

THE EISENHOWER PROTOCOL

A VISION FOR THE UNITED STATES IN MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

‘Celebrating the Interstate Highway System’

Less than a half century ago, the United States sat nervously on the brink of a potential thermonuclear war for which it was wholly unprepared. Recognizing the need for improved national defense, then President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the military establishment, Congress, and the federal government invested heavily into building a more effective transportation infrastructure that would create coast-to-coast highway connections and allow for rapid troop, munitions and equipment deployment. Fresh from their return from Europe and Germany after WWII, American troops had seen first hand the benefits of the European autobahn for troop, equipment and munitions movements. On June 29, 1956, Eisenhower signed the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act into law, dramatically changing the course of American transportation history.

The development of the Interstate Highway System was successful as a tool for national defense. However, not even President Eisenhower himself could have imagined the additional rewards Americans would ultimately reap for decades to follow as a result of his monumental decision. Cities and towns literally formed in areas along the Interstate highways. Domestic travel and tourism flourished. The American automobile and trucking industries were refined and prospered. Ideas and innovations flowed through the new passageways that were created, the roads that built the America we know and reside in today. Americans were literally connected in a manner that was once inconceivable.

The Interstate Highway System linked Americans in the 20th Century, making all sections of our country more accessible, bringing us closer together geographically and as a people and promoted economic and social opportunities never before imagined. This was especially important as our population grew from 140 million in 1950 to 290 million in 2000. Citizens in the industrial United States now had a means of accessing improved education, health care and employment. Once a budding new nation, the United States had developed into a world renowned leader in innovation and industry, and a renewed sense of national pride was born all on the heels of a single historic piece of transportation legislation.

Through this great enterprise, not only was our homeland better protected, but our economy was strengthened, diversified and energized, and educational opportunities were created for the American people. Also through this great enterprise we learned the value and the necessity of transportation infrastructure investment. As we look to the past and celebrate the gifts and talents and visions of our predecessors we are inextricably drawn to look to the future to determine the mobility needs of the citizens of this great nation for the next 50 years. Not only highways, but seaports, airports, freight and passenger rail lines, transit, high speed passenger rail and other modes of transportation as well as the industries that use and support them are essential if the progress we have made as a nation is to be extended into the future.

Shaping the Next Half Century

Americans in the 21st Century face a brave, new world. We continue to encounter new and unique challenges, though we remain steadfast in our desire to sustain our position as a world leader economically and to provide the safest and most efficient transportation opportunities possible. Fortunately, we now also have the advantage of knowing what is possible through sufficient investment in transportation. It is our obligation and legacy that we will use the past as a model for the future and that the next fifty years will be a renaissance for multimodal transportation investment.

Once again while taking care of the basics, we must pursue novel transportation solutions to ensure domestic defense, to combat a steadily increasing population and to protect the safety of our mobile citizens. Luckily, we now have unlimited research pointing us toward transportation investment as a solution, and technology has afforded us with significantly more flexibility than that of fifty years ago. Where President Eisenhower once sought to connect the country with coast-to-coast highways, we now look to multimodal transportation networks, where all facets and modes of transportation intermingle to provide the most efficient infrastructure imaginable.

However, with this knowledge comes great responsibility. It is up to us as local, regional, state and national advocates of improved transportation to share our message with the public and with policymakers at all levels. To this end, we will aim to implement an aggressive communications strategy, which will entail recognition of the Interstate Highway System as a model for transportation investment in our country, as well as the promotion of other issues that might lead to increased funding for America's strained infrastructure.

As intended at the original signing of this document on August 12, 2005 at the 8th Annual Texas Transportation Summit by the City of Irving, Texas, we, the undersigned, will work to rally transportation advocates and others, alike, to initiate several significant meetings and events aimed to move us closer to our goals. At present, scheduled events include an 8th Annual Texas Transportation Summit Co-host Organizations follow-up meeting in October; a celebratory signing ceremony hosted by the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) on June 29, 2006, the actual 50th anniversary of President Eisenhower's signing of the Interstate Highway legislation; and finally, at the 9th Annual Transportation Summit in Irving, Texas, the culminating commemoration of the anniversary and the kickoff to the pursuit of our collective multimodal transportation vision for the next half century.

Collective Statement of Purpose and Declaration of Commitment

We, the undersigned, hereby confirm our dedication to promoting public multimodal transportation investment that will ensure the safety, efficiency and economic welfare of all Americans for the next half century. We pledge to promote improved public multimodal transportation and to seek out creative and innovative solutions that will carry the United States during the 21st century. We will follow the example of the leaders who came before us by pursuing a multimodal transportation network that will promote the social and economic development of our country. Together, we will shape the future.

Signature

Name of Organization

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