Street downtown area was essential for creating the desired atmosphere. Cortlandt (28,672 pop) and Yorktown (36,318 pop), neighboring suburban municipalities to the east, are more concerned with over development within their borders and the related cost of providing services and efficient roadways. The project team consisted of Westchester County, the State DOT and local representatives as major players, along with the local representatives. A consultant team provided technical support, including transportation modeling.

The Challenges

One of the challenges experienced by the Westchester study was that it took nearly four years to generate a final report with recommendations. Public momentum was lost as the production of the study findings lagged beyond the time when public meetings and stakeholder sessions occurred. The situation was made more difficult by turnover of elected officials, appointees and staff during this time period. Not all of the new players bought into the philosophy that brought us together initially. As political identities are often framed by strident words rather than teamwork, reaching consensus has been a difficult and often-elusive goal.

As we look back, it is not easy to identify any particular impediment that caused the study to take so long. Clearly changing personalities and the need to constantly bring consensus about each step was often responsible for delay. The challenge of translating technical data into understandable policy initiatives and action items that were acceptable to a varied group of municipal boards and agencies posed other time lags. Requests for new information, such as a truck study, access management guidelines, and alternative traffic scenarios, that were not part of the initial scope also added months to the project timetable.

Nonetheless the first phase of the project has been completed. The implementing agencies are moving forward on the short-term recommendations and are in the process of signing an intermunicipal agreement to move forward on the middle and long-range ones. A new Route 6 has been defined and mapped conceptually, and the missing link of the Bear Mountain Parkway connecting to the Taconic Parkway is mapped with a new location that takes into account an adjacent trout stream. The existing section of the Bear Mountain Parkway is slated for many safety improvements, which will then allow trucks to safely traverse it – removing them from Peekskill's city center. Access management initiatives are being looked at to alter the curb cuts along state routes in the interest of maximizing the efficiency of the roadway system. New performance standards are being investigated to limit the potential for overwhelming the state roads with development the roads cannot handle. In addition, both the Towns of Cortlandt and Yorktown incorporated the elements of the Sustainable Development Study into their Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Codes.

The success of these pilot studies has spawned other Sustainable Development initiatives on the East End of Long Island and in the Coney Island-Gravesend area in Brooklyn.

Lessons Learned

An important lesson learned from the experiences to date is the need to align the interests and perspectives of the technical staff with the public and stakeholders. Faced with community outrage, and a

(Continued on page 13)

Linda G. Cooper, AICP, is Supervisor, Town of Yorktown in Westchester County.

Rudin Center Highlights

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, October 18, 2005
8:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

6th Annual Tri-State Transit Symposium

The focus of this year's symposium will be national and regional transit security and the financial future of transit in the region. The Keynote Address will be provided by Peter Kalikow, Chairman of the MTA.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

High Speed Rail Projects in the United States: Identifying the Elements for Success

For almost half a century, high speed ground transportation (HSGT) has held out the promise of fast, convenient, and environmentally sound travel for distances of between 40 and 600 miles. While a number of HSGT systems have been developed and deployed in Asia and Europe, none have even come close to being implemented in the United States. Yet this is not for lack of trying. Indeed, there have been a number of efforts around the country, most of which have failed, some of which are still in the early stages, and a few of which might even come to pass. By way of a broad literature review and interviews, as well as three specific case studies – Florida, California, and the Pacific Northwest – this report articulates lessons learned for successfully developing and implementing high speed rail (HSR) in the United States as well as themes for future consideration. The report is published by the Mineta Transportation Institute at San José State University and will be available shortly on the NYU Wagner Rudin Center website.

For more information on events or publications, please call 212-998-7545 or visit our website at:

www.wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter

SURFACE, AIR, AND WATERWAYS: FOCUSING IN SMART TRANSPORTATION: JOINING LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLANNING IN THE GARDEN STATE

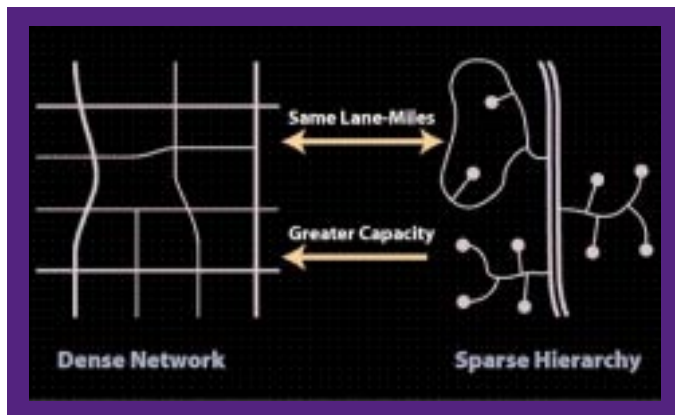
BY JON ORCUTT

Uniting land use and transportation planning has long been seen as an essential step for creating attractive mixed-use communities, promoting development that can relieve rather than aggravate traffic congestion. But the union has been especially difficult to achieve – or even attempt – in states where local control over land use decisions is near absolute and viewed as sacrosanct.

New corridor planning practices now employed in New Jersey constitute the most aggressive attempt yet to grapple with the issue in the Northeastern United States. If they can be institutionalized and made to endure as the state's general approach to traffic congestion, mobility and road capacity, they, together with the New Jersey Transit/New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) transit village initiative, may be a key to revolutionizing American transportation planning in the post-Interstate era. Significantly, the reforms are originating from the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), and they are already attracting attention from state transportation agencies around the United States.

The reason land use is a key to transportation and traffic congestion is clear if one looks at some of the basic transportation and demographic trends in the metropolitan region and the country as a whole – vehicle miles of travel increase consistently and significantly outpace population, economic growth, licensed drivers and registered autos. The march of sprawl and car-dependent development patterns is a major driver of vehicle usage rates and traffic volumes, and thus a chief culprit in the traffic congestion wracking American metropolises.

A 2004 report (“Trouble Ahead”) produced by an advisory group enlisted by former NY State transportation commissioner Joseph Boardman underscored this



Network vs. Suburban Hierarchy Explanatory Diagram

need: “Traffic congestion is often the result of poor land use decisions...New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) must assume a much stronger role in working with local communities, governments and developers on land use decisions.”

That is what the NJDOT is doing. Its experiences under the leadership of New Jersey Transportation Commissioner Jack Lettiere over the last few years are worthy of close examination and adaptation by New York and other states facing severe traffic congestion and tough choices about where best to allocate scarce transportation resources. NJDOT's new perspective grew out of the intensifying focus on smart growth in the Garden State over the past ten years, as well as an increasingly public debate over appropriate transportation investments and whether NJDOT priorities were fostering or containing sprawl development.

The heart of NJDOT's policy approach is dialogue with municipal governments in congested or high growth corridors. NJDOT brings significant planning resources to the table (which may in the past have gone into costly environmental impact statements for road widening projects), but it also carries the message that it is finished chasing traffic congestion caused by development decisions that treat transportation as an afterthought. NJDOT essentially tells communities: “It is your choice not to work with us on land use, but due to limited dollars, we need to restrict our investment to those towns that will.”

Where partnerships have been successfully formed (the case in most of the corridors attempted) they are able to wield planning tools more subtle and effective in the face of traffic congestion than simply adding more pavement.

Along Route 9 in Ocean County, for instance, NJDOT has projected that new lanes would fill with new traffic in a short time. The department's Route 9 project description states that “Rather than widening the road – which would be unsustainable and ineffective in the long term – NJDOT is developing alternatives, including proposing traffic calming measures throughout the corridor and supporting mixed-use development.” The emerging plan, developed in close cooperation with local governments, “will seek integration of local emerging development plans into an overall strategy which creates new centers, walkable communities, and connected street networks.”

Key concepts in NJDOT-municipal corridor plans are transportation network connectivity, collaborative work on transportation-efficient land use design, “build to the street” pedestrian-oriented siting of commercial buildings and charrette processes that closely involve local officials and stakeholders.

In Hunterdon County, NJDOT called off the long-planned Flemington bypass and has instead developed a plan to phase in a new main-street boulevard to complement chronically clogged Route 31. A street grid that could distribute traffic around and between the new boulevard, Route 31 and Route 202 would emerge over time.

NJDOT materials show that an interconnected street grid contains significantly more vehicle-moving capacity than a hierarchical cul-de-sac/collector/arterial system of equivalent lane mileage.

As with any set of large-scale or long-term planning or construction projects, not to mention new policies, not everything has been silky smooth sailing. Some local officials listen to the range of planning tools NJDOT would like to employ and then ask, "Fine, but when are you gonna widen my highway?" In places with no consensus about development goals, NJDOT can run afoul of local conflicts that may not be quickly resolved.

Nonetheless, general reception has been strongly positive. Indeed, the integrated land use/transportation policy has quickly spread from a few planned pilots to over a dozen projects in the program's first 2 years. Commissioner Lettiere explains that as the Department's new priorities and skills unfolded, it simply made no sense to proceed with old-style projects in corridors around the state, and that local reception to NJDOT's approach has generally amounted to: "what took you so long?"

In making its transition from a strictly road-engineering approach, NJDOT has enlisted knowledgeable consultants to advise on the policy changes and to help build new "place-making" and planning capacities within the Department.

The new policy does not necessarily imply a smaller or less active transportation construction program. In addition to its emphasis on mass transit, bike/pedestrian projects and reconnected street networks, it will also allow the Department to increase its effort to reduce the state's serious backlog of pavement and bridge repair needs.

NJDOT's initiative has earned it several awards within the state including the first-ever Smart Growth Award issued by New Jersey Future to a state agency. There are already signs that the NJDOT's transformation is becoming a national

model. A conference on transportation policy reform organized by NJDOT and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation in March 2005 was attended by the leaders of the New Hampshire and Delaware DOTs, as well as delegations from almost all the northeastern states. Most attendees voiced support for the type of new approaches being tried in New Jersey.

"An inclusive planning process that takes local goals into consideration and carefully explains basic transportation needs to stakeholders could save NYSDOT years of conflict."

In downstate New York, there are a number of areas where NYSDOT could begin to exercise the planning leadership demonstrated by NJDOT. In central Suffolk County, NYSDOT aims to widen a group of state highways, but the plans have made a mix of smart growth, civic and business groups and elected officials unhappy for a variety of reasons. An inclusive planning process that takes local goals into consideration and carefully explains basic transportation needs to stakeholders could save NYSDOT years of conflict. The Tappan Zee bridge replacement and mass transit project is likely to arouse a variety of concerns over sprawl induced by Thruway expansion and the viability of some transit options, once the agencies get the currently stalled round of study moving. This complex project may in fact find the path of least resistance through directly discussing and tackling the difficult issues of land use and the future shape of Hudson Valley communities. The standard delay-fraught process of issuing a full-blown agency plan and seeing who challenges it has been largely rendered obsolete in New Jersey by the reforms adopted by NJDOT.

About a decade ago, transportation agencies in the metropolitan began to say: "We cannot build our way out of congestion." But they nonetheless continued to try. Now in New Jersey, the principle is being reflected in practice. ♦

Jon Orcutt is Executive Director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, an advocacy group with offices in Manhattan and Trenton, New Jersey.

NJ TRANSPORTATION FACTS

NJDOT/NJ Transit FY 2005 Capital Budget:

\$2.681 Billion

NJDOT/NJ Transit FY 2005 Operating Budget:

\$1.073 Billion

Vehicle Miles Traveled in New Jersey (2003):

71.262 Billion

NJ Transit 2004 Annual Passenger Trips:

220.1 Million

Rail Passenger Miles Traveled in New Jersey (2004):

1.5 Billion

Bus Passenger Miles Traveled in New Jersey (2004):

885.7 Million

Total Freight Tonnage (2003):

621 Million Tons

Total Highway Carrying Bridges:

6,351

NJ Total Public & Private Use Aeronautical Facilities:

491

Sources: <http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/publicat/Facts/factbook2005.pdf>; http://www.njtransit.com/pdf/an_factsataGlance_FY04.pdf.

their members has been inconsistent at best. Regardless, these metropolitan planning organizations have evolved over their lifetimes and they have found new and innovative ways to pursue and encourage regional planning for transportation and, more recently, land development.

Lessons Learned

What have the various regional impulses that have been expressed over time done for the region as a whole? How have they benefited the region in terms of collaborative planning and administration? As the previous discussion indicates, the results have been decidedly mixed. The region has never had a comprehensive regional vision or overview for its future development that enjoys any true measure of consensus among its constituent stakeholders and governmental entities. The parochial interests of these constituents have largely overridden any regional view and have cast suspicion over the motives of any regional entity which has attempted to advance such a view. Apart from the development of a regional vision, the New York Metropolitan region has also failed to develop any consistent regional forum through which such a vision could be both developed and expressed.

Thus, the lessons to be learned by these examples of failed or superceded regionalism since the late 19th Century are that the size, growth and profound fragmentation of the New York Metropolitan region have effectively doomed attempts at large-scale regionalism; that is, regionalism that is comprehensive in both its structure and its responsibilities. Only smaller, more limited forms of regionalism have had some level of success, but they have indeed contributed to the political and administrative fragmentation that is the hallmark of the metropolitan area.

Prospects for the Future

It appears unlikely that organizational structures will emerge in the coming years that will lead to a larger-scale regional forum. The region's size, complexity, growth patterns and politics have long conspired to suppress this type of organizational formalism at an overarching regional level. However, there are smaller-scale regional structures in place, and the question becomes whether there are effective ways for them to collaborate and forge common ideas and assumptions for the future. A loose confederation of metropolitan planning organizations, other regional boards and other types of regional organizations might feasibly be brought together to explore common issues and chart a future.

Given the limited prospects for the emergence of a larger-scale regional forum, it logically follows that a comprehensive, consensus vision of the region's future is also impractical. Yet there is emerging dialogue between elected officials at various levels about common issues and concerns. This nascent openness to regional dialogue offers an opportunity to establish some basic outlines of a regional vision and should be exploited as much as possible, possibly using the confederation of regional organizations as a platform to build smaller-scale regionalism into a larger scale view. At the very least, this could result in regional planning and decision-making through existing structures that is based on common param-

eters and assumptions for the region's future.

The emergence of a consensus regional vision could naturally lead to an agenda for regional planning and research that addresses issues and initiatives that are outside of the jurisdictions of existing regional organizations. Such an agenda could be a powerful tool for bringing together larger-scale regionalism around issues, thus creating a networked, issue-driven form of regional planning that would likely be less threatening to existing organizations and jurisdictions while pursuing work that affects them but is beyond their individual responsibilities. A regional vision could also lead to shared goals among the constituent organizations. While these goals would likely drive the regional agenda described above, they could also be used to incent planning and decision-making at more local levels that would reinforce the regional shared goals. This think regionally, act locally format could then enlist willing municipalities and agencies in a number of critical activities which, when taken together, result in regional impact.

Conclusions

Even a cursory review of the development of the metropolitan region surrounding New York City highlights competing impulses. I've explored the impulses toward regionalism in some detail. The competing impulses have been toward localism and are best seen in the development of suburban and exurban parts of the region. There has been a consistent tension between the need to establish and maintain more localized control of smaller communities and the need to better manage common resources between communities at a regional level.

The prospects for a new regionalism in the 21st Century seem to lie along the path of exploiting approaches that have worked while acknowledging the limitations of formal regionalism. However, a lack of formality need not result in an absence of regionalism, if the forces of collaboration, research and incentives can be brought to bear in a coherent manner.

Thus, a new regionalism might be built around issues and offer incentives to enlist local interests in regional initiatives. The more that local communities can recognize that participation in regional initiatives, whatever they may be, is in their best interests, the more success those regional initiatives will have in addressing regional issues. Since in many instances, local communities lack resources, both financial and staff, funding and support for regional initiatives can be powerful incentives for them to consider participation.

However, an incentive-based regionalism cannot be scattershot to be ultimately effective. Although it needs to be entrepreneurial in its approach by treating local constituents as its customers, it must also be strategic in how it chooses the issues around which it is built. ♦

In the Suburbs (Cont. from page 9)

lack of participatory sense of "ownership," transportation plans can be quickly scuttled for political expediency. Land use plans can likewise fall by the wayside, victim to a "death of a thousand cuts" by the implementation of individual projects that do not work together as part of a unified plan.

An important caveat is: the politics of perception are not to be underestimated. The challenge before the transportation planning community is how to embrace the changeable concerns of any given community and meld them with the data derived from modeling, past practice knowledge and other technical tools of the trade and make it fit into a current political context.

Key to the success of any project is creating a way for elected officials and participants to feel engaged and see results. Time delays associated with large transportation projects often make this goal elusive. It is critical to have short-term tangible actions that keep stakeholders involved and supportive. Both pilot projects attempted to link competing interests together to make communities work better in regard to traffic patterns, general mobility and pedestrian orientation. The land use elements remind us of the human scale that needs to be blended into each plan.

The issues surrounding home rule are ones that can be combined if unifying elements can be found. Providing funding for only those who work together is one way of providing an incentive. However, finding common ground in resolving congestion, improving ambiance, protecting streams, etc. can be a more positive, energizing way of bringing disparate parties together.

There is often need for a champion. Whether popular or not, each project needs ardent proponents to push various issues and keep everyone focused on the goals. Finally, these issues of personal dynamics and leadership should not minimize the importance of technical expertise to provide impartial evaluations of the merits and drawbacks of alternative solutions.

Although an approach for Sustainable Development can be generalized, there is no magic formula for success in any of these transportation/land use initiatives but rather a panoply of options that keep them moving toward implementation. ♦

International Freight (Cont. from page 16)

country that the status quo was inadequate. Since then US ports have been scrambling to catch up.

Handling a Tidal Wave of Cargo

The problems presented by large ships do not end at the dock, however difficult the environmental and financing hurdles are to getting channels dredged to get the ships there. The land required for an efficient terminal is optimally more than 200 acres. The pressure on the terminal complex once these vessels unload is tremendous. The logistics of staging, storing, dispatching containers to trucks or intermodal rail facilities require major investments in container cranes, rail mounted or rubber tire gantries, gate complexes, maintenance facilities, and computer systems.

Further, after spending billion of dollars on vessels and terminals, cargo still needs to exit the port. Ports like New York and Los Angeles feed millions of containers into the local highway and rail system. Any inadequacy in the infrastructure serving a container terminal can cause congestion that backs up the entire logistics chain. Last year, an import surge in Southern California overwhelmed the Union Pacific Railroad causing a systems failure that stretched all the way to Houston and New Orleans, virtually rendering the Sunset line inoperable. More than 80 vessels were left waiting for berths at congested marine terminals.

The impact on the national economy of last year's west coast problems was enough to get the attention of economists like Federal Reserve Board Chairman Alan Greenspan. The nation's efficient economy now relies on "just in time delivery," which allows companies to minimize inventory. If consumers cannot spend their money on big screen TVs because they are not available, retail sales and related jobs are affected, as are manufacturing plants which need to layoff workers until imported components arrive.

As a reaction to last year's debacle, shipping lines have redirected cargo and ships to other ports in the Pacific Northwest and the East Coast. Some terminals have hired additional labor and are extending hours of operations for truckers to avoid peak periods. While existing systems appear able to handle

(Continued on page 14)

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International Freight (Cont. from page 13)

this year's surge, they are stretched. The question is how much additional capacity can be tweaked out of the system and will there be additional capacity in place when it runs out?

One such approach, having terminals open at night or even around the clock, can only work if warehouses are open to accept deliveries. Most ports are taking steps to increase productivity per acre and velocity of throughput of containers at terminals. The PANYNJ, while still working to have channels deepened to 50' by 2014, has accelerated a number of enhancements to the region's intermodal rail network. To handle double-digit trade growth, however, the nation needs to accelerate investment in the major rail and road corridors over which international cargo, as well as our domestic goods, flow. Achieving this will be no easy feat.

Reclaiming the Lead

Some of America's largest shippers (not to be confused with shipping lines which are "carriers") formed the Waterfront Coalition to push Washington to support corridor improvements that are bottlenecks to the system. The \$2.4 billion Alameda Corridor rail project, which eliminated 200 grade level rail crossing for the railroads serving the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach is seen as a prototype for addressing similar problems in our logistics system. That project, first promoted in 1984 only began to move with the creation of the Alameda Corridor Transport Authority in 1989, and was not completed until 2002. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta does not have that kind of time to face today's challenges.

While the challenges of prioritizing key projects, identifying the optimal blend of private and public resources, and securing necessary funding are formidable, a number of positive factors give one hope. The Coalition for America's Gateways and Corridors, which pushed for dedicated funding in this year's \$286 billion SAFETEA-LU bill, was able to at least get wording that allows states to use funds for such projects. In addition money was set aside for projects of regional or national significance.

President Bush recently appointed former NYSDOT Commissioner Joseph Boardman as head of the Federal Railroad Administration. Boardman, who provided strong leadership in dealing with the Conrail breakup, appreciates the link between transportation to and economic development, and is a strong advocate for developing trade corridors. The current vacancy for Administrator of the Maritime Administration gives President Bush an opportunity to appoint an equally strong counterpart there. If these resources are pulled tightly together many projects could find the critical momentum they need to get off the drawing board.

Closer to home, the demand by major shipping lines for dedicated facilities already exceeds available terminals. The expansion of the New York Container Terminal on Staten Island and the reopening of the State Island Railroad connection to the mainland should be coming on line none too soon. The eventual development of 150 acres of Bayonne Peninsula restricted for maritime use will also help. However, the pressure on the region's road and rail systems continue to present ample challenges.

Fortunately, cooperation between the two states that oversee the Port Authority is good and the Port enjoys experienced, professional management. The relevant economic development entities actively understand and support the Port's role. Labor, the New York Shipping Association, which represents the shipping lines and terminal operators, together with a reinvigorated Maritime Association are in a position to play a strong role in public advocacy.

All these resources need to be utilized to the maximum degree if the nation and this region hope to hold the economic primacy we enjoy today. ♦

Peñalosa Interview (Cont. from page 5)

find many ways to make Manhattan and New York in general safe for cyclists, including children. The streets are wide enough. I dream of a giant pedestrian-only Broadway all the way from downtown to the Tappan Zee Bridge. I also have another dream. New York is a water city, with fantastic waterfronts, bays, rivers, and cliffs. It has water and wetlands all over the place. It is said that when the British arrived in North America, they asked the Indians if they could buy their land. The Indians were puzzled and shocked. Finally, they said "yes, we will sell you the land, and if you want we can sell you the moon and the air as well." Because it was so absurd that you could own something that God had given to humanity for its enjoyment and happiness. There are some pieces of land that should never be sold that are so unique that they should never exclude anyone. Waterfronts, particularly urban and suburban waterfronts should always have pedestrian infrastructure to facilitate their accessibility and they should be publicly owned. In New York, this is not the case at all. Wealthy people have appropriated the Long Island Sound waterfront with the exception of few parks here and there. Full democracy would lead all Long Island Sound waterfronts to have public access with some pedestrian infrastructure – hundreds of miles long. It seems to me that the essence of democracy is that public good should prevail over private interest.

JSK: We have a lot of information on humanity's environmental footprint and the dire consequences to come if we keep doing what we are doing, i.e. maintaining the status quo. People are either skeptical on plans to improve the urban fabric or have given up but you have a really optimistic view. What keeps your optimism fueled?

EP: The type of cities we have today and the type of human environment designed just for cars is a recent phenomenon in world history. We have had cities for five thousand years; we have had cars on a significant scale only for the last 80 years and even less in most places. So this is human nature to make mistakes but in the past there were some horrible living environments as well. For example, we see London in 1800 or 1850, as a horrible living environment. Yet, it was seen then as the most advanced city in the world. In a similar vein, I believe that in the future people will see our cities a little like we see London of 1800 today. We have much more clarity today as to how should cities be than a few decades ago. Even in China where I see some terrible urban mistakes, cities covered up with elevated highways, we have begun to see some very fascinating experiments of neo-cities – much more pedestrian and mass transport based. Chinese cities are realizing that at least 40% of their population moving by bicycle is not something to be ashamed of but some-

thing to build upon. I am optimistic that things can change. One of the most difficult things to change is the low density suburban development of the United States. I really don't see much of a solution to that end but I am sure there is a means. One thing that low density really teaches us is really ironic: car-dependent suburbs have been created because people were seeking relatively car-free environments for their children to play safely. People seek two things in the suburbs – relatively car-free environments for children to play and green. We have to learn that those are very powerful needs people have. For many millennium people would only try to survive and now we are beginning to LIVE. So now we understand for example that people need to be with people. Tourists like to go to Manhattan rather than to Houston because it is more fun to walk on Manhattan sidewalks and look at people. People go to the shopping malls mostly because they want to see people although it is not the ideal place to see people. But we are learning. All I'm trying to say is we are learning and I am relatively optimistic. For example, when Central Park in NY was created NY was poorer and had a lower income per capita than most developing countries cities today. I don't see much similar to Central Park in the developing world. We have to understand more about the importance of parks, of pedestrian streets but I do believe it is possible to organize a modern, dynamic, international, cosmopolitan city in a much more sustainable way. We have very interesting models which may not be perfect but which are really very close to what we should want. In some areas we should be nearer to some northern European countries. Bicycles are a key ingredient. As bicycles have such simple technology – we think that bicycles have existed forever. In fact they are only about as old as cars and in more functional models even less so. Bicycling is almost a more efficient form of walking. Cities in the future will have to be cities basically for walking. Cities will have to be places where people like to be in public spaces. A city is a good city when people want to be out of their house often and for extended periods, meet their neighbors and in general see people, shopping is near where they live and even children can ride bicycles everywhere safely. Protected bicycles-ways have to become as essential as sidewalks; astonishingly many American suburbs do not even have sidewalks! There shouldn't be one single street without a protected bicycle way. They are just as important as sidewalks. As I talk to you, I am looking out the window into downtown Salt Lake City and about 60% or 70% of the space that I see is cov-

ered by open air parking lots. I don't see one single person in the street despite the fact that it is Sunday at 9 a.m. I don't see one single person walking or jogging in the street. I just see cars parked and cars moving about. Oh, I see one lonely person walking far out there. So I would say if flying saucers were to come here, they would report back to base that the living things in this world were some metallic things with four wheels. This is really a very sad human environment.

JSK: Well you've given us some good recommendations and thoughts on what the future holds. I'm going to turn now to what you are doing now and what does your future hold. What's the status of your presidential campaign?

EP: In Colombia the incumbent president has changed the Constitution so that he can be re-elected. It is as if a popular American president promoted a constitutional reform so that he could be re-elected a third time. Normally reforms relating to electoral matters do not enter into effect immediately so as not to benefit the government that promotes the changes. I think he is a good president but the procedure is not. The Congress approved it so now it is before the Constitutional Court. They will make a decision soon. This president is very popular but luckily I have good popular support as well. I would say that if the president can be re-elected, it will be difficult to win, but I still think I can make a significant contribution. Our politics tend to be a little less personally offensive than here; I have a good relationship with the incumbent president. In any case, if by chance the Constitutional Court rules that the procedure to change the constitution is not valid, then I have a very good chance of becoming president next year. ♦

CORRECTION :

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Thanks to Munsun Park, Joe Trainer, and Jeff Zupan for pointing out that the photo caption in, "A Unique Island with Unique Transportation Issues," should have stated that tolls on the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge are charged on the Staten Island-bound side, *not* the Brooklyn-bound side.

COUNCIL ON TRANSPORTATION

Representing major private and nonprofit sector organizations, the Council on Transportation is a bipartisan group created by the Rudin Center, committed to improving transportation in the downstate New York region, especially in New York City. The Council acts as an Advisory Board to the Rudin Center.

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International Freight Goods Movement – Will It Come If We Don't Build It?

By **KEVIN S. CORBETT**

Economic growth and higher living standards are best served by the expansion of free trade in which physical movement of goods is not restrained. For generations, while Europe was fragmented and Third World and Communist Bloc nations were resisting capital intensive investment in infrastructure as a threat to traditional jobs, America's ability to move domestic and international freight was the envy of the world. However, with the end of the Cold War, the rapid rise of Asian economies, and the existence of oil producing nations loaded with cash, the picture has changed.

Billions of dollars have been spent in other parts of the globe to deploy the infrastructure required by export-led economic development. Container terminals in China that can handle millions of shipping containers per year are being designed, permitted, and built within a few years. However, while energy and transportation infrastructure are the backbone of economic growth, US shortcomings in both these areas undermine our competitive position at the very moment our economy is relying on international trade for an ever-increasing percentage of US GDP.

A Changing Industry Poses New Problems

Except in times of war marine transportation, by which 99% of US international commerce moves, was never a top priority. New York, however, was always an exception. Lower Manhattan around the Battery, and later the World Trade Center, were home to a large, politically influential industry composed of shipping lines, tug boat companies, forwarders, custom house brokers, seafarer and longshoremen's unions, and other related businesses and organizations. Until the late 1980s, not only was the Port of New York/New Jersey (PoNYNJ) large from an operational perspective, it was like London, a global business center for the maritime industry. Companies leading the trends in global trade and transport, such as United States Lines and Sea-Land

Services, were American-owned and based in the port district.

Yet today, when international trade as a percentage of US GDP has risen to nearly 25% (compared to 10% in 1970), the companies most directly involved in private sector investment have become far more removed from those responsible for providing the infrastructure necessary to support them. In 2004, 25 container ship companies (those transporting manufactured or semi-manufactured goods) carried 82% of the world's containers. Of those 25 companies, none are American-owned.

The ports to handle these ships are also changing. Twenty years ago a Sea-Land 'Atlantic Class' vessel carrying 3,400 TEU (twenty foot equivalent unit – the industry standard measurement for cargo containers) was daunting, but the PoNYNJ was one of the largest in the world and able to accommodate it. Now vessels of 4,000 to 6,000 TEU are being replaced by those of 6,000 to 8,000 TEU, and a number of lines have vessels of 10,000+ TEU on order for delivery. The three largest container ports in 2004 were in Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore, and Shanghai). The PoNYNJ was the fifteenth largest, handling 4.48 million TEU, compared with Shanghai's 14.56 million TEU.

Although many involved in the Europe/Far East trade routes saw such changes coming, the United States was given a wake up call in July 1998 by the world's largest container ship owner, A.P Moller of Denmark.

The Regina Maersk, a vessel carrying over 6,000 TEU and requiring up to 50' draft in New York's 40' deep navigation channels sailed up the Hudson with much media fanfare to drive home to the Port Authority and others in this

(Continued on page 13)

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