



# Successful Project Prioritization

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Clear Goals, Effective Measures,  
Transparent Process



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# Team GA-TN

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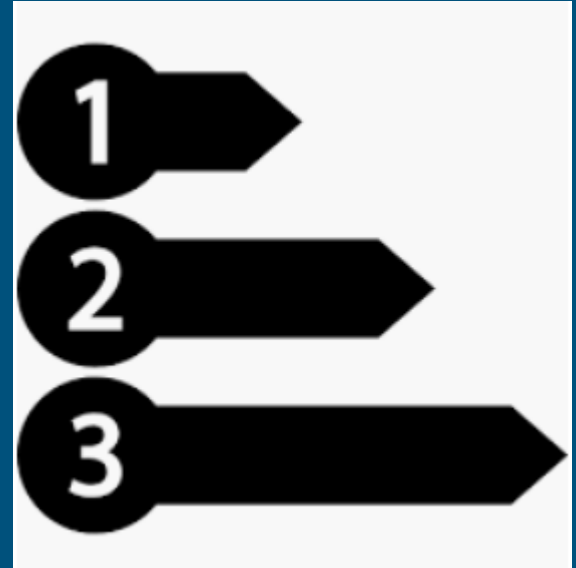


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# Agenda: Successful Project Prioritization

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- Why Prioritize?
- Case Studies & Lessons Learned
- Effective Performance Measures
- The Importance of Process
- Key Takeaways



# Why prioritize?

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**Projects  
and  
Need**

>

**Available  
Funding**

Therefore, projects need to be prioritized for implementation.

- Quantitative Measures
- Qualitative Measures
- Social Equity
- Geographic Equity
- Political Will
- Funding Source

# Case Studies

- Referendums
  - Los Angeles
  - Atlanta
  - Charlotte
  - Nashville
- Internal budget process
  - Seattle
  - Denver



# LA Metro

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## Developed project list for Measure M

- Bottom-up approach: each Council of Government developed own project list based on own priorities
  - Given flexible sub-regional targets→ help make project list more realistic
- At COG level, fully qualitative prioritization
- At county level, Metro staff used performance metrics to rank projects & determine sequencing
  - Mobility
  - Economy
  - Accessibility
  - Safety
  - Sustainability & Quality of Life

# Atlanta

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- More MARTA half-penny sales tax approved by voters to fund transit improvements within Atlanta city limits.
- MARTA and City of Atlanta signed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) in January 2018 to establish and guide the process of selecting projects to fund.
  - Established technical and stakeholder advisory committees
  - Included full list of potential projects
  - Established programming process
  - Established the Joint Prioritization Leadership Group to coordinate across agencies

HALF-PENNY SALES  
TAX APPROVED BY  
ATLANTA VOTERS

PUBLIC  
ENGAGEMENT  
AND EDUCATION

PROGRAM  
EVALUATION  
PROCESS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT  
AND EDUCATION/PUBLIC  
INPUT SURVEY

MARTA BOARD  
VOTE TO APPROVE  
PROGRAM

LEADERSHIP  
AND COMMITTEE  
PROGRAM  
DEVELOPMENT

# Charlotte

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## Prioritization of Transit Corridors

- Identified corridors as part of 1998 Transit and Land-Use Vision
- Evaluated corridors based on:
  - Jobs and housing within half mile of transit stations
  - Capital cost
  - Ridership projections
  - Long term need for congestion relief
  - Long term land use opportunity
- Able to evaluate transit corridor alternatives in conjunction with land use growth scenarios
- Prioritized and sequenced development of corridors after referendum





# Nashville

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## High Capacity Corridor Study

- **Building on nMotion**, Nashville's 25 year strategic plan for transit expansion
- 5 corridors identified for High Capacity Transit
- Identified opportunities and challenges on each corridor and prioritized considering:
  - Existing Ridership
  - Residents and Jobs within ½ mile
  - Community Support (based on surveys during nMotion)
  - Existing Development Activity
  - Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure
  - Constructability (high level feasibility considering implementation challenges)

# Lessons Learned

- **Bottom-up** processes create buy-in
- **Traffic congestion** is a bipartisan issue
- Local projects, geographic equity, and **local** return matter
- Sequencing projects **based on data** builds legitimacy
- **Leadership matters**



## HOW TO PASS A MEGA TRANSPORTATION MEASURE



# Lessons Learned

- Setting broad **goals first** helps to insulate projects from politics.
- **Messaging, communications, and public engagement** creates buy-in throughout the service area.
- Holistically addressing transportation and land use builds support

## Assessment Summary

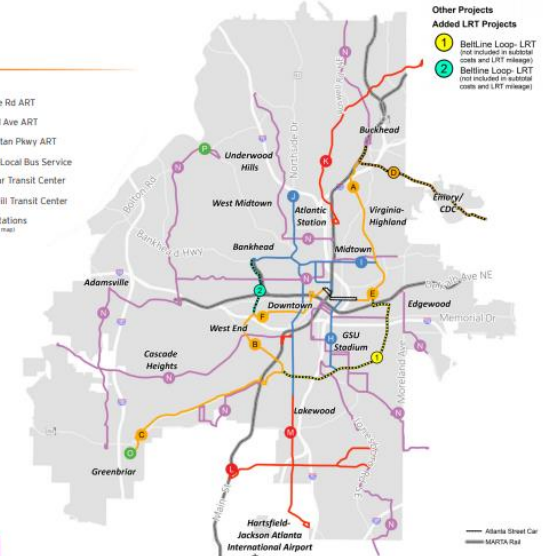
	Charlotte	Gallatin	Noienville	Murfreesboro	Dickerson
Existing Conditions					
Starter Line Bus Ridership (2017)	✓ GOOD	✓✓ BEST	✓ GOOD	✓✓ BEST	✓✓ BEST
Full Corridor Bus Ridership (2017)	✓ GOOD	✓✓ BEST	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD
Residents Served (2015)	→ FAIR	✓✓ BEST	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	→ FAIR
Jobs Served (2015)	✓✓ BEST	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	✓✓ BEST	→ FAIR
Corridor Readiness					
Community Support (nMotion)	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD
Existing Development Activity	✓✓ BEST	✓✓ BEST	✓ GOOD	→ FAIR	→ FAIR
Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure	→ FAIR	→ FAIR	→ FAIR	→ FAIR	→ FAIR
Implementation					
Constructability	✓ GOOD	✓ GOOD	→ FAIR	✓✓ BEST	→ FAIR

## More MARTA Atlanta Program

- A BellLine Northeast LRT
- B BellLine Southwest LRT
- C Campbellton Rd LRT
- D Clifton Corridor LRT
- E Crossown Downtown East Extension
- F Crossown Downtown West Extension
- H Capitol Ave BRT
- I North Ave- Donald L. Hollowell Pkwy BRT
- J Northside Dr BRT

- K Peachtree Rd ART
- L Cleveland Ave ART
- M Metropolitan Pkwy ART
- N Frequent Local Bus Service
- O Greenbriar Transit Center
- P Moores Mill Transit Center
- Q MARTA Stations (not shown on map)

(LRT) Light Rail Transit  
 (ART) Arterial Rapid Transit  
 (BRT) Bus Rapid Transit



# Seattle-King County Metro:

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Developed long-range vision to double transit by 2040

- **Develop guiding principles first**
- Rooted in the county's fund management priorities
  - Maintain
  - Invest in current service
  - Expand in coordination with vision
- Prioritization-Quantitative and Qualitative
  - Equity
  - Ridership
  - Existing partnerships
  - Connection to high capacity network
  - Project readiness/complexity

# Denver

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- Annual call for projects across agency
- Three main categories
  - Compliance
  - Renewal
  - Enhancement
- Multiple reviews within department, by finance, and by Investment Review Panel
- Projects are graded against mission statement
- Final project list advanced for board approval

# Lessons Learned

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- Setting broad **goals first** helps to insulate projects from politics
- **Robust community process** up front helps to skirt future opposition and aligns projects with goals
- Must consider ongoing/recurring costs
- Data drives good decision making



# Effective Performance Measures

- Lead to project prioritization
- More quantitative than qualitative
- Easily understandable and help to build buy-in and explain the decision making process
- Logically follow the inclusive development of a vision statement
- Consider project readiness



# The Importance of the Process

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- Goal/vision setting should happen first
- Role should be clearly established from the start
- The process should be collaborative
- Next steps should be dictated from the start





# Key Takeaways

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It's an art and a science; process and measures should be well-integrated



Evolving performance measures can help to create more nuanced transit prioritization



Near universal buy-in is crucial for a referendum



Vision and planning matters

# Thank you

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Michael Snavely, Cambridge Systematics

Felix Castrodad, WeGo Public Transit

Luke Westlund and Mike Nabhan, Denver RTD

Jason Lawrence and John Muth, Charlotte Area Transit System