



SJSU Research Center
210 N. Fourth St., 4th Fl.
San José, CA 95112

Tel // 408.924.7560
Fax // 408.924.7565

www.transweb.sjsu.edu

Board of Trustees

Founder

Hon. Norman Y. Mineta

Honorary Co-Chairs

*Congressman James Oberstar
Congressman John L. Mica*

Chair

William W. Millar

Vice Chair

Mortimer Downey

Executive Director

Hon. Rod Diridon, Sr.

Ronald Barnes
Rebecca Brewster
Donald H. Camph
Thomas Carper
Anne P. Canby
Jane Chmielinski
William Dorey
Nuria I. Fernandez
Steve Heminger
Hon. John Horsley
Will Kempton
Brian Macleod
Hon. Norman Y. Mineta
Stephanie L. Pinson
Hans Rat
Dean David Steele
Paul A. Toliver
Michael S. Townes
David L. Turney
Edward Wytkind

For immediate release
Contact: Donna Maurillo
831-234-4009
maurillo@mti.sjsu.edu

Mineta Transportation Institute Publishes Report on Influence of Service Planning Decisions on Rail Transit Success or Failure

Researchers Brown and Thompson analyzed 11 major US metropolitan areas to determine what makes a successful, productive system.

San Jose, Calif., December 4, 2009 – The [Mineta Transportation Institute](http://www.mineta.org) (MTI) has published [*The Influence of Service Planning Decisions on Rail Transit Success or Failure*](#). This study by Jeffrey Brown, PhD, and Gregory Thompson, PhD, examines 11 US metropolitan areas with populations of 1-5 million to understand why rail transit systems in some areas are successful and others are not. Of particular interest is how service planning decisions facilitate transit success.

The research found that successful transit systems articulate a clear, multi-destination vision for regional transit; rely on rail transit as the system's backbone; recognize the importance of travel outside the central business district; encourage transfers to reach more destinations; recognize that rail transit alone is not enough to guarantee success; and recognize the importance of serving regional destinations.

“Based on our definitions of ridership success and productivity success, two metropolitan areas emerge as leaders: Portland and San Diego,” said Dr. Brown. “Portland ended the researched period with the largest riding habit and percentage growth in riding habit, along with a very large increase in productivity. San Diego's riding habit increased by almost 30 percent, almost tied with Denver and Atlanta, but lower than Portland and Miami.”

For this study's purposes, riding habit success means that transit patronage (passenger miles) keeps pace with or exceeds population growth. Service productivity success means that a metropolitan area's transit agencies experience productivity increases or declines less severe than the national average. (National service productivity fell 14% from 1984-2004).

Metropolitan areas included in the research were Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver, Miami, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Pittsburgh, Portland OR, Sacramento, Salt Lake City, San Diego, and San José CA.

The free report can be downloaded from www.transweb.sjsu.edu. Click “Research” and then “Publications.” Scroll down to the report.

ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

JEFFREY BROWN, PhD, is Assistant Professor and Master's Program Director in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida State University. He holds a PhD in Urban Planning from UCLA. His research explores the role of public transit in decentralized environments, the influence of finance and professionalization on the evolution of transportation planning and development of the American freeway, and topics in transportation finance and state and national transportation policy. He has published articles on these topics in several professional journals.

GREGORY THOMPSON, PhD, joined the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida State University in 1988, after completing a post-doctoral fellowship at the Hagley Museum and Library, doing historical research about the Pennsylvania Railroad. He has been a transportation planner at the metropolitan and state levels in the US and abroad. He has published in professional and academic literature on transportation topics. His book, *The Passenger Train in the Motor Age: California 1910–1941*, was published in 1993 by Ohio State University Press. His major research interest is studying the role of public transportation in auto-dominated societies, historically and today.

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE:

The [Mineta Transportation Institute](#) (MTI) was established by Congress in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was reauthorized under TEA-21 and again under SAFETEA-LU. The institute is funded by Congress through the US DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, by the California Legislature through the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and by other public and private grants and donations, including the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The US DOT selected MTI as a national "Center of Excellence" following a 2002 competition.

The Institute has a Board of Trustees whose internationally-respected members represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management resulted from a board assessment of the industry's unmet needs and led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute's home. MTI conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer focusing on multi-modal surface transportation policy and management issues. Visit www.transweb.sjsu.edu

###