

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND WORKS ROAD SECTOR POLICY

The Government of Jamaica is preparing a National Transport Policy (NTP) and now seeks comments from the Public on the proposed Road Sector Policy contained within the NTP.

The Ministry of Transport and Works, with the support of the European Union is specifically preparing the Roads/Infrastructure Policies with a view to having a Policy finalized by the end of 2005.

The main objective of the current Road Policy Preparation is to identify in the medium term which are the priorities to be financed through the very scarce financial resources available, comments on this and the wider Policy issues are now being sought.

There are Eight (8) main Strategic Objectives for which the following Policy Statements are proposed as follows:

Strategic Objective No. 1

To update and maintain medium and long-term plans for the road network

1 Policy

1.1 The Government will develop medium and long-term Master Plans. These will be used as the basis for the ongoing development of the strategic highway network. These strategic road plans will be evaluated to determine priorities for maintenance and construction together with the bridge rehabilitation and maintenance programmes.

1.2 A programme of measures for improving roadway capacity along with bypasses and interchanges will be developed. These will protect towns from the effects of through-traffic, whilst providing for more efficient movement of passengers and goods.

1.3 This programme will be demand-related, and the Government will strengthen its capability in traffic monitoring and demand forecasting to facilitate the planning process and the efficient use of resources.

1.4 Road services provided will adhere to targets and standards relating to travel times and road capacity.

1.5 As part of ongoing road condition surveys across the network, assessments will be made of the function and use of all road sections, especially in relation to their contribution to the national objectives for providing accessibility.

1.6 An ongoing rationalization programme will be implemented, to allow for the most effective management and maintenance of all public roadways.

Strategic Objective No. 2

To maintain the road network at a level which preserves the value of the investment and which provides a safe and adequate system for the users

2 Policy

2.1 Maintenance projects and programmes will be carefully appraised to ensure value for money.

2.2 Assistance will be sought to enable the Government to reduce the maintenance backlog and adequately maintain the road network to acceptable standards.

2.3 The Government will ensure that the Road Authorities have the capability to perform their tasks by:

2.3.1 Ensuring that adequate skills in the field of road maintenance, engineering, transport planning exist;

2.3.2 Contracting and cost control are in place;

2.3.3 Ensuring that maintenance projects and programmes give value for money;

2.3.4 Awarding and monitoring contracts with the highest levels of transparency, equity and accountability.

2.4 The Government will ensure an appropriate balance of spending on roads between capital (new roads and major rehabilitation) and maintenance of the existing road network (routine and periodic). As a general principle, quality maintenance of the existing system will be given priority before considering new capital investments.

Strategic Objective No. 3

To secure a sustainable means of funding road maintenance expenditures

Policy

3.1 The Government is committed to the growth of all road maintenance funds through motor vehicle licensing fees and other tariffs, to better meet the expenditure requirements for road maintenance. In addition, funding mechanisms will be established in accordance with the principle that road users should contribute to maintenance in line with the extent that they use the network.

3.2 Additionally, tolls will also be considered as a means of funding maintenance through either public or joint venture-type partnerships. Construction of Toll roads will be permitted, provided that there is an acceptable toll-free road alternative.

Strategic Objective No. 4

To facilitate the efficient movement of public transport on the roadways

Policy

4.1 The Government will ensure that the road network, especially in urban areas, gives priority to public transport. This may include the provision of dedicated lanes for multi-passenger vehicles (public or private).

4.2 The Government will continue to ensure that the road network is maintained at appropriate standards to allow for the efficient movement of public transport.

Strategic Objective No. 5

To encourage greater private sector participation in infrastructure, services and maintenance

Policy

5.1 The Government will provide the appropriate legal framework so that private investors have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, as well as rights and entitlements.

5.2 Overall, regulations regarding tariffs, investment criteria and bidding procedures will be published

5.3 Areas in which the private sector participation will be encouraged, among other things, are:

5.3.1 Construction and operation of tolled roads and bridges;

5.3.2 Maintenance of roads and bridges;

5.3.3 Project Management.

Strategic Objective No. 6

To minimise any negative environmental impacts arising from the provision of transport services and infrastructure

Policy

6.1 All new roads and major improvements tolled or otherwise, will be subjected to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and a Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) by the relevant agency, in order that appropriate measures can be identified to mitigate any adverse effects of road construction and operation.

6.2 Funding needed for mitigation measures will form part of the development costs.

6.3 Environmental standards for new roads and road improvements will be published. These will include social and re-settlement issues.

6.4 Consultation with the relevant stakeholders will be undertaken to evaluate any social and resettlement or displacement impacts.

6.5 In an attempt to minimize any potential environmental or safety hazards, the Government will strive to ensure that construction and/or maintenance projects are fully completed in a timely and environmentally friendly manner.

Strategic Objective No. 7

To improve the institutional arrangements for the management of the main and parochial road networks as well as agricultural, housing and community roads

Policy

7.1 Links between the various road authorities will be strengthened to achieve an efficient road network. The appropriate structures will be established to coordinate planning efforts.

7.2 The Government will seek to develop a National Road Master Plan by the end of F/Y 2005/2006.

Strategic Objective No. 8

To improve transport infrastructure to meet the needs of key industries

Policy

8.1 The Government will ensure an appropriate allocation from scarce resources available for road maintenance and construction to facilitate industrial development

To submit comments on the above proposed Road Sector Policy please click on the link below.

(It is not possible to reply to every individual comment however all comments submitted will be reviewed and where relevant will be considered in finalizing the Policy).