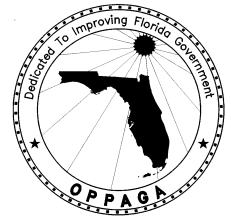




# Office of Program Policy Analysis And Government Accountability



John W. Turcotte  
Director

November 12, 1996

## FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COOPERATIVE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### *Report Abstract*

The 1995 Legislature adopted our recommendation to eliminate the Local Government Cooperative Assistance Program. As a result, the state has avoided spending approximately \$3.3 million annually on local roads enabling DOT to apply these funds directly to priority projects on the State Highway System..

### *Purpose of Review*

Section 11.47(7)(f), F.S., requires agencies to inform us of actions they have taken in response to our recommendations within 18 months of the release of our reports. This follow-up report presents our assessment of the status of recommendations we made to the Department of Transportation in Report No. 94-29, dated February 21, 1995.

### *Background*

The Local Government Cooperative Assistance Program was enacted in 1985 (Ch. 85-180, Laws of Florida) to provide a system wherein DOT and local governments could share in the cost of certain roadway improvements that benefit the

State Highway System.<sup>1</sup> In the Program, DOT allocates funds to local governments through a competitive grant process. These funds may provide up to 50% of the costs of eligible roadway projects, with the recipient local government contributing the remaining project costs. Eligible projects include roadway planning and design, purchase of right-of-way, and roadway construction. These projects may either directly improve the State Highway System or improve local roads if the project can be shown to enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion on the State Highway System (e.g., by diverting traffic from the System onto a local road). For fiscal years 1986-87 through 1994-95, the Legislature appropriated \$30 million for the Program from the State Transportation Trust Fund. During the nine-year period, appropriations averaged \$3.3 million per year. (See Exhibit 1.)

<sup>1</sup> Public roads in Florida are classified as either part of the State Highway System or as local roads. The State Highway System consists of 12,000 centerline miles of roads that are developed and maintained by the Department of Transportation. These roads carry nearly two-thirds of the total vehicle miles traveled in Florida, but comprise only about 11% of the total public roads in the state. Local roads consist of about 101,000 centerline miles of roads that are developed and maintained by cities, counties, and expressway/transportation authorities.

## Exhibit 1

### Appropriations Fiscal Years 1986-87 Through 1994-95

Fiscal Year	Appropriations
1986-87	\$ 5,000,000
1987-88	5,000,000
1988-89	10,000,000
1989-90	0
1990-91	0
1991-92	0
1992-93	5,000,000
1993-94	5,000,000
1994-95	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$30,000,000</b>

**Average Annual Appropriation  
\$3.3 Million**

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability summary data of the Department of Transportation.

### Prior Findings

Local governments generally used this Program to enhance funding to improve city and county roads rather than improve roads on the State Highway System. We found almost 77% (\$23 million of \$30 million) of Program funds were awarded for improvements to local roads maintained by cities and counties. Local government officials said they would have carried out these projects even if they had not received Program funds. Also, local government officials did not contribute more

funding to improve the State Highway System because they believe that the State should be responsible for these roads. Finally, there was no evidence that showed Program improvements to local roads enhanced traffic flow and reduced congestion on the State Highway System.

Our report considered several Program options and identified advantages and disadvantages associated with each. We recommended that the Legislature should repeal s. 335.20, F.S., to eliminate the Local Government Cooperative Assistance Program to avoid diverting State Transportation Trust Fund monies from use on the State Highway System.

### Current Status

As we recommended, the 1995 Legislature repealed s. 335.20, F.S., eliminating the Local Government Cooperative Assistance Program by enacting Chapter 95-257, Laws of Florida. As a result, the state has avoided spending approximately \$3.3 million annually on local roads enabling DOT to apply these funds directly to priority projects on the State Highway System. No action was required of the Department of Transportation.

This project was conducted in accordance with applicable evaluation standards. Copies of this report may be obtained by telephone (904/488-1023 or 800/531-2477), by FAX (904/487-3804), in person (Claude Pepper Building, Room 312, 111 W. Madison St.), or by mail (OPPAGA Report Production, P.O. Box 1735, Tallahassee, FL 32302). Web site: <http://www.state.fl.us/oppaga/>

Project Supervised by: Douglas Isabelle (487-9253)

Project Conducted by: Mark Frederick (487-9251)