



Transit Investment Creates Jobs

Investments into the public transportation system create 70% more jobs than any work done on new roads.

Before we ever received any Recovery Act funds to be spent on our transportation infrastructure, we already knew that investments in public transportation or the repair and maintenance of public transportation assets, and the preservation of current roadways and bridges were associated with consistently higher job creation rates than any investments into the construction of new highway capacity.

For example, a 2009 study undertaken by the University of Utah's Metropolitan Research Center had completed a review of relevant data and found that investments into the public transportation system provided 31 percent more jobs than an equal investment into new roads and bridges. Even funding spent on the maintenance and repair of existing roadways still surpassed the job creation rate of investments into new highway infrastructure by 16 percent.

But why would transit investments and repair or maintenance projects yield more jobs for every dollar spent? Because they are generally more labor intensive; more money is spent on wages, less on equipment, and no dollars are used for property acquisition, which has little or no stimulative or reinvestment value. Also, transit as well as repair and maintenance projects put more money into the economy faster than new construction initiatives, which are usually subject to an extensive, multi-year planning, design, and approval process.

The results of this analysis were available as states began spending their apportionment of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. The report aimed to raise awareness of the fact that not all shovel-ready projects

are alike in their capacity to create new jobs and long-term prosperity. All in all, the stimulus funds provided \$48 billion to the Department of Transportation, which were distributed through existing programs and with the help of two new competitive grants - the High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail and the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) programs.

However, once ARRA funds were rolled out, only 17.5 percent of the transportation funding was spent on transit capital and infrastructure improvements (\$8.4 billion), while well over half of the funds went towards highway infrastructure (\$27.5 billion). Within the money apportioned to highway improvements, roadway preservation received the largest chunk (almost 59%), followed by new roadway capacity projects (over 33%), whereas only a small portion of this mode-flexible funding was spent on public transportation projects (1.7%).

According to Smart Growth America's Recent Lessons from the Stimulus report, Louisiana spent almost 60 percent of its flexible transportation infrastructure funding on new roadways and bridges, while only 1.4 percent of the funds distributed through the Surface Transportation Program (STP) channel went to transit.

It would seem that although we already knew that public transportation had the highest positive impact on job creation, Louisiana as well as other states spent only a small portion of these flexible stimulus dollars on transit projects,

(Continued on page 6)

Newsletter Contents

Transit Investment Creates Jobs
Page 1

Notes From the Top
Page 2

Announcements & Events
Calendar
Page 3

Spotlight Article
Page 4

DOTD On The Go
Page 5

From the Capital...
Page 6



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Notes from the Top *Fall*

by Donna Lavigne

I looked at my calendar the other day and noted that the year is almost gone. The 2011 conference is fast approaching, we've been busy conducting more training, we are coordinating the statewide work group on coordination, we have a new staff member, and to top it all off, our section just moved to the DOTD Headquarters building.

Let's start with the 2011 Public Transit Conference. It will take place November 14-16 in Lake Charles at the L'Auberge Resort. We have visited the facility and are excited to be going to Lake Charles this year. If you want more information on how to register or make your room reservations, go to our website at www.dotd.la.gov/intermodal/transit/ and click on the link to the conference. Everything you need is in the Registration Form. Early registration ends October 14th and you rooms must be reserved no later than October 24th. We have a great conference planned and hope to see you all there.

Some of you have met our new Program Manger for Training and Technical Assistance, Krystal Barkley. She started this September and attended her first training, the cost allocation workshop, in Alexandria. You will see her at the conference; please welcome her to our staff.

As I just mentioned, we held a long awaited cost allocation workshop in Alexandria this month. The class was taught by two ladies who work for the Texas Transportation Institute. The original class was taught in 2002 and the same manual was reviewed and

reused during this workshop. If you would like a copy of the manual or workshop materials, go to our website.

For those of you who either attended the coordination workshop in Marksville or have attended a regional coordination meeting in your area, you've heard about the House Concurrent Resolution No. 131. HCR 131 mandates that DOTD chair a statewide work group to address coordination issues in the Louisiana and report findings to the Legislature before the opening of the 2012 session. We had our first meeting this month. To read more about that effort, see the spotlight article on Page 4.

As all of our Rural Public Transportation providers know, we have implemented the Statewide Transit Tracking and Reporting System (STTARS). We had our first training in June, began using the system in July, and had an additional training session at the beginning of this month. We are pleased with the response and are looking forward to moving our Section 5310 providers onto STTARS in 2012.

Finally, we have moved our offices to the DOTD HQ building on Capitol Access Drive. We are on the 5th floor and most importantly, all of our phone numbers have changed. The main number is now (225) 379-3060 and all of our new numbers will be updated on the website shortly.

Again, thanks for all you do for the citizens of Louisiana and we look forward to seeing you at the conference in Lake Charles. 



Announcements

2011 Public Transit Conference

November 14 - 16, 2011

L'Auberge Resort

Lake Charles, LA

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE AWAITS...

For registration and room information go to
www.dotd.la.gov/intermodal/transit/
Click on the Conference Link & download the Registration form

Or contact Krystal Barkley at
(225) 379-3066 or Krystal.Barkley@LA.gov

Events Calendar

APTA Conferences

Annual Meeting & EXPO
Sept 2-5, 2011 New Orleans, LA

Transit CEOs Seminar
Jan 28-31, 2012 Orlando, FL

Legal Affairs Seminar
Feb 19-21, 2012 Tampa, FL

Marketing & Communications Workshop
Feb 26-29, 2012 Miami, FL

Legislative Conference
March 11-13, 2012 Washington DC

For more information: www.apta.com

Other Upcoming Conferences/Training:

Fatigue in Transit Operations: A
Symposium
Oct 12-13, 2011 Washington, DC

For more information: www.trb.org

Rail~Volution 2011
Oct 16-19, 2011 Washington, DC
www.railvolution.com

National Transit Database Small
Systems Waiver Webinar
Oct 17, 2011

For more information, go to the link in
the next column on NTI Courses

2012 SWTA Annual Conference & EXPO
Feb 12-15, 2012 Denver, CO

2011 Public Transit Conference
November 14-16, 2011 Lake Charles, LA

For information: www.dotd.la.gov
Or call (225) 379-3066
Or email PublicTransportation@LA.gov

NTI Courses:

For information: www.ntionline.com

Transportation Safety Institute Classes

Courses are offered around the country
on various topics throughout the year.

For more information, please visit:
www.tsi.dot.gov





Spotlight on...



Statewide Work Group on Human Services and Transit Coordination

It's an exciting time in Louisiana for human services transportation coordination. Recently, the Legislature passed House Concurrent Resolution No. 131, sponsored by Representative Joe Harrison from District 51. HCR 131 calls for the creation of a "Human Services Coordinated Transit Work Group, led by the DOTD, with active support and leadership commitment from both public and private stakeholders to improve mobility, optimize efficiencies, and manage costs of transit and paratransit services for both able-bodied and disabled persons."

HCR 131 lists 22 different agencies or agency types that will participate on the statewide work group and requires that a report be submitted to the Legislature prior to the 2012 session. The aim of the work group is to identify gaps in service across the state and make existing services more effective and prepared for the future.

The work group membership includes representatives from agencies that either provide or fund some type of human services or transportation services. This includes regular public transportation, specialty transit services directed at a target population, and private operators. On the human services side, it includes social services, non emergency medical services, veterans affairs, family and children services, etc. The group covers the gambit of human and transportation services.

The first meeting of the work group was held on September, 22nd and was well attended. There were about 45 people invited and around 40 of them were in attendance. The first meeting was a kick off with a welcome from the Chairman, Phil Jones, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Intermodal Planning at DOTD, and Representative Harrison. The meeting centered on accomplishing many of the required functions like reviewing several existing studies and looking at best practices from across the country. This put all of the players on the same sheet of music.

The rest of the meeting was spent looking at the various opportunities and barriers to coordination from the various perspectives in the room. Already there are identifiable opportunities that may reap benefits for the transit dependent populations in Louisiana.

The work group members provided some information on what role they play in the human or transportation services arena and what issues they think would be of most benefit to overall service in Louisiana. With that information, a steering committee will be devising small working groups that can attack the various issues before the whole group gets back together.

There's a lot to do before the start of the 2012 session and the overall consensus most of the members was one of hope that we can effect change on an extremely important issue. 



One of the DOTD PT Section's mandates is to provide information and technical assistance to transit providers in Louisiana 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 material 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.



DOTD Conducts Site Visits

As most of you know, part of the outreach and assistance that DOTD provides to the Rural Public (Section 5311) and Elderly and Disabled (Section 5310) providers, are site visits from the Program Manager. During the third quarter, Bennie Nobles made Safety & Security and Drug & Alcohol site visits to Assumption COA, E. Feliciana DOA, St. Martin ARC, The Special Education District in Plaquemines Parish, Pointe Coupee COA, St. Martin CAA, Iberia COA, Lafayette ARC, the Affiliated Blind of LA in Lafayette, St. Martin CAA, Livingston COA, Plaquemines CAA, Avoyelles SDD, St. Tammany COA, and PACE in East Baton Rouge Parish.

DOTD Outreach to Underserved Parishes

As many of you know, one of DOTD's primary goals is to provide some form of public transportation in all 64 parishes. It is a goal listed in the Louisiana Vision 2020 Plan. To further this goal, DOTD has been conducting educational visits to all of the parishes in Louisiana that do not currently have some form of public transportation services. During the third quarter of 2011,

DOTD completed their visits with all of the parishes without public transportation services, meeting with representatives from Morehouse Parish, East Carroll Parish, and West Carroll Parish. They have concluded this outreach effort for 2011.

Training and Workshops

DOTD held several workshops and training seminars during the third quarter of 2011. There was another STTARS training during the first week of September at the LTRC training facility on the LSU Campus in Baton Rouge. DOTD also held a 2-day cost allocation workshop in Alexandria. The workshop was well attended.

Regional Coordination Meetings

In addition to their other activities, DOTD has been attending the regional coordination meetings across the state. This quarter, DOTD attended meetings in Baton Rouge, Alexandria and Monroe.

In The Spotlight

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. 

Contact Information Announcement

In our attempt to keep everyone informed of special events, workshops, conferences, and important information regarding public transportation in Louisiana, DOTD PT maintains a Contact Database. If information about your organization - new phone number, new director, new address or email - has changed, please help us keep our database current. Email your updated information to: publictransportation@la.gov



(Continued from page 1)

while giving more than a third of the funding to the construction of new roadway capacity, although it had a proven lower impact on the provision of new job opportunities.

What are the results of these particular decisions? Let's take a closer look at the analysis that was conducted by Smart Growth America (SGA) on data that was provided through December 2009 by the U.S. House of Representatives Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. It revealed that early ARRA spending on public transportation infrastructure created almost 84 percent more jobs than stimulus money spent on highways. Following this very impressive but only initial assessment, an analysis of the final ARRA obligation revealed that for every \$1 billion spent on transit projects 4.2 million job-hours were produced, while every \$1 billion spent on highway projects resulted in only 2.4 million job-hours, thus transit spending yielded a 70 percent higher job creation rate over investments into highway infrastructure. That makes for an even better statistic than the previously asserted 31 percent increase documented in the University of Utah's The Best Stimulus for the Money report.

Today, with the prospect of having additional monies come to us by way of The American Jobs Act, which promises a \$50 billion investment in transportation infrastructure and a bi-partisan infrastructure bank to allow us to modernize our roads, rail, airports and waterways, we need to make certain that new transportation money is spent in such a way that it provides maximum and long-term investment benefits for our workforce, our infrastructure, as well as our communities. With our surface transportation bill still up in the air, not knowing when or how much money will be available to us for investment into our transportation infrastructure, and battered by this tough economic climate, we need to make wise funding choices.

What should we consider prior to future spending of any funds provided by The American Jobs Act or a similar job creation and economic stimulus bill?

- ✓ Repair and maintain roadways to avoid costly reconstruction later on, especially since the State of Louisiana still has a large inventory of roads that are currently not in "good condition".
- ✓ Utilize the available flexibility of the program to attribute a significantly larger portion to public transportation, if the money is again provided through existing STP channels.

- ✓ Prepare for another round of tight timelines associated with the expenditure of highly regulated funds that must not only comply with all Federal-Aid Highway Program rules, but also come with their own set of stringent reporting requirements.

The knowledge and experience we gained during the ARRA process has positioned us well to gain even greater benefits from any transportation infrastructure funding that might be provided as part of The American Jobs Act or a similar piece of legislation.

When we are getting ready to embark on another recovery fund and job creation adventure, let's keep public transportation funding in the forefront of our minds, knowing that it greatly benefits not only job creation and the improvement of our transportation infrastructure, but that it will also bring many other societal benefits associated with the enhancement of our communities, by keeping transportation assets maintained, community images vibrant, and last but not least, by investing in our transit system, which will go a long way towards providing additional lower-cost mobility options, which are direly needed in these economic times.

To quote yet another source of affirmation emphasizing the benefits of investments into the public transportation system, The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) states that every \$1 billion invested into public transit creates or sustains 36,000 jobs and for every \$1 spent on public transportation \$4 is reaped in economic returns. 



From Capitol Hill...

The White House announced that President Obama had signed the Surface and Air Transportation Programs Extension Act of 2011," which extends funding for the Federal Aviation Administration through January and highway funding through March 2012. 