WMATA’s Business Case for Transit

Measuring our Regional Benefits

EESI
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Think like a regional funder

Re-establish that transit’s outputs go beyond operating metrics

Draw inferences from experience
Impacts

Ballston 1980

Ballston 2001

Station Entrance

Commercial office & retail

Residential rental

Park

Senior Living

Commercial office

Commercial office & retail

Plan

Residence
Methodological Housekeeping

- Communicable metrics
- Measurability
- Counterfactuals
- Transit can’t take credit for everything
- Replicable approach with regional specificity
- Order of magnitude ambition
  - Benefits “comparable” to capital and operating costs
- More follow-up required for bus and paratransit cases
Metro: Increases Property Values

- $235 B in real estate value
- Premium of 7-9%
- 28% of region’s land on 4% of land
- $3.1B in property tax
Transit: Moves the Regional Economy

With transit “off”:

- Peak travel times up 25%
- Congestion fractures the regional economy
- Employers lose access to workers
- We lose competitiveness of single economy
Without Transit

+ 1 million auto trips/day

+ 1,000 lane-miles needed to keep existing levels of congestion

=  

- Equivalent of nearly 2 new Capital Beltways
- 4-6 new lanes on Potomac crossings
- $6.7 billion
Without Transit

200,000 more parking spaces in core

× 166 =

• Almost 170 blocks of 5-story parking garages
  • From 23rd to 12th
  • Constitution Avenue to R Street

Price: $4.1 billion
“Downtown Covered in Parking?”

- Not so far-fetched

An aerial view of parking and land use in downtown Minneapolis.

Surface parking lots  Parking ramps

From David Albersman, Albersman and Armstrong, LTD, Minneapolis
Without Metro

Metro: Makes the Region Livable

- Saves households time and money
  - Time savings: $705M/yr
  - Auto savings: $340M/yr
  - Additional auto savings ~250M/yr
- Cleans the air
- Opens doors for all
- 360,000 trips by car-free households per day
Conclusions

• “Mobility” metrics do not tell the whole story

Transit adds value to land and labor markets in ways that “mobility” metrics do not capture

• Adding this kind of analysis helps make the “business case” for transit