

CHRIS PARK: Welcome to Southern California. It's nice to see a lot of familiar faces, actually, in the room. I'm Chris Park. I'm director of the Warner Center TMO out in the San Fernando Valley. And for those of you who aren't familiar with the TMO or TMA, I thought I'd first kind of explain what those are for you. Basically, TM stands for "transportation management" and the A stands for "association," the O stands for "organization." They're pretty much similar—the same thing, a TMA or TMO.

Within the United States, there's around 140 of us and we're primarily—most of us are legally incorporated as public-private nonprofits, either 501(c)4, (c)3, or (c)6s. My TMA happens to be established as a (c)4. The mission for most of us is very similar to what we do, and that's to improve mobility, looking at the bigger picture of transportation. Not just a traditional transportation infrastructure like widening roads and that kind of thing, but looking way beyond that. And that certainly includes public transit, which we promote, and other alternatives as well because Warner Center, we're located up in a suburban area. We don't have a luxury of a huge transit opportunity for our people currently and, unfortunately, a lot of—with the budget crisis, as I'm sure you know, in LA, the city of LA, especially, where my TMA is located, our city has a budget crisis. Our state has a budget crisis. They're cancelling service. They're raising fares. All that certainly makes it more difficult for us in getting more people on transit. So the other mobility options are equally, if not even more, important to us, which include carpooling, vanpooling, walking, bicycling. We also promote telecommuting, compressed work week schedules, things that help us deal with what we perceive as our problems and solutions in our area.

It's no secret to you that traffic—we have the worst traffic problem in the United States here in LA. We have the worst air quality. We have the largest growth of any other area in the United States. And that's all pretty scary and it's a huge task for us to tackle with. The role of a TMA really is to focus on a local area and what I thought I would do is kind of share with you, in the twenty years that I've been at a TMA—and by the way, to back up, before I was in LA, I was in Kansas City with the—with the government, with the city, the city of Kansas, Kansas City, Missouri, and also then with the MPO, Mid-America Regional Council, dealing in transportation. By the way, I come with a marketing background, so I'm kind of looking at this not from a technical side, but more of a customer focus point of view.

In the world of TMAs—well, first Warner Center, real quickly to tell you about, if you're not familiar with LA, the Warner Center is the third largest urban area in the city of LA. We're—if you're familiar at all with LA, it's up in the valley, called The Valley because it's the most populated valley, the San Fernando Valley. We're at the far west side. We're considered the downtown of The Valley. Warner Center got its name—the Warner Brothers owned the land originally, and many of the westerns you might be familiar with in Hollywood, the movies from the thirties and forties were filmed on their property out at the Warner Brothers Ranch. So, that's how we get the name Warner Center. We don't have any studios at Warner Center. Burbank, a TMA located there, has many Glendale and, of course, Hollywood Universal Studios have that, the movie studios. We have a lot of—we have Aerospace. We have HMOs. We have insurance companies, financial type industry. And speaking of healthcare, one of my members, actually my largest employer member of the TMA is here, Bonnie with Kaiser Permanente. Hi, Bonnie. It's good to see you. And actually, other—I'll point out other partners in the room that we work with. For transit, we have a total of six different transit agencies that provide service to our center, Metro being the largest and we have reps here from Metro. Hi, David and Stan. It's

good to see you all here. And we work closely with them as a partner. Also, VPSI, we have vanpools both with VPSI and with Enterprise for vanpools. And hello, guys. Good to see you all here as well.

So, you know, the key thing with TMAs is partnerships. With transit, I wanted to share and give advice and talk about employers. And obviously I'm very—a proponent of employers. Our TMA is primarily a membership based, like a Chamber of Commerce in a way, organization, where it's private sector driven and led, and primarily funded by private funds through our employer members, who pay a dues. We also, for new development that occurs in our center, they pay into the city a mitigation fund. We're able to receive some dollars from that and we also receive a little bit of money, off and on, from government grants as well.

Within transit, our role has been very interesting over the 20 years that I've been there. As Barbara mentioned, you know, when you build a center, you kind of think they'd add the transit in, that it would just be a, you know, a given. And I would like to think that too, but with our center unfortunately it has not been the case. We have 35,000 people that work within a mile of each other. It's high-density, mixed-use development. And when I came on board 20 years ago, there wasn't really had been given much thought to the word transit and connecting the people that work there with, you know, key areas of where they live. And with LA's sprawl, that was quite a challenge. And we've struggled over the years.

We've added more—the role of TMA was not to provide the actual transit service directly. There are a few TMAs in the country and here in LA that do provide their own shuttle system. Anaheim, with Disneyland, there's a TMA down there and they do provide their own transit. And I believe there's around TMA—ten TMAs around the US that directly provide a shuttle or some transit. Most of the rest of the us are not wanting to get into the business and the finance and the cost of directly providing transit. Rather, what we feel our role is is to advocate and encourage transit to be put in, and not just to say we represent a lot of powerful people, give it to us, although that's one angle. But the other angle is a market and research case, to make a good case of doing our research, to know the pattern, the commute patterns of where a majority of people live to be able to help trans agencies identify where we think it would be a good use of limited tax money to put in services. So, with—years ago, we were just working with one transit agency. Now we're up to six, meaning that we've been able to, in a positive way, work with the public transit agencies in key areas where we identified unmet transit needs, putting in long distance commuter services into our center.

The city of LA runs LADOT, the LA Department of Transportation. They're --July 1, they're about to cut one, actually two of our key transit services, which is very unfortunate, with budget cuts. One included that we help start in 1993, a DASH shuttle that's a local circulator to get people around within the center and connect to the regional transportation system. That's going to be cut. The other one that's going to be cut is a commuter express line coming from Simi Valley, which is an outer valley, the next one over from the San Fernando Valley. But part of the role—our role then is not so much in my TMA to run transit, but to be a partner to work with trans agencies, to understand a customer and where an unmet need, or to reroute to better serve a need that we feel that we have in our in community. Our role then, we feel, is to also then help promote and market the service once it gets put in place. So that is a key role that we feel—we're kind of reaching down to the customer level. We kind of view ourselves as a retailer dealing with the wholesalers. We're not here to recreate the wheel, we're here to work

with the government resources that are there and bring them down to the costumers in our center.

We're—excuse me. We are primarily commuter based, dealing with people that commute to our center, but we have since expanded that. We're now dealing with a college that's a member with student transportation, faculty transportation. We don't deal with the tourism that Anaheim gets, but we do deal with people coming—we have two major shopping centers in our center. It's is a mixed use development. We have a medical center, Kaiser, and it truly—we recently also have added thousands of new condos and apartments in our center with the spurt of the housing market before it's now slowed down. And so we're now working with the home end people as well, commuting out to other jobs. Part of the role of our TMA in a land use planning point of view was that we have a specific plan that guides development within our center. And that plan is an overall vision to not just deal with widening the roads, but it's also looking at the transit element, it's also looking at making sure the building is green, the whole LEED design thing is very exciting to us. It's kind of something we've been doing for many years and that involves everything from, when a building is designed to be built, to ensure that it's going to be transit friendly, vanpool friendly, that a van can fit in the parking lot. You know, things that you would think everybody would think about, but we all know that they don't. So it's a matter of trying to remind them that when you're building, you know, the structure, you're can put in the showers for the walkers and bicyclers. You can put in the bike rack. You know, you can put in the pull out area so it's safe for a carpooler, vanpooler, transit rider to get on and off the bus. I mean, those kind of things, so the design friendly elements within the building is very important to us as well as requiring the landlord and the tenants to cooperate with us to try to reduce the trips coming in to mitigate, you know, to help us with the traffic mitigation.

The—a lot of services we're involved in, one of them, we—one of the first that we started 20 years ago is now a standard across most employers now I believe in the United States called Guaranteed Ride Home. It gets at the theory that we discovered early that people that have a car and don't drive alone, there's a fear of being stranded during an emergency. What if I have to work late? What if I get laid off in the morning when I come into work? What if my child is sick? What if I don't feel well? You know, what if my car breaks down? But whatever the unplanned emergency is, they would normally be stranded if they rode a bus or in a carpool if there wasn't a bus, you know, in a frequent time period to get them back. And so we've been providing for 20 years free transportation—quick, free, easy—to get people home in any unplanned emergency with rental cars and cabs. And it works very well. We only have about 8% who actually have the emergencies during the year, although everybody worries about the emergencies, so it's a low cost insurance program, if you will, to help get people out of the car.

I mentioned bicycling. We have a bike program with bike racks. We do a lot of promotional outreach, a lot of events, a lot of information sharing for transit to—as I think many of you know, you know, people that have not ridden buses that have a choice are very intimidated by a bus and that's in their mind of what a bus would be like. And so a lot of it is education and helping identify for them where the bus stop is. You know, that kind of thing to try to get them to try it with free bus passes to try today. Those are valuable marketing tools for someone like me to help get somebody out of their car for those that have vehicles.

Relocation would be a key thing. With employees right now with the bad economy, we've had many employers lay off. A lot of my buildings are half empty right now. It's been a

very sad time in the past two to three years for my center. But as those buildings start filling up with the economy, we have an opportunity to kind of hit the people where they're fertile before they've relocated to a new work location and to expand the recruiting efforts of the employer to offer up transportation alternatives for them. Let's see, do I still—where am I in time?

Unidentified Speaker: You got about a minute and a half.

CHRIS PARK: Okay, okay. I think I'll kind of cut to the chase on, obviously, you know, I'm here to advocate that it's important to involve employers and I think it's—one thing that many government agencies, as somebody who used to work with one, they don't really get the marketing angle that well. They don't really get customer service that well. A lot are focused more on the operational, so they're not really putting the funding that they should into the time to market and promote and make efficient use of tax money to get more of the seats filled on the buses that are out there. So I'm a very strong advocate for education and marketing to encourage more people to ride transit and other modes.

The employers really can be an advocate to the government, but the employers need to be asked, and the employers, and I think Barbara mentioned it well, that you know, you can't just go in and say, "Well, this is what we want out of you." You have to try and understand what are their concerns, what are their needs. Is it the parking issue? Is it traffic? Is it low morale? Is it turnover of employees? I mean, limited transit? I mean, what really are the reasons? Related to mode split, for every transit rider we have, we have twenty people who carpool, so ridesharing is a very key component in our mobility solutions in trying to get people out of their cars.

Partnerships is really the key. You know, I work with a lot of big employers, multi-tenant commercial properties, condo and apartment buildings, retail shopping centers, college. I mean, it's really trying to bring everybody together at the table, the employers bring in their resources. With limited government money, the employer to bring the resource of their time and some money to the table to help with this. And here, again, they can reach down and have a dramatic effect upon their employees with providing rideshare benefits and what have you to the employee to get more people out of the car. So with that, I think I'll stop and wait for questions and discussion.