

Hopefully, you could make a case that over and beyond the increased counterpart capability that Secretary Boyd talked about, communities getting familiar with minimal statutory requirements, the next few years are going to see us proceed as these programs and processes get more familiar in a better way.

One of the problems I have observed in the transportation area has been, of course, that frequently these projects are approved by the local government which tentatively arrives at agreements and then disinterest and opposition and disagreement occur at the local level.

Perhaps by now developing a process of collaboration where the planning is fitted together earlier and the process of review and deliberation begins earlier we will be able to have a smoother course. That is at least one of the underlying premises of our arrangements.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Will the gentleman yield for just a moment?

Mr. EDWARDS. Yes.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Right in line with your questioning, it reminded me of one of the experiences we had in one of the cities in my district which had an opportunity to purchase an existing golf course which was on the market to be sold for development as a housing area, a new subdivision, and the city felt that it was more desirable to keep the open space.

Apparently at the time they made the application it was the policy of HUD to grant funds for this purpose. After they entered into the contract to purchase the golf course and made their application, the policy of HUD apparently changed and the funds could be used only to acquire space to develop as golf courses but not to purchase already existing golf courses.

So, they found themselves with a commitment. They lost a good deal of money. I think the golf course has since been sold and will now be developed for a new subdivision. It is this sort of thing that is rather disconcerting to the cities.

Mr. WOOD. They have spoken to me on several occasions.

Mr. ERLNBORN. I think so.

Mr. BOYD. May I say this, Mr. Edwards, one of the things that we have done in the Department of Transportation, and it is probably being done in others, too, is to establish in our Office of Public Affairs an Office of State and Community Liaison.

Mr. WOOD. We have that.

Mr. BOYD. We have about a third of the people we thought we needed going around personally making contact with Governors, mayors, county commissioners, and so forth to advise them on what the Department's programs are, and to try to sort of "mother hen" the applications they have coming to the Department of Transportation.

So we have a direct line of communication. When something gets snagged, they are suppose to be able to pick it up.

Mr. EDWARDS. Let me go back to a few more specifics on the plan itself.

The plan reserves to the Secretary of HUD the authority to make grants and undertake projects under section 1605(a) having to do with research, development, and demonstration projects, and 1607(a), technical study, and 1607(c), research and training in institutions of higher learning, where these grants or projects concern transportation planning.