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Overview

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) co-presented a two-and-one-half day conference offering insights, strategies, and opportunities for cities to develop personal rapid transit (PRT) systems in their jurisdictions. These PRT systems are also known as automated guideway transit (AGT) or “podcars.” They are small driverless cars (4-6 passengers) that operate on an automated guideway system. Typically, they are used to transport passengers for first- and last-mile trips, such as between a transit station and an airport. However, they may be used for longer distances within or between neighborhoods or commerce centers.

The International Institute of Sustainable Transportation (INIST) was the primary producer for the conference. Along with MTI, other co-producers included the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Swedish Transportation Administration, George Mason University, Advanced Transit Association (ATRA), and Kompass. Sponsors included Encitra, Lea+Elliott, and Citizens for PRT.

Synopsis

The annual Podcar City Conferences are about transportation and innovation – more than just a better car, bus or timetable. People need true inventiveness in transportation. This means a “next generation” that will be safer, faster, more reliable, more efficient, and even fun to use.

A great deal of thought has gone into the ideas for automated transit – podcars, self-driving cars, people movers at airports, automated subways, and not least, how to link them with existing systems.

Podcar City is the world’s largest meeting on this topic, the seventh since its first gathering in Uppsala, Sweden, in 2007. The annual conference attracts professionals and interested parties who are affected by today’s transit system shortcomings and who believe they can make positive changes.

Two of the keynote speakers came from the US Congress. Hon. James Oberstar (D-MN) represented his constituents from 1975 until his retirement in 2011. He was chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Since 2001, Hon. Mike Honda has represented California’s 17th Congressional District, which encompasses Silicon Valley. He is Regional Whip for Northern California and Chair Emeritus of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus.

During the conference, several aspects of ATNs were discussed. These included:

- The status of operational ATN systems today;
- How self-driving vehicles are emerging and how they can affect public transit;
- How the city of Arlington VA created a 50-100-year plan for its transit system;
- How new transportation solutions play into the urbanism planning processes;
- What the implications might be for a much larger network than just local feeders and distribution systems;
- Recent software developments to aid planning for automated systems;
- How local and federal governments in the US and abroad are working on changes in transit systems;
- How governments can finance new transit systems while mitigating the risks involved with innovation;
- How to change when change is difficult;
- Game-changing transit technology and its challenges;
- And many other facets of this topic.
Program

**Wednesday, October 23, 2013**

**Opening reception at George Mason University**
- Christer Lindstrom, INIST

**Thursday, October 24, 2013**

**Welcoming Remarks**
- Christer Lindstrom, INIST
- Laurie Schintler, George Mason University
- Vincent Valdes, US Department of Transportation’s Federal Transit Administration

**Morning Keynote**
- Hon. Mike Honda (D-CA), US House of Representatives

**Conference Overview**
Each moderator described his or her panel topic for the conference.
- ATN Projects Today – Stan Young, ATRA
- Emerging Transportation Technologies: R&D – Alain Kornhauser, Princeton University
- Urbanism & Transit: An overview – Shannon McDonald, Southern Illinois University
- A General Transportation System – Kjell Dahlström, GTS Foundation
- Planning in Practice: Examples – David Little, Lea+Elliott
- Software Tools: R&D – Ingmar Andreasson, Logistikcentrum
- Swedish.US Memorandum of Cooperation: Cities for Change – Matthew Lesh, US FTA
- Station and Real Estate Transit Design: US and Sweden – Bo Olsson, Trafikverket

**Session One: ATN Projects Today**
Moderator – Stan Young, ATRA, University of Maryland Center for Advanced Transportation Technology; President, Advanced Transit Association
- Peter Muller, ATRA-IG; President, PRT Consulting – “Three Operational Automated Transit Networks: A Case Study”

**Session Two: Emerging Transportation Technologies – R&D**
Moderator - Alain Kornhauser, Princeton University
- Jerome Lutin, Former VP of Research at New Jersey Transit – “Opportunities to Leverage Advances in Driverless Car Technology to Evolve Conventional Bus Transit Systems”
- Ingmar Andreasson, Logistikcentrum – “Synergies Between PRT and Driverless Cars”
- Samuel Lott, Kimley Horn – “Evolving APMs to ATNs Using Driverless Car Technology”
- Adriano Alessandrini, University of Rome - “Evolving Today’s Low-speed Driverless Shuttles to Area-wide Transit Service”

**Lunch Session: Arlington’s Long-term Plan**
Speaker – Peter Bass, PLB Development Advisory Services – “Density by Desire”
Session Three-A: Urbanism and Transit: An Overview
Moderator: Shannon McDonald, Southern Illinois University
- Michael Gray, Public PRT Consortium (PPRTC) – “How PRT Will Change the World”

Session Three-B: A General Transportation System
Moderator: Kjell Dahlström, GTS Foundation
- Kjell Dahlstrom, Architect GTS Foundation – “What Is GTS?”
- Jan-Erik Nowacki, Professor, KTH – “Development of GTS Technology”
- Arne Muñoz, Require AB – “Analysis and Fulfillment of Transportation Objectives”
- Per Ahlstrom, Journalist – “How Habit Keeps Our Thinking in a Box”

Session Four-A: Planning in Practice
Moderator: David Little, Lea+Elliott
- Michele Jacobson
- Mike Hewitt
- Jefferson Davis, Lea+Elliott
- Fred Payne

Session Four-B: Software Tools for Planning
Moderator: Ingmar Andreasson, Logistikcentrum
- Prof. W. Choromanski, University of Warszaw, Poland – “ECO Mobility in Poland: PRT Development and Modeling”
- Bengt Gustafsson, Beamways – “An Idea for Adaptive ATN: Concept and Modeling”
- Sam Lott, Kimley-Horn – “Simulating ATN Ridership on Multimodal Travel Paths”
- Nathan Koren, Podaris – “Collaborative Network Design with Web-based Podaris”
Afternoon Keynote

• Hon. James L. Oberstar (ret), Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (2007-2011)

Session Five: What Are Cities Doing Now?

Moderator: Hon. James L. Oberstar

• Laura Stuchinsky, Director of Transportation, City of San Jose CA
• Gösta Norén, Director of Planning, City of Upplands Väsby, Sweden
• Fred Payne, County Commissioner, Greenville SC
• Bo Andersson, Center Party Transportation Spokesperson, County of Stockholm
• Christer Lindvall, Chairman, Umeå Social Democrats, City of Umeå, Sweden

Friday, October 25, 2013

Morning Keynotes

• Håkan Jansson, Swedish Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communication
• Howard Jennings, Mobility Lab, Arlington
Session Six: The Swedish-US Memorandum of Cooperation – Current Projects and Initiatives
- Christer Lindstrom, INIST
- Matthew Lesh, US Department of Transportation
- Laura Stuchinsky, City of San Jose CA
- Gösta Norén, City of Upplands Väsby, Sweden
- Fred Payne, City of Greensboro SC
- Bo Andersson, City of Sigtuna, Sweden

Session Seven: Financing & Risk Management - New and Traditional Models
Moderator: Dr. Karen Philbrick, Mineta Transportation Institute
- Sanjeev Shah, Strategic Project Development, Lea + Elliott
- Christer Lindström, Co-founder, INIST
- Peter Muller, CEO, PRT Consulting

Session Eight: HSR, Stations, Transit, Bicycles: Connected Systems and Ideas
Moderator: Susanne Ingo, Trafikverket
- Seth Garland, Associate Principal at KGP Design Studio – “Bicycles and Transit Lead the Way to a More Livable Community”
- Paul van Doninck, Architect at Jernhusen – “Stations in Sweden”
- Elisabetta Troglio, Researcher, KTH School of Architecture – “From Regional Visions to Local Modal Change Points: Challenges in Sweden”

Session Nine: ATN: A Game Changer
- Presenter: Dr. Buff Ferman, San Jose (CA) State University – “A Study of the State-of-the-Industry for Automated Transit Networks”
- Presenter: Gene Nishinaga, TCS – “A Future Project with San Jose State University”

Closing Session: Solar Skyways Prize
- Winner: Ron Swenson, INIST
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