

movement of people and not simply to protect a special interest.

It is clear that we must continue to emphasize HOV lanes and transit opportunity in urban areas. Certainly the ultimate funding will have to be found. In my estimation, there is nothing wrong in going to private industry, which benefits from transit and transportation facilities, to see whether they are willing to participate fiscally to make some of these transportation systems feasible. It has been done throughout this country and it is a logical cost of development.

The key to trying to find the answers is working together in a cooperative atmosphere of mutual support and I think we must do it, and I pledge to you, as Federal Highway Administrator, the FHWA will be doing its best to be responsive to you, but not to dictate. We are looking for answers, too, and so we have gone all the way by saying to you that we will eliminate the duplicative red tape that has denied your making progress in resolving projects and getting them off the ground.

We have gone through our priority reviews and have reviewed some 150 regulations. But we need your guidance. I would like to have the answer to what is the proper federal role in the planning process, how should the federal role relate to the states and the local communities? Are the MPOs legitimate creatures who should handle the planning process, or should they be subservient to those constitutionally created authorities called state and local governments? Those are some basic questions that I think must be resolved so that we might structure a program at FHWA to better respond to you who have the obligation of performance.

**KENNETH TORP**  
Colorado Department of Highways

The subject at hand, which is urban transportation planning, is one that is topical for us in Colorado because the 1980 Census is bringing onstream new urbanized areas. We used to have four in Colorado, and we are going to have seven. So we have to rethink our approaches to transportation for such areas.

The key to good planning should be establishing a good rapport among the participating agencies rather than setting up a rigid process. There is an interim period between old and new federal regulations and guidelines, and it lends itself to flexibility in establishing a workable structure for MPOs.

I am heartened by the fact that FHWA feels that there is merit in simplicity, and this should not be overlooked. Toward this end, FHWA is currently seeking to minimize burdensome federal regulations.

The federal position on reorganizing regulations has been surfacing, and we are happy to see it from the perspective of the State Department of Highways in Colorado. Unnecessary red tape, detailed and prescriptive regulations, and the imposition of undue emphasis on federal policies not directly related to transportation must be eliminated.

The fundamental question facing us seems to be, What should be the scope of urban transportation planning? To answer this question, we need to focus on three cardinal areas. First, we need transportation plans that mesh with land use—with economic, environmental, and other functional plans. Second, we need various transportation modes to be broadly and cooperatively planned and that include capital investment, operations, and those transit system manage-

ment techniques that must be carried out in concert with each other. Third, we need state and local officials to plan in concert with citizen input. I think the officially coordinated aspect of urban transportation planning is essential.

A second question that we might ask is, What should be the appropriate level of transportation planning? Let me suggest that the Governor needs to decide where and how transportation planning is to be done, with the approval of affected local governments and with the review of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and subject, perhaps, to broad DOT guidelines that avoid requiring any specific institutional arrangements. I think that would streamline the process considerably.

Finally, what are the possible outcomes of a reduced federal role in urban transportation planning? The first thought is that there will probably be less planning and that such planning will be cost-effective. There would be a reduced focus on meeting federal requirements and more emphasis on matching our planning requirements with genuine state and local needs. We would have enhanced accountability. That is critical from my perspective. Furthermore, we would have our projects implemented more rapidly and in this economy that represents money, efficiency, and productivity. We would have improved state and local cooperation because we will no longer be able to blame the federal government for our problems.

The states need help in planning for the future, and I am not certain that our mindset about transportation planning is appropriate to the agenda of the 1980s. I think our assumption about transportation planning is that we have got to do something new, we have got to build something new, we have got to respond to growth and development in the cities and, therefore, we have to plan what to do.

Planning for the future is planning for declining resources, it is planning to do something smaller. It is planning to consume fewer resources and it is planning to do what is left as well as we possibly can in the public interest.

**THOMAS M. DOWNS**  
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Department of Transportation

My comments perhaps will reflect the uniqueness of the District of Columbia, but they will also reflect some changing public attitudes about the nature of the transportation system. The public expected an improving mass transit system, they expected some improvement in air quality, and they expected us to provide for some optimum utilization of existing streets.

Each highway bill since 1970 has put increasing emphasis on these types of planning activities. Such emphasis, however, robs you of the resources to continue to make transportation system management (TSM) improvements because you are shifting away from large-scale capital programs.

We had made a suggestion at one time to the Senate that there ought to be a revised formula on PRPL money. It should put some kind of emphasis on person miles of travel in the area, a minimum floor level for PRPL—some indication of density of population and urban versus rural population. We also made the suggestion that planning research and systems management activities be eligible for funding from the entire federal aid highway program at state and local discretion, including the Interstate system. In other words, you could take

a portion of your interstate apportionment and put it into PRPL funds. The current 1.5 percent and 0.5 percent would become a base level for the program, with requirements to continue support for current funded organizations and jurisdictions, such as MPOs. States and urban areas would then have the discretion to increase their planning and research for a less capital-intensive solution as required by local circumstances.

Such a proposal is really a step, or at least I think it is, to a block grants program for the federal highway program, a direction wholly consistent with current Administration policy. It would mean that states and counties make trade-offs for allocating limited funds among planning management and capital projects, rather than that these projects be dictated by federal formulas in conflict with federal statutes and policies.

With the reduced funding levels we are facing today, all jurisdictions must meet growing transportation demands through better management of existing facilities and improved maintenance. Without planning support, these objectives cannot be met in urban areas where traffic generates approximately 55 percent of the highway trust fund revenues. That the District, at least, needs to continue the present level of planning research cannot be overemphasized.

Many people have made the assumption that they can leap to the federal role in planning without first addressing whether or not there should be a planning process in urban areas. I think there has to be an urban transportation planning process, at least in the larger urban areas where the population is more than 250,000. The planning process has to do the things that cannot be done separately. We have to have a mechanism to determine among ourselves the compatibility of our investments. For example, it does not do Virginia any good to plan a road for which the District will not provide the bridge capacity. It does not do any good to make assumptions about travel patterns that we are trying to reverse. In a complex urban area like the Washington Metropolitan Area, there is a need for a common data base on growth, land use, and patterns of travel and a forum to debate common local finance needs.

The urban planning process is also a home for specialized technologies and technicians that the local jurisdictions in the area or the states cannot either afford or do not wish to provide. Last, but not least, the process mechanism is a forum for disagreements. Without a metropolitan planning process, the Washington Metropolitan Area would never have come to grips with the construction of I-66 to the District boundary. The very existence of the urban transportation planning process ultimately allowed the local jurisdictions to come to terms with that investment.

More importantly, if there is a federal source of revenue, there probably are going to be some federal responsibilities that come with that revenue. There is a need for a federal role in determining the compatibility of the various federal investments that are made from the agencies within the DOT.

There is a need for a federal role in the development of methodologies in data processing. There is still a federal role, until the Congress changes the legislation, in air quality. There is still a federal role in energy efficiency in the transportation system as a national concern. There is still a federal role for nondiscrimination in the application of those funds.

In cities under 200,000 I am convinced that you have to have the maximum amount of flexibility, whether a city or a county wants to name itself the MPO. Somebody has to come to grips

somewhere in those cities between 50,000 and 250,000 with who is going to take some kind of lead in the transportation planning process—again, within some broad guidelines and with the maximum amount of flexibility in programming and the level of analysis.

There is a strong national need for urban transportation planning processes and organizations, a strong need to support them financially, and a recognition of what the proper federal role is.

PHILIP J. RINGO  
ATE Management  
and Service Company

Transportation, and particularly urban transportation, is at a major crossroads as we plunge into the 1980s. Even though I think there is a great deal of apprehension regarding the need to do "more with less," I feel that the environment that we are now entering into is in many ways healthier than the environment of the past 10 years.

From the transit operator's perspective, the experience of the past 10 years was in many ways far removed from reality. After a much needed stabilization of urban transportation systems throughout the United States, and an even more needed infusion of capital for new equipment and facilities, many transit operations embarked on what appeared to be an environment of almost unlimited expansion and growth. Money in hand, we proceeded to expand and improve service often without proper evaluation of the need and demand for such expanded service. We seldom questioned the long-range implications of increased dependence on federal subsidies and the impact that artificially low fares had on public perception and the economics of our operation. In all too many cases, we collectively did not apply sound management practices to the planning and design of our transit systems or the service pricing mechanism.

Swept up in this euphoria, we all invested time and money in projects that, in retrospect, should have received much stronger and more practical scrutiny. In the search for new solutions to this country's transit problems we discarded much of what we had learned over the past 50-60 years, and also seemed to delude ourselves that there was a magical solution, be it technological, managerial, or planning based, that would provide a miraculous cure for all of the ills of a very complex transportation problem.

The legacy of all this is, or should be, sobering. There are cynicism and skepticism at all policymaking levels regarding the ability of the transit industry to even place a reliable product on the street. Further skepticism and cynicism exist that rather than focusing on immediate practical problems, we collectively continue to search for the PRT, Hovercraft, or other Aladdin's lamp cures to the provision of urban transit in the United States.

Whether you agree or disagree with my assessment, let me try to relate what I am saying to the specific problems facing the transit operators over the next 18-36 months and try to relate those challenges to the specific planning needs of transit operators. Because of the proposed cutback in federal operating assistance, and because of the impact of increased inflation on a labor-intensive industry, most transit systems throughout the United States are faced with the prospect of