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November 13, 2018

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heather Murakami, City Council Administration

FROM: Dion Mesta, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Elefante *DM*

SUBJECT: 2018 Rail~Volution Conference | Building Livable Communities with Transit

Attached, please find my 2018 Rail~Volution Conference report which was held from October 21-24, 2018, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Attachment

Rail~Volution Conference 2018
“Building Livable Communities with Transit”
October 21 – 24, 2018
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Travel Report submitted by Dion Mesta
Office of Councilmember Brandon Elefante
Honolulu City Council, City & County of Honolulu

Sunday, October 21, 2018

Workshop: Introduction to Ecodistricts: Moving on with Ecodistrict Planning

This workshop discussed the Ecodistrict Protocol. The Ecodistrict Protocol provides a guideline for scalable solutions to some of the planning issues and challenges faced such as income, education, and health disparities, climate change, and urban growth. The Protocol is based on three imperatives: equity, resilience, and climate protection. It stresses the importance of equity, cities identifying the communities that are most vulnerable to change, and working to ensure that these communities have the opportunity to meaningfully participate, lead, and most importantly, thrive. It also stresses the importance of cities addressing resilience with a broad view and preparing for social, economic, and environmental events. Climate protection is the third imperative where district teams must create avenues towards carbon neutrality.

The speakers also discussed six priorities—place, prosperity, health and wellbeing, connectivity, living infrastructure, and resource restoration—as well as the three steps of the implementation phase—formation, roadmap, and performance.

The workshop provided a walking tour of the Pittsburgh Borough of Millvale to see and discuss how it used the Ecodistrict Protocol to transform itself to become a more viable, vibrant community. During the tour we visited key locations that served as early wins that highlighted the Millvale Ecodistrict as a leader in crafting an Ecodistrict framework for community planning. evolveEA and its Millvale partners have earned two national American Planning Association (APA) awards for their Ecodistrict Pivot Plan. Our group visited the Millvale Community Library. The library was one of the first of Millvale’s many successes as its first ever public, non-profit library in Millvale. The library took approximately five years to complete and now serves as the center and heart of the community providing for educational and occupational programs and community-based support for children and families in the area.

Access to fresh food is also an issue in Millvale as more than one-third of Millvale’s population lives more than a one mile away from a grocery store. In order to address sustainability, remedy this “food desert,” and provide fresh local food to the area, Millvale looked to create the Gardens of Millvale, a volunteer led community garden set up to transform the ecodistrict into an urban farming leader. Their goal is to provide 95 percent of the food needs for Millvale’s future restaurant cluster.

Welcome Reception at the Pennsylvanian

Later that evening I attended the welcome reception at the Pennsylvanian. Originally constructed in the 1900’s for use as Pittsburgh’s Union Station, it is now considered one of Pittsburgh’s most architecturally significant buildings. This provided another opportunity to network and meet other attendees.

Monday, October 22, 2018

Opening Plenary

Welcome to Pittsburgh and the Region

Rich Fitzgerald, County Executive, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
Bill Peduto, Mayor, City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Welcoming remarks and comments were made by Rich Fitzgerald, Allegheny County Executive, and Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto. They discussed Pittsburgh's past and their vision for Pittsburgh. They touched on topics related to diversification, the increase of young people moving to Pittsburgh, technological advances with autonomous vehicles, natural gas, as well as challenges with transportation and infrastructure with respect to keeping up with the new demands held by a new generation that wants to utilize different modes of transportation. They discussed Carnegie Mellon University and its work on robotics, artificial intelligence, and innovation—eds and meds is the new steel. Mayor Peduto explained that transportation is more than getting people from point A to point B; it is a way to change social mobility—from poverty to middle class and from middle class to the upper class. He talked about changing the system, making it more about people, providing room for multi-modal options, and solving problems at a local level.

The Pittsburgh Story: Where We've Been, Where We're Going

Moderator, Majestic Lane, Deputy Chief of Neighborhood Empowerment, Office of the Mayor, City of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Stefani Pashman, Chief Executive Officer, Allegheny Conference on Community Development, Pittsburgh, PA

Katharine Eagan Kelleman, AICP, Chief Executive Officer, Port Authority of Allegheny County, Pittsburgh, PA

Diana Bucco, President, Buhl Foundation, Pittsburgh, PA

Panelists discussed challenges to creating livable communities and workable space, focusing on core customers, the importance of equity, as well as the importance of customer engagement to create short to long term transit goals. They discussed urban sprawl and legacy challenges to make the business case for funding and investing in transit, the importance of focusing on equity and multi-modal options, and how you can't work on equity when you have independent systems. They underscored the importance of integrated systems for long-term sustainable societies. When attempting to install new lines or routes, it is important to engage with the core customers, bring people together to experience it as a group, and create a great experience. When using technology to bring equity, it is crucial to ensure that people have equal access and that technology is used effectively to better their experience.

Fighting for the Movement: A time of Unprecedented Threats

Earl Blumenauer, Congressman, 3rd District, Oregon; Board Member, Rail~Volution

Congressman Earl Blumenauer discussed curbing single occupant vehicles, getting people to walk, and making low tech "cool." He spoke on needing to change the way we do business and that business developments in transit should not be inflicted on the community.

Mobile Tour: Mobility Optimization Along Smart Spines

I participated in a walking tour of the Oakland neighborhood, also known as Pittsburgh's second downtown, its eds and meds district and the innovation district, where top-tier universities are paving new paths in the mobility industry. We took a tour of the Oakland Business Improvement District and visited the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University. Speakers discussed Scalable Urban Traffic Control (SURTRAC) and advantages when it comes to optimizing signals for the actual traffic on the road, coordination for networks, not just arterials, optimization for multiple travel modes, and scalable, incremental deployment. In its Pittsburgh deployment, they found 25 percent lower travel times, 40 percent less idling, 30-40 percent fewer stops, and 21 percent lower emissions.

Speaker Alex Pazuchanics, with the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure in the City of Pittsburgh, talked about the new department and its goals. The goals include access to fresh fruits and vegetables with 20 minutes travel from home without a private vehicle for every residents; all trips less than one mile away are easy and enjoyable to achieve by non-vehicle travel by all ages and abilities; the combined cost of transportation, housing, and energy does not exceed 45 percent of household income for any income quintile; travel time for all modes are reliable and predictable; infrastructure assets reflect the values of the city; and most importantly, that no one dies or is seriously injured while traveling on city streets. Some goals of the innovation program include using technology to quantifiably improve public services that respond to stakeholder needs, create a data utility that public-private and NGO users can build on top of, explain your values to technology companies whose business models rely on access to the public trust and use the right levers, not just a convenient one, and leverage partnerships to build market power in the service of public goals.

A Car-Light Life: Analyzing TOD and Access to Transit

Moderator, Meg Fencil, Program Director, Sustain Charlotte, Charlotte, NC

Michael Krantz, PE, LEED AP-ND, Development Analyst, Metro Transit, Minneapolis, MN

Ian Carlton, PhD, Project Director/Co-Founder, ECONorthwest, Portland, OR

Joe DiStefano, Principal/Co-Founder, UrbanFootprint, Berkeley, CA

Meg Fencil spoke on questions that transit planners face when it comes to getting riders access to transit and ensuring that investment and policy are aligned with those goals. She also touched on challenges that she has encountered in her city with the lack of sidewalks and crosswalks. She discussed the program Walk2Transit: Better Bus Stops, which focuses on resident-centered education and aims to reduce senior mobility challenges.

Ian Carlton discussed autonomous vehicles and two potential futures: ghost trips taken by the young and old and the potential for more vehicle miles traveled with 10 percent of vehicles as well as how autonomous vehicles may be heavily used by seniors, millennials, and children.

Joe DiStefano talked about how the first end-to-end platform dedicated to urban planning technology is struggling to keep up. He also talked about Urban Footprint, a cloud-based urban planning software built by urban planners and designers which provides actionable data, scenario building, and multi-metric analysis that is all in one place and accessible from anywhere. He discussed the importance of having access to extensive data and advanced scenario planning and how network analysis was expensive.

During the moderated discussion, panelists discussed bringing more relevant information to the public early in the planning process, how planners need to communicate with other agencies, how planners can analyze what services are critical, how planners can use data to look at transit-oriented development (TOD) through an equity lens, and how the job accessibility method is not useful without considering the different nuances.

Hacking the Single-Family Neighborhood, One ADU at a Time

Moderator, Frankie Levington, Public Affairs Specialist, Metro, Portland, OR

Kol Peterson, Owner, Accessory Dwelling Strategies, Portland, OR

Helen Leung, Co-Executive Director, LA-Más, Los Angeles, CA

Kol Peterson discussed accessory dwelling units (ADU) in Pittsburgh and how it allows attached ADUs and does not require an additional parking stall if one is built. The speaker discussed issues with ADUs and how it doesn't add as much value to property as it takes to build, that economic incentives must be long-term, how the vast majority of ADUs are unpermitted, and that opposition normally involves parking impacts and changes to the neighborhood's character.

Helen Leung discussed California Senate Bill 1069 and Assembly Bill 2299, permits issued by Los Angeles County in 2017, her non-profit's work with Genesis LA for ADU loans, and Los Angeles County's ADU pilot program as a strategy to combat homelessness. The pilot program intends to pilot an ordinance, pilot a financial incentive program, offer a \$75,000 forgivable loan to three selected homeowners, and rent new ADUs to a formerly homeless family or individual for 10 years. She also discussed the Backyard Homes Project, which aims to support the creation of more affordable housing units in the City of Los Angeles for Section 8 voucher holders. She mentioned that 40 percent of Section 8 vouchers are forfeited because of the lack of available housing options for voucher holders in the rental market.

Tuesday, October 23, 2018

Second Plenary

The Times, They Are a Changin': New Mobility and Transit

Emcee, Robin Hutcheson, AICP, Director of Public Works, City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis, MN

Jarrett Walker, Principal Consultant, Jarrett Walker + Associates; Blogger on HumanTransit.org, Portland, OR

Joseph Okpaku, Vice President of Public Policy, Lyft, San Francisco, CA

Aniela Kuzon, Global Lead, City of Tomorrow Challenge, Ford Motor Company, Detroit, MI

Jarrett Walker discussed how land use and transit come together, addressing new modes of mobility, autonomous vehicles and new technology, axiomatic certainty, and how it's all about geometry and how technology won't change geometry. He touched on how Uber decreases parking demand but increases demand for lane space and adds new vehicle miles traveled, how autonomous vehicles create an induced demand and, if it's easier to travel, people will most likely use that mode of transportation more. Additionally, he talked about fixed-route networks being the key to urban freedom and how the rigidity of the line gives you more freedom and how it needs to be scalable, how really good transit runs in a straight line, and how tradeoffs must be looked at with what the customer wants and what can be done.

Transit has to work for everyone or it doesn't work for anyone. Transit should be scalable for the vast majority.

Aligning Resources for Equitable TOD

Moderator, Alyia Gaskins, Assistant Director of Programs/Health, Center for Community Investment, Washington, DC

Maggie Super Church, Senior Advisor, Conservation Law Foundation, Boston, MA

Thatcher Imboden, TOD Manager, Sound Transit, Seattle, WA

Alyia Gaskins discussed challenges with financing ETOD partnerships, the Center for Community Investment, and capital absorption network, which involves shared priority, pipeline, and an enabling environment.

Thatcher Imboden discussed Sound Transit's 80-80-80 policy that offers 80 percent of suitable surplus property to affordable housing developers that make at least 80 percent of units on site affordable to people earning 80 percent or less of area median income (AMI). She discussed the implementation process and provided a case study on Roosevelt Central.

Maggie Super Church discussed the Conservation Law Foundation and the Healthy Neighborhoods Equity Fund (HNEF), a closed private equity fund which raised \$22.35 million and fills the equity funding gap for mixed use, mixed income real estate projects in transitional neighborhoods. HNEF invests in TOD projects that have the potential to provide attractive risk-adjusted returns for investors, transform neighborhoods, strengthen community and environmental health, and promote regional equity. The target returns for the fund to Class A investors is 8 percent. HNEF seeks to provide financing for high-impact projects not otherwise possible in transitional neighborhoods in partnership with public investment. The speaker also talked about how it was more than financial returns, but also about walkability, health and wellbeing, and access to housing.

Tour of Ansaldo STS USA

Move Oahu Forward arranged a tour of Ansaldo STS USA in Pittsburgh where Honolulu's rail cars are manufactured. Jason G. White, Chief Executive Officer North America, provided a presentation and tour of the headquarters.

Wednesday, October 24, 2018

ETOD: Approaches to Incentives from All Over

Moderator, Devin Culbertson, Senior Program Director, Enterprise Community Partners, Portland, OR

Ahmad Abu-Khalaf, Research Analyst, Enterprise Community Partners, Washington, DC

John Swartz, CPE, LEED AP, Transportation Planning Manager, AECOM, Los Angeles, CA

Nkosi Yearwood, Urban Planner, Montgomery County, Maryland, Hyattsville, MD

Lena Andrews, AICP, Senior Development Officer, Action Housing, Pittsburgh, PA

Meea Kang, Senior Vice President, Related California, San Francisco, CA

Speakers discussed using physically-owned parcels to boost ETOD, offering more sites at discounted prices to developers, Washington State legislation which allows for a pipeline of inventory which can be offered

at a discount, improving disposition in public process, public sites to be developed and managed competing goals and interests, improving solicitation of competing process, aligning affordable housing resources, and the need to establish dedicated sources of capital to affordable housing development on publicly-owned parcels.

Panelists discussed aligning priorities, expectations and reality, consideration of timeframe, inclusionary costs, providing subsidies to cover market spread, flexibility, bringing resources to the table, clearing environmental hurdles, and providing infrastructure. They spoke on Shady Grove Station and White Flint Plan Area case studies and on-site assembly and projects in the county with 20 plus units having to offer 12.5 percent of units as affordable housing and up to 60 percent AMI. Discussion focused on TOD/c financial incentives in Los Angeles County and issues with the 15 percent decline in transit ridership overall, housing crisis shortfall of 500,000 homes, and solutions from initiatives by LA Transit called Measure M. Some solutions include transit-oriented community (TOC) initiatives and funding strategies to include joint development, TOD planning grants, TOC loans programs, and other transit support tools.

Closing Plenary

Emcee, Beverly Scott, PhD, CEO, Beverly Scott Associates LLC, Albany, CA

Sarah Ross, Director System Planning, Transportation Planning and Policy, Translink, New Westminster, British Columbia

Robin Rather, Chief Executive Officer, Collective Strength, Austin, TX

Dan Bartholomay, Chief Executive Officer, Rail~Volution, Minneapolis, MN

Invitation to Rail~Volution 2019 in Vancouver, BC, provided by Sarah Ross.

Millennials, #MAGA and Muddled Messaging: How to Win

Robin Rather discussed the top ten essentials community checklist. The checklist includes excellent listening and research outreach that cares more about people than the parcel itself, system design that deeply reflects the listening starting with those most disinvested and working out from there, inspiring key audiences including neighborhoods/community/schools/churches, getting elected officials and key influencers on board, the base fired up, and the rest of the grassroots groups aligned with the base, small and large business leaders on board, anticipate what the opponents will do, execute and respond, and repeat this cycle continuously.

Ms. Rather discussed some core problems in framing transit, sticking with smart growth and new urbanism framing from the 1990's, continuing the pattern of systemic racism versus gentrification and displacement in an effort to get developers to buy in, cultural competence about rural needs, focusing on place making maps and stats instead of people and connections, not communicating a unifying bold vision of the future and the role of transit in it. The speaker discussed shifting from the new urban framework and to stop focusing on cities, stop focusing on placemaking, stop using the smart growth lexicon about sprawl, and to not start using increasingly "geeky Smart City lexicon." Instead, focus on people and unifying people with a vision of people surviving and thriving in a world that is no longer dystopian, focus on rail/transit as the key to rebuilding the urban, suburban, and rural areas, actually fund and implement the equity recommendations—all of them first, not as an afterthought, focus on transit as the unifying network that connects us at a time of stressful disconnection, connecting us to jobs, opportunities, education, new places, medical needs, and to ourselves.

The speaker also discussed implementing equity recommendations, including the investment in transit service and capacity which should directly address inequalities and access to transportation, transit access practices such as fair policy should target high need communities, dialogue between transit leadership and communities can build clearer understanding of needs by reducing resistance to transit projects or changes, transit planning should account for housing affordability and improve access to and from affordable housing, transit operations and capital projects should support employment in low-income communities, and transit agencies should decriminalize fare evasion.

Closing comments were provided by Dan Bartholomay.

The Rail~Volution Conference 2018 provided extensive educational opportunities to collaborate and network with dozens of local, regional, and national stakeholders from all levels of public and private sectors who work on transportation projects all around the country. The conference provided the opportunity to ask questions and discuss ideas with respect to transit-oriented development, transit-oriented communities, affordable housing, accessory dwelling units, transportation equity, adjusting to and planning around new modes of transportation, as well as what has and has not worked in different cities with community leaders, city planners, elected officials, and housing advocates. I learned about new innovations and how other cities are facing similar challenges as Honolulu. These various strategies used by our counterparts around the nation to help overcome obstacles related to public transportation can help provide guidance and solutions for the transit issues facing our City here in Honolulu.

City Council
City and County of Honolulu

CLAIM FOR TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Date: 11/08/18

Traveler: Dion Mesta

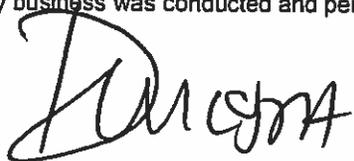
Event: RailVolution 2018

Location: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Dates: From October 21, 2018 To October 24, 2018

Description	Amount	Notes:
1. Registration Fee		
2. Airfare		
3. Hotel	940.50 ✓	Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh Downtown
4. Meals	174.03 145.62 ✓	
5. Ground Transportation	71.63 ✓	
6. Tips	41.40 39.54 ✓	Meals and tip for housekeeping
7. Other	60 ✓	UA Baggage Fees
Other		
Other		
8. Adjustment		
TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT	1257.26 ✓	

This is to certify that the above data, based upon receipts submitted to Council Administrative Support Services via a CCLTRVL02 form, is accurate. Further, I am claiming reimbursement for expenses associated with a trip in which City business was conducted and personal funds were used to advance payment:



Signature of Traveler

11/08/18

Date