

PAST PROGRESS: FUTURE PLANNING

Past progress in highway transportation in the United States has been noteworthy—and the Congress deserves great credit for the legislative leadership which it has given over the years through progressive Federal highway acts.

Looking ahead, indications are that highway travel will nearly double in the next 20 years—with much faster growth in our burgeoning metropolitan areas. Meeting such needs presents a huge challenge.

Planning for such a future demands a sound foundation and procedure. Fortunately the technology of planning has advanced greatly, particularly for urban areas. Much credit should be given to the requirement of urban transportation planning contained in the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962.

Fullest benefits from the planning process can result only from a coordinated and genuinely cooperative participation of appropriate agencies of all levels of government. Full involvement of overall planning agencies of local governments is essential to securing desired results—though it has often not been achieved.

Institute policy “supports the integration of transportation planning, freeway development, and the comprehensive planning process with the goal of making our cities better, healthier, happier, safer, more convenient and more attractive places in which to live . . .” “The Institute recognizes that the planning and development of urban freeways should not only fit the local environment but also contribute to raising urban standards and to enhancing the aggregate of community values. Safety, convenience and economy are significant among these values and should not be relegated to secondary importance.”

The Institute urges that the Congress include in appropriate legislation the provision that in local communities of over 10,000 population future street and highway developments involving any form of Federal assistance shall be based on planning and design consistent with standards approved by the Department of Transportation and developed or approved by municipal or metropolitan authorities having street and highway responsibilities.

LEGISLATION FOR NATIONWIDE NEEDS STUDY

The Institute of Traffic Engineers urges the Congress to enact legislation calling for the Federal Highway Administration in cooperation with the States and local governments to make a comprehensive nationwide study of future street and highway transportation needs, both physical and financial, and to report to the Congress the resulting findings and recommendations by an appropriate date. A study period of 3 years is suggested. The legislation should also provide that the needs studies be on a continuing basis.

Many matters must be included in such a needs study, including tax sources and rates, economic factors, estimates of population and motor vehicle growth, urbanization trends, metropolitan development, trends in work and travel patterns, shifts in urban development, and the needs and desires of people.

As to the street and highway aspects of such a study—including financing, four bases should be used: