Metropolitan Transportation Plan

2009-2035

This document is the long-range transportation plan for the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization. It represents the staged implementation of the transportation needs in the Houma-Thibodaux urbanized area, extending from 2009 to 2035.

Adopted on May 14, 2009
Prepared by the South Central Planning and Development Commission

Contents

Figures

Tables

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area is located in south Louisiana approximately 50 miles southwest of New Orleans. The metropolitan area lies mostly in Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes, with a smaller portion extending into Assumption Parish. The cities of Houma, Thibodaux, and the towns of Lockport, and Golden Meadow are the only incorporated municipalities in the study area.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to update the long range transportation plan for the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area as required by federal law and rules. The new target years for this plan will be 2015 for the short range, 2020 for the intermediate stage and 2035 for the long range stage.

Scope of Work

This study provides an update of area travel characteristics, an inventory and an evaluation of the existing transportation system. Alternative improvements to the system will be developed and analyzed. A transportation plan and staged improvement program will be recommended.

Organization

This Metropolitan Transportation Plan is being developed in accordance with the latest federal Metropolitan Planning regulations. Under these regulations, the South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) has been designated by the Governor as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area and is the responsible agency for transportation planning activities.

Two committees were established to oversee the planning process. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provides review and evaluation of the technical aspects of planning activities and is made up of local, State and Federal transportation planners and engineers and other technically qualified persons with an interest in the transportation system. The Policy Committee (PC) provides decision-making with regard to the approval and adoption of transportation plans and programs and is composed of the principal elected officials in the metropolitan area, as well as state and Federal representatives. A list of the members of these committees is available in the SCPDC office.

SAFETEA-LU

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – Legacy for Users

(SAFETEA-LU) continues the requirements for comprehensive transportation planning. It also requires that additional factors be considered in developing transportation plans and programs. These factors are:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the ability of the transportation system to support homeland security and to safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and Local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

The methods of consideration of these transportation planning factors are described later in this report.

Goals and Objectives

One of the first tasks of the study was the formulation of a set of goals and objectives to provide a framework for the transportation plan and to maintain it as a viable document. The goals and objectives were also used as guidelines in preparing and evaluating alternative improvements to the system.

The overall transportation goal is to develop a transportation system which will accommodate present and future needs for mobility of all people and goods traveling within and through the area. In addition, the transportation system must be safe, efficient, economically feasible, and in harmony with the character of the area.

To ensure that the recommended transportation plan meets the desires of the area, the following objectives have been established:

1. **The transportation system should**:
    - Meet the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area's long range transportation needs.
    - Be planned as a unified system of roadways based on function and relative importance, providing a proper balance of freeways, expressways, arterials, collectors, and local streets

- Encourage and accommodate through traffic on the classified street system (i.e., freeways, expressways, and arterials), and discourage it on collectors and local neighborhood streets.
- Provide access among all developed areas of the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area.
- Improve overall accessibility to employment, education, public facilities, the central business district (CBD), and other major activity centers.
- Make maximum use of existing highway and street facilities.
- Provide for a high degree of safety for both motorists and pedestrians.
- Provide for an orderly improvement and expansion of the roadway system at minimum cost as the need for improvement arises.
- Minimize disruption of existing and planned developments and established community patterns.
- Reduce air pollution, noise, and other environmental impacts associated with transportation improvements and new facility construction.

2. The transportation plan should:

- Be viewed as a document that requires periodic updating and revision. It should provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate changes in land use planning for the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area and other unforeseen changes and conditions.
- Consider development potentials within and beyond the projected limits of the urbanized area to the year 2035.

3. Continuing transportation planning activities should:

- Be performed within the framework of comprehensive regional planning and support regional growth and development goals.
- Provide continuity and coordination between jurisdictions.

CHAPTER 2

Existing Transportation Network

The general boundaries as established by SCPDC are shown in Figure 1.

The Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area is the only one in Louisiana with no interstate highway mileage. The study area is served by several other Federal and State highways. These facilities constitute the main network of roadways in the area. The most significant of the facilities are:

US 90 — This four-lane expressway provides a four-lane route from Lafayette to New Orleans and could ultimately be upgraded as an extension of I-49.

LA 182 (Old US 90) — Prior to the construction of the Interstate Highway System this Federal Highway was the major east/west route through the southern United States. It now primarily serves local trips in south Louisiana.

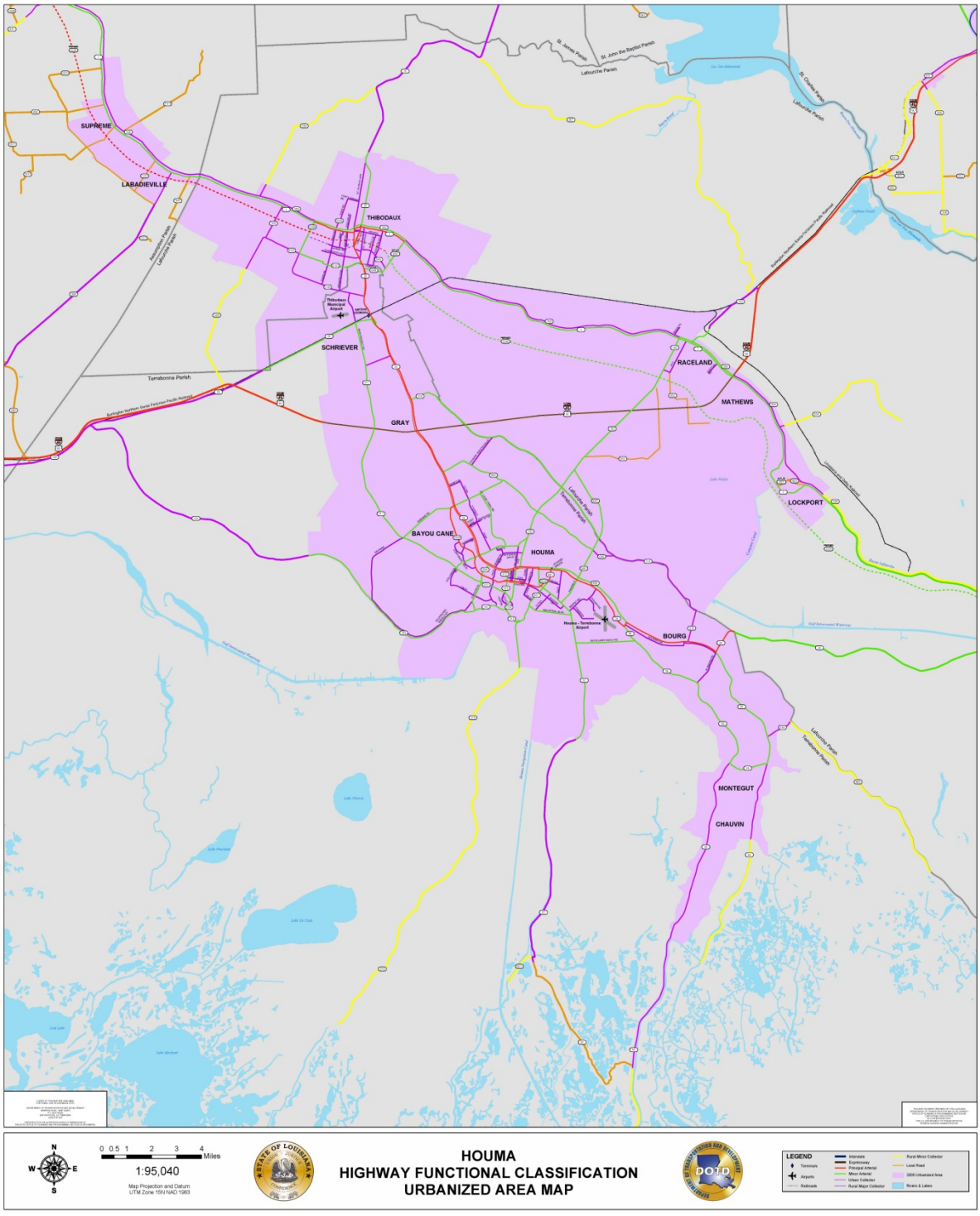
LA 24 — Most of the length of this north/south arterial is a couplet on either side of Bayou Terrebonne.

LA 3040 — In the early 1960's the completion of this highway tunnel provided access across the Intracoastal Waterway (ICWW) unrestricted by marine operations. Later extensions of the highway provided an alternate route to LA 24.

LA 1 — This north-south highway traverses the entire State of Louisiana from the Arkansas State line to Grand Isle. It parallels Bayou Lafourche through the City of Thibodaux

The study area is divided by the ICWW. Routes crossing the ICWW are LA 315, LA 3040, LA 24, LA 659, LA 3087, LA 316 and LA 1 and LA 308.

Figure 1 – Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization Urbanized Area



Existing Street and Highway Functional Classifications

The preceding map represents the streets and highways in the Houma-Thibodaux urbanized area, and is the current existing street and highway network. This area is the only urbanized area in the state with no interstate, but is made up of expressways, arterials, collectors, and local roads.

Each type of facility provides separate and distinct traffic service functions and is best suited for accommodating particular demands. Their designs also vary in accordance with the characteristics of traffic to be served by the facility.

Expressways This type of facility provides for movement of large volumes of traffic at relatively high speed, and is primarily intended to serve long trips. Expressways have some grade separated intersections while the majority of the intersections are widely spaced and signalized.

Arterials Arterial streets are important components of the total transportation system. They serve both as feeders to freeways and expressways, and as principal travel ways between major land use concentrations within the study area. Arterials are typically divided facilities (undivided where right-of-way limitations exist) with relatively high traffic volumes and traffic signals at major intersections. The primary function of arterials is moving traffic, and they are the main means of local travel. A secondary function of arterials is land access.

Collectors This type of facility provides both land service and traffic movement functions. Collectors serve as intermediate feeders between arterials and local streets and primarily accommodate short distance trips. Since collector streets are not intended to accommodate long through trips, they are generally not continuous for any great length.

Local Streets The sole function of a local street is to provide access to immediately adjacent land. Within the local street classification, three subclasses are established to indicate the type of area served: residential, industrial, and commercial. These streets are not included in the computer network.

Mass Transportation

Good Earth Transit began operations on February 12, 1997. It is the only public bus service in the Houma-Thibodaux a Metropolitan Area. The fleet of eight 30 ft. buses runs along four routes covering a large portion of the area. Approximately 33,000 people live within one-fourth mile of the routes. All four routes operate daily from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Average headways are about 30 minutes during peak times and 50 minutes during the midday schedule.

The transit fleet's low-floor design, which utilizes a simple ramp for entry, allows the elderly and handicapped to have full accessibility to the entire system. Paratransit service is also being implemented to augment this service. There are over 225 bus stops located throughout the system with 25 shelters and 60 benches placed at bus stops with high passenger volumes. To further accommodate passengers, all buses are equipped with a bike rack capable of carrying two bikes. Ridership is expected to reach 1,300 passengers per day.

Planning for the transit system addresses the location of minority, senior citizens, and low income families by use of census geography, included but not limited to racial mix and median family incomes of each geographic area, to assure transit service quality. In addition, close attention was paid to traffic generators including areas of employment, retail shopping, educational facilities, hospitals and medical offices.

CHAPTER 3

Recommended Improvements

Improvement Mileage

The Recommended Improvements (hereinafter referred to as the MTP) includes approximately 274 miles of improvements. The mileage by type of improvement is listed below.

Widening	49.25 miles
New Roadway	40.35 miles
Reconstruction	0.8 miles
Overlay and other Maintenance	166.37 miles

The MTP also includes two ICWW bridges (1 new, 1 replacing the Tunnel) and eighteen other bridge projects (11 new, 7 replacements). Additional improvements entail ITS projects in major arterial corridors, and the extension of the Main Street/Park Avenue couplet in Houma.

Major Improvements

The MTP contains several significant improvements to major facilities. Each classification was developed to adequately accommodate projected travel demand and achieve a balanced transportation system.

Freeways:

I-49 The designation of the US 90 corridor from Lafayette to New Orleans as I-49 will mean that Houma will no longer be the only urbanized area in the State with no interstate highway. The inclusion of service roads along the route will open up a large amount of land for development.

Arterials:

LA 24 This Principal Arterial is the main north/south route through the Study Area. Most of the route currently experiences capacity deficiencies. Forecast traffic volumes indicate a worsening of the situation. The density of development on the portion extending from the CBD to Bayou Gardens Boulevard makes it highly improbable that adding an additional lane would be an option. Improving and constructing new parallel routes and implementing a computerized traffic signal system will alleviate the forecast congestion. The extension of the one-way couplet southward from the ICWW will improve traffic circulation in that area.

LA 3040 This arterial runs parallel to LA 24 and experiences similar conditions in development density that precludes any widening improvements. The movement of traffic in the corridor will be helped by a computerized traffic signal system.

LA 57 This principal arterial serves the east side of the ICWW and is also a candidate for a computerized traffic signal system.

LA 311 The widening of this arterial will serve newly developing areas in the northern and western portion of the Study Area in the I-49 corridor.

LA 3185 This highway provides one quarter of a loop around Thibodaux. The completion of the loop would eliminate the need to widen arterial routes through town.

Other arterial projects include the extensions of Coteau Road, S. Hollywood Road and Corporate Boulevard. These routes will provide continuity and fill-in improvements for future development.

ICWW Crossings:

LA 3040 The current crossing is an almost 50 year old two lane tunnel under the canal. Even with the construction of the high rise bridges on Main Street and Park Avenue the traffic volumes in the tunnel remain over capacity. A four lane high rise bridge would ease traffic congestion in the corridor.

Industrial Boulevard

The replacement of the tunnel still would not satisfy all of the demand for ICWW crossings. The extension of Industrial Boulevard to Little Bayou Black Drive would meet that demand. It would also provide an alternate route for trips from I-49 to the growing industrial area around the airport and the Port of Terrebonne.

Other bridge projects include the replacement of the Bayou Terrebonne Bridge on Prospect Avenue and the S. Van Avenue Bridge over the Houma Navigation Channel and several bridges to provide access to the one way couplets in Houma and Thibodaux.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Policy statements by the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration indicate that the Federal goal for bicycling is to accommodate current use and encourage increased use, while enhancing safety.

When a plan is adopted SCPDC will take the steps necessary to incorporate it in the MTP.

With regard to pedestrian movement, it is recommended that, where feasible, sidewalks be included in the design of all improvements in this MTP. SCPDC and the local jurisdictions should conduct an inventory of existing pedestrian access and develop a plan aimed to retrofitting

deficient areas.

Transit Development Program

The expansion of the transit service is directly related to the population density/service cost factors inherent in the current system. It is not anticipated that transit will achieve a large mode share should current density patterns persist. The cost/benefit ratio of expanding the fixed route transit system within Terrebonne Parish is considered a significant barrier to transit expansion. Under SCPDC transit planning function a Transit Development Plan (TDP) has been prepared.

Capital and operating assistance projects were selected from the TDP for inclusion in the annual Transportation Improvement Program. Those projects are incorporated into this document by reference.

Transportation System Management

This recommended MTP provides capacity and continuity improvements to adequately handle most of the projected traffic to the year 2035. However, some street sections and isolated locations may still experience unacceptable levels of service during peak periods. These areas of potential deficiency could be mitigated by incorporating transportation system management (TSM) techniques in addition to those listed in the recommended plan improvements.

TSM improvements are generally low cost, effective measures that improve traffic flow by making better use of the existing transportation system. The TSM improvements listed herein are general in nature, and a more detailed study on a case basis would be required to identify specific locations and types of improvements which would be needed.

SCPDC will also closely monitor development activities in the Study Area and amend the MTP as necessary.

Implementation Cost Estimate

The estimation of costs to implement this MTP is based on historical data collected from LA DOTD and local agencies. This data included actual contract amounts for completed projects and projects currently under construction, and programmed amounts from State and local proposed construction programs. Order-of-magnitude cost estimates, in 2009 dollars, for projects not included in any of the above categories were developed.

The results were an average cost per improvement type as listed below.

Table 3.1
Road Improvement Cost Estimates

Type	$$$ (000)	per
New 4 lane freeway	$15,000	Mile
New 2 lane roadway	$2,250	Mile
New 4 lane arterial	$4,000	Mile
Interstate widening	$12,500	Mile
Arterial Widening	$3,900	Mile
One way couplet	$3,500	Mile
Center turn lane	$1,500	Mile
Reconstruction	$2,250	Mile
Overlay	$450	Mile
Intersection improvement	$700	Each
Interchange improvement	$5,250	Each
New interchange	$25,000	Each
Underpass	$12,000	Each
RR overpass	$5,800	Each

Source: Neel-Schaffer, LA DOTD

Potential Funding Sources

The implementation of this MTP will involve several sources of funding. These sources include various programs at the local, State and Federal levels. Since many of the improvement projects are on the State and Federal Highway System, substantial financial assistance could be obtained through funding programs of the LA DOTD, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Any costs not covered by Federal and State programs will be the responsibility of the local governmental jurisdictions. Local funds can come from a variety of sources including property taxes, sales taxes, user fees, special assessments, bond issues, impact fees and private donations.

SAFETEA-LU

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) will provide total funding of $286.4 billion nationally for fiscal years 2005-2009. This legislation includes several categories of funding under which many of the projects in the Plan will be eligible for Federal funding assistance. The eligibility of specific projects under these funding categories will be based on the functional classification system. This system has been prepared for the Houma Urbanized Area by LA DOTD in consultation with SCPDC. These categories are:

National Highway System (NHS)

This category covers all Interstate routes and a large percentage of urban principal arterials. The Federal/Local funding ratio for arterial routes is 80/20.

Surface Transportation Program (STP)

The STP is block grant funding program with subcategories for States and Urban Areas. These funds can be used for any road (including NHS) that is not functionally classified as a local road or rural minor collector. The State portion can be used on roads within an urbanized area and the urban portion can only be used on roads within an urbanized area. Subcategories of the STP funds are: STP greater than 200,000 population, STP less than 200,000 population, STP Flexible, Hazard Elimination, and Enhancement. The funding ratio is 80/20.

Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation

These funds can be used to replace or repair any bridge on a public road. The funding ratio is 80/20.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law by President Barack Obama on February 17, 2009. According to the White House, the ARRA will create or save 3.5 million jobs nationally over the next two years. According to local estimates, this translates into 50,000 jobs in Louisiana. The Senate Committee on Appropriations has directed that Louisiana receive $429.9 million for investments in transportation infrastructure. The funds are to be used through the same process that drives the MPO - the FHWA's Surface Transportation Program, and must be spent by March 2, 2010. The Houma-Thibodaux MPO received $9.6 million dollars from this legislation.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Grant Programs

The Federal Transit Administration dispenses funds under several categories for mass transportation (transit) improvements. The primary categories available to urban areas are under Section 5307, Section 5309, and Section 5316 of the Act.

Section 5307

Title 49 U.S.C. 5307 provides funding for capital assistance, planning, and operating assistance for public transportation in small urbanized areas with populations greater than 50,000, but less than 200,000. Section 5307 also provides funding for capital and planning assistance for public transportation in large urbanized areas with populations over 200,000. FTA makes these funds available to the designated recipient(s) in large urbanized areas for capital and planning assistance.

Section 5309

The Section 5309 Capital Investment Program has three parts: (1) fixed guideway modernization in areas with populations over 200,000 with fixed guide way segments at least seven years old; (2) construction and extension of new fixed guideway systems; and, (3) purchase of bus and bus related equipment and facilities in both urbanized and nonurbanized areas. The Capital Investment Program is authorized under the provisions set forth in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU), enacted on August 10, 2005, as codified at 49 U.S.C. 5309 ("Section 5309"). The Secretary may make grants to assist State and local governmental authorities in financing capital projects for bus and bus facilities, fixed guideway modernization, new fixed guideway systems, and development of corridors to support new fixed guideway systems.

Section 5316

The Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program was created under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) in 1998 to support local transportation initiatives designed to connect low-income families to jobs. Initially established as a competitive grant program under TEA-21, Congress reauthorized the transportation funding bill in 2005, and under the newly passed this SAFETEA-LU, changed JARC to a formula-based program. Allocations are now based on the number of eligible low-income and welfare recipients living in each state. Funds are provided to states for areas with populations less than 200,000 and directly to urbanized areas for populations at or above 200,000. JARC is now codified in Section 5316 of Title 49, United States Code, and is one of a number of programs funded through the FTA to support transportation services to low-income workers and other riders.

Property Taxes

Property taxes are levied on both real and personal property. This taxation is the primary source of revenue for local units of government in the United States. More than 80 percent of all tax revenues at this level come from this tax. Property is not subject to Federal government taxation, and state governments have in recent decades shown an increasing willingness to leave this important source to local governments.

General Sales Taxes

The general sales tax is also an important revenue source for local governments. The most commonly known form of the general sales tax is the retail sales tax. The retail sales tax is imposed on a wide range of commodities, and the rate is usually a uniform percentage of the selling price. The local governments in the Study Area have dedicated a portion of the sales

taxes collected in their jurisdictions to fund road and street improvements. These projects are primarily maintenance projects (i.e., resurfacing) aimed at making better use of existing facilities.

Community Development Block Grants

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development provides funds to local governments for a variety of programs. The Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) may be used for transportation projects. These CDBG funds must be used on activities which meet at least one of three broad national objectives. These objectives state that the activities shall:

- Benefit low and moderate income persons; or
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; or
- Meet community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community.

Bond Issues

Bonds are used to finance high front-end capital expense where a tax or fee can be pledged to pay this debt. These bonds are issued by local governments upon approval of the voting public. Property tax and sales tax funds can be used on a pay-as-you go basis, or the revenues from them can be used to pay off general obligation or revenue bonds.

User Fees

User fees are fees which are collected from those who utilize a service or facility. The fees are collected for the purpose of paying for the cost of a facility, financing the cost of operations and/or generating revenue for other uses. Water and sewer services are the most commonly known public improvements for which a user fee is charged. This method of generating revenue to finance public improvements has also been employed to finance the cost of public parks, transit systems and solid waste facilities. The theory behind the user fee is that those who directly benefit pay for the cost of the public improvement.

Special Assessments

Special assessment is a method of generating funds for public improvements whereby the cost of a public improvement is collected from those who directly benefit from the improvement. In many instances, new streets are financed by special assessment. The owners of property located adjacent to the new streets are assessed a portion of the cost of the new streets, based on the amount of footage they own adjacent to the new streets. Special assessments have also been used to generate funds for general improvements within special districts, such as central business districts.

Local Option Fuel Tax

Local governments would be provided with constitutional authority to levy a gasoline tax to further fund maintenance and improvement of local transportation systems. The primary advantage is that local governments would be further empowered in transportation decision making.

Private

When an improvement benefits a private entity such as a business or institution, that entity may contribute all or part of the cost of implementing the project. This type of effort may also advance the project in the construction schedule.

Impact Fees

Development impact fees have been generally well received in other states and municipalities in the United States. New developments create increased traffic volumes on the streets around them. Development impact fees are a way of attempting to place a portion of the burden of funding improvements on developers who are creating or adding to the need for improvements.

Financial Feasibility

The financial feasibility of the MTP was determined by comparing the estimated cost of the programmed improvements to the projected funds which could be available from the various funding sources referenced earlier. The projection of funding was made by analyzing historical data on expenditures for street and highway construction in the Houma Urban Area.

Historical information obtained from LA DOTD indicates that, on average, approximately $6.8 Million per year in State and Federal funds have been made available for construction and maintenance of the transportation infrastructure within the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area through the years 1980-2003. This figure represents actual expenditures on projects.

Since the cost estimates for implementing projects in this Plan were made in 2009 dollars, the forecast of fund availability for 2010 to 2034 was also developed in 2009 dollars. To make this forecast, the Historic Funding from 1979 to 2003 was converted to 2009 dollars. These figures are shown in Table 3.2. The conversion shows that the Houma-Thibodaux area could expect an average of approximately $10.9 Million per year in Federal and State funding between the years 2009 and 2035.

Table 3.2 – Historical Federal and State Funding – Houma-Thibodaux MPO Area

Historical State and Federal Funding

Year	Real Dollars	2009 Dollars
1980	$ 7,127,778	$ 18,355,152
1981	$ 2,925,868	$ 6,830,018
1982	$ 3,407,112	$ 7,491,868
1983	$ 1,774,009	$ 3,779,440
1984	$ 17,154,096	$ 35,033,485
1985	$ 1,919,955	$ 3,786,254
1986	$ 11,068,420	$ 21,429,208
1987	$ 2,967,474	$ 5,542,933
1988	$ 6,005,170	$ 10,771,386
1989	$ -	$ -
1990	$ 504,874	$ 819,668
1991	$ 9,784,989	$ 15,244,538
1992	$ 6,809,479	$ 10,298,815
1993	$ 19,417,840	$ 28,514,392
1994	$ 3,008,498	$ 4,307,572
1995	$ 10,343,170	$ 14,401,235
1996	$ 8,725,077	$ 11,799,874
1997	$ 3,026,608	$ 4,001,402
1998	$ 2,801,675	$ 3,647,213
1999	$ 12,884,642	$ 16,410,749
2000	$ 9,693,184	$ 11,944,400
2001	$ 5,311,863	$ 6,364,427
2002	$ 1,434,010	$ 1,691,422
2003	$ 7,527,947	$ 8,681,400
Total	**$ 155,623,738**	**$ 251,146,851**
Average	**$ 6,766,249.48**	**$ 10,919,428.30**

Source: LA DOTD; US Department of Labor

Plan Implementation

One of the most important phases in the preparation of a long range transportation plan is the development of a logical staging schedule of the various recommended improvements. The schedule provides the framework for the technical, administrative and public support necessary for the success of the MTP.

Staged Improvement Program

Taking into account the funding limitations described in the previous section, the MTP projects were allocated to a financially constrained Staged Improvement Program. This program is divided into three time periods. Stage I is from 2009 to 2014, Stage II is from 2015 to 2020, Stage III includes the remaining years to 2035.

Stage I (2009-2014)

Stage I include projects that were identified as committed and are currently in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Other committed projects in this stage are the Prospect St. Bridge replacement over Bayou Terrebonne, the S. Hollywood Rd. widening and the beginning of the ITS traffic signal improvements. Additional improvements include the widening of Grand Caillou Rd., extension of Westside Blvd., reconstruction of Country Dr. and the widening and extension of Acadian Dr. West. Also included are several smaller bridge replacements, a couple of overlays, enhancements and maintenance and all American Recovery and Reinvestment Act projects. Stage I improvements total 74.12 miles at a cost of $154,784,000.

Stage II (2015-2020)

Stage II contains the widening of LA 182, N. Hollywood Rd, Bayou Gardens Blvd, and St. Louis Canal Rd. New roadways include the extension of N. Hollywood Rd, S. Hollywood Rd and Westside Blvd., the relocation of Woodlawn Ranch Rd and the realignment of LA 1 near downtown Thibodaux. The projects programmed in Stage II total 55.1 miles at a cost of $70,330,000.

Stage III (2021-2035)

The long range needs of the MTP are listed in Stage III. It includes the upgrade of US 90 to I-49 and the development of service roads in selected areas along the route. Widening projects are shown on S. van Ave., LA 24 in Presque Isle, Little Bayou Black Dr., Percy Brown Dr., LA 3185 and Industrial Blvd. Also included is the extension of Bayou Gardens Blvd and the one way couplet in the Main St/Park Ave corridor. A significant bridge replacement is the S. Van Ave Bridge at the Houma Navigation Canal. Stage III involves 99.35 miles of improvements costing $163,197,000.

Unfunded Needs

Several of the improvements identified as being needed by 2035 will apparently not be able to be implemented. This situation is due to the shortfall in forecast funding. Included in this list are the widening of Coteau Rd., the north portion of Little Bayou Black Dr, Main Project Rd, and Tunnel Blvd. New roadways and extensions involve Bayou Gardens Blvd, Industrial Blvd., St. Louis canal Rd, Valhi Blvd, Prospect St and the completion of the Thibodaux Loop. Bridges in the unfunded category are on Woodlawn Ranch Rd, the ICWW Bridge on Industrial Blvd and the replacement of the Tunnel with a high-rise bridge. Unfunded projects total 48.4 miles at a cost of $761,495,000.

Table 3.3 – Stage I (2009-2014) – Improvement Program

Stage I (2009-2014)

Project Number	Name - Limits or Location	Improvement	Length (Miles)	Total Cost (000)	Federal (000)	State/Local (000)	Funding Source
742-29-0001	Acadian Road-West - Canal St. to LA 3185	New two-lane	2.10	$10,439	$8,351	$2,088	STP<200K
742-55-0106	Westside Blvd. Extension - to LA 3040	New 4 lane	1.10	$3,172	$2,537	$634	STP<200K
742-55-0002	Hollywood Road Widening	Reconstructed to 4 lane	0.80	$11,954	$9,563	$2,390	STP<200K
246-01-0053	LA 57 - Industrial Blvd to Thompson Road	Widen to 5 lanes	1.80	$6,548	$5,238	$1,309	NHS
065-91-0016	LA 3087 - Prospect Bridge Replacement	Bridge Replacement	0.13	$28,000	$25,400	$5,600	STP Flex / DEMO
855-07-0010	LA 660 at Bayou Terrebonne	Bridge Replacement	0.20	$676	$540	$135	FBRON
737-55-0003	Various Locations	ITS Phase III Deployment	0.00	$2,000	$0	$2,000	State DOTD Construction Budget
855-12-0008	LA 664 at Bayou Terrebonne	Bridge Replacement	0.20	$1,070	$856	$214	FBRON
005-07-0057	LA-182 Drain Canal Bridge	Bridge Replacement	0.20	$776	$620	$155	FBRON
742-55-0102	Country Drive Widening A (Jeff Dr to Presque Isle)	Widening to 4 Lanes	1.20	$4,680	$3,744	$936	STP<200K
742-55-0109	Country Drive Widening B (LA 24 to Jeff Dr)	Widening to 4 Lanes	1.20	$4,680	$3,744	$936	STP<200K
713-55-0100	St. Anne Bridge	Bridge Replacement	0.01	$4,000	$3,200	$800	FBROFF
065-91-0017	LA 24 at Company Canal	Bridge Replacement	0.40	$31,650	$49,080	$12,270	FBRON
064-06-0047	LA 1 Repairs - Lockport	Repairs	0.01	$275	$0	$275	STCASH
407-01-0034	LA 308 - Scully and Drainage Canal	Bridge Replacement	0.40	$1,530	$1,224	$306	FBRON
407-04-0041	LA 308 Cold Plane/Overlay (St. Charles Br to LA 20)	Overlay	6.51	$4,560	$3,648	$912	STP Flex
424-08-0035	LA 1 North and South Service Road Overlay	Overlay	1.00	$527	$0	$527	STCASH
829-12-0021	LA 653 Bayou Dumar and Drain Canal	Bridge Replacement	0.95	$830	$664	$116	FBRON
005-03-0019	LA 182 - Bayou Black @ Gibson Bridge Replacement	Bridge Replacement	0.26	$2,690	$2,152	$538	FBRON
065-91-0031	LA 24 - Little Caillou Bayou Bridge	Clean and Paint	0.02	$551	$440.80	$110.20	FBRON
065-91-0032	LA 24 at LA 55	Left turn lane	0.20	$150	$0	$150	STCASH
247-01-0009	Robinson Canal Bridge	Bridge Replacement	0.40	$1,500	$1,200	$300	FBRON
247-02-0030	Boudreaux Canal Bridge	Clean and Paint	0.05	$503	$402.40	$100.60	FBRON
737-55-0004	Terrebonne Parish Signal Upgrade	Signal Upgrade	0.00	$1,200	$960	$240	STP Flex
855-08-0057	LA 661 Bayou Lacarpe Bridge	Clean and Paint	0.04	$616	$492.80	$123.20	FBRON
	Westside Blvd - LA 3040 to LA 311	New 4 lane roadway	1.20	$4,800	$0	$4,800	Local
	Assumption ARRA Funds						
	LA 1 @ Labadieville Church intersection and geometric improvements	Construction		$180	$180	$0	ARRA
	LA 1010 @ LA 398 intersection and geometric improvements	Construction		$100	$100	$0	ARRA
	Lafourche ARRA Funds						
	LA 1 @ Control Section 6406 intersection and geometric improvements	Construction		$1,100	$1,100	$0	ARRA
	Tiger Drive Extension	Overlay	0.80	$400	$400	$0	ARRA
	Lafourche Parish Turning Lanes	Construction		$900	$900	$0	ARRA

Project Number	Name - Limits or Location	Improvement	Length (Miles)	Total Cost (000)	Federal (000)	State/Local (000)	Funding Source
	LA 1 & LA 308 @ Tiger Dr						
	LA 1 & LA 308 @ Audubon Dr						
	LA 1 & LA 308 in Raceland						
	LA 1 in Matthews						
	LA 1 & LA 308 @ Jackson St						
	Lockport ARRA Funds						
	LA 1 lighting and signage improvements	Enhancements		$45	$45	$0	ARRA
	Justin @ Church Street intersection and geometric improvements	Construction		$150	$150	$0	ARRA
	Terrebonne ARRA Funds						
	Terrebonne Parish Overlays	Overlay		$1,400	$1,400	$0	ARRA
	Country Drive - Jeff to Klondyke Road		2.50				
	Southdown Mandalay Road - St. Charles to Thacker Dr		0.80				
	Westside Blvd.		1.00				
	Terrebonne Parish Concrete Section Repairs	Construction		$2,200	$2,200	$0	ARRA
	Dunn Street - Honduras to Main St		0.60				
	Saadi St		0.80				
	Acadian Ave - Van Ave to Saadi St		0.50				
	Jefferson Davis - Wilson St to Wright Ave		0.20				
	Corporate Dr - MLK to Emerson		0.20				
	Enterprise Dr - Main to MLK		0.60				
	"F" St - Westside Blvd north 500'		0.10				
	Alma St - Westside south 500'		0.10				
	Woodlawn Ranch Rd - Bayou Chauvin and Bayou Grand Caillou Bridge Approaches		2.40				
	Klondyke Rd - Bridge approach at Bayou Lacache		0.04				
	Bayou Gardens Blvd - Alma to St. Louis Canal Rd		0.50				
	Terrebonne Parish Turn Lanes	Construction		$2,200	$2,200	$0	ARRA
	Corporate @ Tunnel Blvd						
	Corporate @ MLK						
	6th St @ LA 182						
	Country Estates Dr @ LA 660						
	Hollywood @ Main						
	Hollywood @ MLK						
	MLK @ Hollywood						
	Bayou Gardens Blvd @ Main						
	Polk @ LA 311						
	Valhi @ Civic Center Blvd						
	Coteau Road @ West Park Avenue						
	Howard Avenue at Main Street						
	Thibodaux						
	Audubon Drive - S. Acadia to Erwin Dr	Overlay	0.40	$89,122	$89,122	$0	ARRA

Project Number	Name - Limits or Location	Improvement	Length (Miles)	Total Cost (000)	Federal (000)	State/Local (000)	Funding Source
	Ridgefield Rd - LA 1 to Plantation Rd	Overlay	1.00	$259	$259	$0	ARRA
	Tiger Drive (LA 1 to Parish Rd)	Overlay	0.60	$214	$214	$0	ARRA
	Acadia Road Pedestrian Walkway (Bayou Lane to LA 648)	Enhancements	0.00	$235	$235	$0	ARRA
	Areawide	Enhancement Projects	0.00	$1,000	$800	$200	STPENH
	Areawide	Relieve hazardous areas	0.00	$1,250	$1,000	$250	STPHAZ
	Areawide	Bridge Replacement	0.00	$1,500	$1,200	$300	FBROFF
	Areawide	Yearly Overlays	40.00	$12,000	$0	$38,716	OLAY
	Sub-Total Stage I		**74.12**	**$154,784**	**$136,716**	**$77,432**	

Table 3.4 – Stage II (2015-2020) – Improvement Program

Stage II (2015-2020)

Project Number	Name - Limits or Location	Improvement	Length (Miles)	Total Cost (000)	Federal (000)	State/Local (000)	Funding Source
	LA 182 - Legion Ave to LA 3087	Widen to 4 lanes	4.50	$17,550	$14,040	$3,510	STPFLEX
	N. Hollywood Rd. - LA 24 to LA 182	Widen to 4 lanes and new 4 lane roadway	1.90	$7,440	$5,952	$1,488	STP<200K
	Bayou Gardens Blvd. - Vicari St. to LA 660	Widen to 4 lanes	1.60	$6,240	$4,992	$1,248	STP<200K
	Woodlawn Ranch Rd.	Relocated 2 lane	2.80	$6,300	$5,040	$1,260	STP<200K
	S. Hollywood Rd. - Valhi Blvd to LA 182	New 4 lane roadway	1.60	$6,400	$5,120	$1,280	STP<200K
	St. Louis Canal Road - N. Hollywood to Bayou Gardens	Widen to 4 lanes	2.50	$9,750	$7,800	$1,950	STP<200K
	LA 1 at Jackson Street	Realignment	0.20	$450	$360	$90	STPFLEX
	Areawide	Enhancement Projects	0.00	$1,200	$960	$240	STPENH
	Areawide	Relieve hazardous areas	0.00	$1,200	$960	$240	STPHAZ
	Areawide	Bridge Replacement	0.00	$1,800	$1,440	$360	FBR
	Areawide	Yearly Overlays	40.00	$12,000	$0	$12,000	OLAY
	Sub-Total Stage II		**55.10**	**$70,330**	**$46,664**	**$23,666**	

Table 3.5– Stage III (2021-2035) – Improvement Program

Stage III (2021-2035)

Project Number	Name - Limits or Location	Improvement	Length (Miles)	Total Cost (000)	Federal (000)	State/Local (000)	Funding Source
	US 90 - Through Study Area*	Upgrade to I-49	7.00	$8,073	$6,458	$1,614	NHS
	LA 661 @ Houma Navigational Canal*	Bridge Replacement	0.20	$8,649	$6,919	$1,730	FBR
	LA 24/LA 659 - LA 57 to Presque Isle	Continuation of one-way couplet (includes new bridges)	4.40	$15,400	$12,320	$3,080	STPFLEX
	LA 24 (Presque Isle)	Widen to 4 lanes	0.20	$780	$624	$156	STPFLEX
	LA 311 - Barataria Blvd to US 90	Widen to 4 lanes	9.70	$37,830	$30,264	$7,566	STPFLEX
	I-49 (LA 24 to LA 316)	New 2 lane service roads	2.00	$4,500	$3,600	$900	NHS
	LA 648 - LA 20 to LA 308	Widen to 4 lanes	2.30	$8,970	$7,176	$1,794	STPFLEX
	LA 3185 - LA 308 to LA 20	Widen to 4 lanes	5.30	$20,670	$16,536	$4,134	STPFLEX
	Industrial Blvd - S. Van to LA 57	Widen to 4 lanes	1.75	$6,825	$5,460	$1,365	STP<200K
	Bayou Gardens Blvd	LA 660 to LA 316	1.50	$22,500	$18,000	$4,500	STP<200K
	Areawide	Enhancement Projects	0.00	$3,000	$2,400	$600	STPENH
	Areawide	Relieve hazardous areas	0.00	$3,000	$2,400	$600	STPHAZ
	Areawide	Bridge Replacement	0.00	$3,000	$2,400	$600	FBR
	Areawide	Yearly Overlays	65.00	$20,000	$0	$20,000	OLAY
	Sub-Total Stage III		**99.35**	**$163,197**	**$114,557**	**$48,639**	
	Total Stage Improvement Program (Financially Constrained)		**228.57**	**$1,381,381**	**$1,280,207**	**$149,737**	

* Used estimates in 2025 MTP and inflated to 2009 dollars using formula from the US Department of Labor; all other projects where formulated using typical cost estimates.

Table 3.6 – Unfunded Needs

Unfunded Needs

Name - Limits or Location	Improvement	Length (Miles)	Total (000)
Woodlawn Ranch Road*	New 2 lane bridge	0.10	$1,153
Industrial Blvd - S. Van to LA 311*	New 4 lane road and ICWW bridge	1.40	$20,181
Industrial Blvd - LA 57 to LA 659*	New 4 lane road with Bayou Terrebonne bridge	1.70	$11,532
Coteau Rd - LA 24 to LA 3087	Widen to 4 lanes	7.40	$28,860
LA 311 - US 90 to Main Project Road	Widen to 4 lanes	2.40	$9,360
Main Project Rd - LA 311 to LA 3185	Widen to 4 lanes	3.00	$12,000
St. Louis Canal Rd Ext - Bayou Gardens to LA 316	New 4 Lane Road	2.95	$11,800
ICWW Tunnel (LA 3040)*	Replace with 4 lane bridge	0.75	$17,298
LA 3040 - ICWW to S. Hollywood	Widen to 6 lanes	2.50	$9,750
Valhi Blvd - Venture Blvd to Savanne Rd	New 4 lane road	2.50	$10,000
LA 3087 - LA 182 to LA 648	New 4 lane road with I-49 interchange	11.20	$193,000
Bayou Gardens Blvd - LA 3087	New 4 lane road	1.00	$4,000
New Road - LA 316 to LA 3087	New 2 lane road	1.00	$2,250
Thibodaux Loop SE - LA 20 to LA 308	New 4 lane road including Bayou Lafourche Bridge	3.00	$12,000
Thibodaux Loop NE - LA 308 to LA 20	New 4 lane road	4.40	$17,600
Thibodaux Loop NW - LA 20 to LA 308	New 4 lane road	3.10	$12,400
Sub-Total Unfunded Projects		**48.40**	**$373,184**
Total Recommended Plan		**276.97**	**$761,495**

* Used estimates in 2025 MTP and inflated to 2009 dollars using formula from the US Department of Labor; all other projects where formulated using typical cost estimates

System Maintenance and Operation

The maintenance and operation of the transportation system was considered in the development of the plan and staged program. Typically, maintenance costs are applicable to the system as a whole. Where possible, maintenance projects are identified individually. However, it is not possible to develop project specific maintenance schedules for other than the near term. The maintenance costs identified in this plan are the responsibility of various governmental jurisdictions. A variety of funding sources are available to which identifiable projects have been allocated.

The balancing act of meeting identified transportation improvement needs and maintaining the present transportation system will continue to place local decision makers and revenue forecasts somewhat at odds. The conservative recommendations made by this plan fully considered the impact of maintenance cost in the determination of available funding.

Interstate Maintenance Program (IM)

This Federal funding category is intended to "rehabilitate, restore, and resurface" the Federal Interstate system. The only potential federal interstate highway lying within the Houma Urban Area will be Interstate 49.

Federal Bridge Replacement Program (FBR)

This Federal funding category is intended to provide funding to any bridge on a public road.

State of Louisiana Overlay, Maintenance and Operations Program

A variety of both Federal and State funds are used to implement the statewide overlay, maintenance and operations program including Surface Transportation Funds, National Highway System Funds,

Local Maintenance, Continuity, and Minor Capitol Projects

The local general purpose governments affected by this plan characteristically provide for these types of improvements through annual appropriations in their public works and capital improvement programs. The local governments utilize sales tax, general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, and special revenue sources to implement its street and road programs.

Implementation Cost Summary

The estimated implementation cost of the MTP is summarized by stage, funding source, and match ratio in Table 3.7. The total Plan includes over 276 miles at a cost of $761,495,000. The grouping of the non-Federal portion of the matching funds for Federal programs was made because for some projects it may be wholly State, wholly local or a combination of both. It was not felt that this document should dictate which agency should provide the match for a given project. These arrangements should be reached through negotiation at the proper time of programming.

Table 3.7

RECOMMENDED PLAN IMPLEMENTATION COSTS
By Funding Source

Funding Source	Total	Federal	State/Local
Stage I (2009-2014)	**154,784,000**	**136,716,000**	**77,432,000**
NHS	6,548,000	5,238,000	1,309,000
Demo	3,000,000	3,000,000	– – –
STPFLEX	30,760,000	24,608,000	6,152,000
STPENH	1,000,000	800,000	200,000
STPHAZ	1,250,000	1,000,000	250,000
STP<200K	33,053,000	26,442,000	6,610,000
FBR	74,562,000	59,649,000	14,912,000
State Overlay	12,000,000	– – –	12,000,000
ARRA	9,600,000	9,600,000	– – –
Stage II (2015-2020)	**81,130,000**	**45,664,000**	**23,666,000**
STPFLEX	18,000,000	14,400,000	3,600,000
STPENH	1,200,000	960,000	240,000
STPHAZ	1,200,000	960,000	240,000
STP<200K	36,130,000	26,320,000	6,580,000
FBR	1,800,000	1,440,000	360,000
State Overlay	12,000,000	– – –	12,000,000
Stage III (2021-2035)	**163,197,000**	**114,557,000**	**48,639,000**
NHS	12,573,000	10,058,000	2,514,000
STPFLEX	83,650,000	66,920,000	16,730,000
STPENH	3,000,000	2,400,000	600,000
STPHAZ	3,000,000	2,400,000	600,000
STP<200K	29,325,000	23,460,000	5,865,000
FBR	20,000,000	16,000,000	4,000,000
State Overlay	20,000,000	– – –	20,000,000
Total Staged Program	**1,381,381,000**	**1,280,207**	**149,737,000**
Unfunded Needs	**373,184,000**		
MTP	**761,495,000**		

CHAPTER 4

MTP ADOPTION AND MAINTENANCE

Once the Metropolitan Transportation Plan is developed, efforts should continue toward adoption, maintenance and periodic updating.

Adoption

It is understood that unanticipated development and changes in the economic climate of an area call for periodic revisions to the MTP. These situations do not invalidate the need for the MTP to be officially adopted and enforced. Adoption by local governing bodies will officially recognize and confirm the status of the MTP as a part of the policies and procedures of planning and development for all governing bodies within the Study Area.

Public Participation

The SCPDC will provide opportunities of citizens to contribute ideas and voice opinions, early and often, during the preparation of draft plans and programs through the Public Involvement Program. This program includes three main components:

- **Community Dialog**

  Every opportunity will be taken to distribute information to the public. Information will be distributed to the media and local interest groups via fact sheets, brochures, reports, etc.

  Notices for upcoming meetings and public involvement activities will be published in the official journals of the governmental bodies that are represented by the Houma- Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization: *The Courier, The Daily Comet,* and *The Assumption Pioneer*.

  The Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization staff (South Central Planning & Development Commission) will maintain a list of interested parties who wish to be notified of any upcoming events or actions regarding the transportation planning process.

  Presentations to neighborhood groups, civic organizations, governmental meetings, and other special interest groups will be made on an as requested basis to discuss transportation activities within the expanded Houma Urbanized Area. Interested organizations should contact the South Central Planning & Development Commission offices and allow ample time for the staff to make arrangements to attend.
  Information will be provided to the public through technical assistance and

access to publications. Official copies of the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will be reserved in the South Central Planning & Development Commission offices and the main for easy public access and information. They will also be posted the MPO's website, http://www.htmpo.org.

- **Public Meetings**
  At least one public meeting will be held during development of the "Draft" *Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan* and/or the "Draft" *Transportation Improvement Program*.

  Major amendments or changes to the *Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan* and the *Transportation Improvement Program* documents will result in a second public meeting. Major amendments shall include any addition or deletion of projects deemed regionally significant. Exceptions:

  1. Those projects or project groupings that are specifically exempted from the public involvement process.
  2. Minor revisions to document text or project descriptions.
  3. Revisions to project timings within the TIP time frame.

Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate traditionally under-served audiences, including low income and minority households and persons with disabilities. All public meetings, public hearings, and open houses will be held at wheelchair accessible locations. Persons with disabilities who have special communication or accommodation needs and who plan to attend the meetings may contact the South Central Planning and Development Commission offices for assistance.

All public meetings will be announced by publication in the official journals of the governmental bodies that are represented by the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Planning Organization: *The Courier, The Daily Comet,* and *The Assumption Pioneer.*

All persons or organizations maintained on the interested parties list will be notified of public meetings. Also, every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that stakeholders in the transportation planning process are invited to participate. These stakeholders will include, but are not limited to: persons or organizations involved in traffic operation, transportation safety and enforcement, airports and port authorities, and appropriate private

transportation providers.

- **Review and Comment**
  Prior to adoption of the *Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan* and/or the *Transportation Improvement Program*, or major amendments to either document, the public will be given adequate review time. A notice will be published in the official journals: *The Courier*, *The Daily Comet*, and *The Assumption Pioneer*, at least two weeks prior to any public meeting and notices will be sent to all interested parties. Copies of the draft documents or proposed amendments will be available for public review at the South Central Planning & Development Commission office as well as the main branches of the Terrebonne Parish and Lafourche Parish public libraries.

Continuing Transportation Planning

A continuing transportation planning process is an important part of overall planning. It is also an essential requirement to ensure that the transportation system is serving the travel demand in an efficient and effective manner. In addition, an annual evaluation of the MTP is required by the 3-C Planning Process. The SCPDC as the MPO for the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan area is the agency responsible for conducting continuing transportation planning. The process is coordinated with other local and State planning activities through the Technical Advisory Committee and the Policy Committee.

Implementation of the MTP should be continually monitored to determine any necessary revisions in the Program resulting from changes in urban development and travel patterns that were not determined when the MTP was prepared. Maintenance of current information on land use planning data and travel demand - and how they interrelate - will permit a continuing evaluation of the transportation needs of the area. This continuing transportation planning process will protect the local, State and Federal governments' investment in necessary improvements.

The continuing transportation planning process should contain at least the following three steps:

1. Collect, maintain and annually update key land use and planning data, system characteristics and travel demand information. This MTP was prepared based on specific land uses, population and socio-economic data. An annual update of this data is essential to maintain an up-to-date transportation plan. Information should be maintained and collected in order to update travel demands as they pertain to the transportation system. Information from the land use and planning data collection should be compared with forecasts from this study to determine the continued validity of the projections. Information concerning the use, capacity, finances, and level of

service of the transportation system should be maintained and collected periodically in order to provide current knowledge of the total system operation for evaluation with respect to future need and possible change.

2. Evaluate the current MTP. Based on updated data, annual projections of future travel demands should be made. This data should then be compared with projections estimated in the original MTP. It must then be determined if the MTP needs revision.
3. Revise and update the MTP as needed based on new projections of travel demand, the results of sample surveys, and current transportation system data.

Conclusion

The MTP will provide a framework for rational implementation of a transportation system to satisfy the travel demand as the Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Area continues to develop and grow into the future. The realization of the recommended improvements will require the continued coordination and cooperation of local, State and Federal officials in making decisions concerning the availability and use of transportation improvement funds. The ultimate improvement and fulfilling of the mobility needs of the traveling public in the Houma-Thibodaux area will depend on the degree of compliance with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Chapter 5

SAFETEA-LU Planning Factors

1. **Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.**
   The I-49 designation and the improvement of routes that interchange with it, will allow access to national and international trade routes making land in the corridor more attractive for development.

2. **Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.**
   Intersection Improvements will include cross section and geometric design to improve safety. Signal Systems will increase safety not only for vehicles but for bicycles and pedestrians. Widening improvements will often replace substandard two lane roads with minimal or no shoulders.

   In addition, the HTMPO works with the LA State Police for the collection and coordination of its own safety data, which involves the collection of crash data, analysis of crash trends, and current best practices. The result will be the identifying problems and recommending solutions. The HTMPO also helps to support the efforts of South Central Planning & Development Commission's Safe Communities Program, which is a joint effort between the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission and South Central Planning and Development Commission and the HTMPO with the goal of promoting safety through various means of safety awareness programs.

   Regional safety issues are further addressed by HTMPO's ITS Development Plan. One of the primary objectives of the proposed ITS deployment is to improve the safety on the regional transportation system and to address transportation system deficiencies within the region. Plans include a local ITS Center to be located within the South Central Planning & Development Commission facilities.

   Additionally the HTMPO has begun to facilitate the Houma Area Incident Management Team which was recently formed to develop a multi-jurisdiction traffic management

program that will provide for the organized and safe movement of traffic during major accidents/incidents. The committee itself consists of representatives from E-911, Police, Fire, EMS, First Responders, Office of Emergency Preparedness/Homeland Security, LADOTD, local Departments of Traffic Engineering, private towing services, and other interested parties from the HTMPO service area. Through consultation and coordination with this group the HTMPO formulates regional strategies necessary to access resources and funding to address any disaster whether weather related or man-made.

3. **Increase the ability of the transportation system to support homeland security and to safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.**

   Currently our partner agency, the South Central Planning and Development Commission (SCPDC) houses the HTMPO as well as the Region 3 Coordinator of the Governor of Louisiana's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. This office is primarily responsible for coordinating and overseeing the implementation of preventative measures, precautions taken to guard against terrorist attack, sabotage, espionage, crime, etc.

   By involving the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness as an active participant in the MPO processes as well as local/parish/state law enforcement agencies and governmental entities they are able to participate in the MPO workings and affect the outcomes of MPO's planning processes. Also, through these associations we are able to participate in other regional efforts to protect the local citizens.

4. **Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight.**
   Improvement of routes interchanging with I-49 would provide greater accessibility for developing industrial and commercial areas around the Houma - Terrebonne Airport and the Port of Terrebonne. The Airport and the Port would also be greatly served by the improvement and extension of Industrial Boulevard.

   Many of the improvements in the MTP would allow greater accessibility for the buses of the Good Earth Transit System. This would enhance their ability to move people throughout their service area. Access to the Houma - Terrebonne Civic center would be increased.

Increased capacity on north/south routes through and around Thibodaux would greatly improve hurricane evacuations efforts.

Many of the recommendations of the MTP are aimed at "catching up" with development which has already occurred. The likely effect of most projects which add additional lanes will be to allow for continued use of existing properties and for in-fill development which may have been postponed or made not financially viable due to limited access.

5. **Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and Local planned growth and economic development patterns.**

   The Plan reduces congestion which can be a substantial improvement in quality of life. This plan was developed under the direction of the HTMPO Policy committee and the Technical Advisory committee, which consists of state and local officials involved with transportation planning and economic development. It meets their expectations and is consistent with their vision for the region. The MTP is also consistent with the vision put forth in local comprehensive planning efforts, such as the Terrebonne Comprehensive Plan and the Assumption Comprehensive Plan.

6. **Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.**

   The MTP recommendations were chosen to greatly enhance the connectivity between the Houma-Terrebonne Airport, the Port of Terrebonne, Good Earth Transit Station and Nicholls State University. The improvements to routes interchanging with I-49 will greatly improve the flow of freight to and from distribution terminals.

7. **Promote efficient system management and operation.**
   The plan was developed taking known areas of congestion into consideration. Alternative improvements were considered that determined the impact on the expected congestion. The ultimate project mix selected for inclusion in the Plan includes those

projects which will have the greatest impact on lessoning congestion in the study area.

8. **Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.**
Of the 274 miles of improvements in the MTP, only 17 projects involve new roadway totaling 40 miles. Of the 17 new roadways, one is the relocation of an existing facility, one is a re-alignment, one involves service roads for I-49 and three of the roadways complete the loop around Thibodaux. The rest of the projects are extensions of existing roads. Those extensions will provide continuity and greatly improve the efficiency of the network.

The remaining projects and improvement mileage involve the existing system. While about half of the projects are widening existing roadways there are several bridge replacements, the continuation of one way couplets and an extensive ITS traffic signal system. The MTP also includes approximately 150 miles of overlays on the existing network. Ridership on Good Earth Transit has shown a steady increase since its inception in February, 1997. Improvements such as the route extension to Thibodaux and proposed improvements indicate that the service is a very viable part of the overall transportation system. The HTMPO is currently studying the feasibility of extending the GET system to include Thibodaux into its service area.

In addition, the HTMPO has initiated and participated in several other studies and projects that strive to improve the operation of the region's transportation system. Various traffic signal retiming studies have been completed or are currently underway in order to increase the carrying capacity of a corridor without adding capacity. The region continues to move forward in order to expand ITS into additional highways. ITS has been an instrumental strategy in managing incidents and reducing congestion. Presently, the HTMPO is exploring options to move the ITS Center into the South Central Planning and Development Commission's facilities to help better the opportunities for intergovernmental and interagency coordination. Furthermore, the coordinated human services transit planning exercise recently completed for our region encourages local may encourage efforts to get people out of their single occupancy vehicles and into mass transit.