

Continuing Transportation Studies for Urban Areas

(A panel discussion concerned with the development of an effective transportation planning process and coordination of the planning efforts of all jurisdictions was conducted as part of the program of the 50th annual Purdue Road School. Much of the discussion was concerned with a "Policy Statement on Urban Transportation" which was presented by Carlton C. Robinson, director, Traffic Engineering Division, Automotive Safety Foundation, Washington, D. C. Because of the importance of this topic and the general agreement of those present on the wisdom and completeness of the policy statement, it is reproduced here.)

POLICY STATEMENT ON URBAN TRANSPORTATION

(The following statement was prepared as a result of a meeting called by the Transportation Committee of American Public Works Association. Present were representatives of American Institute of Planners, American Road Builders Association, American Society of Civil Engineers, American Society of Planning Officials, American Transit Association and Institute of Traffic Engineers. As of the publication date of these proceedings all of the indicated organizations had not acted on official endorsement.)

Transportation, which includes all modes of private and public conveyance for the movement of people and goods, affects every element of the community. Great sums of money are involved annually in the construction, operation, maintenance and use of transportation systems. Certainly transportation has a major influence on the economy, the well being and the safety of a community. *Therefore, it is essential that an effective transportation planning process be developed and coordinated among all jurisdictions and all agencies which are individually responsible for various elements of the planning process.*

" . . . After July 1, 1965, the Secretary (of Commerce) shall not approve under Section 105 of this title any program for projects in any urban area of more than fifty thousand population unless he finds that such projects are based on a continuing comprehensive transportation planning process carried out cooperatively by states and local communities. . . ."

This quotation has been extracted from Section 9 of the 1962 Federal-Aid Highway Act. Action is called for, and it is this action to which this statement is addressed.

Units of government are urged to enter into agreements as soon as possible providing for participation in a joint comprehensive, continuous transportation planning process in urban areas which should be carried out in light of its impact on the life, form and character of the area and its citizens. Such a process should draw upon the planning experience, data, decisions and programs of all public and private agencies having responsibilities and concern for transportation.

Toward this end these concepts are presented:

1. THE END OBJECTIVE OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS IS INFORMED DECISIONS LEADING TO THE COORDINATED USE OF ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR MAXIMUM BENEFIT TO THE AREA, THE STATE AND THE NATION. Plans and studies are elements of a continuous process, not the process itself. *A community plan is never final.* Changing conditions, technology and the desires of the people require continual re-evaluation and adjustment of the plan. Thus all agencies directly involved in the continuous transportation planning process should take part in the study phase of the program to the extent of becoming thoroughly familiar with the comprehensiveness and nature of data amassed and the nature of its analysis.

2. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING TO ATTAIN DEFINED GOALS IS PRIMARILY LOCAL. The identity of a community is reflected by expressed policies and actions of the local political structure. Providing services, facilities, tax structure and regulations are such expressions. These must be planned to direct the community toward desired goals. In the same way, regional, state and national goals should be merged for coordinated attainment. On the other hand, both state and Federal agencies have clear responsibility for control of their transportation programs, which can neither be delegated nor usurped.

3. A TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PARTNERSHIP OF CITY-COUNTY-STATE-FEDERAL MUST BE FORMED. Transportation systems know no political boundaries. The legal requirement of cooperation must be demonstrated through a working partnership of governments. To accomplish this, agreement must be reached on the obligation of all parties and an agreed-upon distribution and understanding of work elements. All parties must demonstrate

their willingness to accept responsibilities including cooperation, decisiveness and active participation with both manpower and money.

4. THE LOCAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE SHOULD BE FULLY REPRESENTED AND SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP. Decisions formulated outside of the political structure are meaningless. Some variations of this principle can exist so long as the governing body is constantly aware and fully behind any authority it may delegate.

5. THE PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE SHOULD CONSIST OF REPRESENTATIVES OF STATE AND LOCAL UNITS OF GOVERNMENT. THE GOVERNING BODY OF EACH LOCAL AGENCY WITH AUTHORITY OVER TRANSPORTATION, PLANNING AND RELATED MATTERS SHOULD HAVE APPROPRIATE REPRESENTATION OR LIAISON WITH THE PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE. Within this structure, special groups fairly representing the interests of those most directly involved in a given situation should be established to deal with specific problems. This concept is designed to permit a more manageable group in large complex urban areas, while retaining complete representation.

6. DECISIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE MADE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT. Those decisions which are the responsibility of one governmental body are its prerogative, but should reflect agreements reached through the cooperative planning process.

7. THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS SHOULD BE INTEGRATED INTO NORMAL OPERATIONS OF GOVERNMENT INsofar AS POSSIBLE. An organizational objective is to create a process for the systematic collection, analysis and utilization of the information needed in developing sound transportation plans and programs. Local units of government should provide for the efficient functioning of the transportation planning process within their own jurisdiction to the extent specified in the partnership agreement. This may require the teaching of new skills and techniques to existing employees, the hiring of additional staff or the use of consulting services. Technical competence is essential.

8. PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE IS NECESSARY TO TURN PLANS INTO PROGRAMS. Public acceptance of planned facilities

and of the actual construction meeting regional transportation needs is the test of a successful transportation planning process.

Recognizing that all opposition of every project can not be avoided, it is nonetheless essential that the public be kept constantly aware of planning developments and that the planning process be responsive to public desires.

Summary

In summary the transportation planning process should be—

- cooperative— the collective decisions leading to actions by all governments in the area.
- comprehensive—inclusive of all governments and all forms of transportation, using the best technological skills to be found.
- and continuing—carried on as a normal and continuing function of government.

These principles do not attempt to solve specific organizational problems or to provide the necessary technical data to be assembled and analyzed. Answers of this nature vary with each situation and consultation of competent authority is advised.