



RESEARCH PROJECT CAPSULE [12-4SS]

October 2012

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PROGRAM

Development of Minimum State Requirements for Local Growth Policies

JUST THE FACTS:

Start Date:

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Duration:

18 months

End Date:

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Funding:

SPR: TT-Fed/TT-Reg & RITA

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Sponsored jointly by the Louisiana
Department of Transportation and
Development and Louisiana State
University

POINTS OF INTEREST:

Problem Addressed / Objective of
Research / Methodology Used
Implementation Potential

This project is associated with the Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC) partnership with the National Center for Intermodal Transportation for Economic Competitiveness (NCITEC). The NCITEC is a University Transportation Center housed at Mississippi State University funded by the Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

PROBLEM

In Louisiana, growth in and around many urban areas is neither planned nor managed. State and local government agencies

simply react to what has occurred and attempt to catch up with the necessary infrastructure. In other words, government is left with the unenviable task of cleaning up the mess created by uncontrolled development. For example, if building setbacks are not required, the state may be required to purchase and demolish new homes and commercial buildings in order to acquire the right-of-way necessary to comply with a new state law that mandates a complete streets' approach to infrastructure provision of state roads and highways. This includes providing space for future transportation demands generated by growth in that area. Transportation infrastructure includes travel lanes, turning lanes, bicycle infrastructure, sidewalks, and bus stops.

On a smaller scale, if a left-turn lane is not installed at the entrance to a new development, traffic in one direction can be impeded by vehicles stopped in the main travel lane waiting for a gap in oncoming traffic. Further, if residential or other sensitive land uses are allowed adjacent to major transportation corridors such as interstate highways, complaints about noise and requests for noise walls will begin almost immediately. When sidewalks and crosswalks are not built, pedestrian traffic generated from development can end up conflicting with automobile traffic. Growth management is not intended to be anti-growth; rather, it is intended as a mechanism for coordinating infrastructure in investment with development to encourage a safe, efficient, sustainable, and multimodal transportation system.



OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this research is the development of minimum requirements for local growth management policies for use in Louisiana. The research will be limited to defining minimum requirements with respect to transportation with a focus on understanding how it relates to the new complete streets policy. This study will be a mixed methods approach that includes both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

METHODOLOGY

1. Conduct a literature review, identify the states that have implemented growth management policies, and review best practices from their experience. Also review models used to estimate the impact of applying growth management policies.
2. Conduct a survey to identify current state-of-practice and legal framework in Louisiana.
3. Conduct a socioeconomic and demographic analysis of population trends obtained from the last U.S. census data at the parish level across the state of Louisiana.
4. Conduct a statewide poll of opinions and issues related to growth management and policies.
5. Hold meetings with stakeholder agencies.
6. Develop a list of growth management policies or guidelines for managing growth for both rural and urban transportation networks as related to the project scope.
7. Demonstrate the effectiveness of the guidelines by hypothetically assuming one or two of the policies or guidelines developed in task 6 were applied in Louisiana in the past, use models to predict their consequences to the present, and then compare the predicted conditions with the current situation.
8. Develop a return on investment analysis for the implementation of guidelines.
9. Develop a draft for "Growth Management Guidelines" for Louisiana
10. Hold meetings with stakeholder agencies to present findings, solicit comments, and establish a consensus-building approach.
11. Develop final report documenting entire research effort.

IMPLEMENTATION POTENTIAL

The feasibility of implementing growth management in any state is based on political support. However, this project will establish a set of tools that local, regional, and state-level planners, engineers, and officials can utilize to better understand best practices and a set of policies to implement growth management in Louisiana. Moreover, the implementation of growth management will be more likely based on the support initiated by the stakeholder working group meetings, results of the statewide poll, modeling, and other tasks within this project.