

# Better Roads. Better Future.



## What are the Benefits of Better Roads?



### *Improved Safety:*

- **Problems** – Travel on Arkansas’ non-Interstate highways is approximately twice as dangerous as driving on Arkansas’ Interstate roadways. In 2004, the fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles of travel on non-Interstate highways in Arkansas was 2.52 compared to a fatality rate of 1.35 on Interstate highways in Arkansas. Nationwide, 76 percent of all fatal crashes occur on two lane roads while only 14 percent of fatal crashes occur on roads with four or more lanes.
- **Contributing Factors** – Rural roads are more likely than urban roads to have two narrow lanes, limited shoulders, sharp curves, pavement drop-offs, steep slopes and limited clear zones along roadsides.
- **Solutions** – Suggested safety improvements include rumble strips, improving signage and pavement/lane marking, installing lighting, removing or shielding roadside obstacles and improving or adding guardrails, adding turn lanes at intersections, resurfacing pavements and adding median barriers, improving roadway alignment, widening lanes, adding or paving shoulders, adding passing lanes or additional lanes, and improving or installing safety devices at railroad crossings. These safety improvements can significantly reduce the number of accidents, injuries and save lives.

### *Economic Growth and Development:*

- **Problems** – Too many bright, young Arkansas graduates are forced to leave the state to find jobs. This “brain drain” has a ripple effect over times as the state loses so many of its human resources along with the tax revenue and spending power they take with them.
- **Contributing Factors** – Employment opportunities in Arkansas are influenced by a myriad of factors, but transportation plays a key role.
- **Solutions** – Improvements to the highway system can have a positive impact on luring prospective companies and keeping existing companies in Arkansas – increasing job opportunities for Arkansans. Corporate executive ranked highway accessibility as the number one factor for companies to consider when selecting new locations – ahead of more than 25 other factors



including, construction costs, proximity to major markets, and the availability of skilled labor – in Area Development’s 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Corporate Survey (2005). In addition to helping the growth of local and regional economies, roadway improvements are essential to the tourism industry in the Natural State. More than 21 million people visited Arkansas in 2005, spending more than \$4.6 billion in travel-related expenditures.

➤ *Arkansas Good Roads Transportation Council*

