

# I. INTRODUCTION

In 2003, Louisiana released its updated *Statewide Transportation Plan*, which serves as a blueprint for transportation investment. The Plan includes the policies, programs, and projects that are needed to strengthen the state's economy and improve the quality of life of Louisiana citizens. It addresses the movement of people and freight across all modes of transportation.

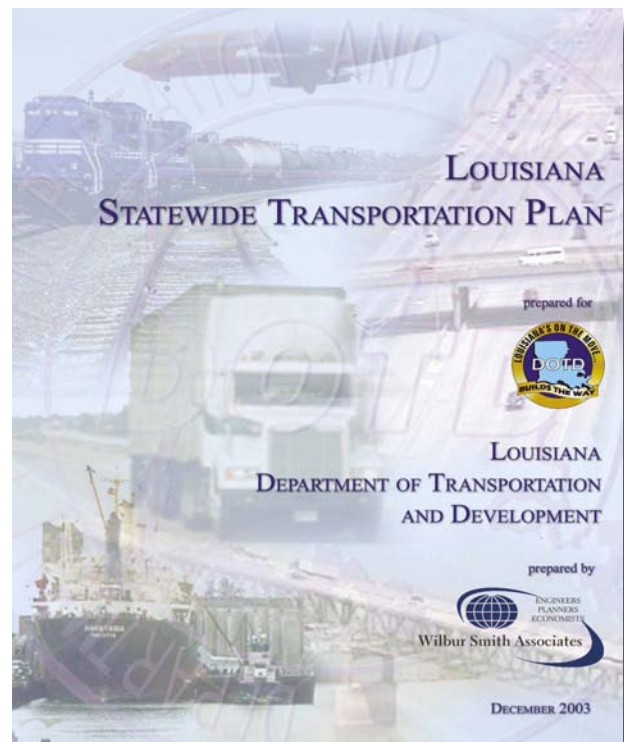
The Plan was developed over a three-year period through extensive technical analyses, exhaustive consensus-building, and a highly structured decision-making process. It was published following a thorough public involvement effort and adoption by the statutorily-created Louisiana Investment in Infrastructure for Economic Prosperity (LIIEP) Commission.

Several important events have impacted the state and its infrastructure in recent years. In August and September 2005, Louisiana was devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. While the recovery has progressed, these storms may have forever changed the socioeconomic characteristics of south Louisiana, particularly the southwest portion of the state and the New Orleans Metropolitan Area. Also in August 2005, the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted by the United States Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush. The new bill advocates private investment in the surface transportation system and offers a number of innovative finance techniques, including several pilot programs for tolling existing and new Interstate highways. Lastly, construction costs have escalated significantly nationwide since the Plan was completed in 2003. Construction inflation along the Gulf Coast has been particularly pronounced in the aftermath of the hurricanes.

The 2005 hurricanes may have forever altered the socioeconomic fabric of south Louisiana.

In light of these occurrences, a review of the Plan was deemed to be in order, as was the incorporation of other select public works infrastructure. The *Louisiana Statewide Transportation and Infrastructure Plan (LSTIP) Review and Status Report* is not intended to replace the 2003 Plan, but rather serves as a supplement to it. Therefore, in reviewing the *LSTIP Review and Status Report*, it is recommended that the reader also refer to the 2003 *Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan*.

This *Plan Review and Status Report* is intended to supplement the 2003 Plan, not replace it.



## OVERVIEW OF 2003 LOUISIANA STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The 2003 Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan was an update to the state's first transportation plan adopted in 1996. The mission of the 2003 Plan was to develop a long-range multimodal transportation plan that meets the goals and objectives approved by the LIIEP Commission, considers the applicable benchmarks contained in *Louisiana: Vision 2020*, and addresses the planning factors included in federal law.

The 2003 Plan's focus is economic growth in Louisiana – sending the message that Louisiana is a progressive state.

A primary focus of the 2003 Plan was economic growth in Louisiana.

The Plan's recommended policies, programs and projects were developed to support existing wealth-building industries and employment; strengthen the foundation for economic growth; take advantage of international trade opportunities; enhance the quality of life for citizens; and send a message that Louisiana is a progressive state.

### SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The 2003 Statewide Transportation Plan, adopted by the LIIEP Commission in March 2003, addressed both passenger and freight travel demands and needs across all modes of transportation through the Year 2030. Development of the 2003 Plan was primarily guided by Advisory Councils that represented the various transportation modes as follows:

- Aviation;
- Freight Railroad;
- Intelligent Transportation Systems;
- Ports & Waterways;
- Regional Planning Officials (highways);
- Surface Passenger (transit, passenger rail, and intercity bus);
- Trucking; and,
- Intermodal.



The Plan includes an overview of existing transportation conditions, an analysis of future needs, highway performance evaluation results (using the statewide travel demand model developed as part of the Plan), recommendations for each mode of transportation, and fiscally constrained revenue scenarios with specific program elements.

Public involvement was instrumental in the preparation of the 2003 Plan and included extensive activities to involve public agencies and stakeholders throughout the development process. Public involvement activities included two Statewide Transportation Conferences, nine regional Public Meetings in the state's metropolitan areas, meetings with the eight Advisory Councils, distribution of the Draft Plan Report to libraries throughout the state to facilitate public review and comment, a project website, and three newsletters. The existing transportation system was analyzed to identify current needs, and forecasts were made to determine future transportation needs and improvements in the state through the Year 2030. Areas of analysis included:

- Population and employment growth;
- Pavement and bridge preservation needs;
- Highway safety conditions;
- Freight flows (trucking, railroads, and ports and waterways);
- Mobility (existing and future capacity deficiencies); and,
- Demands and needs associated with other transportation modes including aviation, public transit, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

The 2003 Plan was developed around four revenue scenarios. The baseline scenario assumed no additional funding nor any periodic adjustment for inflation. The second scenario assumed periodic adjustment for inflation but no new revenues. The third and fourth scenarios assumed significant increases in recurring revenues.

In 2005, an Implementation Plan was prepared to identify strategies that would provide for the orderly and efficient delivery of the programs and projects contained in the 2003 Plan once funding for the third or fourth revenue scenarios was secured.