

US DOT'S BEYOND TRAFFIC: 2045 DRAFTS FRAMEWORK FOR FUTURE, SEEKS PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Earlier this year the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) published its draft report *Beyond Traffic: Trends and Choices 2045* after a team of experts conducted a comprehensive analysis of the nation's transportation system. The report examines both the transportation system today and also forecasts how it will function 30 years in the future if we continue on the same path we have been traveling the last several decades. According to the report, US DOT is not advocating specific policy actions, but aiming to provide a blueprint to frame the important transportation policy choices that need to be made, and providing objective information to serve as the foundation for larger national discussions.

The report is separated into three main sections: major trends shaping the transportation system, implications of these trends on the various modes of transportation (including transit), and a description of the baseline future scenario that may emerge as a result of the continuation of current trends. Major trends identified in the report relating to transit include Millennials driving less and older Americans using transit more – 40 percent more in the last decade, though this still constitutes less than 3 percent of all trips by this group. Also discussed are transit's key role in providing affordable access to jobs, growing urban areas, the lack of robust transit systems in the large majority of suburbs, technological

innovations providing the public with real-time transit schedule information, and the relationships between bike-share systems and ride sourcing services with transit, among many others. Furthermore, expanding and/or improving the quality of transit services is listed as a policy option "that could potentially reduce congestion and preserve quality, affordable, and accessible transportation options" (p. 41).

In the system implications portion of the document, the report points out that transit ridership is the highest it's been in over half a century, increasing by almost 25 percent over the past two de-

cadec; asserting that urban area population growth, increasing roadway congestion, and changing attitudes toward travel will likely contribute to increased transit ridership and demand over the next 30 years. Additionally, it states that developments in technology are enhancing transit, both in terms of vehicle safety and fuel efficiency, as well as convenience and responsiveness of transit services. However, it also highlights the rising costs of maintaining transit systems in a state of good repair and the decline of fuel tax revenue, which could limit federal funding support for transit expansion and maintenance. Furthermore, according to the report some transit systems will

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NOTES FROM THE TOP



BY MICHELLE HORNE

on-one technical assistance when needed. The meetings proved to be effective, as 104 of about 108 agencies participated.

The FTA State Management Review was completed on September 3, 2015. FTA reviewed our documentation and spent several days at the DOTD offices going over our procedures and assessing management practices and program implementation to ensure that the FTA programs are administered in accordance with federal transit law provisions and are meeting program objectives. FTA representatives also visited a few transit providers including Pointe Coupee Council on Aging and Franciscan Pace, Inc. in Baton Rouge to ensure compliance. The review examined 13 areas and was extremely productive. Two deficiencies were found, one in the Grant Administration area regarding Milestone Progress Reports and one in the Procurement area regarding procedures for verifying that excluded parties are not participating. The Public Transportation Staff is revising our procedures to address these issues.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you at the Annual Public Transit Conference November 17-19 at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Baton Rouge. This year's theme is **"Safety Starts with You!"** where we will learn exceptional safety strategies, exchange ideas and information, and connect with experts from across the nation. Additional featured topics include transit updates, customer service, STTARS, LA-TEAM, and much more. There is still time to register, so don't miss this learning and networking opportunity! We will see you there!

It's hard to believe we are in the last quarter of 2015. A lot has been going on the last few months. We had our Directors meetings, completed our FTA State Management Review, closed the ARRA Grant (see the Spotlight article for all the details), and have been gearing up for the Annual Public Transit Conference.

This year the Directors meetings were held on July 23-24 in Baton Rouge at the Embassy Suites and July 28-29 in Marksville at the Paragon Casino Resort. Topics covered included DOTD updates, safety and security, maintenance procedures, procurement, STTARS updates, LA-TEAM online Application, the annual compliance review, and program updates and requirements for JARC/New Freedom, Elderly & Disabled and Rural programs. We also went over all RTAP trainings offered and sought suggestions on what trainings the directors would like to see more of. The agencies were made aware of what drug and alcohol reporting requirements are expected of rural providers and we touched on asset management and provided one-



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ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

We look forward to seeing you at the **2015 Annual Public Transit Conference November 17-19!** For more information, see the events calendar below.



NTI COURSES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: www.ntionline.com

NOV 3 - 6	Procurement Series II - Risk Assessment and Basic Cost or Price Analysis St. Petersburg, FL
NOV 3 - 4	National Transit Database (Urban Reporting Houston, TX
DEC 1 - 4	Procurement Series I - Orientation to Transit Procurement El Paso, TX

LADOTD EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: <http://wwwsp.dotd.la.gov>

NOV 17 - 19	Louisiana 2015 Annual Public Transit Conference Baton Rouge, LA Registration is open. For more information, visit: http://wwwsp.dotd.la.gov/Inside_LaDOTD/Divisions/Multimodal/transit/Pages/default.aspx
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APTA EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT: www.apta.com

NOV 12 - 13	ITS Transit Best Practices Workshop Atlanta, GA
NOV 15 - 17	13th National Light Rail Conference Minneapolis, MN

OTHER EVENTS

NOV 3	FTA Webinar Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program Webinar For more information, visit: http://www.fta.dot.gov/newsroom/calendar.html
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SPOTLIGHT ON...

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT GRANT RECIPIENTS



The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) was enacted to preserve and create jobs; provide funds for investment in infrastructure, energy efficiency, and science; provide assistance to the unemployed; and assist with state and local fiscal stabilization.

Signed into law on February 17, 2009 it provided \$787 billion in total investment, including \$48.1 billion for transportation with

\$8.4 billion allotted for transit.

As a result of ARRA the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development received almost \$430 million, over

\$15.2 million of which was used to fund capital transit grants for rural transit providers existing

in 2009.

Now, after providing funding for over 500 pieces of capital equipment, along with 32 preventative maintenance projects, the ARRA Grant is closed.

Over its lifespan the grant funded projects throughout the state totaling approximately \$15,259,838.

The breakdown of projects funded is as follows:

- 222** Surveillance Equipment for Buses
- 134** Buses and Vans
- 107** Computers
- 32** Preventative Maintenance Projects
- 25** Generators
- 23** Pressure Washers
- 13** Bus Garages
- 4** Intercity Over-the-Road Coaches
- 1** Capital Cost of Contracting Project

DOTD ON THE GO...



One of the DOTD PT Section's mandates is to provide information and technical assistance to transit providers in Louisiana in order to assist them in meeting their requirements for FTA funding. These activities come in many different formats and venues. DOTD PT provides numerous training courses, workshops, and training materials, as well as a website and an annual conference. To keep all of our constituents up to date on DOTD PT's activities, DOTD On The Go features just a few selected items each quarter.

SITE VISITS

Part of the outreach and assistance that LaDOTD provides to the Rural Public Transportation (Section 5311) and Elderly and Disabled (Section 5310) providers are site visits from the program managers. LaDOTD conducted three site visits for Section 5311 during this quarter in East Feliciana, Evangeline, and Point Coupee Parishes. Additionally LaDOTD performed two Section 5310 site visits to the Jefferson COA and Lafourche COA.

OUTREACH

To further the goal of providing some form of public transportation in all 64 parishes, as listed in the Louisiana Vision 2020 Plan, LaDOTD has been conducting educational visits to all the parishes in Louisiana that do not currently have some form of public transit service. LaDOTD conducted outreach meetings in seven parishes this quarter: Caddo, Rapides, Lafourche, Jackson, Sabine, Winn, and West Feliciana.

TRAINING

DOTD staff provided STARS training in August and September in addition to Vehicle Maintenance Management and Inspection (VMMI) training.

If your agency or someone within your agency deserves recognition for a job well done, or has already received recognition or an award, please let us know. Email or send a brief description, photos, and contact information to Donna.Lavigne@la.gov or to Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development/Public Transit Section, attn: Donna Lavigne, P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.

become increasingly vulnerable as a result of climate change.

In the end, the report states that if these trends continue over the next 30 years transit will still account for less than 10 percent of commuter trips, services will become increasingly expensive to provide, fares will increase, and the quality of service nationally will decline. On the other hand, to preserve and expand the key role of public transit, the report lists the following policy options:

- Investing in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of existing public transit services that are in critical need of repair.
- Decreasing total travel-time and increasing the reliability and frequency of public transit services.
- Investing in bus rapid transit

services by converting existing general-purpose travel lanes into connected regional networks of dedicated bus-only right of way to greatly improve safety, access, travel speeds, frequency, and reliability.

- Identifying sustainable funding mechanisms to offset the decreasing purchase power of fuel taxes.
- Increasing use of performance measurements to direct funds for state of good repair.
- Promoting the use of common technologies and platforms to make transit payments more seamless and convenient (p. 222).

These are policies that can be considered while weighing the costs and benefits of expanding public transit service in the future.

To read the full report, visit <https://www.transportation.gov/BeyondTraffic>.

FROM CAPITOL HILL...

FTA conducted webinars in September to explain and discuss what is covered in the Public Transportation Safety Program Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) published in the Federal Register on August 14, 2015. This proposed rule would officially adopt Safety Management Systems (SMS) as the basis for FTA's new Public Transportation Safety Program and would create the framework for the FTA's authority to monitor, oversee, and enforce safety in the transit industry. It also sketches proposed content for the National Public Transportation Safety Plan, which will be the topic of a future Federal Register Notice.

Industry stakeholders were able to comment on the NPRM until October 13, 2015. Though the comment period has closed, interested parties can learn more about the proposed rule by accessing the webinar materials at the following web address: http://www.fta.dot.gov/tso_16574.html.

FTA also conducted webinars in October to go over the Transit Asset Management (TAM) NPRM, the purpose of which is to help achieve and maintain a state of good repair for the nation's public transportation systems. **This NPRM is open for comment until November 30, 2015.** For more information go to <http://www.fta.dot.gov/13248.html>.

