

Federal-aid highway funds was authorized—and encouraged—for projects to improve the capacity and safety of existing urban arterials without major construction, but rather by the systematic and comprehensive application of traffic operations and minor construction improvements in combination. These include intersection channelization, traffic control and lighting installations, judicious street widening at bottlenecks and intersection approaches, and a variety of other proven engineering techniques * * *.”

The Institute of Traffic Engineers strongly concurs, as it does also with this further important point in the same report:

To be fully helpful, the TOPICS program will need additional Federal-aid funds, available for use on all urban arterial streets and highways. Making such additional funds available should be considered in the formulation of a future Federal-aid highway program.

The institute urges the Congress to position the traffic operations concept strongly in “Federal Aid for Highway Transportation,” because of its often-demonstrated capacity, efficiency and safety benefits to highway transportation usually at relatively low costs.

URBAN FREEWAY OPERATIONS

The operation of freeways within sizable municipalities poses a dilemma. Freeways by their nature serve through traffic. Their values are enhanced by consistency of design, signing and other traffic control devices, police patrolling and enforcement, and emergency service programs. Nonuniformity in the matter of acceleration and deceleration lanes and of on- and off-ramp location can be very troublesome, for instance.

Yet local authorities are rightfully concerned about freeway traffic in its relationship to local streets and terminals. Local streets are directly affected by onramp metering and other onramp traffic operations, and by the traffic loads which must be absorbed from offramps. In the planning of interchanges in municipalities, therefore, local traffic operational specialists should have an active role because of the very great effects of such interchanges on urban traffic conditions.

Hence, the institute urges that Federal highway legislation provide that on freeways on which there is any form of Federal assistance, and which will affect traffic in municipalities of 10,000 population or more, concurrence of local authorities shall be obtained in all location, design and operational decisions—subject to arbitration by the Department of Transportation in case of disagreement which State and local authorities cannot resolve.

SAFETY

The public wants more attention to highway safety. Fortunately, through the Highway Safety Act of 1966 and its companion act on vehicle safety, the Congress gave new stature to highway safety, calling for safety programs in all States meeting national standards and providing for Federal funds to aid in various aspects of highway safety. The institute commends those congressional actions and urges that all necessary measures be taken, including Federal grants, to assure that the momentum achieved and the effectiveness of the National Highway Safety Bureau will be continued and even increased.