

The 1968 National Highway Needs Report also noted:

The planning for future highway programs cannot wait completion of the Interstate System. An orderly transition from the present program to the new requires that preliminary planning studies begin at the earliest possible time. The available lead time (to 1975) is just barely adequate even now.

Any new highway program must have as its goal the development of a coordinated transportation system. The Interstate System will never achieve maximum effectiveness, nor will urban centers achieve maximum viability, if disproportionate emphasis continues to be placed on one element of the transportation system.

The Interstate System has succeeded in reducing congestion in some ways in urban areas, but it has increased it in others by dumping large amounts of traffic onto street systems unprepared to absorb such heavy traffic volumes. Its own utility has been limited because it is often compelled to function as a local arterial to relieve inadequate, congested streets which should carry more local traffic. Further, development of essential urban traffic circulation systems is not apt to occur in the absence of any Federal support for such systems.

Many needed improvements in local street and highway systems not a part of the Interstate System have been deferred pending the projected 1972 completion date for the Interstate System. As the completion date for the Interstate System is put off further and further, the need for action on these other projects is ever more compelling.

Recent cost estimates indicate that the Interstate System will not be completed until well after the originally projected 1972 completion date. Before that system is completed, an interim program must be initiated to decrease congestion and improve the safety and convenience of travel on major arteries within metropolitan areas and on essential elements of the highway system in rural regions by focusing resources on the most necessary highway projects deferred pending completion of the Interstate System. A procedure must be developed to "phase in" a new highway program as early as possible.

Thus it is appropriate, while discussing the immediate future of the ABC program, that we look ahead to the problems and solutions involved in developing coordinated transportation systems for urban areas in the next decade.

While we are concerned with the total highway program, as an organization of America's cities, our primary concern is urban transportation. In this latter respect we propose that a new urban transportation program should have three vital characteristics:

It should provide convenience and economy of travel, but it should also be a tool to shape the growth of metropolitan areas and have as its goal improvement of the quality of the urban environment;

It should be sufficiently flexible to permit the particular characteristics of the urban region to be served to determine the transportation modes and services most appropriate for the area; and

It should be structured so as to assure funding of the transportation system employing the mix of modes most appropriate to good transportation in the urban area.

Further, we believe that such a program should seek to overcome some present roadblocks to coordinated transportation develop-