

# Critical Issues in Transportation for 2024 and Beyond

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## CARROS POR PUESTO-THE 'JITNEY' TAXI SYSTEM OF CARACAS, VENEZUELA

THE JITNEY TAXI SERVICE IN VENEZUELA IS STUDIED WHICH CONSISTS OF SHARED TAXICABS THAT PICK UP AND DROP OFF PASSENGERS ALONG PRESCRIBED ROUTES AND NORMALLY CHARGE EACH PASSENGER CARRIED A FIXED FARE ON A ZONE BASIS. THE JITNEY OR PUBLICO SERVICE IS A COMMON ONE IN SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA. SAN FRANCISCO AND ATLANTIC CITY ARE THOUGHT TO BE THE ONLY CITIES IN THE UNITED STATES THAT STILL HAVE A JITNEY SERVICE. THIS SYSTEM WITH ITS FREQUENT SERVICE AND SPEEDS COMPARABLE TO THE PRIVATE AUTOMOBILE IS SIMILAR TO THE CHARACTERISTICS OF VARIOUS PROPOSED SMALL CAR AND MINIBUS PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS BEING STUDIED. DATA WAS COLLECTED IN 1966 BY AN ORIGIN-DESTINATION HOME INTERVIEW SURVEY, VEHICLE-COUNTING PROGRAMS, TRAVEL TIME STUDIES, AND OTHER TRAFFIC SURVEYS. THE STUDY SHOWS THAT THE USE OF JITNEYS AS PART OF A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM HAS SEVERAL ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS, INCLUDING GREAT FLEXIBILITY IN ROUTING AND SCHEDULING, OPERATING SPEEDS EQUAL TO THAT OF PRIVATE AUTOMOBILES, SEATING FOR EVERY PASSENGER, AND PROVIDING FREQUENT SERVICE AT SHORT HEADWAYS. HOWEVER, AS A RESULT OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES TOWARD LIMITING AND CONTROLLING JITNEY AND TAXI OPERATIONS AND AS A RESULT OF THE PROVISION OF IMPROVED BUS SERVICE AND A RAIL RAPID-TRANSIT SYSTEM, THE JITNEY WILL PROBABLY BECOME LESS IMPORTANT AS A MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE FUTURE. THE CONTINUED ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CARACAS MAY FORCE THE ABANDONMENT OF THE SYSTEM ON FINANCIAL GROUNDS AS HAPPENED IN THE UNITED STATES. HOWEVER, WITH TRANSPORTATION DEMAND EXPECTED TO GROW TO 2.5 TIMES THE EXISTING LEVEL BY 1990, IT IS THE AUTHOR'S HOPE THAT A MEANS CAN BE FOUND TO KEEP JITNEYS SERVING CARACAS FOR MANY YEARS. A REVIVAL OF THE SYSTEM IN NORTH AMERICA IS WORTH CONSIDERATION. THIS COULD POSSIBLY BE DONE AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD A MORE SOPHISTICATED COMPUTER-CONTROLLED DIAL-A-CAB SYSTEM. IT MIGHT PROVIDE IMPORTANT SOCIAL BENEFITS SUCH AS CREATING JOBS AS DRIVERS FOR THE UNSKILLED AND IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN SLUM AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT CENTERS.

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