

# **Selecting Major Transit Projects: Making and Keeping a 10 Year Promise**

*Work Session for  
the Atlanta Roundtable on July 7, 2011*

UTA is ahead of schedule and under budget with its FrontLines project. FrontLines is a group of five UTA rail projects that will add 70 miles to the 64-mile rail network.

Despite initial skepticism, TRAX now enjoys widespread support. Both the University Line and its extension to the University Medical Center were completed ahead of schedule. A daily ridership of 15,000 was expected for the initial 15-mile line in 1999. By the fourth quarter of 2009, the ridership had risen to 43,400.

Today the program is estimated to cost \$6.7 billion, leaving a \$2-2.5 billion funding gap. If the program can't secure another revenue source, the agency won't finish all the projects until 2042 (25yrs behind schedule).

Initial cost estimate in 1999 for the Blue Line was \$225 million. In 2000, costs increased to \$331mil. Costs increased to \$371mil in 2002. By 2004, cost increased to \$399mil and were again revised to \$427mil in 2005. Revised estimates in 2007 called for the project to be completed at a final cost of \$463mil, more than double the original estimate of \$227mil.

# The 10 Year Promise

- What the promise is:
  - Performance
  - Price
  - Delivery
- To whom the promise is made:
  - Citizens
  - Roundtable members

# July Workshop Purpose

- Make the promise:
  - Simpler format for difficult choices
  - Create the pipeline (program to promise)
  - The sales tax is a 10 yr. promise
- Keep the promise:
  - Fit the promise to the project
  - Commit, focus and be accountable

# Make the Promise

## 10 Year Promise Buckets

Projects placed in buckets by promise:

### 1. Done and open: 1-10 yrs

- Lots of people riding
- Costs are understood (on budget)
- Project is delivered on time

### 2. Substantial construction: beyond 10 yrs

- Ridership projections are high
- Substantial construction (on schedule)
- Costs are understood (on budget)

### 3. Continue the pipeline:

- For the next available funds

# Keep the Promise

(Commit, Focus & Be Accountable)

- Requires serious commitment and leadership from the project sponsor:
  - ✓ Staying within budget (construction and operations)
  - ✓ Ongoing operating funds (if not funded by the regional sales tax)
  - ✓ Making tough decisions
  - ✓ Addressing citizen concerns quickly
  - ✓ Enabling development appropriate for major investment
- Accountability of the project sponsor to the region for performance, price and delivery

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