Right-Sizing the State Highway System

A Voluntary Road Transfer Program
Overview

Opportunity exists to:

• Reduce the size of DOTD

• Empower local governments

• Correct inequities in the distribution of state highway miles among the parishes
Overview

- Concept of “Right-Sizing” the State Highway System involves transferring approximately 5000 miles of road, with the money, to local governments.

- State Highway System is too big; Right-Sizing has been called for in State Transportation Plan since 2003.

- DOTD needs to focus more on construction – less on operations and maintenance.

- DOTD can help with capital projects for those local governments willing to accept greater O&M responsibilities.
LA Highway Network

• State Highway System 16,670 miles
  - Total Public Road System 61,000 miles
  - State Ownership in LA 27+ %
  - National Average 19 %

• Proposed State System 11,995 miles*
  - Net Decrease 5,035 miles**
  - State Ownership 19+ %

* Includes 75 miles of new construction
** Includes 284 miles of frontage roads
Role of State in Highway Network

- Ensure that Louisiana is well connected to the rest of the country and world

- Provide for the movement of people, goods, and services between and through urban areas. Travel within an urban area is a local responsibility

- Maintain a basic farm-to-market network in rural areas. These areas lack sufficient population, and therefore tax base, to maintain these facilities
Right- Sizing Principles

- State should not be maintaining neighborhood streets in urban or rural areas
Right- Sizing Principles

- State mileage inversely proportional to population
  - As population increases, need for farm-to-market network decreases
  - Former rural state roads become urban and suburban streets

2002

2009
Right-Sizing Principles

• In urban areas, the State System should consist only of roads that serve a significant interurban function

• Intraurban travel needs are best served by local governments even if streets have high traffic volumes
Transfer Mileage

• State Highway System mileage following transfer = 11,919.17
• New State construction (including TIMED) = 75.32
• Revised State Highway System mileage = 11,994.49

Proposed limit for State Highway System = 12,000.00 miles*
  • Excludes frontage roads

• Maps showing transfer roads have been developed for each parish
• Roads being retained by State are shown in red
• Roads proposed for transfer are shown in green
• Transferred roads do not disappear, rather the ownership changes
Compensation

- Participation in the program is voluntary, it’s straight business, and is available now.

- Roads will be repaired prior to transfer under the DOTD Road Transfer Program.

- Local governments will be credited for 40 years of routine and capital maintenance which can be applied to any highway capital project(s).

- Local governments interested in participating need to contact their DOTD District Administrator.
Benefits to Local Governments

- Immediate capital assistance with only minor near-term O&M cost increases
- Greater authority in transportation decision-making including prioritization and fund allocation
- Authority to regulate traffic and development over larger portion of network
- Ability to implement comprehensive plans with less interference/less dependency on the State.
Benefits to State Government

- Seizing the opportunity will allow DOTD to focus on the system most important to the economy
  - Freight movement
  - Tourism
  - Business travel
Realities and Opportunities

• Because of budgetary pressures, much of government is devolving to the local level.

• Those who want good infrastructure and amenities, and are willing to pay for it, can have it.

• The Road Transfer Program offers an opportunity for immediate capital assistance to jump start the repair and enhancement of transportation infrastructure.
Further Information

- Go to: www.dotd.la.gov
- Click on: Government - State and Local Resources
- Click on: Programs
- Click on: Road Transfer Program
  - Report explaining the Program
  - Parish maps grouped by DOTD District