U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

European Commission

Summary of EC-FHWA Session on January 10, 2018

"Sharing Innovative and Tested Practices in Sustainable Urban Mobility in EU and US Cities"

Recognizing the important role of sustainable mobility in tackling urban passenger transport challenges, the European Commission's (EC) Directorate General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE) and the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) convened a joint session on "Sharing Innovative and Tested Practices in Sustainable Urban Mobility in EU and US Cities." The session was conducted on January 10, 2018 in conjunction with the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

The three-hour event brought together approximately 60 European and US representatives to engage in dialogue that emphasized innovative, tested solutions and approaches for bringing about a paradigm shift in urban mobility and triggering behavioral change in favor of sustainable mobility. The session featured the European Horizon2020-funded CIVITAS initiative and representatives of CIVITAS-funded R&D projects from Bremen (Germany), Lisbon (Portugal), Bologna (Italy), and Enschede (Netherlands) and included representatives from the EC and the Polis city network. U.S. participation included representation from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), FHWA, USDOT, research centers, companies, and the cities of New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, and Washington, D.C. Also in attendance was a representative from the City of Toronto, Canada.

In opening the session, Mr. Robert Missen (Head of Unit, EC DG MOVE) and Mr. Martin Knopp (FHWA Associate Administrator for Operations) provided welcoming remarks in which they briefly discussed common European and US sustainable urban mobility challenges and underscored the value of sharing best practices and learning from each other.

Topics and Themes from Technical Presentations

With Martin Knopp and Henriette van Eijl (EC DG MOVE) co-chairing, eighteen short (4 minute) presentations were delivered, approximately half from the European participants and half from North American participants.

The link to the presentations can be found at: https://www.polisnetwork.eu/Sustainable-urban-mobility-session-Transport-Research-Board-Annual-Meeting2018-Washington-DC

The presentations highlighted a wide range of tested and demonstrated innovative mobility strategies, many of which are providing real-world benefits. Many topics were covered and several mobility examples were described in the presentations.

Among the topics discussed were:

- Policy, planning, and design initiatives to facilitate the mainstreaming of innovative urban mobility solutions
- Proactive steps regions and cities can take to enable electric and automated mobility
- Efforts by EU (e.g. establishing planning frameworks - SUMPs) and US (USDOT technology grant programs) to incentivize planning and implementation of new mobility solutions

- The nexus between congestion reduction and safety
- The importance of marketing and public relations efforts to complement technology solutions
- New modeling and analysis tools that are more sensitive to multi-modal alternatives (including cycling and walking) and that allow for an estimation of a broader range of impacts
- Apps and strategies to induce behavioral change in selecting modes of transport
- Data collection techniques and use of multi-modal data to inform active travel policies
- Key findings from the FHWA Global Benchmarking study on Shared Mobility in Europe

From these presentations, the following key themes and take-aways were noted:

1. ***Public agency/sector leaders need to be proactive in ensuring technology and innovation support goals and objectives of regions and cities.*** Mobility and congestion reduction is one important aim, but others such as energy use, air quality, equity, health, safety, security, and economic impacts are becoming increasingly important drivers in transport investment decision-making. Ensuring these considerations are prioritized requires proactive public agency leadership.

2. ***Public agencies need to be more willing to test and try new solutions before they are 100% market ready.*** The traditional model and project timeline from planning to implementation may not be suitable for newer innovations since by the time agencies are ready to deploy, technology has often changed and the original design and approach may not be most appropriate. Agencies need to shorten the project development timeline by piloting concepts to learn "on-the-fly" and continuously refine their operations.

3. ***Mobility and safety goals are not mutually exclusive***. There is often a misconception that techniques to improve safety (e.g. narrowing lane widths) will have a negative effect on congestion and mobility. In many cases, this has proven to be a false choice; i.e., both goals can be achieved simultaneously.

4. ***Marketing, branding, and messaging is critical to ensuring public and decision-maker buy-in.*** Marketing campaigns need to stress the safety benefits of new mobility strategies. Marketing plans need to provide customized messaging to various demographic groups and sectors.

5. ***New tools are emerging to model, analyze, estimate, and plan the impacts of new mobility strategies.*** Simulation tools augmented to incorporate active transportation, multi-modal congestion assessment tools, tools to estimate health, economic, environmental, and safety impacts of mobility strategies. Apps to influence travel behavior, and tools to extract data on mode choice are proving to be valuable aids to better understand the impacts and attractiveness of transport services.

6. ***New partnerships are emerging to enable successful deployment of new services.*** Examples of public-private and public-public partnerships were cited as important to providing a foundation for successfully deploying innovative mobility applications. One example is the expanded availability of electric vehicle charging infrastructure made possible through partnerships with electric utility companies.

7. ***Re-evaluation of urban area curb space*** . Traditional polices and design standards for the curb space often exacerbate traffic congestion and safety problems and do not accommodate the need for improved public transit mobility, shared use mobility customers and service providers, and urban freight delivery.

8. ***Preparing cities and regions for connected and automated vehicles.*** Current approaches in urban and regional mobility planning, application of regulations, revenue models, infrastructure investment, public transit, and consumer acceptance will need to be adapted to automation in transport. A transition phase, with mixed conventional and fully automated vehicles, will have to be taken into account.

Opportunities for Future Cooperation:

The presentations were followed by questions and answers, open dialogue, which highlighted the following areas of interest for further EU-US knowledge sharing:

- Evaluation results from projects mentioned that were only recently deployed or tested
- Access to urban mobility research being conducted by projects and programs in the EU and US
- Analysis, modeling, and simulation tools used to evaluate innovative mobility strategies
- Best practices in planning, policies, regulations, contracting mechanisms, and public-private agreements
- How cities have been able to secure funding for advanced urban mobility programs and pilots
- Specific steps cities are taking to prepare for automation, electrification, and shared use mobility (including public transit)

The session concluded with a brief discussion on how the EC, the FHWA, and European and US cities and other agencies could cooperate in smart, urban development. It was noted that cooperation can have many forms and the smart cities theme is very wide.

Some possibilities that were discussed include (1) twinning initiatives such as the successful US-EU twinning initiative in the areas of urban freight R&D and infrastructure; (2) involving some city representatives on each other's project advisory boards; (3) coordinating the submission of formal sessions at future TRB annual meetings; and (4) taking advantage of future conferences, meetings, etc. to continue the dialogue.

Messrs. Missen and Knopp agreed on jointly exploring these and other possibilities and thanked everyone for their participation.

Session participants and other interested experts and practitioners are invited to submit suggestions for areas where they see a need for information exchange and sharing of good practices between US and EU organizations.

If you require any further information, then please contact Hana Maier (Hana.Maier@dot.gov) and Henriette van Eijl (Henriette.VAN-EIJL@ec.europa.eu).