



Foreword

For nine years I served as secretary of transportation in two states, New Jersey and Delaware. People often ask me why I chose to lead a public advocacy organization.

I came to STPP convinced that a well-organized and informed corps of citizen advocates is an essential, and maybe **the** essential element in achieving a different transportation system—a system that provides travel options for all residents within our communities and among regions, where sidewalks and streets are safe for our kids to walk to school and our parents to walk to the library, and where investments revitalize our existing communities and support a healthy economy. My time as President of STPP has strengthened my conviction.

The passage of the *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act* (ISTEA) in 1991 (reaffirmed in TEA-21) set the stage for a new era in transportation reform. The changes to the law aimed to advance needed reforms. These included: greatly strengthened planning requirements; flexibility in the use of funds; meaningful public participation; greater attention to safety and system preservation; equal federal match for highway and transit investments; and control by larger metropolitan areas over a modest share of federal funds.

Over the past 15 years, we've seen many advances, and it's worth celebrating the significant increases in new transit lines, sidewalks, and bike paths/lanes. Yet, the proportion of funding devoted to designing safe, healthy, livable communities, creating greater transportation choices, and enhancing access for people and freight remains well below what the public is demanding. Regrettably, the flexibility and the tools made possible under ISTEA have been unevenly embraced. It should be no surprise that the public is increasingly dissatisfied with the results produced from old policies and priorities and is looking for new answers to congestion, traffic speeding through their neighborhoods, the lack of travel choices, bumpy roads, and old buses.

The recent approval of more than \$240 billion (FYs 2005–2009) for federal transportation programs provides the opportunity to shape transportation investments over the next few years. The challenge is to ensure these resources produce the outcomes that the public wants to see. The lack of a clear direction for the future threatens to deflect ad-

