

POINT X
TRANSPORTATION

"MANY IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE MADE IN OUR PRESENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM."

"IMPORTANT LOW-COST CHANGES WILL BE INTRODUCED IMMEDIATELY"

"MORE DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE TOTAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WILL BE INTRODUCED OVER A SEVERAL YEAR PERIOD."

The subcommittee has carefully considered its charge and makes the following recommendations for immediate action and future consideration;

The first and most important decision is to decide what kind of a relationship there will be among the city, the state and the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA). Until a decision is made acceptable to the representatives of the citizens of the city of Detroit, and approved at the federal level, there is no assurance any plans made by the City to improve public transportation will ever be carried out. With that note of caution, the subcommittee submits the following as its report.

The transportation problem can be handled best by dividing it into three broad stages; short term, intermediate term and long term.

SHORT TERM:

Time period: From now to April, 1974

Subject Matter: (1) The 100 day plan. (2) Taking management control of the DSR. (3) The purchase of service contract with SEMTA.

INTERMEDIATE TERM:

Time Period: From now to July, 1974

Subject Matter: Reorganizing the scattered city transportation functions into the Department of Transportation created by the new City Charter.

LONG TERM:

Time Period: From now to July, 1975

Subject Matter: (1) Selection of a Rapid Transit component. (2) Obtaining community approval of it. (3) Starting construction of it. (4) Expanding bus fleet operations under a new route and scheduling system to be coordinated with the Rapid Transit component.

The following pages contain a more detailed discussion of the subjects outlined above.

SHORT TERM

(1) The 100 Day Plan

There are three major aspects of this plan; express bus service, special fares and parking. The subcommittee met with H.C. McLaughlin, Superintendent of Transportation Operations at the DSR and requested that he prepare and submit a detailed report showing time-phased action schedules and costs for implementing these major aspects of the 100 Day Plan. Mr. McLaughlin's report is attached as Exhibit A.

The subcommittee recommends that express bus service be provided on Gratiot, Woodward and Grand River beginning with Gratiot as suggested in the attached report. All such service should initially be limited to the city of Detroit. However, if a survey establishes that service beyond the city would benefit the city, then the service should be established. This service could be operational by the end of February, 1974.

The subcommittee recommends that senior citizens be allowed to ride free and without restrictions as to time. The subcommittee also recommends that other fare adjustments identified in the attached report also be implemented.

Due to insufficient data as to availability of land for parking both in the downtown area as well as outlying areas, the subcommittee has no specific recommendations as to sites. It is recommended, however, that responsibility for this aspect of the 100 Day Plan be given immediately to the Special Committee on Transportation created by Mayor-Elect Coleman A. Young. That same committee should also be given responsibility for development of the plan to provide bus service between the City and suburban job sites.

Possible sources of funds for some or all of the costs of the 100 Day Plan would be: (1) City, (2) SEMTA, (3) State, (4) Federal. The purchase of service contract between the City and SEMTA, for example, could be renegotiated to provide a larger share of gas tax funds for the City. Also, proposed legislation could be introduced again in Lansing to obtain state assistance from the General Fund for the cost of providing low fares for students and no fares for senior citizens. Finally, at the federal level, the City could apply for available funds for mass transit under the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973.

SHORT TERM (Cont)(2) Taking Management Control of the DSR

The three member Board of Street Railway Commissioners set policy for the DSR. It can, if it wants to, take control of the Department and run it. This Board, however, will serve only until the new Department of Transportation is created. At that point the Board will be replaced by an Advisory Commission of at least five members.

The President of the present DSR Commission will be a key appointment. It will be that officer's responsibility to put the 100 Day Plan into effect, to represent the DSR in negotiations with SEMTA, the state and federal governments, to recommend top management personnel, to develop and submit the reorganization plan for review, and to lay the groundwork for selection of the Rapid Transit component and overhaul of the bus scheduling and routing systems.

The subcommittee recommends that priority be given to the selection of the members of the DSR Commission.

(3) Purchase of Service Contract

This contract sets the relationship presently existing between the City and SEMTA. Basically, it spells out what the City must do to qualify for financial assistance from SEMTA which it receives from the State in the form of Gas Tax Funds. This contract expires the end of this year. SEMTA has recommended a six-month extension on the same terms and conditions as exist in the existing contract.

The subcommittee recommends that the Special Committee on Transportation created by Mayor-Elect Coleman A. Young be given responsibility for working with the present administration and SEMTA to insure that the new contract is fair, equitable and flexible enough to allow the City to bring about badly needed improvements in public transportation.

INTERMEDIATE TERMOrganizing the New Department of Transportation

Transportation responsibility and functions are now scattered among various City departments, agencies and divisions. The DSR operates the buses. The Department of Streets and Traffic regulates the flow of people and goods within the City. The Municipal Parking Authority builds, operates and leases parking facilities. The Aviation Commission runs the City Airport. The Department of Public Work has two divisions that affect public transportation; the Highway and Freeway Division and the Street Maintenance Division.

Some or all of the separate functions will become part of the new Department of Transportation. Between now and the time the new Charter takes effect, a reorganization plan must be prepared, reviewed and adopted. The plan should be ready for adoption by July, 1974.

The subcommittee recommends that the DSR Commission be given the responsibility to work with the Task Force on Charter Implementation to give whatever assistance is necessary to have the plan prepared, reviewed and ready for adoption by July, 1974.

LONG TERM(1) Selection of a Rapid Transit Component

As far as can be determined, Detroit holds the record for transportation studies - at least fifteen of them. The most recent studies recommend that construction of the Rapid Transit component begin in the city and eventually extend through the suburbs serving the region.

The subcommittee recommendation is that an early decision be made on the nature of the Rapid Transit system, whether it be Rail Rapid Transit, as recommended by the most recent studies, or People-Movers or buses or a combination of the three.

For a variety of reasons there will be a shift to public transportation. The timing is right to do something about rapid transit.

Financial aid is available. Under the new Federal Sharing Formula, the federal government will pay eighty percent of the construction and equipment costs. And, nationally, both the Senate and House passed legislation that would provide operating subsidies of Eight Hundred Million over the next two years. While this legislation may not survive a presidential veto, it does represent a trend that will lead to a breakthrough.

LONG TERM (Cont)

The subcommittee recommends an early decision on the kind of rapid transit system to be built in the city. We have had enough studies.

(2) Obtaining Community Approval

Selection of the kind of Rapid Transit system will require that the people of the city be involved and that their approval be obtained. A massive Public Works Project of this kind should not be undertaken without public support.

The subcommittee recommends that the Fall election in 1974 be set as the target date for submitting the question to the voters of Detroit as to the building of a Rapid Transit system in the city which will be planned and therefore consistent with a regional system. At the same time the question of the acquisition of the DSR by SEMTA could be placed on the ballot as a separate question.

The subcommittee wishes to stress at this point that cooperation among the City, the State, SEMTA and the Federal government is absolutely essential to the success of a rapid transit proposal.

(3) Starting Construction

Once construction is approved every effort must be made to involve minority contractors. Details of involvement should be worked out beforehand so that no delay in construction will occur.

(4) Expanding Bus Fleet Operations

To lure people out of their cars, public transportation needs a rapid transit component with buses then radiating from the stations to provide feeder service. This will require more buses and a new system of routing and scheduling the buses.

The subcommittee recommends the use of computer technology to overhaul the present system of routing and scheduling. The need to do so exists now and work on it should not be delayed until the Rapid Transit component is operational. At that point necessary adjustments can be made as required by changes in travel patterns.

RAPID TRANSIT

The following is an excerpt from a proposal written by
Demetrios K. Triantafyllon, December, 1972.

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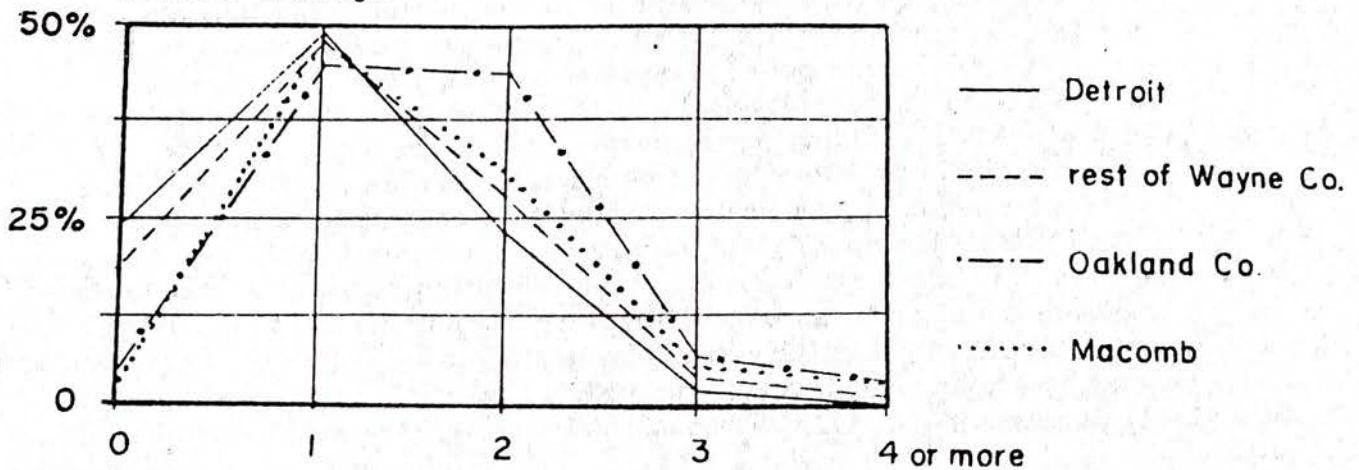
Criteria for Measuring Success.

Considering that the majority of person trips either start or end in Downtown Detroit, and that the dominant road network is radial which converges on the center of the City, it follows that if the mass transportation system of Detroit is reinforced by the services that I have proposed, a great deal of freedom of movement will be extended to the urban poor, who either have limited or no private transportation to their disposal. This freedom in return will open new employment and housing opportunities, which are so desperately needed. Downtown Detroit will be more accessible at all times of the day, and a reduced number of automobiles - on account of the extensive use of the Mass Transportation System - will mean reduced street noise, reduced traffic congestion and exhaust pollution, as well as more relaxed commuters and fewer automobile accidents. Another area that Detroit could benefit substantially would be its increased capacity to accommodate existing employment levels, and attract new employment, which is so very important if the City is to maintain its vitality and financial health.

Most important is the impact that the new Mass Transit lines are going to have in providing an orderly direction to future development of urban settlement patterns. The existing Grand Trunk Western right of way runs through some very old and long overdue for urban renewal areas in the City of Detroit. New centers of growth would spring up around rapid-transit stations, containing major shopping centers and clusters of high-rise and low-rise apartments within walking distance of the station.

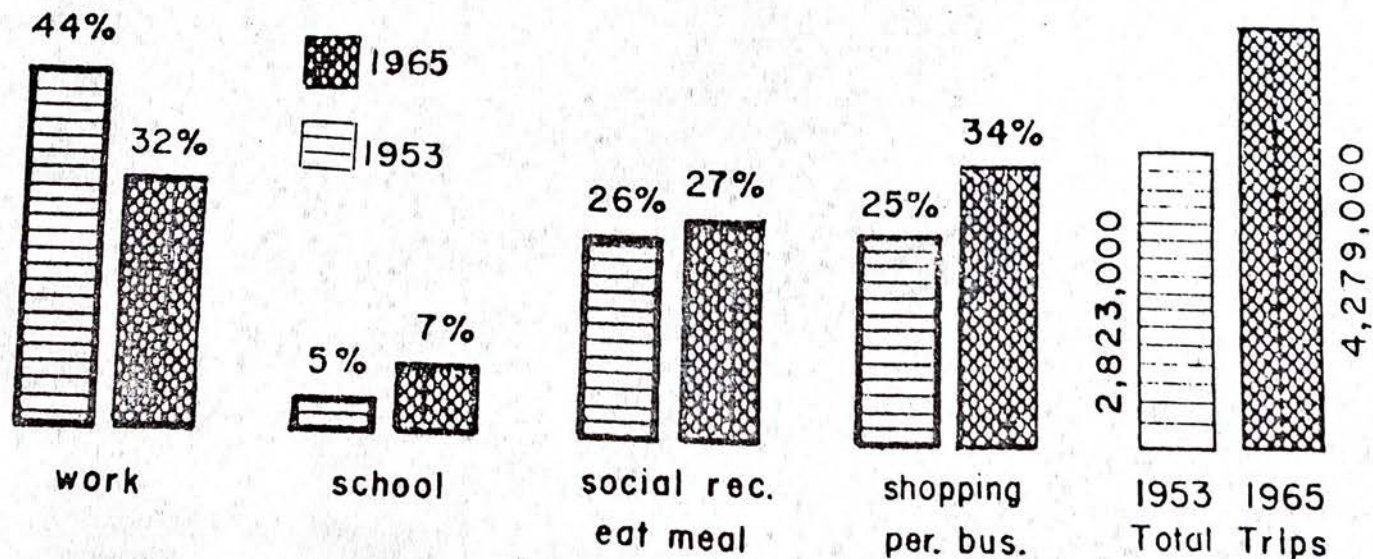
Thus the Rapid Transit itself will become a critical parameter in both the physical shape and the economic success of the entire area it serves, and it will act as a catalyst to an inward growth of Detroit, and the cities it serves like Ferndale, Royal Oak, Pontiac and others.

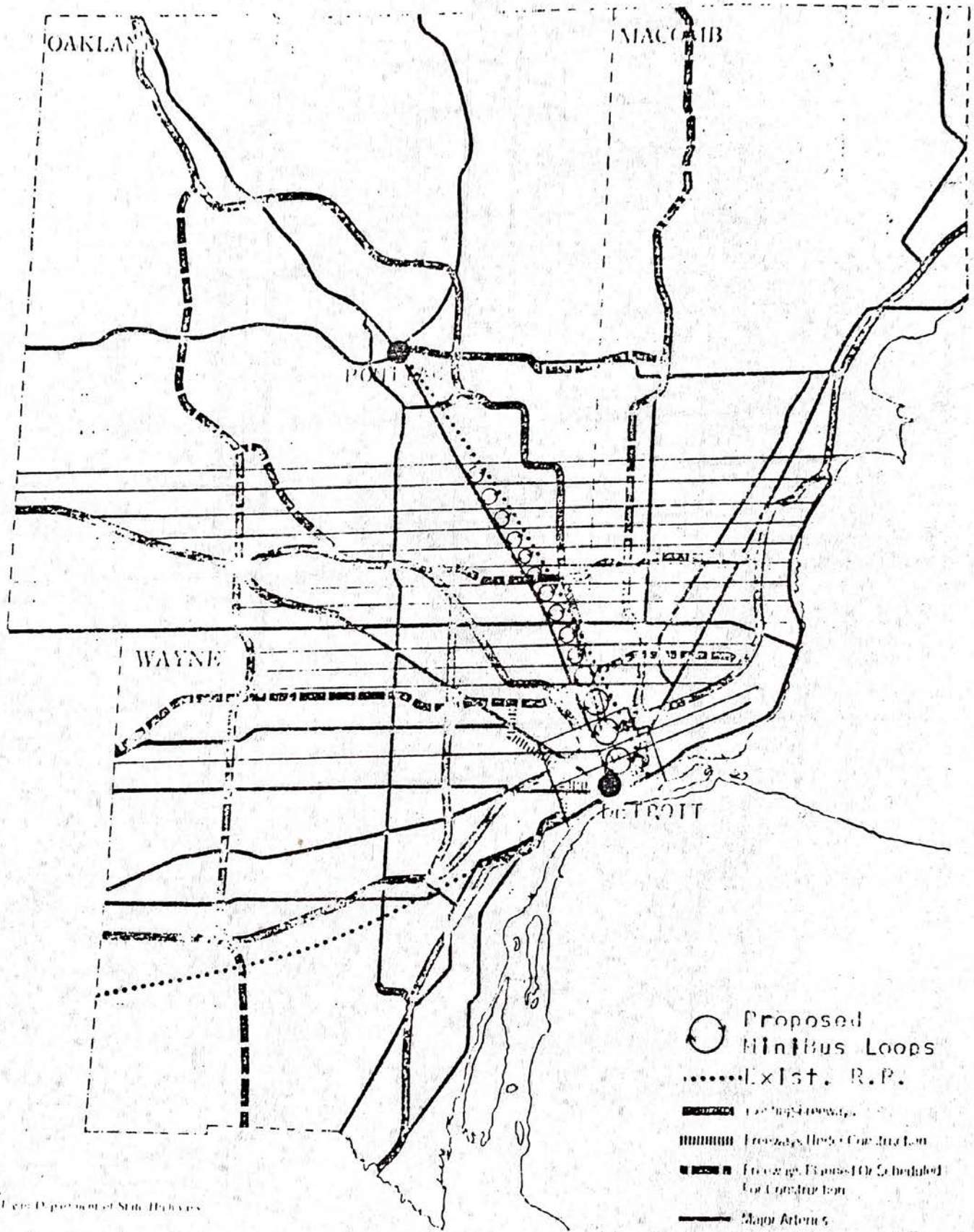
86.5% of all households in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties have one or more cars available for their use. Oakland County has the largest percentage of households with two cars (43.3%) and three cars (6.8) available. 34.6% of Detroit households have no car available compared to 19% for the rest of Wayne County and 4.6% in Oakland County and 3.5% in Macomb County.



% OF TRIPS BY PURPOSE

The accompanying chart classifies all trips into four broad purpose categories and shows how the "work" trip has declined and the "shopping and personal business" trip has increased as a percentage of all trips since the 1953 Detroit Metropolitan Area Traffic Study. During this same 12 year period, household trip generation rates have increased by 25% and the number of households by 20%, resulting in the production of 50% more person trips on the average day.





Source: Michigan Department of State Highways

