Economic Impact Study Of The Proposed Mississippi River Bridge At St. Francisville, Louisiana And The Zachary Taylor Parkway



Client

Facts

Period 1999

Project Country

By Economic Development Research Group for Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development, 1999

The economic development of Central Louisiana has long suffered in the shadow of greater growth in the southern part of the state. In part, this has been due to limited highway accessibility in Central Louisiana, and the fact that the Missippi River crossing at New Roads - St. Francisville suffered from both reliability limitations and an inability to accommodate large trucks. That limitation required any large vehicles to divert 60 miles to and from the U.S. 190 bridge in Baton Rouge. To address the region's access needs, the proposed Zachary Taylor Parkway is a four-lane route across Central Louisiana, with a new bridge spanning the Mississippi River. The highway would connect I-59 near Poplarville, MS with I-49 in Alexandria, LA.

Economic Development Research Group, under subcontract to the engineering firm of N-Y Associates, assessed the economic development benefits and costs associated with constructing the new Mississippi River Bridge and 4-lane highway. The analysis included estimation of the expected truck diversion pattern and impacts, resulting from changing travel distances and travel times as the current exclusion of large trucks on the existing river crossing is eliminated. It also analyzed the effects of increasing highway speeds and reducing access times. The study included a survey of business shippers, and it analyzed the pattern of truck shipping, profiled the types of businesses and locations that would benefit, and allocated benefits among various local and non-local industries. An economic model was used to assess the project implications for business competiiveness and economic development.

The study finding, that the bridge project could bring significant economic development benefits, helped lead to its funding using the state's TIMED (Transportation Infrastructure Model for Economic Development) Program.

Contact Persons