Improving Transit Access to Health and Social Services

better access

better service

Summary October 17, 2014

Study Sponsor
Project Background

- Evolved out of MTC’s Coordinated Plan (2006-07)
  - Strategy to enhance land use & transportation coordination
- Focus on facility location decisions for health care and social services
  - What existing policies and practices influence where these services are located?
  - What can be done to enhance transit access as a factor in these decisions?
- Focus of MTC study was on fixed-route transit access in Alameda and Contra Costs counties
Transit Access Challenges?

Kaiser Permanente Medical Center (Antioch)

Nearest bus stop

What is your own example of a medical or social service agency where good planning could have fostered improved access?
Study Process
Project Elements

- Mapping of fixed-route transit accessibility in Alameda and Contra Costa counties
- Policy research at local, federal and state levels
- Key informant interviews
- Case studies
- Regional summit
Stakeholder Outreach & Engagement

- Technical Advisory Committee
- Key informant interviews (36)
- Focus groups (3)
Case Studies: Transit Access Makes a Difference
Case Studies Overview

- Five facilities
- Urban and suburban
- Sizes ranging from 14,000 to 1 million sq. ft.
- Hospital, County agency, and community-based clinics/centers
La Clínica de la Raza

- Oakland and Concord locations
- Community-based medical services
- Fruitvale Transit Village (Oakland, 42,000 sq. ft.)
- Monument Corridor (Concord, 14,000 sq. ft.)
- Neighborhood & transit-oriented client base
Sample of Key Findings and Solutions

23 Findings

12 Recommended Solutions
Are facilities transit-accessible in Alameda & Contra Costa Counties?

• 88% have adequate or better transit service
  – At least one bus every 30 minutes weekdays within one-quarter of a mile between 7 am and 7 pm
  – GIS analysis didn’t include adequacy of sidewalks, curb cuts, pedestrian crossings, etc.
• Using second database of medical facilities, 20 of 287 or 7% had inadequate transit service; 104 had excellent transit service

Bottom line: The majority of medical and social service agencies in Alameda and Contra Costa County have excellent transit service.
Federal, State & Local Policy Influence

- Facility location approval is mostly a City/County decision
- State policies exist but are difficult to enforce: “shall give consideration to the location in existing public transit corridors”
- Some federal policy direction is in place

Bottom Line: Existing policies do not provide the regulatory authority or “teeth” needed to establish transit accessibility as a true priority in locating facilities
How much more does it cost to locate in more transit accessible locations?

- In 2010 dollars, office rental rates adjacent to BART stations (2010: $2.40 to $2.70), also have the highest frequency bus services.
- This was $.50 to $1.00 per square foot higher than sites with more limited transit service.
- Transit accessible locations have 1 to 3% higher rent levels than non-transit accessible locations.

Bottom Line: Rent differentials are a very small factor in total agency operating costs.
Sample of Other Key Findings

• Growing role of community-based organizations in service delivery

• Large medical centers require large sites
  – Seldom have excellent transit access
  – Majority of clients use autos

• Definitions of “transit-accessible” vary
What are the most promising solutions to improve transit access?

Land Use & Built Environment

- Neighborhood-serving clinics and centers
- Central co-located services
- Infill and re-use opportunities
Sample of Key Findings

• Growing role of community-based organizations in service delivery

• Large medical centers require large sites
  – Seldom have excellent transit access
  – Majority of clients use autos

• Definitions of “transit-accessible” vary

• County field offices locate in single tenant buildings
What are the most promising solutions to improve transit access?

**Policy and Planning**

- Be proactive in planning and locating facilities
- Engage the community
- Build political will

Ed Roberts Campus planners achieved all three…with tremendous perseverance and patience.
MTC Recent Initiatives

- Plan Bay Area at a very high level promotes transit accessibility
- Priority Development Area (PDAs) often include medical and social service agency facilities
- Economic Prosperity Strategy pilot projects

Bottom Line: Project development approvals happen at the local level and need transit-accessibility advocates to ensure adequate consideration early in the planning process.