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LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY PROGRAMS:  
FAUS EXPERIENCE AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY PROGRAMS:  
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The paper deals with local governments' participation in the existing federal aid urban system (FAUS) highway program. Local government officials' role in programming FAUS projects provides some guidance for a future highway program directed toward urban area highway needs. A description of the local FAUS program in northeastern Illinois illustrates how local FAUS programs are generally administered in a major urban area. Data on FAUS programs in other regions were gathered through a questionnaire distributed to selected Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The responses provided by the MPOs and the authors' experience with the northeastern Illinois FAUS program are the basis for the FAUS program evaluation.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY PROGRAMS:  
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There is general agreement that the next major legislation for Federal transportation funding will significantly change the organization, administration, and funding levels of federal aid highway programs. The next Surface Transportation Act will undoubtedly be far different from the Act of 1987 (1), which made few changes in highway programs and continued program authorizations at near existing levels to 1991. Future legislation will have to deal with the fact that the largest single highway program, Interstate construction, is expected to end by 1993.

Local governments are speculating on the nature of post-Interstate federal aid highway programs, and trying to anticipate how their highway improvement programs will be affected. Urbanized area governments are particularly anxious due to the growing traffic congestion on suburban and urban arterial streets. Recent attempts to eliminate, restructure, and change the funding levels of the Federal Aid Urban System (FAUS) program have further added to local governments' uncertainty about future highway funding levels.

It seems reasonable to expect a post-Interstate federal aid highway program directed toward urbanized area highway needs. Determining funding levels for such an urban area program and procedures to be followed in developing eligible highway projects and moving them to contract are, perhaps, the biggest challenges facing the drafters of the next federal transportation legislation. One question this legislation will have to resolve is what role local elected officials will have in a future urban area federal aid highway program.

This paper relates local officials' experience with the programming of projects for the FAUS program. A brief description of the programming of FAU projects in northeastern Illinois illustrates how the FAUS program generally functions in a major urban area. An evaluation of the program was obtained through a questionnaire distributed to selected Metropolitan Planning Organizations. MPO staff were asked to describe the FAUS program in their region and provide observations on the performance of their region's FAUS project programming. Some implications for new urban area highway legislation are developed from the MPO responses and the authors' experience with the northeastern Illinois FAUS program.

#### The Federal Aid Urban System Program

The FAUS program is the newest of the four federal aid highway system programs; Interstate, Primary, and Secondary are the previous three federal aid system programs. It was established by the 1970 Highway Act (2), but it became a major highway program only after passage of the 1973 Highway Act (3), which significantly increased the mileage in the FAU system and the level of federal funding. The FAUS program differs from the other three highway system programs in one important characteristic. FAU routes and projects for federal cost sharing are selected with input from local elected officials. Though the states are required to "sign off" on FAU routes and improvements, the FAUS program is designed to have more local government involvement than the other federal aid highway system programs.

With its urban area focus and involvement of local elected officials, the FAUS program was intended to accomplish three objectives (4):

1. Obtain federal highway funds for highway needs not eligible for other federal funding participation;
2. Provide for a more equitable allocation of federal aid highway funds between urban and rural areas;
3. Base priorities for a portion of federal aid highway funding upon local governments' highway needs.

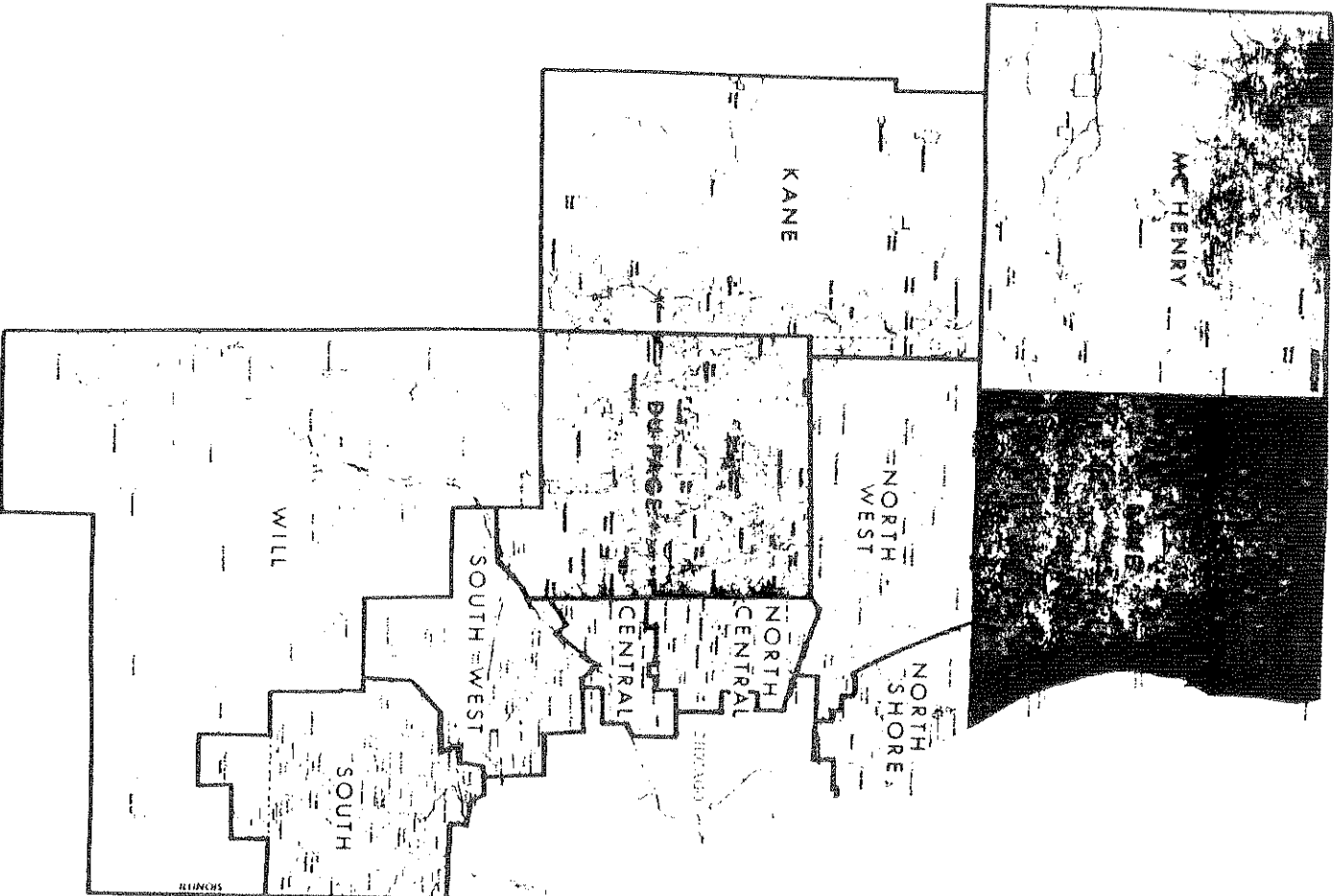
Organization of the FAU System Program in Northeastern Illinois

In the northeastern Illinois region, local FAUS program input is obtained through eleven suburban Councils of Mayors organizations, plus the City of Chicago. Mayors and their representatives are consulted through these eleven working councils, which are based upon geographic and jurisdictional boundaries. A map of the council areas is shown in Figure 1.

The FAUS program in northeastern Illinois is administered through the region's MPO, the Chicago Area Transportation Study, which also prepares the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (5). The major FAUS program responsibility of CATS is to keep track of FAU expenditures by each council and advise the councils of the balances remaining in their FAU accounts. The agency also provides assistance in the paperwork required to get projects into the region's TIP and prepares program reports containing summary statistics on the program's operation, types of FAU projects programmed, and estimates of project and regional impacts.

The Council of Mayors have some staff capability. Each council receives planning funds for a subregional staff person who coordinates activities among council members. The subregional staff person represents his council in meetings with CATS, the Illinois Department of Transportation, federal

Figure 1. Councils of Mayors Regions





transportation agencies, and other regional transportation providers. Some subregional staff also perform small technical studies for their councils.

There is no actual competition between councils for FAU funds. Suburban councils and the City of Chicago share FAU funds based upon population. FAU funds are also allocated among suburban council areas by population. Reallocation of suburban FAU funds does take place, however, whenever a council is unable to program enough projects to use up its allocated FAU funds. The shifting of FAU funds between council areas is supervised by an Executive Committee elected from council members and staffed by CATS.

#### Survey of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

A questionnaire was mailed to selected MPOs. These agencies were asked to describe the selection and programming of FAU projects in their region. Some of the questions were open ended so that respondents could further explain procedures used for the programming of FAU projects. At the conclusion of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to critique their local FAUS programming process and suggest changes in federal requirements. Any available documentation on their FAUS programs was also requested.

As outlined in the federal planning regulations, the role of the MPO in a region's FAU project programming is limited. The MPO has joint responsibility with providers of transportation services to prepare the TIP, which must include all FAU funded projects. A more direct relationship between MPOs and FAUS programs is established by the required endorsement by the MPO of the TIP's annual element, the section of the TIP that identifies projects to be funded in the next fiscal year. Within the existing

legislation, this is acceptable evidence that local elected officials have been involved in selecting FAU projects.

But in fact, most MPOs participate to a much greater extent in the programming of FAU projects than the role outlined by the federal requirements for transportation planning. The MPOs are the principal recipients of federal funds for transportation planning. They are usually well established planning agencies and often the only planning agency with resources to administer the local FAUS program. Organizations of elected officials that select FAU projects are frequently affiliated with an MPO or part of an MPO's organization, such as the MPO's policy making board.

The MPO is a common denominator in the FAUS program from one region to another. Staff of MPOs are usually directly involved in the FAU program, or at least knowledgeable about local procedures, and a logical group to survey for an evaluation of the FAUS program across regions.

Selection of MPOs: Questionnaires were sent to 32 MPOs, all members of the National Association of Regional Councils' (NARC) MPO Transportation Advisory Committee. Eighteen MPOs returned completed questionnaires, and are listed in Table 1. Nine of these eighteen MPOs also returned additional material describing FAU project selection and programming for their regions. This documentation made it possible to later check answers on the questionnaire.

The responding MPOs included a range of different sized regions. They fall naturally into the four population groups shown in the top of Table 2 based upon their 1985 metropolitan area populations (6).

The eighteen MPOs also are distributed geographically between growing urban areas in the west, south, and southwest, and mature areas in the east

Table 1. MPOs That Returned Questionnaires

Metropolitan Planning Organization	Documentation
Middle Rio Grande COG: Albuquerque, New Mexico	X
North Central Texas COG: Arlington (Dallas-Ft. Worth), Texas	
Atlanta Regional Council: Atlanta, Georgia	X
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission: Columbus, Ohio	
Denver Regional COG: Denver, Colorado	X
Southeast Michigan COG: Detroit, Michigan	X
Capital Region COG: Hartford, Connecticut	
Mid-America Regional Council: Kansas City, Missouri	
METROPLAN: Little Rock, Arkansas	X
Southern California Association of Governments: Los Angeles, California	X
Wilmington Metropolitan Area Planning Coordinating Council: Newark (Wilmington), Delaware	
Regional Planning Commission for Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany Parishes: New Orleans, Louisiana	
Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	
Bi-State Metropolitan Planning Commission: Rock Island, Illinois	X
Sacramento Area Council of Governments: Sacramento, California	
East-West Gateway Coordinating Council: St. Louis, Missouri	
San Diego Association of Governments: San Diego, California	X
Pima Association of Governments: Tucson, Arizona	X

Table 2. Metropolitan Area and MPO Groupings

## 1. Grouped by Population

Group	Metro. Area	Population	Group	Metro. Area	Population
I	Rock Island	377,200	III	Denver	1,827,100
	Albuquerque	464,300		San Diego	2,132,700
	Little Rock	498,500		Pittsburgh	2,337,400
	Newark	544,000		St. Louis	2,412,400
	Tucson	585,900		Atlanta	2,471,700
II	Hartford	1,035,000	IV	Arlington	3,511,600
	Sacramento	1,258,500		Detroit	4,581,200
	Columbus	1,287,600		Los Angeles	12,738,200
	New Orleans	1,324,400			
	Kansas City	1,493,900			

## 2. Grouped by Growth and No Growth

No Growth Regions	Percent Change 1980 to 1985 Population	Growth Regions	Percent Change 1980 to 1985 Population
Detroit	-3.6	Tucson	10.2
Pittsburgh	-3.5	Albuquerque	10.5
Rock Island	-2.0	Los Angeles	10.8
St. Louis	1.5	Denver	12.9
Hartford	2.1	Sacramento	14.4
Columbus	3.5	San Diego	14.5
Newark	4.0	Atlanta	15.6
Kansas City	4.2	Arlington	19.8
Little Rock	5.1		
New Orleans	5.4		

and Midwest. Growth in population from 1980 to 1985 was used to sort regions into high growth areas with growth rates greater than 10 percent during this five year period, and regions with population growth roughly between plus and minus five percent over the same period. The bottom of Table 2 shows the resulting growth and no growth MPOs.

Questionnaire: The questionnaire was addressed to the MPO representative on the NARC MPO committee. Usually the contact person filled out the questionnaire. With two exceptions, the staff person who responded had been employed by their agency for more than five years.

The questionnaire's format was generally multiple choice or short answer. Space was provided on the questionnaire to elaborate on local circumstances that do not match any of the possible answers when the multiple choice format is used. This format was selected in the hope that the questionnaire would not be tedious to fill out, and also to focus responses when none of the choices were appropriate. Unfortunately, the resulting questionnaire was lengthy since it was necessary to describe the alternative choices for many of the questions in some detail.

The questionnaire had five subject areas: (1) a profile of the MPO; (2) development of FAU projects; (3) characteristics of FAU funding; (4) development of FAU project priorities; and (5) local FAUS program evaluation. Within each of these sections, questions were asked in the form of an outline. Instructions, such as select one of the following, were provided as needed. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the project report (7).

Testing of the questionnaire was accomplished by distributing it in advance to several members of the NARC MPO committee. Their comments were

incorporated into a revised questionnaire that included some additional instructions and slight rewording of several questions. After the completed questionnaires were received, the answers to multiple choice and yes/no questions were entered into a microcomputer file to simplify data manipulation.

Local Elected Officials' Involvement in Developing FAU Projects

The MPO staff person was asked to describe the relationship between the organizations of elected officials involved in the programming of FAU projects and the MPO. Five possible organizations were identified on the questionnaire. From these five choices, only three were selected: (1) a direct relationship between the MPO and elected officials, whereby the organization of elected officials is also the MPO's policy board; (2) an autonomous organization of elected officials with the MPO as a liaison between elected officials and transportation providers; and (3) the MPO assembles and endorses the FAU component of the TIP from project lists developed by an autonomous organization of elected officials. Table 3 lists these responses by size of region.

In smaller urban areas, the number of elected officials is so small that they can be consulted through one regional organization of local elected officials. Such organizations normally number 10 to 20 members. Based on the responses in Table 3, they tend to be organized as part of the MPO.

For large metropolitan areas, a single working organization of elected officials for FAU project development and endorsement is impractical due to the number of local governments. Endorsement of the FAU projects in the TIP is done by the MPO policy board representing all local officials. Policy

Table 3. Relationship Between MPO and Local Elected Officials

MPO Population Group	Number of Positive Answers		
	Directly Related	Autonomous- MPO Liaison	Autonomous- MPO Minor Role
Group I (smallest)	4	2	0
Group II	4	0	1
Group III	4	1	1
Group IV (largest)	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Total( $\bar{a}$ )	12	5	3

a. Two MPOs responded with two answers.

board membership is determined through elections or some systematic rotation of membership. FAU projects are either developed by smaller groups of elected officials, by state and regional service providers, or jointly by elected officials and providers.

Questionnaire responses indicated that local officials have an active role in FAU project development. In only one case did a returned questionnaire say that the principal role of local officials was to endorse projects originated by state or regional transportation providers. All others answered that local officials were either primarily responsible for FAU project development or shared this responsibility with providers.

Local elected officials in most regions have a dual role in the FAUS programming process. They both originate FAU projects and endorse the list of FAU projects in the TIP, which includes projects they have put forth as well as projects reflecting state and regional transportation providers' priorities. This dual role was brought out by the fact that several returned questionnaires had multiple answers for local officials' role in the process. They contained positive responses for, one, endorsement of project lists by local elected officials, and two, one of the choices indicating some responsibility on the part of local officials for initiating FAU projects.

#### Local FAU Matching Funds

The local match for federal FAU funds is provided by municipalities, counties, and states. The local matching source refers to the unit of government that controls the expenditure of funds, not the unit of government that collects the funds.



The bar chart in Figure 2 shows average local match shares by population groups and by growth and no growth regions. The larger metropolitan areas depend more upon state and county sources for their local FAU matching share than do smaller regions. The municipalities in growing metropolitan areas tend to provide a greater share of the local match than municipalities in no growth regions.

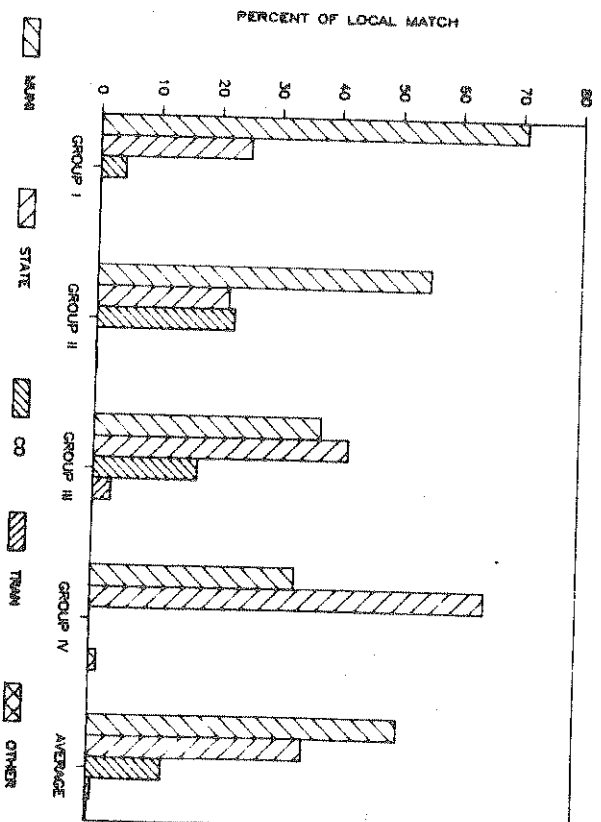
#### FAU Project Priorities

To program FAU projects, there must be some procedure to select projects for the transportation improvement program, and some means within the TIP to advance projects from the multiple year element to the annual element. In most metropolitan areas, FAU funds are allocated to subareas or project categories before priorities are determined. Fifteen MPOs reported that FAU funds are first distributed to local governments within the region. In larger urban areas, the most frequent allocation was to counties. Other regions distributed FAU funds to municipalities over a certain population and urban/urbanized areas. In nearly all instances, population is used to allocate funds. The legislation itself prescribes a population-based allocation of FAU funds between the central city and suburbs. Distributing FAU funds in this manner spreads funds around a region in a politically acceptable manner and reduces the need for project priorities.

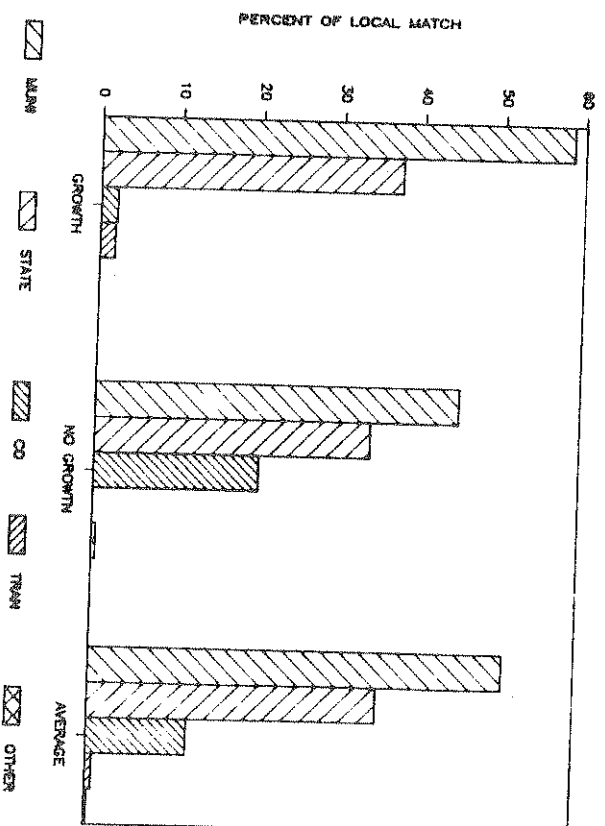
Several other means of allocating FAU funds were described on the questionnaires. Six MPOs said that FAU funds were distributed to different categories of projects. Several regions set aside a percentage of their FAU funds for transit. In one metropolitan area, FAU funds are divided among different functional classes of highways. In all cases, however, the

Figure 2. Sources of Local Matching FAU Funds

A. By Metropolitan Area Population Group



B. By Growth and No Growth Metropolitan Areas



allocation is the result of a negotiated policy agreement, rather than an objective measure of need.

The questionnaire asked how projects are compared to set priorities. The bar chart in Figure 3 lists the number of positive responses for five different levels of project evaluation and prioritizing: (1) purely subjective project priorities; (2) priorities for general FAU project categories; (3) priorities based upon technical studies without explicit ranking of projects; (4) a formal ranking of projects; and (5) other methods for prioritizing FAU projects.

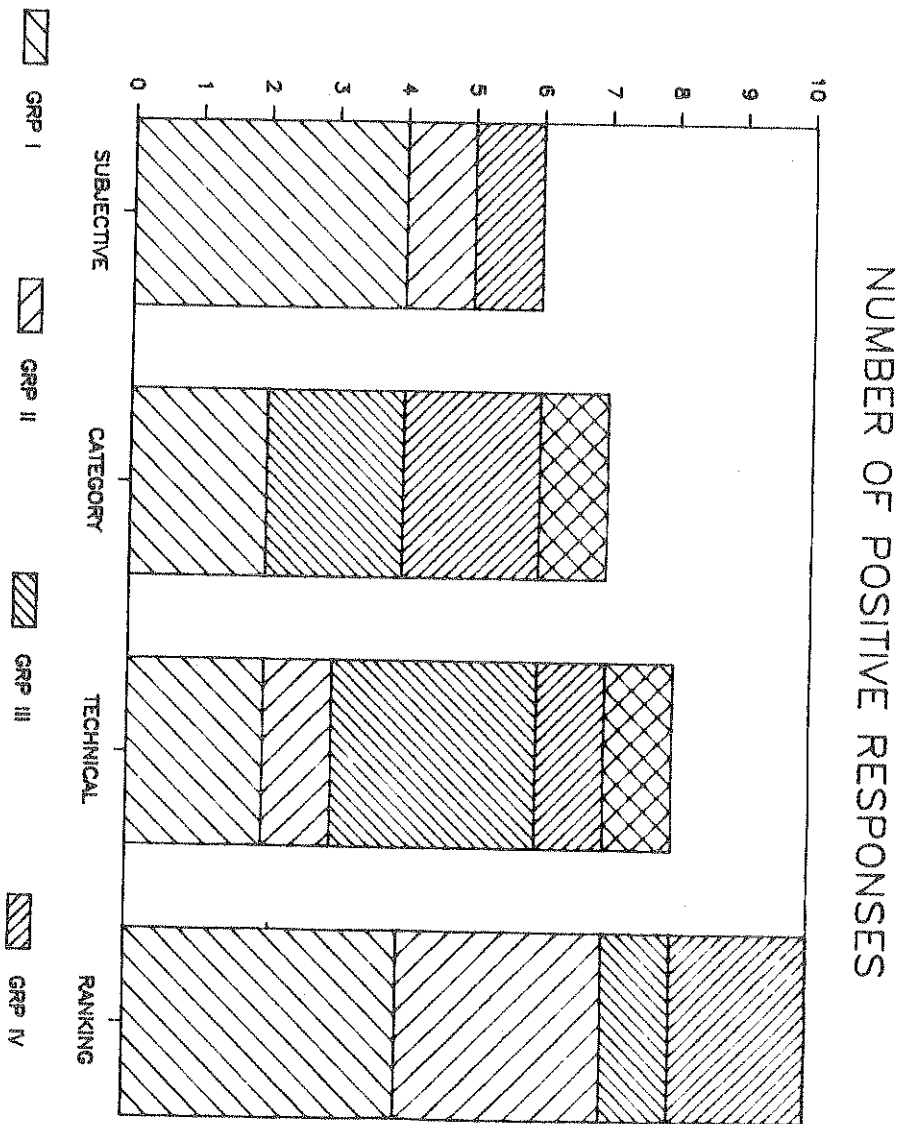
No one form of FAU project evaluation and prioritizing is dominant. Most agencies marked more than one choice, and it seems safe to say that FAU project priorities are commonly based on some combination of technical evaluation and other considerations. Two agencies commented that project readiness for contract letting is a major consideration.

#### Evaluation of Local FAUS Programs

MPOs were asked to indicate problems in programming FAU projects from a list of anticipated possible problems. None of the MPOs indicated that it was difficult to develop suitable projects for FAU funding, and several contended that they had a backlog of available projects. Six respondents answered that there was a shortage of local matching funds in their region. Eight MPO staff persons noted that there were disputes among local officials or between local and state officials over project priorities. Satisfying federal program requirements was cited as a problem by five of the MPOs.

Following is a summary of other identified problems in processing FAU projects through local programs:

Figure 3. Type of FAU Project Evaluation



1. The responsibility for advancing FAU projects through a local program belongs to local governments, but some have trouble following the procedures required to move FAU projects to contract letting.
  2. Design standards required by federal participation are excessive and unnecessarily increase project costs.
  3. The staff in FHWA regional offices is inflexible in interpreting program procedures, for example, insisting on an exact federal to local funding split of 75:25 even when local governments are willing to increase their share to expedite projects. (This comment was made prior to the 1987 act.)
  4. It is difficult to reach a fair and politically acceptable allocation of FAU funds in the region.
  5. There is uncertainty in annual federal funding levels due to, one, the annual authorization of federal program obligations required by the federal budgeting process, and two, possible sanctions on federal funds due to a region's failure to meet air quality standards or other federal requirements.
- The final part of the questionnaire contained three open ended questions that asked respondents their opinion of the strengths and weaknesses of their region's FAUS program, and also to suggest changes in federal FAUS program requirements.

Strengths of Local FAUS Programs: One characteristic of local FAUS programs was repeatedly noted as a major program strength. Although expressed in several ways, thirteen of the respondents said that coordination between local

governments, the MPO, public transportation providers, and the state was a major program strength. There is a very positive sense that the FAU programming process produces a coordinated regional program through the joint efforts of participants. One questionnaire contained the comment that the FAUS program, "is the only example of regional capital improvement programming in our area."

The technical process itself, the evaluation of projects and development of priorities, was identified as a strength on four of the questionnaires. Another MPO felt that the allocation formula used in its region to distribute funds between major highway and local street improvements was an advantage. Two of the questionnaires concurred with the national objectives for the program in identifying local program strengths. In these two instances local governments' ability to obtain federal funds and the use of FAU funds to rebuild badly deteriorated urban facilities that could not otherwise be funded were identified as program strengths.

Weaknesses in Local FAUS Programs: The absence of above program strengths was often felt to be a local program weakness. For example, a weak technical process for evaluating and prioritizing projects was reported as a weakness by two MPOs. Not surprisingly, six MPOs said that there was too little federal money. Several MPOs argued that the mileage in their region's FAU highway system is not balanced with funding levels. There are so many FAU route miles with deficiencies that current FAU spending produces negligible impacts when measured on a regional system-wide basis. Also, one MPO stated that limited FAU funds restricted their use for non-highway improvements, such as small transit projects and ridesharing programs.

Several regions said that they had problems meeting program requirements that delayed contract lettings. In some regions, delays in meeting program requirements have caused unobligated balances to accumulate in FAU accounts. These unspent funds make it difficult to argue that the FAUS program is needed to meet immediate highway needs, or that it is efficient in meeting program objectives. Also, the past inflation in highway construction costs greatly reduced the purchasing power of these unspent FAU dollars.

Three MPOs said a poor working relationship between local governments and the state transportation/highway department prevented their region from meeting program requirements. Project design revisions were also cited by one MPO as a reason for delays in processing FAU projects.

Local Recommendations: The overwhelming suggestion for improving the program was for increased flexibility in the FAUS program requirements and their administration by FHWA regional offices. Three MPOs felt that block grants for local transportation improvements would improve the situation.

Other suggestions made by MPOs to increase program flexibility include:

1. Reduce the federal project approval role.
2. Eliminate the requirement that FAU funds be spent only on designated FAU routes.
3. Reduce program paperwork.
4. Eliminate the required formula allocation between central city and suburbs.
5. Permit more local discretion on the part of regional FHWA offices in project design and processing.

6. Allow an implementing agency to set local match above minimum level, when desired.

Implications for Future Legislation

In the following sections, some comments on the questionnaire answers and their implications for future urban highway programs are drawn from the authors' experience with the northeastern Illinois FAUS program.

Program Flexibility: Most local officials favor increased program flexibility, but there is little agreement on how to bring this about. Ultimate flexibility would be provided by local transportation block grants, but local government officials in northeastern Illinois have reservations about the block grant concept. Many feel it was proposed as a means to reduce funds to urban areas; others are concerned about state administration of a block grant program. Another unknown is whether transit projects would receive more or less funding through a block grant program.

Several steps toward increased FAUS program flexibility were included in the 1987 legislation. A new program provision now allows local governments to set the local match above the 25 percent figure in the legislation. The five-state demonstration block grant program for FAU and secondary highways will answer many of the questions raised about this approach.

Program Administrative Requirements: Many of the responses on the questionnaire regarding administrative requirements had a familiar ring to them. However, FAUS program requirements have become less burdensome in northeastern Illinois as the local FAUS program has matured. Most importantly,



the federal project approval time has been substantially reduced over the past several years in this region.

Two developments have contributed to this reduction in approval time. First, most communities now hire a consultant to manage the implementation of the project including the approval process. In the early local history of the program, FAU projects would get lost in the changing priorities of a community. Municipal staff would find themselves working on other things and later discover that no progress had been made toward approval of their FAU projects. A second factor was the initiation of meetings between communities and the FHWA by the local state Department of Transportation office. This has resulted in fewer delays, more flexibility in project design, and a greater willingness on the part of communities to use FAU funds.

Ability of Local Governments to Participate: One opinion is that local governments are far less equipped to meet federal program requirements than are the states. In critiquing local governments' participation in the FAUS program, it should be remembered that the FAUS program is modeled after the earlier highway system programs that emphasize state participation.

In contrast to local government staff, state highway/transportation departments have been partners in major federal aid highway system programs for several decades and have a well established bureaucracy in place to meet program requirements. State staff have good working relationships with FHWA regional personnel, and have accumulated specialized knowledge of the federal aid highway programs as they have evolved.

By retaining a program structured as past federal aid highway system programs, the expectation is that local governments will be able to perform

many of the functions that states carry out in the other federal aid highway programs. The survey shows that many local governments cannot, nor are inclined to, perform as states do in the other federal aid highway programs.

Specific FAUS Program Problems: Two specific FAUS program problems cited on the questionnaire have generally not been an issue in northeastern Illinois, designation of FAU routes and central city-suburb allocation of FAU funds. Designation of FAU routes has become a non-issue in northeastern Illinois for an unfortunate reason. Inappropriate additions to the region's FAU network over the past several years has produced a regional FAU system that includes too much local street mileage without regional significance. When FAU projects are approved on these local streets, the improvements required by federal standards are excessive given their traffic. This is a very small portion of the total program in the region and is concentrated in those communities least able to finance capital improvements.

The current allocation between the suburban area and the city of Chicago is 57:43. The city historically has carried a ten to twenty million dollar unobligated balance, while the suburban area has maintained a far smaller one to three million dollar balance over the last five years. Yet, there is little sentiment to eliminate the city-suburb allocation of funds based upon population. One reason is that it keeps volatile city-suburb issues from intruding on the FAU program. Also, neither side is sure from year to year of their political ability to influence the allocation in their favor.

Sharing Of Program Responsibilities: If local governments participate in a future federal highway program, they must also share in the maintenance of the highway program. At the very least, local governments should document

how local elected officials are involved in the selection of projects and provide some minimal measures of the effectiveness of improvements built under the program.

The questionnaire requested each MPO to return documentation on their local TIP or FAUS program with the completed questionnaire. Half the responding MPOs returned some material. This indicates that many regions have little or no documentation on the operation of their FAUS program.

This process documentation is useful for a variety of reasons. It can be used to brief newly elected local officials on how the program operates, or promote the FAUS program among local governments to increase their participation. This documentation is a first step toward introducing changes in local program administration. It also provides evidence of local officials' participation if the local program's legality is challenged.

It appears that few regions have any measures of the impacts of FAU projects other than their cost and the amount of federal funds brought into the region. This lack of documentation on program impacts makes it all but impossible to demonstrate the benefits from FAU projects, or to compare the FAUS program with the other Federal aid system programs. Project documentation does not have to be a detailed traffic analysis of the benefits of each improvement, but need only include data prepared during design and submission of the project for federal aid approval.

Project Priorities: The survey indicated that no single form of evaluation and priority setting dominates local FAUS programs. The northeastern Illinois experience is that technical evaluation of FAU projects has become more prevalent as more suitable projects are developed. This region has gone

From one council performing a technical project evaluation to virtually all councils using some formal project analysis in the last three years.

This is due to having more FAU projects ready for approval than funds available. More formal project evaluation has forced some harsh decisions to delay ready projects until more worthy projects are funded. In most project evaluation schemes less costly small projects tend to rank higher, which spreads FAU dollars among more projects and communities. Marginal projects are less likely to be proposed and the five year program in the TIP is more realistic, which makes it easier to move projects to the annual element of the TIP.

#### Continuing Local Governments' Participation

The arguments for local officials' participation in a forthcoming federal aid urban highway program are stronger today than they were when the FAUS legislation was first enacted. Although the degree and effectiveness of local officials' involvement in the FAUS program varies from region to region, the FAUS program has achieved a reasonable level of success in meeting its objective of local officials' participation in the regional programming of federal aid highway improvements. Original concerns that the FAUS program would not function due to the parochial interests of local officials have proved by and large to be groundless.

Increasing traffic congestion in urbanized areas is a national issue threatening the economic vitality of both growing and mature urban areas. Local officials' understanding of local highway needs, combined with their ability to influence land development, seem necessary inputs into any federally supported urban highway program directed toward urban congestion.

Acknowledgements

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