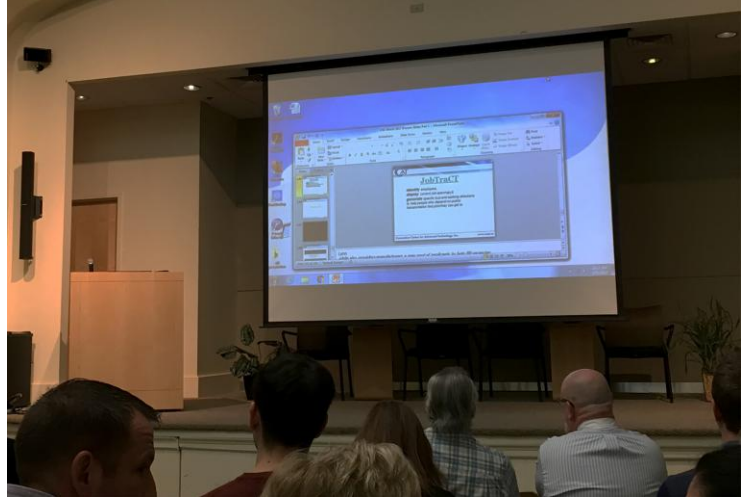


First/Last Mile – IForum -2017

If you could get a 10% raise starting tomorrow, how would you be able to improve your life? While I'm not in a position to do that for anyone, and the ideas that were discussed won't go into effect tomorrow, it's still something to think about.

This was just one statistic presented at the IForum 2017 presentation on Friday by Partnership For Strong Communities (PSC) titled *First/Last Mile: Ensuring Transit Opportunities are Shared by All*. The IForums are a series of programs presented throughout the year by (PSC) focused on solutions to all of the problems facing struggling communities, and the dissemination of ideas leading to solutions.



The 10% referenced above was from a statistic that for a significant portion of the population, transportation involving owning an automobile accounts for 19% of their average income annually, while when public transportation is substituted, the percentage drops to 9%. This isn't always true, but it is when the public transportation is successful in allowing people to avoid owning a car.

The costs associated with automobile ownership, which include not just buying and insuring it, but fueling and maintaining it, and the often hidden cost of parking it, make the public transit option not just more beneficial to the individual, but to society in general.

The Forum began with a welcome from Alicia Woodsby, Ex Dir of PSC, and introductions by Kayleigh Lombardi, a Policy Analyst for PSC. The opening remarks came from Dr. Lyle Wray, Exec Dir of the Capitol Region council of Governments who laid out a number of the statistics that demonstrate why private automobile ownership is not the best use of resources. Two of the most stunning is that the average amount of time that an automobile is parked is 95%, and that while there are approximately 253 million cars on the road in the US, there are approximately one billion parking spaces. We allocate more space for our cars than for ourselves.

To convey everything that Dr. Wray said in his opening remarks would take more space than is available here, and that would leave none for the Keynote Speaker **Christof Spieler**, Vice President and Director of Planning for Houston Huitt-Zollars, Board of Directors, Houston METRO, or the panelists; **Douglas Hausladen**, Director of Transportation, Dept. of Transportation, Traffic and Parking, City of New Haven; **Michael Sanders**, Public Transit Administrator, CTDOT; **Matt Powers**, General Manager, Uber Connecticut and **Tanya Barrett**, Senior VP, 2-1-1 health and Human Services, United Way of Connecticut.

The good news is that the entire presentation was video taped and will be available on the PSC website. If you got to <http://www.pschousing.org/news/firstlast-mile-ensuring-transit-opportunities-are-share-all> you'll see the link to the video at the bottom of the page.

Bernie Michel