What is Bus Rapid Transit?

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December 15, 2009
Is Bus Rapid Transit . . .

- Bus lines that work like rail lines?
- Buses in car pool lanes?
- Bus-only corridors or busways?
- Buses that, like magic, almost always hit green lights?

EmX BRT Line in Eugene-Springfield, Oregon
Clockwise starting top right: Pittsburgh busways; interior of Orange Line bus, Los Angeles; Curitiba, Brazil BRT station; Illustration of expressway BRT in suburban Chicago
What is BRT? The Technical Definition . . .

A flexible, high performance rapid transit mode that combines a variety of physical, operating and system elements into a permanently integrated system with a quality image and unique identity.

Federal Transit Administration/National BRT Institute, 2009
Bus Rapid Transit is not a type of bus; it’s a new way of thinking about bus service.

- Applies creativity and innovation to metropolitan bus service.
- Focuses on medium-length and longer trips:
  - Need time savings to compete with the automobile.
  - Need comfort and ease to compete with the automobile.

Parallel movement: applying creativity and innovation to local trips that maximize access:

- Urban circulators and trolley buses.
- Does not yet have a name as sexy as BRT.
- New federal funding pot announced by the Obama administration 12/1/2009.
BRT: Areas Undergoing Innovation

- Running ways or corridors
- Stations
- Vehicles
- Fare collection
- Intelligent Transportation System technologies including Transit Signal Priority
- Service and operations
- Branding
BRT and Land Use: The Possibilities?

• Is there such a thing as BRTOD? Maybe.
• Is there such a thing as BRT-supportive development? YES!
• BRT’s strengths are also its challenges for land development
  – New and evolving
  – Variability
  – Phasing
• Decisions about corridors and stations are typically the most important
  – The more significant the infrastructure investment or dedication, the more likely it is to shape development
• Coordination with land use
  – Regional corridor level
  – Local corridor access or station level
  – Context dependent