

5

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20590

REMARKS BY ALAN S. BOYD, SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, PREPARED
FOR DELIVERY AT A SPECIAL JOINT SESSION OF THE LEGISLATURE OF
THE STATE OF FLORIDA, IN THE STATE CAPITOL, TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA,
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1967, 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker:

I am delighted to be here and deeply honored at the invitation.

It was a timely and farsighted act on the part of this Legislature to establish a Department of Transportation for the State of Florida. I have come to congratulate you and the people of Florida.

I am proud of my home State for the good judgment and imagination displayed by its representatives here in these halls. In creating a new executive agency to plan, coordinate and comprehensively oversee all aspects of transportation -- land, sea and air -- you have readied the State of Florida for a great advance in those aspects of life that depend on mobility.

Our economic lives, our physical and social comfort, our science and our technology, are all so closely interwoven with transportation that it is hard to imagine progress without movement. But Florida's stake in transportation can be expressed in much more specific terms.

Almost 18 million tourists visited this State last year, and they spent an estimated \$4.3 billion here. And the total value of foreign trade handled through Florida custom ports was over \$1.2 billion.

So you have very good reasons for demanding the best transportation system obtainable -- one that is fast, safe, efficient, convenient and economical.

And also one that will preserve the natural beauty of Florida. For that is ^{one of} the reasons people come here in the first place.

At this particular time, across our nation, people have very mixed feelings about transportation. On the one hand, they take great pride in America's leadership in just about everything that moves. On the other hand, there are signs of a general feeling of resentment.

Many people object to the side-effects of transportation that impinge on their private lives. By and large, these are people who inhabit the most densely populated urban areas.

The din, the damage, the delay, and dislocation that are the sometime by-products of transportation offend their sense of what is right and proper.

They recognize that transportation is not only a function of the marketplace. More and more, it has become a factor in social choice. Personally, I would like to see it serve -- much more than it has in recent years -- as an instrument of local choice, of self-determination.

Transportation is a force which can either supplement or erode the natural advantages of an area. The local community must set the terms of existence for transportation, and not the other way around. A

new transportation route or facility may have momentous consequences for a geographical area. It may undermine, or it may bring new vigor, or it may trigger some superficial changes that make no fundamental difference at all. It is important for a community to try to elect, not just suffer, the consequences.

In Florida, as in every dynamic State with rapidly growing urban centers, we must seek to balance the various social and economic interests. Transportation is a shifting weight on that see-saw as each element in the community tries to hang the costs of mobility on another party.

How often we find that the car owner wants someone else to provide the parking. The merchant wants someone else to absorb the delivery charges. The pedestrian wants someone else to subsidize urban transit. The industrial plant wants someone else to underwrite the access road. The developer wants someone else to pay for the interchange. The owners of private planes want someone else to support the airport. And so on.

Probably the one happy fact is that everyone is so engaged that this "hot potato" calisthenic forces everyone to pay attention and results in a very healthy political process.

Nevertheless, someone has to pay for transportation improvements.

One approach, of course, is providing the payment for all improvements out of public funds. That system looks great until you add up all the costs and discover that the storied riches of both Florida and the United States are inadequate.

In general, Florida and the nation as a whole have recourse to three principles of transportation finance. In one, the user bears the cost of the transportation system. For example, our fuel taxes pay for most of our highways.

Another familiar principle is that of subsidy. When the users simply can't afford to pay what the service really costs, you have to make a social judgment. And if you decide it is very important to society that this service be provided, you have to overrule the market place. Then, as a matter of public policy, some part of the transportation costs are defrayed from the general treasury.

At the Federal level, at the present time, this is done for urban transit, local air service, and the merchant marine.

The third principle of transportation finance is the conception that transportation is a cost of doing business. We usually see this applied to the large suburban shopping centers, where free parking and shuttle-bus service are provided. In other words, an enterprise which imposes the need for additional transportation facilities should bear those additional costs.

Now, I must say, the great metropolitan areas have been very reluctant to extend this principle to residential real estate development, where it logically belongs. All over America, including many parts of Florida, new subdivisions and high-rise apartments are allowed to go up

Boyd/5

with little concern for the added burdens they impose on local transportation facilities.

In plain language, more congestion. And a multitude of other side-effects. Usually, no calculation is ever made of these costs. No attempt is made by the community to obtain compensation from the developer, in advance. He takes his profits and the community takes the consequences.

The evil is not real estate developers and urban growth, for Florida certainly needs the enlightened variety of both. The evil is not congestion, as such, for a certain amount of traffic delay in urban areas is just plain unavoidable. Especially in this State, during the peak tourist season.

The abuse that we must seek to curb in the public interest is thoughtless or opportunistic use of land -- land-use which generates additional traffic where the facilities cannot be expanded except at prohibitive cost.

I know of no major city which possesses, or has the power to enforce, the kind of comprehensive zoning laws needed to defend the efficiency of its internal transport system.

It seems to me that the impact of land-use decisions on mobility should be a major area of concern to Florida's new Department of Transportation. Without the ability to influence land-use decisions, planning becomes a futile exercise. Intelligent zoning is not only the key to successful transportation investment.

It represents our best hope of forestalling future transportation problems. For, as you all know, it is far easier to shape the future than to revise the present day.

With bold strokes of a well-conceived, far-sighted policy, we can hand down to our great-grandchildren a marvelously enhanced economic environment, to match the heaven-sent natural environment of this State.

But dealing with current problems, the improvements usually come by small increments. Even the relatively minor changes for the better are hard to make. We simply have to resign ourselves to that fact.

The best illustration of that is perhaps the High-Speed Ground Transportation Project.

This experimental rapid-rail link-up of Boston-New York-Washington is the major activity in a \$26 million project of the Federal Department of Transportation. When the Boston-New York segment goes into operation, this fall, the running time will be cut from the present four hours and ten minutes to about three hours and fifteen minutes. And when the New York-Washington segment starts up, around the end of this year, the running time will be reduced from the current three hours and thirty-five minutes to a flat three hours.

All that money will be expended; all that work will be done for a net savings of fifty-five minutes and thirty-five minutes, respectively. And only when the project is completed will the Department know whether the service can be economically justified; whether the public will ride the rapid-rail in sufficient numbers.

In sufficient numbers for what? In sufficient numbers to justify a further investment by private industry in much faster equipment, so that the savings in time will begin to get really dramatic.

Please don't misunderstand me. I'm not criticizing one of my own projects. I know it is worth the effort. I believe it will succeed handsomely. But it is an experiment, let there be no question about that. There just is no other way of getting at the truth of certain transportation ideas.

I suspect that the outcome of our demonstration on the Northeast Corridor of our nation will have considerable bearing on your own thinking as regards future transportation linkage of Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach.

I think it is a great thing that Florida will soon have an agency to study such matters on a scientific and systematic Statewide basis, with due regard for the needs and resources and priorities of this area. It will certainly place Florida transportation officials in a much stronger, much more productive relationship with their opposite numbers in Washington. It should lead to greater benefits to this state through your ability to get into gear more rapidly and maximize opportunities under new Federal-aid programs.

Boyd/8

As a case in point, I have in mind a little-known program that was set up not long ago under the Federal Highway Administration which so far only a few States have taken advantage of.

It is called TOPICS, and it is one of our responses to President Johnson's call for further work on a problem of concern to all municipalities. This is the effort to increase traffic capacity and improve the traffic flow and safety of existing city streets.

TOPICS is an acronym for Traffic Operations Program to Increase Capacity and Safety. It helps pay for immediate engineering improvement to reduce traffic congestion. The program applies to areas of 5,000 or more population, which makes it widely applicable in this State.

The effect of this program is to expand the Federal-aid Primary System. It now permits the selection of principal streets and downtown grids to receive Federal aid. As you know, these streets were not previously considered eligible for Federal-aid highway funds.

Cost of the improvements will be shared by the Federal and State highway agencies on a 50-50 basis, out of the regular Federal-aid highway apportionments, and State and local people will make the selection of the streets.

I should emphasize this is an immediate action program for traffic operation improvement--not for major construction or reconstruction projects.

For example, you may provide additional traffic lanes on approaches to signalized intersections. You may construct pedestrian grade separations or highway grade separations to relieve bottlenecks at very complex intersections or railway-highway crossings.

Our research has demonstrated that low-cost improvement to existing streets, and the use of the latest traffic engineering techniques and traffic control devices, can double traffic capacity and increase average speeds by 25 percent. To achieve such gains, you may install control systems for a wide range of purposes, such as making traffic signal operations responsive to traffic conditions, diverting

traffic from congested areas, establishing a part-time one-way operation, reversing direction of traffic on selected traffic lanes, or for separate bus lane controls.

Among other things, this program permits the development of separate traffic lanes for loading, unloading, or transferring passengers at surface transit terminals and intermediate stops -- including platforms and shelters within the street right-of-way. It also permits the development of truck loading and unloading facilities where necessary to improve traffic movement.

This is the kind of Federal-aid that your new Department of Transportation can really turn on, all over Florida. And there are other attractive programs for other transport modes that only await your coordinated, State initiative.

In that connection, I want to commend Florida for the steps it has taken this year to improve its highway safety program. You have made significant improvements in annual inspections, motorcycle safety, licensing, implied consent and reexamination of drivers. Any many of these actions were in line with the federal highway safety program under which we will help the states pay the cost of better highways and better protection for drivers

In state and local government, as much as in Washington, there is an urgent need for coordination of transportation service. For it is generally at the transfer points that the most serious losses to efficiency occur. Whether in passenger travel or the movement of freight, the delays and rehandling between modes are costly to all concerned -- the passenger, the shipper, the carrier. It is a burden to the consumer who must purchase goods at a higher price because of the unnecessary transportation costs. And it also affects total U. S. competitiveness in international trade.

So, one of your major goals in Florida, as in the nation as a whole, ought to be measures for increased intermodal efficiency. We can stimulate progress through promotion of integrated systems, including strong support to the containerization efforts of the transportation industry.

Now, to some people, standard-size shipping containers that can be transferred without a lot of trouble from one mode to another may seem like a trivial advance, especially in this dawning age of space exploration. But within existing constraints, I think containerization is one of the few quick and practical improvements of transportation service that does not require a heavy lump-sum investment.

Of course, modern containerports themselves do not come cheaply. And that is a major investment decision that sooner or later confronts a State like Florida, with the longest deepsea coastline of any State in the Union, and a dramatic, year-by-year build-up of foreign trade. That is certainly one of the questions that your new Transportation Department will have to help you answer.

I don't doubt but that future developments in aerospace technology will have an influence on the containerport question, as well. The international and domestic traffic implications for Florida of the Supersonic Transport are easily imagined. Taking into account possible limitations on overland use of

the SST arising from supersonic boom, it is clear that this State--because of its peninsular form and geographic position--will have unique advantages in future air commerce. And these advantages can be maximized or minimized according to the soundness or shortsightedness of Florida's transportation policies and its planning efforts.

Among the basic implications of that fact is Florida's need for a future supply of home-grown talent in the transportation field. This State would do well to invest in the particular human resources required to achieve and maintain leadership in this industry. Such might be accomplished through support for programs of transportation education in selected State colleges. Speaking now only as a Floridian, I would certainly hope your new Department of Transportation will look into the possibility.

Ideally, this new agency is much more than a specialized tool to be applied to problems of intra-state movement. It can have a broad impact on all aspects of life in Florida. So the present occasion is probably the most appropriate time to raise certain speculative questions:

Exactly what is it you would like to see your new Department accomplish? What contribution do you expect it to make to the well-being of this State? How will it serve to improve the quality of your constituents' daily lives?

At the very least, this agency can accomplish for Florida what the Federal Department of Transportation is working to achieve in the nation as a whole. It can seek to make transportation

more efficient, more economical, more expeditious, and more socially responsible.

You can use it to insure that all forms of transportation in this State become safer and more reliable for the user, especially the passenger. You can use it to express your tangible concern for the mobility needs of physically handicapped people.

Your agency can help to promote technological progress in the transportation industry of this State.

Through the promotion of integrated systems, including strong encouragement to containerization efforts, you can improve intermodal efficiency in Florida.

You can throw your full weight behind the planning process, in the private as well as the public sectors of transportation.

As evidence of your full faith in the private enterprise, competitive system, you can help the local transportation industry to remain viable and profitable to its owners. One way to do that is to avoid public investments which unnecessarily intrude on the private sector.

You can employ your new Department in the search for new ways in which transportation can assist in the economic development of lagging local areas in this State.

Above all, this agency can make a more positive contribution to the urban environment, especially in your larger cities. It can spearhead your efforts to put an end to the intolerable noise, pollution and general disfigurement that transportation has unintentionally brought to metropolitan areas--in beautiful Florida as elsewhere. With this resource,

Boyd/14

you can do much to bring on a renaissance in the quality of urban mass transit service available to city and suburban residents.

If these are some of your major goals, here in Florida, then I can assure you that an agency with similar goals and a strong desire to be helpful awaits your call in Washington.

Together, I think we can cause some worthwhile things to happen in the transportation system of this State.

#####