

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

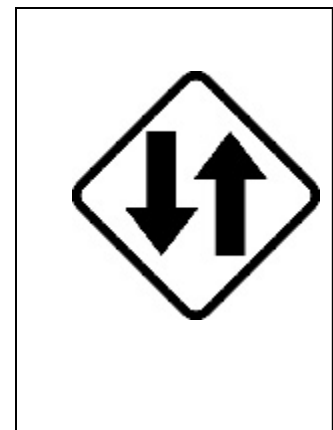
City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:

October 27, 2008

Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government

Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

Transportation is the second most important consideration in the Comprehensive Master Plan. Land use being the most important. The framework of the Lafayette Parish arterial transportation system has been planned for a long period of time. Charles Colbert completed the first Thoroughfare Plan in 1955 for the City and Parish Governments. Many of the arterials proposed in 1955 have yet to be built, but the need has not gone away. Camellia Boulevard bridge and extensions are only now being constructed after forty five years. Lafayette City-Parish is the Hub of the region. The economic viability of the community is critical to accessibility of retail, educational, industrial, service, and medical facilities. Lafayette City and Parish Government must maintain an aggressive and long range transportation plan and program. The MPO Citizen Advisory Committee, Transportation Technical Committee and Transportation Policy committees have reviewed the current transportation plans and programs and made the following set of recommendations to the LINC Steering Committee. The Steering Committee reviewed and adopted the MPO Committee report with modest changes and adjustments.

4.1 FUNDING

Develop a stable source of transportation funding with a rational nexus. Alternatives to be considered:

- a) Local option gas tax
- b) Roadway frontage fee
- c) Driveway access fee

Commentary: There is a concern that current gasoline taxes are still being channeled to activities other than transportation. Examples identified are state grant funding for local jails and for State Police. Transportation Taxes should be directly applied to transportation improvements and programs. However, considering the shortage of dedicated transportation revenue, the subcommittee recommends three potential sources for local project funding that should be considered thoroughly and submitted to the voters of Lafayette Parish with specific projects and programs.

4.2 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES

Improve management and maintenance of existing transportation facilities with anticipated spending on new capacity projects.

Commentary: There is a continuing debate within the Lafayette community on the need for new streets, roads, and highways throughout Lafayette Parish. Priority should be focused on improving the management and maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure when programming spending on new capacity projects.

4.3 CORRIDOR PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Corridor Preservation and Management should be a major component of the transportation improvement program for the parish.

Commentary: The I-49 Connector Corridor Preservation and Management Plan serves as a model for identifying future arterial alignments well in advance of construction and need. There have been repeated studies and recommendations over the last twenty years urging local governments to institute corridor preservation for future thoroughfares. Maintaining the integrity of the Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan would be a logical objective and goal for future growth and development needs. The cost/benefits of corridor preservation are substantial and easily demonstrated on current projects. The Camellia Blvd extension/bridge was originally recommended and approved in March, 1956.

4.4 ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

An Access Management Plan should be comprehensively adopted for all major thoroughfares in the parish, both existing and planned based on the Florida Model with immediate implementation on new development projects and a time frame technique to be determined for existing development (block by block).

Commentary: A tough political hardship is generated by the subject of access management. Commercial developers, business owners, property owners, and retailers generally desire full and unobstructed access to all roadways. It is difficult at best for local elected officials to say no. The proven reality is clearly demonstrated around the country that access management improves accessibility and safety. It is time that Lafayette applies this sophisticated expertise to our transportation network.

4.5 TRANSIT ALTERNATIVE

Enhance the transit alternative.

Commentary: Transit ridership has declined over the last twenty years. This is understandable given the growth and spread of the Lafayette urban area and auto use. The Lafayette Consolidated Government recently completed a major two year Parish Transit Study and Plan which recommends over eighteen new initiatives for transit improvement. This Transit Study and Plan should be an essential priority for the parish as a viable alternative to auto congestion, air quality and transportation for those citizens who are disenfranchised from the auto user group. Public transit is a community necessity and should be maintained and developed in a manner that can and will attract a larger citizen market.

4.6 NEW TECHNOLOGY

Implement new technology for enforcement, congestion management, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Commentary: The Citizen Advisory Committee, Transportation Technical Committee, and the Transportation Policy Committee have long supported and endorsed the concept and practical applications of Intelligent Transportation Systems. Having toured the ITS facility in Houston in 1997, CAC committee members recommended and urged the MPO and Lafayette Consolidated Government to prioritize this program for the Parish. Grant funds to complete an ITS Deployment Plan for the parish have been secured and should be contracted within the next few months. The State DOTD has indicated an initial funding support once the Deployment Plan is completed. Lafayette Consolidated Government should be prepared to fully partnership in this effort.

4.7 TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN

Develop and implement a Parish Traffic Calming Plan.

Commentary: Opposition is a natural reaction to increased development activity in and around established residential areas. Lacking a general grid network of streets (which provide alternatives for local and major streets and roads) Lafayette experiences negative congestion on the few through streets and roads available. Increased traffic and speed prompts the need for innovative techniques and options to slow through traffic, primarily,

on local residential streets. Traffic Calming designs should be incorporated into the long range transportation plan for the Parish.

4.8 ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

Adopt uniform parish-wide roadway design standards for application by local, state and federal agencies.

Commentary: The CAC recommended and the Lafayette Consolidated Government, acting in its capacity as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, adopted design standards for all major street functional classifications in 1997 with the adoption of the Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan. These standards are to be applied to all street, road and highway construction in the Parish. The Lafayette Consolidated Government has improved construction cross standards, but many state projects are not being built accordingly. There has been some improvement, but more needs to be done. The Citizens Advisory Committee suggests revising the Functional Classification Design Standards and securing intergovernmental agreements with DOTD for future arterial construction.

4.9 SECONDARY STREET SYSTEM AND PLAN

Secondary Street System and Plan should be developed and adopted for long term growth and development of the parish.

Commentary: One of the critical transportation network needs throughout Lafayette Parish is the lack of inter-connectivity among Lafayette residential developments. The Planning Commission appears to work diligently requiring new developments to provide stub-outs and interconnecting streets as urban area expands. The problem is centered on the pervasive desire of many residents to live on dead end streets or cul-de-sacs and limit inter-connectivity to the greatest degree possible. The current Subdivision Regulations require cross streets every 1,500 feet along major arterials. This regulation is difficult to pinpoint and is frequently omitted or waived. A comprehensive parish-wide Secondary Street Plan needs to be developed. This plan should clearly identify minimal secondary streets within a given area.

4.10 FINANCIALLY CONSTRAINED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Realisticize the Financially Constrained Transportation Plan (FCTP)

Commentary: The Financially Constrained Transportation Plan (FCTP) is a federally mandated requirement for urban areas receiving federal transportation funds for metropolitan transportation networks. The process attempts to apply realistic projections of transportation revenue from all sources (local, state, federal and private) in a comprehensive improvement program coordinated through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in a cooperative war. The committee notes that project costs are continually escalating and becoming increasingly unrealistic. Revenues can be and are redirected and/or fluctuate enough to distort what resources are available to meet the

projected improvement plan schedule. Three suggestions to improve the process: 1) Annual review of FCTP project costs; 2) Annual review of all transportation revenue sources committed to the FCTP; and 3) Annually reduce or remove transportation projects when funding and costs do not match in the FCTP.

4.11 REDUCE GRADE SEPARATIONS

The number of planned grade separation intersections/interchanges should be reduced.

Commentary: There are a total of thirty-two grade separation interchanges and intersections planned in Lafayette Parish. Not one has been built in the last eighteen years. The Louisiana Avenue Interchange on I-10 will be under construction in the spring of 2001. The estimated cost of this new interchange is approaching \$20,000,000. Alternative designs in-lieu of grade separations should be considered for these planned intersections.

4.12 ROUNDABOUTS

Roundabouts should be considered as a viable alternative to grade separations and standard grade intersections.

Commentary: Recognizing the prohibitive cost of grade separations and the on-going cost of maintaining traffic signals and safety issues at regular grade intersections, reviewed recent studies on alternative roundabouts have been reviewed. Florida is beginning to experiment with new modern roundabouts which are better designed than the traffic circles we are familiar with in Alexandria. Clearwater, Florida has recently constructed a roundabout at a major intersection that is working well. Modern roundabouts keep traffic moving, are signal light free, safer for pedestrians, reduce traffic accidents substantially, provide an aesthetically pleasing asset to the community and cost 20% -30% of the money needed for a grade separation.