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Research finding: California high-speed rail can bring positive urban transformations if cities consider complementarities with other station cities and how to integrate their station in the region

Free MTI report lists ten planning recommendations for certain cities along the route.

San Jose, Calif., March 6, 2012 – The [Mineta Transportation Institute](http://transweb.sjsu.edu) (transweb.sjsu.edu) has published a report that develops recommendations for planning, designing, and programming areas around California high-speed rail stations. *Planning for Complementarity: An Examination of the Role and Opportunities of First-Tier and Second-Tier Cities along the High-Speed Rail Network in California* draws from case studies of cities in Northern and Southern California. Principal investigator was Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, PhD, with assistance from several other researchers. The 223-page report is available for free PDF download from transweb.sjsu.edu/project/1030.html

“The report notes that the coming of California High-Speed Rail (HSR) offers opportunities for positive urban transformations in first-tier and second-tier cities,” said Dr. Loukaitou-Sideris. “Our research team explored the different but complementary roles that these cities along the HSR network can play in leveraging the HSR to achieve positive urban transformations.”

The research had four objectives:

- to understand the important preconditions for positive HSR station area development and how these may differ between first-tier and second-tier cities
- to assess the degree to which key economic, urban design, real estate market, and municipal behavior preconditions are present in two first-tier cities and their adjacent second-tier cities on California’s HSR network
- to examine how California station cities are preparing for HSR
- to propose policy and urban design recommendations to foster positive development and complementarity in California’s station cities

At least in European and Asian contexts, the study found that HSR stations in first-tier cities play a different role in catalyzing development than stations in second-tier cities, are likely to experience different positive and negative urban form impacts, and require different preconditions for successful development. Such examples imply that HSR is likely to redistribute growth in California, and the benefits and burdens of providing HSR will be unevenly distributed.

Dr. Loukaitou-Sideris noted, “We also found that there is quite a lot of variation among California’s second-tier cities in terms of context – urban, suburban, exurban, and rural – local economy, preexisting local assets, municipal behavior, distance from first-tier cities, etc. Such variables are likely to affect potential development impacts from HSR.”

The report presented ten specific recommendations. For example, cities should consider the interface of four spatial zones – the station itself, the station-adjacent district, the municipality at large, and the larger region, which includes adjacent station cities. In addition, second-tier cities should consider catalytic projects, complementary planning with first-tier neighboring cities, and branding strategies

that emphasize their unique offerings and assets. Planning for HSR in low-density second-tier cities should take into account not only the immediate station area (half-mile radius), but also the five-mile radius and, in particular, the densest nodes or destinations within that wider region for jobs, services, and commercial activity.

The 223-page report includes six case studies (first-tier cities of Los Angeles and San Jose, and second-tier cities of Anaheim, Norwalk, Fresno, and Gilroy), a literature review, 66 figures, and 43 tables to further illustrate the research. It is available for free PDF download at transweb.sjsu.edu/project/1030.html

ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, PhD, is Associate Dean of the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs and Professor at the UCLA Department of Urban Planning. Her specialties are urban design, physical and land use planning. She has published extensively on issues of downtown redevelopment, inner-city revitalization, transit-oriented development, design and transit safety, and parks and open spaces. She has served as a consultant to the Transportation Research Board, Federal Highway Administration, Southern California Association of Governments, South Bay Cities Council of Government, Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative, Mineta Transportation Institute, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Greek government, and many municipal governments on issues of urban design, open space development, land use and transportation. Her research has been supported by the U.S. and California Departments of Transportation, the Haynes Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Mineta Transportation Institute, the California Policy Research Seminar, the Poverty and Race Research Action Council, the UCLA International Institute, and the UCLA Institute of American Cultures. Her books include *Urban Design Downtown: Poetics and Politics of Form* (1998), *Jobs and Economic Development in Minority Communities* (2006), *Sidewalks: Conflicts and Negotiation over Public Space* (2009), and *Companion to Urban Design* (2011).

ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) conducts research, education, and information and technology transfer, focusing on multimodal surface transportation policy and management issues, especially as they relate to transit. 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 has been funded by Congress through the US Department of Transportation's (DOT) 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 grants from the US Department of Homeland Security. DOT selected MTI as a National Center of Excellence following competitions in 2002 and 2006. The internationally respected members of the MTI Board of Trustees represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI's focus on policy and management resulted from the Board's assessment of the transportation industry's unmet needs. That led directly to choosing the San José State University College of Business as the Institute's home. Visit transweb.sjsu.edu

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