

**STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT**



RURAL CONSULTATION PROCESS

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I. ONGOING CONSULTATION

Throughout the year, DOTD District personnel, and to a lesser extent, Headquarters Personnel, are in communication with rural officials regarding needed projects and relative priorities. They regularly meet with state, parish, and municipal elected officials to discuss potential projects, maintenance issues, funding, etc.

In addition, the DOTD also has a well defined response system which deals with written and electronic inquiries from elected officials and the public. Inquiries are routed to the appropriate party for response, which in most cases is accomplished within a week. A record is kept of inquiries made, responses provided.

II. HIGHWAY PRIORITY PROGRAM / STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP)

The Highway Priority Program is the document submitted to the State Legislature which defines the projects which are being developed by DOTD. The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) contains the same projects, however, it is the document submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for approval.

Currently, annual Public Hearings are held throughout the State to receive public input on the proposed Program and STIP. These Public Hearings are given once in each of the nine DOTD Districts. Notices of the hearings are published in newspapers in each Highway District and notices are sent to state and local officials in each area.

As noted above, rural officials have the opportunity throughout the year to provide input and recommendations for new projects. Additionally, DOTD has developed an E-Mail system in which officials from rural areas are asked to provide input prior to development of a preliminary Highway Priority Program or State Transportation Improvement Program. Information as to projects in their area will also be provided to these officials via the e-mail system.

In addition, once a preliminary Program and STIP are developed, an opportunity to comment on the proposed plan will be provided. The Program and STIP plan is published and copies will be made available directly to the following:

DOTD District Office

Each of the Eight Planning and Development Districts in Louisiana
State Senators and State Representatives representing the rural areas

Notices of the availability of the document will be published in newspapers in each highway District and the Advocate (Baton Rouge) as display advertisement with the location where the document may be inspected, a brief description of the document, the deadline for comments and the address where comments may be sent for consideration. The period for public review and comment will be no less than 45 days.

