WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Workshop Hosted by 3 Revolutions Policy Initiative of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis

Workshop Premise: Policies that apply price rewards and/or penalties to make pooled travel more attractive than solo driving show promise in tackling our biggest transportation challenges, including worsening traffic congestion, increasing emissions, declining transit ridership, and the widening of the mobility gap. But in the US, despite longtime popularity of pricing mechanisms among transportation experts, economists and planners, comprehensive travel pricing has struggled to gain political traction.

In June 2017, the 3 Revolutions Policy Initiative of the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Davis hosted a workshop convening a select group of leaders in transportation to identify whether recent advances in the number of pooled travel choices offer new political opportunities to advance transportation pricing policies.

This workshop marked a historic moment of innovation in transportation as hosts of new pooled choices have emerged including Lyftline, Uberpool, micro-transit services, carsharing, and bikesharing, as well as better integration of these services with the conventional pooled choices, rail and bus services. Automated vehicles will also soon likely add to the list of new types of pooled travel choices. Workshop participants discussed whether more choices will allow policymakers to leverage new pooled travel options to the level that they can compete with solo driving. Participants discussed whether a more socially equitable, more efficient and less environmentally damaging transportation system is within reach.

Summary of Key Points on US Travel Market

- **US transportation policy to date: owning is easy, sharing is difficult.** Historically, US policy supports the perception that driving alone is the best option. The best way to fill empty seats is simply to change this equation and make sharing a more attractive alternative.

- **But Americans still dislike riding with strangers.** Carpooling is a failure for commute trips, carpooling dropped from cited 36% of carpool commute trips in 1980, compared to 9% today, despite billions spent on peak hour HOV lanes.

- **Travel using services like Lyft and Uber are still too expensive to replace private car ownership.** Ridehailing and taxiing in the future will be cheaper, with better pooling options as well as the introduction of electric/automated cars.

- **US Public Transit is experiencing a much-needed evolution.** US Transit Providers will require innovation to reduce per ride costs, reduce vehicle emissions, improve service, and maintain living wages for transportation sector employees. Opportunities abound to develop public-private partnerships, employ on-demand micro-transit, and consider innovative transit solutions. Innovation is likely coming to traditional transit service as well as dial-a-ride and paratransit service.

Critical Considerations from Discussion with Public Leaders

- **Leaders and advocates need to better frame the tangible personal and societal benefits of pooled travel.** Reframing pooling and pricing as win-wins for travelers and the transportation system. Frame pooling supportive pricing policies not as penalties to be minimized and applied gently, but as methods to improve travel, create economic opportunity, benefit the environment, etc.
• Improved community support is needed for elected officials willing to stick their necks out against the status quo. Support is requested at local and regional public meetings to bring rational arguments as counters to change-averse public sentiments. A balance is needed to the metaphorical “people with pitchforks” who favor the status quo of solo driving subsidies over transportation innovation.

• Improving transportation equity will look different for rural and urban communities. Travel needs vary considerably between rural, suburban and urban areas; and needs vary for workers, parents, seniors and low-income travelers. The most successful travel innovations will address the unique needs of communities and individuals and will not leave our most vulnerable neighbors stranded.

• A continued discussion is needed on how to fund services that don’t fit into existing state and federal mechanisms. Continued discussion needed to identify opportunities for special regional transportation taxes, that build in flexibility or inclusion in regional sustainable Community Strategies and a larger conversation needs to occur to identify what types of funding sources should be used to subsidize ridehailing service?

• Notice anything missing? If you were an attendee and you took note of additional considerations to add to this list, please share these by emailing: 3rev@ucdavis.edu.

Case Studies and Research Examples Presented by Speakers and Discussants

Los Angeles Metro: Office of Extraordinary Innovation (OEI)  Chief Innovation Officer, Dr. Joshua Schank described an exciting FTA funded pilot project launched in Seattle and Los Angeles to improve first-last mile transit access to a selected set of transit stations. The OEI is accepting opening proposals for innovative public-private partnerships to expand feeder service to transit terminals, pilot micro-transit van pickup service, and generally think about extraordinary ways to improve transit in L.A.

Research: Impacts of Transportation Technologies on Travel Behavior and Vehicle Ownership A recent National Sustainable Transportation Center study presented by Dr. Giovanni Circella from ITS-Davis and Georgia Tech, examines ridehailing impacts on travel demand, travel behavior, and vehicle ownership comparing Millennials and Gen-Xers. The study showed that a considerable portion of millennials reported that their use of Lyft/Uber contributed to reducing the amount of walking/biking they do and their use of public transportation.

Opportunities For Shared-use Mobility Services In The San Joaquin Valley  Dr. Caroline Rodier, described her ITS-Davis research project to expand accessibility with shared use mobility services in rural disadvantaged communities at a cost at or below currently available transit services. Rodier introduced several pilot concepts including one that crosses ridesourcing and round-trip carsharing. It allows car renters/drivers to pick up a car and/or others traveling on a similar route, which makes trips more affordable.

Are we ready to jump back in the pool? Prospects for Carpooling and Ridesharing in the Years Ahead  Professor Brian Taylor, Director of the UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies, presented data and research on shared mobility and argued that an increase in shared rides in the years ahead is not a foregone conclusion. Indeed, noted Taylor, carpooling on commute trips decreased from 36% in 1980 to 9% today. Taylor suggested that relatively low-cost subscription shared services may prove more attractive for many travelers than pricier privately-owned automated vehicles, offering a path toward increased ride-sharing in the years ahead.

100 Hours Campaign  Amanda Eaken reviewed the social and environmental benefits associated with congestion charging schemes in London and Stockholm and described the 100 hours campaign (link to it) recently launched in Southern California to examine proven solutions to traffic congestion from around the world.