1982 Executive Order 12372: Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

Replaced OMB Circular A-95 issued in 1969.

Federal government relied on state-established process for intergovernmental review of federal program.

Federal government accommodated state and local officials concerned with proposed program actions or explained basis for alternative decision.

1983 FHW/UMTA Urban Transportation Planning--Final Rule

Product of 2.5-year effort to comprehensively review the planning process to determine the appropriate federal role in the process.

Gave state and local officials more discretion in carrying out the planning process, including institutional relationships.

Strengthened the tie between planning activities and programming decisions.

The state and MPOs are required to certify that certain federal laws and regulations are met.

The Evolution of Transportation Planning in California

BOB DATEL

Transportation planning in California developed as a direct result of California's entry into the building of freeways. In 1939 the legislature established the freeway principle by statute and authorized the Division of Highways to construct any portion of the state highway system as a freeway or to make any existing highway a freeway. Since then, the state of California has made considerable progress in planning and building freeways. The boom in freeway development was spurred by the tremendous increase in California's population during the 1940s and 1950s. The population grew between 1940 and 1960 from 7 million to 15.9 million. By 1970 the state's population reached 20 million. This tremendous increase in population brought about a corresponding increase in motor vehicle registrations and miles of vehicle travel.

Because California's natural resources, manufacturing centers, and recreational areas are widely dispersed, economic activity in the state was, and still is, highly dependent on highway transportation. During the 1950s the street and road system, which was developed to serve a relatively small population dependent largely on agriculture, was no longer adequate.

California recognized the need for a highway system that had the primary purpose of linking major areas of traffic interest with high standard facilities to provide fast, safe, through traffic movement.

During the later 1950s and early 1960s, the California legislature became concerned that the rapidly expanding freeway network was not the result of a cooperatively planned system that considered local desires and plans. A legislative subcommittee report outlined these and other shortcomings in the state's highway planning procedures. In order to remedy this situation, the legislature asked the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to undertake development of an overall statewide freeway plan. This plan would provide a basis for state, city, and county authorities to coordinate all transportation plans, work out necessary financial arrangements, and promote the development of land use planning. This first attempt at long-range transportation planning in California was a highly successful one.

The plan, finished in 1959, resulted in the legislative adoption with practically no controversy of the 12,250-mile California freeway and expressway system. The actual system adopted was the result of cooperation and coordination developed between Caltrans and city and county authorities in the area of transportation planning.

With the state-adopted freeway and expressway system as a framework, comprehensive transportation studies continued during the decade of the 1960s in the 10 largest urban areas in California. The advent of the computer made these complex transportation analysis and large transportation planning studies possible. Caltrans made significant strides in the field of modeling by using land use, demographic, and economic factors in transportation planning.

The new interest in cooperative transportation planning involving the state and local agencies was fostered by federal and state legislation. The first law to significantly affect transportation planning in California was the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962. This act required, for the first time, a "continuing, comprehensive transportation planning process carried on cooperatively" by state and local communities with urbanized areas of more than 50,000 population, which is commonly referred to as the 3C process. With the support of the 1962 Federal-Aid Highway Act, regional planning agencies quickly evolved in California's 10 largest urban areas. Caltrans' 11 districts were closely involved in much of the early transportation planning effort, which was largely staffed and paid for by the department, using state funds and federal highway planning and research (HPR) funds. As a result, the regional planning agencies did not develop into strong organ-

izations until federal and state funding legislation was enacted in later years.

The late 1960s and early 1970s ushered in a period of increasing public concern over adverse impacts on the environment resulting from the rapid development of transportation facilities. The building of freeways in many areas raised concerns about the disruption of the social and physical fabric of the cities. People demanded greater input into alternative decisions for highway projects. In response to that climate, increased emphasis was placed on transit. The California Transportation Development Act was passed in 1971 as unique state legislation providing cities and counties with additional revenue primarily for transit. Part of this revenue was also available for planning.

On the federal and state levels, response to public concern for the environment resulted in the passage of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in 1969 and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in 1970. The primary difference between the two acts is that CEQA emphasizes the physical environment whereas NEPA considers both physical and socioeconomic impacts.

In 1970 Congress enacted the Clean Air Act, which required the establishment of air basins, air quality lead agencies, and air quality plans. Caltrans has been active since then in providing assistance in the development of such plans.

Passage of Assembly Bill 69 made 1972 a landmark year for transportation planning in California. The legislature had affirmed the need for multimodal transportation solutions by the creation of a multimodal Department of Transportation to replace the highway-oriented Department of Public Works. AB 69 required that transportation planning be conducted in rural areas as well as in the urbanized areas. The 43 regional transportation planning agencies were designated and required to prepare regional transportation plans. Because many of these agencies were new, with either small staffs or no staff at all, the bill authorized the allocation of state funds to finance up to 70 percent of each regional agency's nonfederally funded transportation planning activities. Caltrans geared up to provide technical assistance and staffing to initiate the continuing regional planning process in many parts of the state.

The Division of Transportation Planning was created by this legislation and was charged with the responsibility of developing a state transportation plan. A draft plan was developed by Caltrans in 1975, but it failed to win acceptance from a diverse group of transportation constituents. This draft plan was ultimately rejected.

The legislature's frustration with the difficulties in adopting a state transportation plan led to the passage of Assembly Bill 402 in 1977, which emphasized short-range regional planning and programming. The requirement for a state transportation plan was eliminated and instead a biennial report of significant transportation issues and necessary future improvements was required. The State Transportation Board was eliminated and replaced by the California Transportation Commission (CTC), which has the responsibility of annually adopting a 5-year state transportation improvement program (STIP).

Most significantly, AB 402 required the regional planning agencies with populations greater than 50,000 to prepare a 5-year regional transportation improvement program (RTIP). The RTIPs identify state and federally funded projects for an entire planning region, both the urban and rural areas, for a 5-year period. These RTIPs are prepared on the basis of a 5-year federal and state transportation revenue estimate adopted by the CTC. Caltrans prepares a preliminary STIP, which the regions must consider in developing their RTIPs. Differences between Caltrans' preliminary STIP and the RTIP are resolved in the final STIP that is adopted by the CTC. The final STIP may deviate from the RTIP only if there is an overriding state interest, insufficient funding, or conflicts between RTIPs. This programming process has influenced the importance of the transportation planning process and increased the responsibility and authority of regional planning agencies in planning and programming facilities in their regions.

Both AB 69 and AB 402 had the ultimate effect of causing closer cooperation among cities, counties, regions, and the state in developing plans and agreeing to implement priority projects. Many cities and counties developed, for the first time, multiyear plans and priorities for their own jurisdictions.

In the mid-1970s and early 1980s the state experienced an era of severe fiscal problems. Inflation caused highway construction costs to skyrocket, and state and federal funding could not keep pace because it was tied to fixed gasoline tax revenues. It became obvious that Caltrans would not be able to keep all of the commitments that had been made to the local areas over the past several decades. Caltrans was faced with the painful decisions of determining priorities for projects that should proceed and identifying projects that could not be built at all. The term "downscoping" was coined during those years, which simply meant reducing the scope of projects. This period taught an important lesson, that of recognizing the danger of over-committing resources and being cautious not to raise local expectations that cannot be met at a later date. The severe fiscal constraints of this period were eased temporarily with the 5-cent federal gasoline tax increase in 1983 and the corresponding 2-cent increase in the state gasoline tax.

Today the roles of all agencies involved in the regional planning process have changed. These changes have resulted from the growth and maturation of the regional planning agencies as well as from changes in federal planning regulations. When regional planning first began, Caltrans performed as the technical staff for many of the regional planning agencies. Most of these agencies now have increased their staffing and technical expertise. Many regional agencies conduct transportation planning activities without the help of Caltrans or with limited assistance. Caltrans' role has changed from carrying out regional planning studies to assisting and cooperating with regional planning agencies in conducting planning activities in accordance with federal and state requirements.

Recent changes in the FHWA-UMTA joint planning regulations have shifted responsibility for certification to the state and the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). Caltrans has been working with the MPOs to develop a procedure for the regional and state certification of the planning process and has prepared a guide to assist MPOs in carrying out their planning activities. Procedures to assist Caltrans staff to effectively monitor the regional planning process and document completed planning activities have been identified. These changes in regulation will allow Caltrans to reaffirm its commitment to the success of the regional transportation planning process and its willingness to assist and coordinate with the regional planning agencies.

In addition to regional planning activities, Caltrans has reinstituted a statewide system planning effort to update within today's environment the long-range highway transportation needs. The concept

of system planning really is not new at Caltrans. The 1959 freeway and expressway system was a system plan.

Through the system planning process, Caltrans, in cooperation with the regional planning agencies, will identify current and long-range problems and possible solutions based on realistically constrained resources. The process will allow Caltrans to focus actions on the most important system problems, thus providing the most effective transportation system available within the limited resources. Priorities developed through the system planning effort will feed the Caltrans program identified in the TIP.

Unfortunately, system planning cannot solve all of California's transportation problems. The fund estimate for the 5-year STIP shows that a lack of adequate funds will continue to exist despite recent increases in federal and state gasoline taxes. Caltrans intends to maintain a position of not promising or programming projects that it cannot reasonably be expected to deliver.

In the densely urbanized areas of the state, highways are not the solution to all transportation problems. With the projected increases in population, Caltrans expects greater reliance on other alternatives to highway expansion. With the regional planning agencies, the department will have a greater role in promoting ridesharing, use of high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lanes, and transit.

Currently, Caltrans coordinates closely with the MPOs in developing and maintaining ridesharing programs. The department also participates with the regional transportation planning agencies and local agencies in solving specific transportation problems. For example, in the San Francisco Bay area, Caltrans, with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Golden Gate Bridge District, Marin County Planning Department, and the city of San Rafael, studied the needs and actions necessary to provide a satisfactory level of mobility along Route 101 in Marin County. The study resulted in the identification of a project, now programmed in the STIP, to construct HOV lanes along Route 101. When completed, this project will greatly ease the rush-hour congestion experienced by Marin County residents who work in San Francisco.

Caltrans has learned through experience that close cooperation among state, regional, and local agencies is essential to avoid log jams caused by separate and often conflicting planning efforts by various agencies with limited jurisdiction over the total transportation system. For example, Caltrans worked closely with San Diego's regional and local agencies years before the inception of the 3C process. The department lent its staff and expertise and in turn gained first-hand experience with local transportation problems and needs. The result is a well-planned, efficient transportation system that serves the needs of the region.

Caltrans is working closely with the other MPOs and rural transportation planning agencies throughout the state with the system planning effort as well as day-to-day regional planning activities through 11 district offices. The goal is to continue to use the planning process to help ensure that funds available for transportation are used in the most cost-effective manner. To Caltrans, planning is an essential tool for effective programming.

The Evolution of Transportation Planning in Pennsylvania

THOMAS D. LARSON

Everybody is feeling some inclination toward history here today, so I thought I'd go back and dig into history in a more authentic fashion. I brought my history book! This is the third volume in a four-volume history of George Washington. It's remarkable how little most of us know about the man who really set our democratic processes in place. In this particular reference, he was in his first year as President. He was traveling in New England, having a lot of trouble, I might add, because he was a Virginian. At any rate, one of his problems was that John Hancock, the Governor of Massachusetts, was a staunch advocate of states' rights. The question was, then, how could the President visit the state without appearing to capitulate to states' rights? As it happened, the President managed the circumstances by requesting Mr. Hancock to come visit him at his inn. Hancock said he wouldn't do this but eventually agreed. He actually came to the President all wrapped up in blankets, claiming grave illness to prove that he was capitulating with great personal loss.

Getting down to transportation, there is another reference here. The President, after he got to New Hampshire, said he'd had enough of New England and started for home. He was traveling by a sort of random route and had a lot of trouble. The roads were intolerable and the accommodations indifferent. A direct quote from our first President is as follows: "The roads in every part of this State are amazingly crooked to suit the convenience of every man's fields and the directions you receive from the people are equally blind and ignorant." After the trip he came home and prescribed FHWA, the A-95 process, and MPOs. It's part of the legend that it took 200 years to really have the President's wishes carried out. At least the first part of that story is true!

Getting down to my comments on transportation planning, I will be very brief. Much of what I could say has been covered, but clearly there is a difference between rural and urban settings. The rural setting was the problem that George Washington had--a lot of crooked roads. Early on, we could not get