

State Economic Development Highway Programs



Client

Facts

Period

2003Project Country

Recognizing the importance of highway access in enabling economic development, states have initiated a variety of economic development road programs. To better understand the scope and scale of these initiatives, the Federal Highway Administration engaged Economic Development Research Group to survey state transportation departments concerning the nature of highway programs and policies to support economic development. The report profiles the characteristics of these programs and the level of state funding for them. It covers 39 states having any of three types of programs and policies:

Funding Programs for Local Access Roads - formal programs with dedicated state funding for investment in local connector routes that provide access from intercity highways to local business districts or industrial parks. Currently 19 states have these types of programs, with formal rules for applications and local/private co-funding. The Appalachian Regional Commission's Local Roads program also provides a mechanism for 13 states to co-fund road access projects. Three other states have discretionary set-aside funds for local road projects to support economic development.

Funding Programs for Inter-City Connector Routes - These are formal programs with dedicated state funding for investment in highways that improve access from isolated rural and economically depressed parts of the state to major highway routes and economic market centers. Currently, four states have their own programs of this type and 13 states offer this type of program through the multi-state Appalachian Development Highway Program, including six not previously counted.

Policies Recognizing Economic Development as a Factor in Funding Decisions - Some states lack dedicated funding of roads for economic development, but do recognize economic development as a criteria in highway decision-making. Currently, 13 states have policies of this type, including 11 states not counted in previous categories. Another three states are in the process of setting up such policies.

Contact Persons