Bus acceleration programme in the City of Hamburg





Starting Point

- Every year the number of passenger in the public transport system increases between 2 and 3 %.
- Some bus lines are overcrowded in rush hour.
- The new construction of train systems takes decades, it's not a quick solution!
- Many bus lines can't work in reliable and scheduled way, caused by overcrowded roads (There is one bus line only with special-owned lane).

Bus acceleration programme

(divided in two phases: A: Start in 2012, B: Start in 2019)

Institutional settings

There were an existing working public transport system, consisting of a subway, rapid trains, metrobuses and citybuses.

The Players are

- The local authorities (BMWI)
- Transport network company (HVV)
- Company of infrastructure (LBV)
- Bus companies (HHA, VHH)

...all of them are in public ownership.

Institutional settings

Following stakeholders must be involved:

- Parliament of Hamburg
- Customer organsisations
- Disabled representation
- Citizen initiatives
- Concerned citizens and business people in the districts
- Traffic police

Budget over the two phases: 260 Mio €.

Each single activity must be justified by an Cost-Benefit-Analysis.

Approach

New planning for each busstop and for each intersection over the whole bus line, includes

- New traffic lights programmes
- Partially new positions for the bus stops
- New road division between public and private traffic (also bicycle and pedestrian lanes)
- Installation of telematik systems (Buses communicate with traffic lights)

Offer and carry out several public planning workshops to involve the stakeholders and citizens with well elaborated and understandable presentations.

Approach



Metrobus-System-Plan

Plan of one crossing



Outputs

- The bus lines, where all activities have been done, do become faster, the average speed increase between 5 and 10 %.
- The bus services on the concerned lines got a higher reliability (avoiding bus-queues on lines with frequent departures).



Outputs

• The new bus stops are well-designed and take into account the needs of disabled persons (strips for blinds, smaller gaps between vehicle and ground).



Time savings either followed by cost savings or allowed a better service because it's possible to manage more capacities (more vehicles). The customers get shorter travel times and a higher quality.

Lessons

- The public attention for this project was/is very high. This requires high efforts to involve the important stakeholders for discussing the main activities.
- The new planning for each intersection to reach every little time saving is a laborious work, but at the end the results are positive.
- Sometimes it requires courage to realize good and effective activities (especially when it concerns the individual traffic by car)

Lessons

But the challenges go on:

- The increase of passenger numbers continues.
- The urban authorities pick up the needs of a sustainable climate and traffic politics in the City of Hamburg. For this the individual traffic gets more and more limitations, so it needs further improvements for the public transport systems.
- Next step: Bus Rapid System ?
- Electrification of the bus fleet (1.500 Buses over all)
- ...

Transfer

- If installing a new public bus service this example shows and improves mistakes made in the past. Maybe you have the possibility to avoid them!
- Maybe not every activity ist feasible , but maybe some of them.
- The City of Hamburg has a very regulated public traffic system, which facilitates integrated, consistend and coordinated decisions.
- An integrated and holistic concept, which outlines the development in the future, is a good base for all current discussions.
- But: Every public transport system depends on the specific local frame.