

state and is generally engaged in administrative activities.

2. There has been a decrease in local planning and an increase in area-wide planning, and there is no linkage between the two.

3. Area-wide planning is accomplished at too gross a scale to be meaningful.

4. The shift in emphasis from long-range planning to TSM and TIP operations has led to support of MPO staffs with planning money, but

these types of activities are not appropriate for MPOs.

5. The federally imposed process is too sophisticated, and the federal regulations are too complex.

However, at least in Arkansas, new activities intended to strengthen highway planning and implementation functions are being initiated.

Plan Implementation: Texarkana Urban Transportation Study

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The implementation of proposed transportation improvements in the Texarkana, Texas-Arkansas, urban area is surveyed. This brief case study provides insight into the administrative aspects of conducting and implementing transportation improvements in a bistate, multicounty urban area and identifies and discusses several factors that contributed to the successful implementation. The success of the implementation is measured in terms of the percentage of all improvements that have been completed or are under contract.

Local transportation issues—whether opportunities or constraints—vary from area to area, and planning programs must be tailored specifically to the conditions and characteristics of the particular urban area. In this paper, some techniques that just happened to work in the Texarkana, Texas-Arkansas, urban area are described.

Before 1964, simultaneous studies were performed by two consultants—one for the Arkansas side of the area and one for the Texas side. These studies were performed without significant coordination and resulted in a lack of continuity of facilities (including on master street plans) across the state line.

The resulting lack of support for the fragmented master street plans, lack of public involvement, and lack of confidence in the credibility of the studies led to voter rejection of bonds for the proposed improvements to the street and highway system. Because local bond funds were required for matching of state and federal monies, no major improvements could be implemented.

Since 1964, the organization and staff of the Texarkana urban transportation study has been the primary driving force in implementation of transportation improvements for the area. The organization and study are bistate (Texas and Arkansas) and multicounty and multicity (this means four cities and two counties). Two separate divisional offices of the Federal Highway Administration also assist in supervising the planning process. The primary objective of the study group in selecting individuals to guide the planning process is to bring together those persons who have responsibility for segments of the urban transportation system and those who are vitally affected by its service. Categories of participants include government decision makers; technical staffs of city, county, and state governments; consultant planners and engineers; citizens; and staffs of other planning organizations.

Policy direction is under the guidance of a policy advisory committee composed primarily of elected officials or their designated representatives. This com-

mittee is also responsible for policy direction of metropolitan planning organization (MPO) activities of the area. A technical committee and a citizens advisory committee prepare detailed recommendations for submission to the policy group. All committees meet together at least once a year.

Typical study procedures were used during the initial plan-preparation phase of the study. When the transportation plan was completed, it was adopted by all participating governmental jurisdictions as their master plan for development. No attempt was made at that time to assign responsibilities for financing or implementation of the various recommended facilities.

The keys to implementation of any transportation plan are

1. The development of a logical planning process,
2. A comprehensive effort to determine priorities and programs, and
3. Continuous participant involvement throughout the entire process.

However, in addition to the basic or routine planning processes that contribute to success in implementing a transportation plan, there are several other factors that should be considered.

The first of these is the integration or merging of the comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative (3C) planning process, the master street plan, community controls, and project planning. In Texarkana, merging the master street planning with the 3C planning was no problem; the governmental agencies participated in the 3C planning process and simply adopted this plan as the master street plan. Use of community controls has also been successful in the area; local ordinances were revised to specify that land developers must dedicate rights-of-way for streets and highways in the master plan and construct new collector streets at their expense. Frequent review of detailed project planning and project status by committee members ensures early consideration for funding.

The second factor is that continuity of planning is essential to implementation. This continuity means that one group of individuals is assigned responsibility for supervision of the planning process, coordination with review agencies, processing environmental clearances, completing public-involvement requirements, and recommending sources of funding. This eliminates the duplication of effort that can occur when different groups share these responsibilities.

The third factor is that a firm understanding by all

committee members of what each planning-process document is and why it is essential to implementation of improvements is necessary. Nonplanners can easily be lost and give up trying to understand the numerous abbreviations placed on documents and organizations. This understanding begins by classifying the documents into two categories—policy and planning.

The prospectus, which was formerly known as an operations plan, is a policy document that presents an overview of the planning process for the area. It includes a summary of the planning programs, a discussion of important transportation issues facing the area, a general description of the status of each of the planning elements, a description of procedures to be used in carrying out each planning element, and a description of the functional responsibilities of each participating agency.

The other policy document is the unified work program (UWP). The UWP is prepared annually and is expected to describe all transportation-related planning activities anticipated for the area during the next one- or two-year period, regardless of funding source. Essentially, the prospectus describes long-range policy and the UWP describes short-range policy.

Thus, the planning documents can also be classified into long-range and short-range categories. The long-range plan is for a far horizon (e.g., 20 years), and the short-range-plans category includes such documents as the transportation improvement program (TIP) and the transportation system management elements (TSME).

The TIP is prepared annually and in summary form identifies all transportation improvements to be advanced during a 3- to 5-year period. It also indicates priorities for these improvements and groups them into anticipated staging periods. The TIP includes realistic estimates of costs and revenues for the period.

The TSME is intended to provide for the short-range transportation needs of the area by making efficient use of existing resources. It generally considers actions such as traffic operations improvements, preferential treatment for high-occupancy vehicles, appropriate provisions for pedestrians and bicycles, management and control of parking, and changes in working schedules. It also considers actions to reduce vehicle use in congested areas and actions to improve transit management and service.

The fourth factor involves a philosophy of long-range versus short-range planning. In earlier years, transportation planning was viewed as planning for 20-year capital improvements. Then, the traffic operations for improved capacity and safety program was developed that allowed planning for short-range and traffic-operational improvements. At present, the emphasis seems to have been shifted to the short-range TIP-TSM type of planning.

Although it is very difficult, in the presence of financial and staff constraints, to allocate resources between planning solutions for near-term or long-term problems, balance must be maintained. Simply planning for year-to-year TSM-type improvements will not be satisfactory unless these improvements are directed toward a long-range plan.

The fifth factor is that the priority order of proposed improvements is important to the implementation process. Generally, priorities can be established based on a best-judgments approach (the qualified engineers', planners', and technicians' composite appraisal of need). The policy-decision makers then receive a perception of priorities that is weighted more on the importance or urgency of the work than on its feasibility.

The sixth factor is that assignment of target dates for implementation of improvements is essential. Many

projects require preimplementation time. Assignment of target dates allows completion of environmental studies, public involvement, and right-of-way negotiations in a systematic way before implementation begins.

The seventh factor might be called "marketing the assets". This involves being sure that the benefits of the improvement are apparent. For example, the public should be made aware of an improved safety record at an intersection.

The final factor involves a disagreement with the basic planning philosophy that requires an in-depth review of past financing performances and estimates of likely future funds and, from that base, attempts to balance financial requirements and capabilities. Instead, it is more effective to determine improvements based on need and then set a goal of establishing a sufficient fund source. Standards and typical sections that were acceptable to all jurisdictions can be established and needs estimates prepared on this basis.

In Texarkana, the forecasted funds from existing sources were determined to be inadequate to meet the needs expressed by the plan. Thus, to respond to this reality, it was necessary to seek a higher funding level and added fund sources.

In the past 14 years, the transportation planning process in Texarkana has used funds from many resources: economic development funds; urban renewal funds; model cities, housing, and community development funds; general revenue funds; funds from two bond issues; federal and state safety funds; transportation operations to improve capacity and safety funds; federal-aid urban, secondary, and primary funds; and monies from two states, four cities, and two counties.

In preparation of the Texarkana plan, no assignment of responsibility for implementing specific projects was made. Transportation improvements were considered to be an urban-area responsibility. For example, the cities have reserved right-of-way on a loop; airport planners have incorporated major access plans into their master plan, and one city built frontage roads at city expense on a section of loop road being constructed with state and federal monies. One of the important elements of the planning process is acknowledging that a transportation plan cannot be implemented through use of state and federal financing only.

The first Texarkana transportation plan was published about 11 years ago. That original 20-year plan proposed 43 major arterial improvements as priority needs. Thirty-one (72 percent) of these projects are now complete or under construction (28 of these were among the first 32 on the priority list). The plan also listed 25 major collector-street improvements as priority needs; 40 percent of these are either complete or under construction. Thus, a total of 60 percent of the arterial and collector-street improvements in the plan have been completed or are under construction.

The plan of transportation system management type improvements was published in 1971. About 70 percent of the major projects included in this plan have been completed.

The techniques identified and used in the Texarkana urban area (which has a population of about 100 000) included the following:

1. Successful merging of the 3C planning process, master planning, community controls, and project planning;
2. Consolidation of supervision of the planning process through pre-project development activities in one agency;
3. Understanding of all planning documents;
4. Determining a balance between administration, long-range planning, and short-range planning;

- 5. Determining the priority order of projects through the composite judgment of engineers, planners, and technicians;
- 6. Assignment of project target dates to allow systematic preconstruction activities;

- 7. Advertising the benefits of completed projects; and
- 8. Omitting assignment of responsibility for specific projects by considering improvements an urban-area responsibility.