

Executive Summary

Pursuant to the charges of JBE 2016-23, the Governor’s Task Force on Transportation Infrastructure Investment (Task Force) worked diligently over a six-month period to determine what must be done to address Louisiana’s vast multimodal transportation issues. Through the course of six formal meetings at the capitol and by attending eight regional meetings across the State hosted by economic development organizations and metropolitan planning organizations, the Task Force studied the complexities of Louisiana’s transportation needs and the project delivery process; received national expert testimony on transportation financing; and received feedback from communities across Louisiana. Based on its findings, the Task Force adopted nine resolutions that together make the actionable recommendations necessary to fulfill JBE 2016-23’s charge. This report provides an overview of the information studied by the Task Force and other key findings that led to the adoption of nine resolutions.

The recommendations in this report deliver a balanced solution to the myriad of competing goals and objectives for the Louisiana transportation system of the future. JBE 2016-23 clearly identified the mission of the Task Force. However, in order to provide direction and context for the development of actionable recommendations, the following *guiding principles*, consistent with the Governor’s intent and feedback from regional meetings, were adhered to by the Task Force:

1. **Fix the Problem** – The transportation plan moving forward must be bold and aggressive as the problem is large and acute. Nibbling around the edges with an incremental increase in infrastructure investment will not fix the problem and will erode public trust. The return on the citizen’s investment must be substantial to meet expectations, and the solution must also be sustainable. A one-time infusion of funding does not provide for a transportation system that will address the needs of the future.
 - a. Resolutions A, B, C, and D specifically address this principle by recommending a level of investment that will provide adequate funds to improve and maintain the transportation system in Louisiana.
 - b. Resolution F recommends a policy improvement (indexing) to specifically address a sustainable solution to ensure the state will not fall behind in the future.
2. **All new revenue must be dedicated to transportation** – New revenues must be spent delivering transportation projects in Louisiana. Retain legislative authority to prioritize each year based on needs, such as more system preservation and backlog reduction in the initial years, while preconstruction activities on capacity and Category A and B Megaprojects are underway.
 - a. Resolution E recommends the use of existing procedures for allocating investment in categories codified in the Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan (LSTP) and is consistent with the statutory Highway Priority Program. As such, the Task Force is recommending new revenues be a dedicated source for transportation funding.
3. **Don’t unnecessarily reinvent the wheel** – The LSTP is comprehensive and extensively vetted. The plan meets federal standards, addresses the multi-modal needs, and establishes a framework and organization for the consistent discussion of needs, priorities, and solutions.
 - a. Resolution A recommends revenue generation consistent with one of the LSTP potential funding scenarios.
 - b. Resolution E specifically recommends the use of categorical spending, which is consistent with the LSTP’s approach to allocating new revenues.

4. **Ensure infrastructure improvements will promote and enhance economic development** – Over \$100 billion in industrial expansion is planned in Louisiana. Infrastructure must facilitate freight movement and mobility in support of this forthcoming investment, as well as the vast industrial facilities that currently exist in Louisiana. Investment must provide additional infrastructure for planned population increases to support livable communities, quality of life, and attract additional business development.
 - a. Resolution E addresses economic development as part of the plan.
5. **Support greater authority and control of project and investment decisions at the local level** – Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Economic Development Organizations, and local governments want greater input and control over investment decisions in their respective areas. Continue efforts to support regional priorities and the road exchange program. Consider DOTD Districts as MPOs for the rural parishes in each district. Incentivize local investment to match state and federal funds.
 - a. Resolution E recommends additional investment in the Local Programs category.
6. **Leverage the use of all available tools for infrastructure investment** – Louisiana has existing enabling legislation to develop additional toll facilities, operate a State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) once capitalized, enter into Public Private Partnerships (P3), and employ the full spectrum of alternative delivery means to expedite project completion. Current best practices are available and should be encouraged.
 - a. Resolutions G, H, and I specifically recommend support for all innovative and alternative methods of infrastructure investment and delivery.
7. **Employ a balanced approach to investment allocation** – True investment solutions must be comprehensive, inclusive, and strategic in addressing vast multimodal transportation needs.
 - a. Resolutions A through I all contribute to this principle, achieving a prudent balance among the following competing priorities, which include:
 - i. *Backlog of needs*: we must preserve and take care of the system we have. This refers primarily to the surface transportation system of roads and bridges, which are crucial to both rural and urban areas. This current backlog of needs is \$13.1 billion.
 - ii. *Timely congestion relief and capacity enhancement*: quickly finance Category A and B Megaprojects to provide significant additional capacity to relieve congestion.
 - iii. *Economic development enablers*: support the current and future projected investment in industrial expansion in Louisiana.
 - iv. *Quality of life*: improve safety and make travel times more efficient through congestion mitigation and strategic pursuit of complete street and enhancement projects that are pedestrian friendly.
 - v. *Multimodal*: Louisiana must capture the synergistic effects of connecting its highway, rail, port, waterway, and airport assets. Creating alternatives that enhance mobility of people and goods will define successful state economies in the future.

- vi. *Urban and rural*: service to all citizens, businesses, and areas of the state is essential to enhance our agriculture markets and growing urban populations.
- vii. *Sustainable Financing*: seek out recurring, reliable sources of revenue for transportation and utilize some combination of debt, user-fees, private investment, and “pay-as-you-go” methods to leverage favorable market conditions and accelerate delivery of projects and benefits.
- viii. *Innovative Financing, Project Delivery*: leverage tolling and P3 opportunities with State investment, thereby, offsetting total costs with private investment and corridor or structure-specific user fees.

The Task Force was very diligent and thoughtful in formulating the recommendations that were adopted by resolution and are expanded upon in this report. If enacted together, Louisiana’s multimodal transportation issues will be addressed in a timely, efficient manner that delivers meaningful economic benefits and will improve the overall quality of life for the citizens of this State. The Task Force stands ready to be of assistance to the Administration in its effort to enact sustainable solutions for multimodal transportation infrastructure in Louisiana.