December 2002

Fellow Land Use Commission Members and Tri-State Residents:

Thank you for your support of "Where Do We Grow From Here?" – the visioning phase of the OKI Land Use Commission’s project to develop a Strategic Regional Policy Plan. Enclosed is a report on this phase of the Commission’s ongoing project.

Today, more than ever, we live our lives at a regional scale – traveling farther from home to work, shop, and seek entertainment – crisscrossing the region in our daily activities. As the tri-state continues to grow, this phenomenon will have increasing impacts on the quality of life in the region. We must find it in ourselves to continue to provide the leadership, intellect, and resolve to make Greater Cincinnati an exceptional place to live and work in the years to come.

Since this visioning effort began in April, we have spent a lot of time learning and sharing. In so doing, we found that some aspects of the region’s physical growth and change may hurt our quality of life and economic vitality. Those inefficient land use trends must not shape our destiny. Instead, we must deliberately influence the future we want for our region, a future clearly expressed in our Statement of Stewardship – our vision.

We have a great region with unique assets, but there are critical challenges and fundamental policy concerns that constrain our full potential. These are expressed in the report as Strategic Regional Issues.

In the upcoming phases of our project, together we will create a Strategic Regional Policy Plan. This plan will establish a broad set of policies – based on our vision and framed by our strategic issues – that will help OKI make decisions and provide guidance and tools that local communities can use at their discretion.

This process also highlighted very real challenges in achieving a vision for a regional community of nearly two million residents living in 190 jurisdictions. The challenges, including state-level planning and zoning laws, economic competition, public apathy, incentives to coordinate and/or cooperate – make implementation on a regional scale a daunting endeavor.

Thanks for your attention. We look forward to your continued support.

Sincerely,
OKI Land Use Commission
Steering Committee
Acknowledgements

Land Use Commission
Steering Committee
Mel Martin*
Chair, Land Use Commission
Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission

Ken Reed*
Vice Chair, Land Use Commission
City of Trenton Council

William Bowdy
Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission

Mike Juengling*
Butler County Planning Commission

Peggy Reis*
Anderson Township Trustee

Kevin Costello
Boone County Planning Commission

Tom Yeager
Clermont County Water and Sewer District

Daniel Batta*
Dearborn County Commissioner

Neal Barille*
City of Hamilton Planning Commission

Carol Erickson**
Dearborn County Chamber of Commerce

Elizabeth Brown
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Pamela Mullins*
Supplier Diversity, Cincinnati Public School District

OKI Officers
Richard L. Murgatroyd
President

Ken Reed
First Vice President

Gary W. Moore
Second Vice President

James Q. Duane
Executive Director

Land Use Commission Committees

Environment & Infrastructure
John Ageneau
Neal Barille*
Daniel Batta*
John Bowling
Paul Brasch
Bill Bradford*
Elizabeth Brown
Ed Burdell*
Barry Burke
John Carr*
Preston Combs**
Larry Crisenbery*
Stephen Dana
Tom Dixon*
John Domaschko*
Jeff Eger
Beth Fennell*
Michael Fischer*
Cathy Flagg*
Danny Fore*
Phil Geis
Kenneth Glenn*
Haynes Goddard
Bill Goetz
Ralph Grieme, Jr.*
Scott Guenther*
Corryne Gutjahr
Terry Harris
Dave Hart*
Carl Hartman*
Barbara Hauck*
Stan Hedeen
Chuck Heilman*
Norma Holt Davis*
Hans Jindal
Thomas Jordan
Pat Karney
Janet Korach
Allyn Kuennen
Bill Lewis*
Christine Matacic*
John Mays
Gary Moore*
Mary Moore
Chris Moran
Tom Neyer*
Thomas Pennekamp*
Walt Powers*
Robert Proud*
Elmo Rose*
Chris Ruthemeyer*
Greg Sample*
Steve Sandfort
Mark A.
Scharrninghausen*
Tom Spellmire
Mary C. Walker
Bob Yeager
Tom Yeager

Economic Development & Funding
Tim Bachman**
Pete Beck*
Joseph Beischel*
Ruth Bennett
Elizabeth Blume*
Kenneth Bogard*
Carl Bray
William Brayshaw*
Edward Buechel*
Jim Bushong*
Courtney Combs*
Kevin Costello
Martha Dorsey*
John Dowlin*
Carol Erickson**
Michael Fox*
Ivan Frye
Karen Garrett
Gerri Harbison*
John Harris
Keith Henry*
Cheryl Hilvert
Mark Kreimborg*
Andy Kuchta
Patrick D. Long*
Henry Mann*
Diana Martin*
John Maxwell
Peg Moerl
Michael P. Morris*
Michael Murray*
DeAna Nichols*
Curtis Paddock*
Wally Pagan
Ronald Pandorf*
Thomas Pennekamp*
Todd Porter*
Robert Price*
Ken Reed*
Peggy Reis*
Mary Jo Ruccio
Karen Swales Shell*
Chris Smith
Dennis Stein*
Harry Stone
Stephanie
Summerow Dumas*
Patricia Timm
Paul Tremain*
Neil Tunison*
William Verst*
Gene Weaver*
Melissa Williams**

Land Use Policy & Planning
Robert Allen*
James Anderson*
Jane Anderson
Robert Ashbrook
Tim Bachman**
William Bowdy
Glen Brand
Terry Bruck
MaryAnn Burwinkel*
Kay Clifton
Kevin Costello
Robert Craig*
John Cranley*
Stephen Dana
Frank Davis
Steve DeHart
Andrew Diehm*
Mark Donaghy**
Peter Gomsak, Jr.*
John Gradolf*
Mike Hammons
Robert Haney
Catherine Hartman
Thomas Hollocher*
Jeff Holtegel
Richard Holzberger*
Michael Juengling*
Scott Kadish*
Barbara Kalb*
Scott Kimmich
Peter Klear
Ed Knox*
Martin Kohler*
Norman
Langenbrunner
Vivian Llambi
Mel Martin

* Member of OKI Board of Trustees  ** Executive Committee Alternate
Acknowledgements continued

Vision Process Committees

Outreach
Elizabeth Brown
Co-Chair
Pamela Mullins*
Co-Chair
Valerie Adams
Carole Beere
Elizabeth Blume*
Jerome Bowles
Andrea Bratten
Gary Conley
Ken Craig
Robert Craig**
David Daugherty
Jeff Diver
Tom Dix*
Dan Dressman
Jeff Earlywine
David Eiland
Matthew Franks
Dave Geohegan
Catherine Hartman
Joe Hinson
Norma Holt-Davis*
Robert Horine
Larisa Hughes
Peggy Kelly
Edward Knox
Christine Matacic*
Randy Maxwell
Chris Moran
Christine Mueller
Bill Over
Elmo Rose*
Robert Schrage
V. Anthony
Simms Howell*
Jay Springer
Dan Stauf
John Vissman
Shirley Walker

Publicity
Neal Barille*
Co-Chair
Carol Erickson**
Co-Chair
Bill Beinkemper
Anita Benning
Trenepohl
Deborah
Fecina Bridge
Jennifer Clayton
Gina Douhath
John Harris
Sally Hilvers
Kathy Lehr
Fred McCarter
Patrick Merten
Chris Smith

Workshop Facilitators
Patty Bachman
Manning Baxter
Courtnee Carrigan
David Fehr
Dave Geohegan
Brian Goldstein
Carlos Greene
Larisa Hughes
Bruce Koehler
Catalina
Landivar-Simon
Mary Luebbers
Bill Simon
Paul Smiley
Caroline Starkus

Workshop Discussion Leaders
Neal Barille*
Daniel Batta*
Barry Burke
Robert Craig**
Carol Erickson**
Mike Juengling*
Christine Matacic*
Chris Moran
Ken Reed*
Peggy Reis*
Harry Stone
Tom Yeager
Melissa Williams**

Public Forum Facilitators
Patty Bachman
Roger Barry
Daniel Batta*
Manning Baxter
Bryan Behrmann
Andrea Bratten
Elizabeth Brown
Courtnee Carrigan
Robert Craig*
James Cunningham
Stephen Dana
Dave Geohegan
Catherine Hartmann
Tim Herschner
Larisa Hughes
Erika Jay
Hensley Jemmott
Bob Johnstone
Melissa Jort
Yana Keck
Bruce Koehler
Catalina
Landivar-Simon
David Main
Dave McElroy
Pamela Mullins*
Bill Over
Jeff Palmer
Jascia Redwing
David Shuey
Paul Smiley
Dan Stauf
Bob Ware
Jennifer Warner

Public Forum Sites
Warren County Administration Bldg.
Lebanon, Ohio
Ryle High School
Union, Kentucky
Perfect North Slopes
Lawrenceburg, Indiana
TECHSOLVE
Cincinnati, Ohio
Newport High School
Newport, Kentucky
Univ. of Cincinnati
Clermont College
Batavia, Ohio
Summit View
Middle School
Independence, Kentucky
D. Russel Lee
Career Center
Hamilton, Ohio

Public Forum Site Workers
Nicole Anderson
Regina Brock
Stephen Dana
Bob Koehler
Marilyn Osborne
Andy Reser
Summer Robinson
Sara Woller

Public Forum Site Hosts
Neal Barille*
Dan Batta*
Andrea Bratten
Elizabeth Brown
Kevin Costello
Robert Craig**
Carol Erickson**
Mike Juengling*
Mel Martin*
Richard Murgatroyd*
Steven Pendrey*
Ken Reed*
Tom Yeager

OKI Staff
William Miller
Regional Planning Manager
Janet Keller
Senior Planner
Jane Wittke
Senior Planner
Fran Malone
Administrative Assistant
Indraneel Kumar
Courtney Carrigan
Sharmili Sampath
Interns

Consultants
ACP–Visioning & Planning, Ltd.
Jamie Greene
Gianni Longo
Jennifer Lindbom
Environmental Simulation Center
Michael Kwitler
Paul Patnode
Community Outreach Consultant
Barbara J. Milon

* Member of OKI Board of Trustees  ** Executive Committee Alternate
# Table of Contents

1. Introduction
   - Overview ........................................ 1
   - Why do we need a Regional Vision? .......... 2
   - Background on the Land Use Commission .... 3
   - Visioning Process Summary ..................... 6

2. Vision for Stewardship
   - Overview ........................................ 8
   - Creating the Vision ............................... 8
   - Vision for Stewardship ......................... 10
   - Supporting Stewardship Principles .......... 10

3. Strategic Regional Issues
   - Overview ......................................... 13
   - Identifying Strategic Issues .................. 14
   - Strategic Regional Issues ..................... 15

4. Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan
   - Background ..................................... 18
   - Creating the Strategic Regional Policy Plan .... 20
   - Key Features of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan .... 20
   - Organization of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan .... 22
   - How the Strategic Regional Policy Plan will be used .... 22
   - Conclusion ..................................... 23

Supporting documents are available upon request from the OKI Regional Council of Governments.
1. Introduction

Overview

This document summarizes the Regional Visioning Process undertaken by the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) and its Land Use Commission (LUC). The visioning process, known as “Where Do We Grow From Here?”, was designed to produce a regional vision and to identify strategic issues affecting the successful realization of that vision.

Prior to starting the visioning process, the Land Use Commission and its committees had collected and analyzed baseline data. This information was used to identify a broad set of regional issues. A more narrow set of strategic issues will ultimately be addressed in the strategic regional policy plan to be developed in the next phase of the LUC’s work.

This report is divided into four chapters.
1. Introduction
2. Vision for Stewardship
3. Strategic Regional Issues
4. Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The Introduction explains the need for a regional vision and provides a summary of the Regional Visioning Process as well as the strategic issues identification process. The Vision for Stewardship chapter discusses how the regional vision was developed and will be used in upcoming activities of the LUC. It also includes the specific statements and principles that comprise the vision.
Introduction

Strategic Regional Issues includes the key issues that impact the ability of the region to achieve the vision. This chapter also describes how the issues were identified and how this information will be used. The issues fall into six categories (land use, transportation, public facilities and services, economic development, natural resources and open spaces, and housing).

Finally, Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan summarizes the purpose, structure, and implementation of the plan, and provides a frame of reference for the Land Use Commission’s most recent efforts.

Why do we need a Regional Vision?

Today, more than ever, people live at the scale of the region. They travel farther from home to work, to shop, and to recreate, crisscrossing the region as they go about their daily lives. As the OKI region continues to grow, this phenomenon will have increasing impacts on the quality of life in the region – impacts that can only be effectively examined and addressed with a regional perspective. In fact, the work of Myron Orfield and Michael Gallis, two of the top experts on regional growth and development, stressed the importance of looking at the OKI region in its entirety to achieve more efficient growth and to promote a globally competitive economy.

As part of the Regional Visioning Process, a wide range of data on the OKI region was reviewed, including existing reports on the region, census figures and socioeconomic data, and existing land use maps and zoning maps for all jurisdictions in the region. These resources served to develop a sense of where the region is headed in the years to come. This analysis stemming from the research effort was presented in the form of a Probable Scenario, which illustrated what the region can expect in the future and the types of issues that will need to be addressed.

According to the Probable Scenario, through the year 2020, the region can expect population and economic growth exceeding that projected for most other regions in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana. The majority of residential and commercial development will continue outside of the urban cores or already developed areas in the eight-county region. Traffic congestion will increase as population grows and more people travel between work and home and travel farther distances. Undeveloped land will continue to be consumed at a rate disproportionate to population growth. If current trends continue, in the next 20 years alone, nearly ten percent of the region’s currently undeveloped land will be consumed to accommodate the projected growth in population. The concentration of poverty in urban areas will continue. (See: Snapshot of the OKI Region.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRENDS</th>
<th>Snapshot of the OKI Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>* Projected to grow by 305,450 people (16% increase) between the years 2000 and 2020. Growth is not evenly distributed in the region.  * Central city has historically been losing population.  * 90% of projected population growth is expected in the five high growth counties of Butler, Clermont, Warren, Dearborn and Boone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>* Population continues to increase, population densities decline.  * Land is being urbanized five times faster than population growth.  * From 1970 to 2000, land consumption increased 100% while population increased by 23%.  * Ohio’s metro counties lost 26% of farmland acreage from 1959 to 1997 while counties in the OKI region lost 43% in same period.  * Declining population densities result in higher infrastructure costs on a per household and/or per development basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Traffic</td>
<td>* Population is urbanizing at lower densities, vehicle miles traveled (VMT) increased as residents travel farther (e.g. all counties except Butler and Hamilton export more than 50% of their workforce).  * VMT are increasing disproportionately to population growth – 16.6 million VMT in 1982, 32.6 million VMT in 1999 – an increase of 66% in VMT while population increased by approximately 13%.  * This increase in VMTs is most pronounced on freeways, growing by 100% between 1982 and 1999.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Economic and Social Issues | * Racial and economic segregation is pronounced in the region.  * Overall racial segregation is greater in the Cincinnati region than all but one of the 25 largest metropolitan areas in the country.  * Region is expected to lead Ohio’s major metro areas in job growth (1996-2006) at 14% with the most diversified economy.  * From 1992 to 1997, the City of Cincinnati lost 6.3% of its jobs while suburbs gained 25.1%.  

---

1. Myron Orfield and Thomas Luce, Cincinnati Metropatterns, Metropolitan Area Research Corporation, September 2001.
Although the need to think regionally to address these concerns is easily recognized, the reality of acting regionally is another issue because of the number of distinct municipal, state, county, and federal jurisdictions and districts. The OKI Regional Council of Governments – a council of local governments, community groups, business organizations, and citizens from 190 communities working together to improve the Cincinnati metropolitan region – acknowledges that these various jurisdictions and districts must work cooperatively to do what cannot be achieved individually. Local autonomy is important, but achieving the vision and addressing fundamental quality of life issues requires new ways of thinking and acting.

Through the LUC, OKI initiated the Regional Visioning Process to create a vision that:

- Acknowledges the relationship between land use and transportation;
- Is ambitious yet feasible;
- Enhances the region’s livability, economy, and natural assets; and
- Considers all sectors of the region’s inhabitants, including traditionally underserved populations.

This vision will serve as a basis for developing the strategic regional policy plan, which, in turn, will help local governments and the OKI Board of Trustees implement the vision. The policies and action steps included in the plan will encourage land use patterns that promote efficient travel patterns and the efficient use of land, natural resources, and public facilities and services throughout the region. The plan will be available for use by agencies and local governments at their discretion and could be used by public, private, and civic sectors as a guide and tool for achieving the vision.

**Background on the Land Use Commission**

A number of challenges such as transportation planning transcend jurisdictional boundaries and necessitate a regional planning response. To be sure, there have been many valuable planning efforts in the tri-state region. Many of these efforts however, by design or effect, do not consider the entire eight-county, three-state region. Consideration of regional interdependence and a coordinated approach are essential to regional vitality and sustainability. For example, the land development trend that has produced an estimated $3.5 billion shortfall in the region’s transportation needs versus identified revenue sources over the next 30 years will erode the tri-state’s vitality. Reasonable and effective planning policies could make a strategic difference for the well being of the region. The LUC was formed to address this concern.

The direct impetus for establishing the OKI Land Use Commission was the 1991 and 1998 federal transportation acts that directed OKI to plan for transportation more comprehensively. The OKI Board of...
Introduction

The direct impetus for establishing the OKI Land Use Commission was the 1991 and 1998 federal transportation acts that directed OKI to plan for transportation more comprehensively.

Trustees decided to establish the LUC to produce a strategic regional policy plan that would establish regional policies for land use and public facilities and services.

The OKI Year 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (1993) provided for a commission on land use to bring about consistency between the long range transportation plan and local land use policies. The Year 2010 Plan states that the commission will identify linkages between land use and transportation pertinent to the development of a regional land use plan.

The original intent was to create a commission whose membership represents the region geographically. Since broad representation is also the foundation of the OKI Board of Trustees, the Board of Trustees elected to sit as the Land Use Commission. To assist in their work, the Board apportioned themselves among three working committees and added representatives from throughout the region who bring their particular expertise to the project. The LUC’s three working committees are Land Use Planning and Policy, Environment and Infrastructure, and Economic Development and Funding.

OKI envisioned that the LUC would make recommendations in support of land use patterns to promote multimodal travel alternatives and reduced trips. These recommendations would be included in the strategic regional policy plan, which could then be used to guide local and county jurisdictions to ensure that land use and transportation linkages are considered in all planning processes.

It is OKI’s intent that the LUC’s recommendations lead to the use of reasonable standards and criteria that recognize the relationship between land use, transportation, and other infrastructure.

Following its creation, the LUC began its work by assembling and analyzing a variety of information, including but not limited to:

- Major components of planning and zoning law in each of three states;
- Existing economic development policies and practices in the region;
- Comprehensive plans from around the region; and
- Regionally significant resources in the region.

The other major task undertaken by the LUC prior to the visioning process was the creation of an Existing Regional Land Use map and an Existing Regional Zoning map. These maps have been used to prompt discussions about the importance of linking land use and transportation planning.

Through open dialogue and communication with decision makers and the public, the OKI Commission on Land Use shall develop a strategic regional plan, which encourages land use patterns that promote multimodal travel and the efficient use of land, natural resources, and public facilities and services.

– The Land Use Commission’s Mission
Both the baseline data and the maps were used by the LUC during a series of nine meetings, culminating in a set of 80 regional issues that reflect the complexity of the land use/transportation relationship. These 80 regional issues were accepted by the LUC in November 2001, and were intended to serve as the basis for the LUC’s visioning process.

Regional planning generally consists of processes to define a vision, establish common priorities, and work together toward a shared future for the region. OKI, as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning, is the Tri-State’s only multipurpose regional entity that is in a position to plan for and coordinate intergovernmental solutions to growth-related problems. It is important to note that OKI works daily to promote regional cooperation while supporting local autonomy.
**Visioning Process Summary**

The process of developing a vision must be both informed and intuitive. For OKI’s Regional Visioning Process, review and analysis of data was conducted on existing conditions and trends relative to demographics, socioeconomic indicators, transportation, and land use; a values surveys known as the Future Vision Assessment was administered to the LUC; stakeholders and members of the LUC attended workshops to share their perspective on development in the region and related issues; and citizens of the region shared their ideas during public forums.

These activities were accomplished through the four major project components of “Where Do We Grow From Here?” A description of each component follows the list below:

- Visioning Preparation
- Phase 1: The Visioning Process Begins
- Phase 2: Public Contribution to the Visioning Process
- Phase 3: Strategic Issue Identification

**Visioning Preparation**

To set the stage for the Regional Visioning Process, OKI’s consultant conducted work sessions with OKI staff, a regional tour and visual survey, and data analyses to assess existing conditions and trends in demographics, socioeconomic indicators, and land use in the region. In addition, two committees were established on Outreach and Publicity to promote “Where Do We Grow From Here?” The Project Kick-off was held on April 23, 2002 at the OKI Annual Meeting.

**Phase 1: The Visioning Process Begins**

A key element of this phase was the preparation of the Probable Scenario. The Probable Scenario depicts future growth and development in the region based on current trends and describes population and employment forecasts related to land consumption.

The Probable Scenario was shared with the LUC during Workshop 1 on June 10, 2002 (Workshop 1 Report, July 2002). The workshop was a half-day interactive session that engaged participants in the fundamental question, “Where do we grow?”

The second workshop, held on August 23, 2002, engaged participants in the subsequent question “How do we grow?” (Workshop 2 Report, September 2002). The outcome of this second half-day session was consensus on the desired direction of future growth and development in the region. There was also agreement on a vision statement reflecting the desired principles for future land use and quality of life considerations (please refer to Chapter 2 for a full description of the Vision for Stewardship and its supporting principles).
Phase 2: Public Contribution to the Visioning Process

Public participation is key to the development of a vision that represents the aspirations of the residents of the OKI region. Public forums were conducted throughout the region to assess the public’s reaction to the principle statements developed in Phase 1 and to gather citizen’s ideas for the future of the region.

One public forum was held in each of the region’s eight counties between September 16 and September 26, 2002. All of the public forums were divided into three parts. They began with a short presentation that included the background of the project, current trends in the region, and an explanation of the LUC’s vision as expressed through the Vision for Stewardship and its supporting principles. The attendees broke into small groups to share their ideas about the future of the region and discuss their reactions to the vision (Public Forum Report, October 2002).

OKI staff compiled contributions from all eight public forums and, with direction from the Steering Committee, recommended modifications to the vision. The final vision was considered by the LUC during the OKI Board of Trustees regular meeting on October 10, 2002. After discussion, a slightly modified vision was adopted.

Phase 3: Strategic Issues Identification

In Phase 3, the LUC began to identify and discuss the strategic issues that must be addressed to move the vision forward, and to ultimately create a strategic regional policy plan, which will provide a better link between long-range transportation planning and local land use planning. Two workshops were conducted with the LUC to identify and refine strategic issues.

Workshop 3 was held on October 25, 2002 and Workshop 4 was held on November 22, 2002. The purpose of Workshop 3 was to begin to identify the regional issues that are the most strategic to achieving the mission and the vision of the Land Use Commission. This process was completed during Workshop 4 (please refer to Chapter 3 for a listing of the draft Strategic Regional Issues).
2. Vision for Stewardship

Overview

Through extensive discussion and research, the Land Use Commission (LUC) determined that modifying recent trends to create a different future was essential to improving the region’s quality of life in all its dimensions. If current trends do not change, the region will continue to utilize land inefficiently, struggle to adequately fund infrastructure, have limited mobility choices, and experience further segregation of land uses and people.

The LUC came to the conclusion early in the Regional Visioning Process – and sustained it throughout the process – that the region’s trends should not become its destiny. It is not inevitable that the trend of recent growth patterns must continue; however, those trends are perpetuated by a variety of existing policies and general “business as usual” attitudes that can be changed. The Vision for Stewardship, a vision for the OKI region through year 2020 and beyond, was developed through two workshops and a series of public forums.

Creating the Vision

Workshop 1

As the first workshop in the series, the purpose of Workshop 1 “Where do we grow?” held on June 10, 2002, was twofold. It was designed to demonstrate the current pattern of development, emphasizing the relationship between population growth, land consumption, and transportation; and to elicit preferences for future growth patterns that would be used in shaping a vision.
These objectives were achieved through a Future Vision Assessment values survey, two presentations, and tabletop mapping exercises. The participants at this workshop provided the direction needed to create the future vision related to land consumption, mobility, environmental protection, infrastructure provision and other topics. The results of the workshop clearly illustrated a strong sentiment among LUC members to modify current trends in development and land consumption as described in the Probable Scenario. Participants indicated a strong preference for encouraging more redevelopment and infill development, using less land to accommodate future growth, and preserving open space (Workshop 1 Report, July 2002).

Workshop 2

Workshop 2, conducted on August 23, 2002, was a follow-up workshop to engage the LUC in a series of steps to address the question, “How do we grow?” The outcome of this workshop was consensus on the desired direction of future growth and development. It also included agreement on a vision statement reflecting the desired principles for future land use and quality of life considerations. Participants affirmed their desire to use the region’s land resources more efficiently (Workshop 2 Report, September 2002).

Through these activities, the draft vision was articulated in a series of principle statements. These statements, as well as the other supporting material developed for Workshop 1 and 2, were used to prepare for describing the vision to the public in the public forums.

Public Forums

As described in Chapter 1 of this report, one public forum was held in each of the region’s eight counties between September 16 and September 26, 2002. These public forums were divided into three parts. They began with a short presentation that included the background of the project, current trends in the region, and an explanation of the LUC’s vision. After the assembly, the attendees broke into small groups to share their ideas about the future of the region and discuss their reactions to the vision (Public Forum Report, October 2002).

Adopting the Vision

OKI staff compiled contributions from all eight public forums and, with direction from the Steering Committee, recommended modifications to the vision. The final vision was considered by the LUC on October 10, 2002. After discussion, the draft Intergovernmental Coordination principle was amended to emphasize local land use planning responsibilities. The Vision for Stewardship and supporting principles were then adopted by the LUC.

This vision describes the desired future of the OKI region through 2020 and beyond. The vision is expressed in a Statement of Stewardship...
and a set of Supporting Principle Statements, which are listed in the following section. These statements imply major rethinking of how the region should grow in the future.

**Vision for Stewardship**

In 2020, the region’s land resources will be carefully managed based on a shared commitment of citizens and public and private sector stakeholders. This commitment will guide decisions on the timing, location, impact of development and redevelopment in the region. In addition, this commitment will enhance our quality of life, reduce government spending on development and ensure the health and viability of natural systems. Some areas of the region will have higher densities of people and more intense uses than other areas, and greater emphasis will be given to encourage reuse and redevelopment. Key green space areas, which add value to surrounding property and improve overall quality of life, will be preserved and protected for future generations. Future generations will also enjoy key areas of the built environment—such as established neighborhoods and villages, as well as places of cultural and historical significance.

**Supporting Stewardship Principles**

**Redevelopment and Infill Development:** In 2020, redevelopment of underutilized areas and infill development within existing areas will be actively promoted for more efficient use of land resources, with consideration given to the need for parkland and green space.

**Land Use Patterns To Support Transit:** In 2020, communities throughout the region will have areas that are developed with higher concentrations of housing, businesses, and activities to better utilize land resources and support public transit.

**Transportation Choices:** In 2020, transportation choices will be available throughout the region, including public transit, automobiles, biking and walking, in a manner that optimizes accessibility, efficiency, mobility, and affordability.

**Public Facilities and Services:** In 2020, public facilities and services will be well coordinated and determined prior to land development and redevelopment. Such public facilities and services will include transportation, water, sewer, parks and storm water management systems.

**Connectivity:** In 2020, neighborhoods will be linked by a network of interconnected streets and walkways as part of a larger system that provides safe motorized and non-motorized access to homes, businesses,
schools, recreation facilities and services, and other destinations. These networks will be designed to keep local traffic off major arterials and high-speed, through-traffic off local streets.

**Mixed-Use Centers:** In 2020, centers that include a mix of integrated office, retail, residential and civic uses will be found throughout the region. These mixed-use centers – of a scale appropriate to their surroundings – will concentrate uses in a manner that supports walking, biking, public transit, and automobiles.

**Mixed-Use Neighborhoods:** In 2020, new and redeveloped neighborhoods will include walkable, compatible retail, business, education, and civic uses, as well as a broad range of housing types and price levels.

**Housing Choices:** In 2020, a diverse mix of housing choices – in terms of size, price, type and location – will be available within communities throughout the region. Every community in the region will maintain quality housing, whether it be newer developments or older neighborhoods, owner-occupied or rental.

**Educational Opportunity:** In 2020, comprehensive and quality education will be available throughout the region for residents of all ages.

**Environmental Quality:** In 2020, the health and viability of natural systems, such as air quality, water resources and wildlife habitats will be protected. There will be an extensive network of green spaces in the region that includes neighborhood and regional parks, hillsides, river corridors, forests, flood plains and farmland.

**Cooperative Economic Development:** In 2020, communities will cooperate, coordinate, and share on mutually beneficial economic development opportunities, on business retention and recruitment, and workforce development. This cooperative effort will require the active participation of local governments, economic development organizations, businesses and other stakeholders.

**Fiscal Responsibility:** In 2020, decisions on land development, redevelopment, and improvements to public facilities and services will be made with a clear understanding of their fiscal impacts to individual communities and the region. The cost of development will be allocated among those who benefit, with consideration of the fiscal impacts to existing residents.
**Intergovernmental Cooperation:** In 2020, land use policy remains a fundamental prerogative and responsibility of each local jurisdiction. However, local governments will effectively and willingly communicate, cooperate and coordinate on issues of land use, transportation, natural systems, economic development and public facilities and services.
3. Strategic Regional Issues

Overview

The ultimate goal of the Regional Visioning Process is realization of the vision. The attainment of the vision is dependent upon understanding the issues that must be addressed to change regional trends. This understanding must then be the basis for creating tools and a framework for making local and regional choices.

Thereby, a critical aspect of this Regional Visioning Process was the development of a list of Strategic Regional Issues. These issues represent the most significant challenges or fundamental policy concerns that must be addressed to achieve the mission and vision of the Land Use Commission (LUC).

As described in Chapter 1, the Strategic Regional Issues were produced through a process of distilling 80 issues originally accepted by the LUC in November 2001 as well as additional issues raised since that time. Workshops 3 and 4 were integral to this process (Workshop 3 and 4 Report, December 2002).

The Strategic Regional Issues are organized in the following categories:

- Transportation;
- Public facilities and services;
- Natural resources;
- Economic development;
- Housing; and
- Land use.

“The extensive fragmentation of planning at the public, private and non-profit levels results in inefficient development patterns. It also results in concurrent needs for capital investment and reinvestment, little intergovernmental coordination of land development, mismatched tactics to conserve natural systems, and growing concentrations of poverty.”

Mel Martin, Chair OKI Land Use Commission
Identifying Strategic Issues

Workshops 3 and 4 of the Regional Visioning Process dealt exclusively with identifying Strategic Regional Issues (Workshop 3 and Report, December 2002).

Workshop 3

Workshop 3, conducted on October 25, 2002, provided the forum for narrowing the list of 80 regional issues developed by the LUC in November 2001 to those issues most strategic to achieving the mission and the vision of the LUC. This was an essential task for the LUC because the Strategic Regional Issues will become the focus of the strategic regional policy plan.

The main objectives of Workshop 3 were to:

• Review the list of 80 regional issues that were accepted by the Land Use Commission in November 2001;

• Consider how the 80 regional issues relate to the mission of the LUC and the Vision for Stewardship as well as how they relate to the issues of obstacles, incentives, and timeliness; and

• Discuss the issues that could be considered most strategic.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the findings of Workshops 1 and 2 indicated a strong sentiment among LUC members to modify current trends in development and land consumption. Workshop 3 was an effort to move closer to finding ways to alter the trend.

Based on the review of the issues, specific themes came out of the workshop. A selection of these themes is outlined below:

• There is a fundamental relationship between economic development and transportation, in terms of access to jobs, infrastructure, and the availability of choice.

• There is a need to create sufficient densities and systems that encourage walkability and transit.

• There is a need for more incentives for revitalization (e.g., brownfield revitalization).

• There is a need to quantify the costs of development relative to benefits.

• There is a need to identify the benefits of working regionally, as well as to discuss incentives for regional cooperation.

• Non-traditional solutions, such as watershed-based planning, should be considered in addressing issues related to governmental fragmentation.

• Policies that address these issues at a regional level will be extremely difficult to implement.

• Apathy is a major obstacle, and education about the planning process and these issues is desirable.

In an effort to address these comments and combine related issues, the total number of regional issues was reduced to 65. The list was further refined and narrowed by the LUC’s Steering Committee using its...
knowledge of the region and preferences indicated by Workshop 3 participants.

Workshop 4

The process of refining the Strategic Regional Issues continued in Workshop 4, held on November 22, 2002. The workshop was designed to finish identifying the regional issues most strategic to achieving the mission and the vision of the LUC. The main objectives of Workshop 4 were to review the list of draft issues from Workshop 3, examine how the issues relate to the vision, and reach consensus on the most strategic issues.

Along with important clarifications of the issues, there was a shared concern that air quality and socioeconomic issues were missing from the list of strategic issues.

The extensive efforts of the Steering Committee and LUC during workshops and work sessions led to the final set of issues. With recommendations from the Steering Committee, proposed revisions were made to the draft issues based on the Workshop 4 discussions. The Strategic Regional Issues, which were adopted by the LUC on January 9, 2003, will serve as the basis for the strategic regional policy plan.

Strategic Regional Issues

Transportation

1. At the local level, there is little coordination among transportation planning, land use planning, capital budgeting, and economic development.

2. On a regional scale, there are few available modes of transportation. Limited public transit is an obstacle to accessibility and mobility for the region's citizens, especially the transportation disadvantaged, which includes elderly, disabled, low income, minority populations, and other zero-car households.

3. The costs associated with transportation are rising. There is a lack of adequate financial resources to provide roadways and transit in the region.

4. There is insufficient coordination of land use issues between local, state, and regional transportation planning agencies.

5. Traffic congestion is increasing in the region, with multiple implications including loss of productivity, increased pricing of goods and services, loss of personal time, wasted fuel, and degradation of air quality.

6. The number of local trips on Interstate highways has been increasing as a result of commercial and residential development patterns.
7. Transportation project choices affect the region's ability to attain air quality standards.

**Public Facilities and Services**

8. Ill-timed extension of water, sewer, and road facilities and services may expedite sprawling, inefficient development.
9. Adequate infrastructure does not keep pace with the impacts of development.
10. There is little coordination among public facilities and services planning, transportation planning, and land use planning.

**Natural Resources and Open Space**

11. Protection and sustainability of groundwater and surface water resources are not always addressed in local, state, regional, and federal planning processes.
12. The value and preservation of diverse natural systems, which includes air, water, wildlife, plant life and land are not always examined in local, state, regional, and federal planning processes.
13. There is little coordination among natural systems planning, land use planning, and public facilities planning.
14. Protection and sustainability of water resources are most effectively addressed on a watershed basis, while local governments make planning and budgeting decisions on a jurisdictional basis.

**Housing**

15. The housing stock in the region's older neighborhoods is in need of stabilization and revitalization in order to maintain the community's fiscal strength and protect the property owner's assets.
16. Generally, there is a lack of housing convenient to transit and services such as shopping and daycare.
17. Affordable housing is not consistently available throughout the region.
18. Distressed public school districts affect and are affected by the surrounding neighborhoods.
19. Socioeconomic issues continue to fuel migration within the region.

**Economic Development**

20. Suburbs and cities are linked in a single regional economy, but numerous economic development organizations operate without a common mission, plan, or coordination and compete for economic development opportunities.
21. Economic vitality depends on an educated, skilled workforce.
22. Sprawling development patterns can de-stabilize central downtown business districts, as well as secondary business districts.
Land Use

23. There are few truly comprehensive plans at the local government level which link land use policies with transportation planning and capital budgeting.

24. There is major fragmentation of political, legal, and land use authority in the region, including wide variations among state planning laws.

25. The public costs associated with new development are not widely understood, nor is a consistent method for calculating public costs used in the region, leading to developments that may not generate anticipated revenues.

26. Land is being consumed for new development at a rate five times faster than population growth, resulting in a decrease in population density and population movement toward communities farther away from current centers of population and employment.

27. There is a tendency in the region to develop vacant land on the suburban fringe because greenfield development is more economical and less constrained than brownfield redevelopment.

28. Low-density developments, and the isolation of residential, work place, and shopping uses increases the per-unit cost of public facilities, taxes or user fees, and the level of income needed to obtain housing.
4. Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Background

A number of challenges such as transportation planning transcend jurisdictional boundaries and necessitate a planning response at the regional level. The consideration of regional interdependence and coordinated actions is essential to regional vitality.

The OKI Year 2010 Regional Transportation Plan (1993) provided for a commission on land use, which would bring about consistency between the long-range transportation plan and local land use policies. The Year 2010 Plan stated the commission would identify linkages between land use and transportation pertinent to the development of a regional land use plan.

The OKI Board of Trustees envisioned that the commission would make recommendations in support of land use patterns that promote multimodal travel alternatives and reduced trips. It was further envisioned that those recommendations would be included in a strategic regional policy plan, which could be used to guide local and county jurisdictions to ensure that land use and transportation linkages are considered in all planning processes.

The difficulty with working on regional issues is that by their nature they require a group effort. Within a multitude of governmental agencies and private sector interests, even the simplest task can be extraordinarily difficult to accomplish. For example, the agencies and organizations that are key players in the region’s growth and development do not exist in a

“There is need to discuss regional approaches to stabilize communities struggling with social and economic disinvestments, reduce fiscal disparities and dependence on the local tax base to fund basic public services, and discourage sprawling development patterns.”

neat hierarchical relationship. Rather, they are independent entities with their own set of powers. This becomes apparent when one looks at transportation. Within the tri-state, there are 190 local governments, one MPO, transit authorities, aviation authorities, railways, and state and federal departments of transportation — all involved in providing transportation services.

It is clear that, even if they existed, a consistent set of local growth policies would not ensure that communities would automatically work in sync with one another. Nor would they guarantee that activities important to the overall success of a region would be undertaken. What is needed is a means for thinking about and dealing with the common interests of the region.

The key issue facing the region, then, is how to successfully address a regional vision and strategic issues. Studies of areas that have a record of doing so suggest the answer lies in having what has variously been described as a strong “civic culture,” a sense of “regional community” and a “machinery for teamwork.” Each of these terms refers to having strong connections among communities and agencies, and between the public and private sectors within a metropolitan area.

The strategic regional policy plan will address the potential for fashioning regional consensus to increase the region’s ability to function at a metropolitan level. Effort is focused at this level because the major growth issues within the tri-state are greater than local but less than eight-county in scope. Persistent problems such as increasing levels of traffic congestion, decreasing amounts of large open space, the functionality of natural resources, and an expanding need for affordable housing result from economic and social forces operating at a metropolitan level.

As a tool, planning’s value and purpose is to improve the ability of a community to make informed decisions about its future. It does this by providing a method to rationally and objectively identify the timing and location of land and infrastructure development – something that zoning and subdivision regulations alone cannot accomplish.

Planning also provides a method to rationally and objectively identify choices, such as the amount of open space to preserve or the service standard to maintain. Knowing up front the choices that may be available, along with their costs, allows a community to consider different ways in which varied and oftentimes competing goals may be balanced. For example, balancing economic development with environmental protection involves choosing areas either for development or conservation. Choices made (i.e., various ratios of developed land to conservation land) will reflect differing ways a community might go about balancing these two. It is this capability that the term planning is meant to convey when used in the Land Use Commission’s process.
Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

By broadening the viewpoint from which available choices and their costs are examined, regional planning allows for more informed decisions to be made regarding these interests.

Creating the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

OKI’s strategic regional policy plan will contain an overall 20-year vision for regional vitality, sustainability, and competitiveness, focusing on the land use–transportation connection. Six strategic subject areas have been selected to guide and focus planning efforts to achieve the overall regional vision. These strategic subject areas are regional transportation, land use, public facilities, natural resources and open space, economic development, and housing.

Conceptually, the strategic planning process addresses the following four questions:

• Where are we as a region?
• Where are we going given current trends?
• Where do we want to go?
• How do we get there?

The process began with a broad examination of existing conditions and current trends affecting the region. This examination included a review of institutional roles and activities, and the identification of potential opportunities and challenges facing the region. The trends analysis also provided a basis, along with input from the regional community, for constructing a regional vision.

The results of the trends analysis and the visioning process guided the identification of Strategic Regional Issues. Strategic issues serve to be the most significant challenges that must be addressed to help achieve the mission and vision of the Land Use Commission. Strategic issues are critical challenges or fundamental policy concerns.

The LUC established Strategic Regional Issues within six strategic subject areas as the key points of departure for the strategic regional policy plan, beginning the “How do we get there?” portion of the plan.

Reasonable and measurable regional goals, objectives and policies will round out the strategic regional policy plan and specify “How do we get there?”.

Key Features of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

There are three key features of the strategic regional policy plan.

1. Setting direction
2. Focusing on priorities
3. Adapting to change

Setting Direction

The strategic regional policy plan is intended to be a direction-setting document for the tri-state region, not just for the OKI Regional Council
Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Strategic regional issues are best approached through coordinated actions that consider inherent linkages, such as the connection between land use and transportation.

In addressing strategic regional issues, the plan will establish both long-term directions through strategic regional goals as well as short-term policies and benchmarks to guide implementation efforts.

Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Prepared by the OKI Regional Council of Governments. It establishes how to achieve the vision over the next 20 years.

The tri-state region consists of many interconnected physical, economic, and social components. Strategic Regional Issues are best approached through coordinated actions that consider inherent linkages, such as the connection between land use and transportation.

Such coordinated actions have tremendous implications regarding the importance of institutional participation and community input in the development and implementation of the strategic regional policy plan. In the end, the plan is aimed to address the vitality of the regional community, and can only be fully implemented through the institutions within and affecting the region, whether public, private or non-profit, as well as the general public.

The strategic regional policy plan should serve to promote cooperative planning and decision-making throughout the tri-state region, including local governments, special districts, OKI, state and federal agencies, and the private and civic sectors.

Focusing on Priorities

Second, the strategic regional policy plan focuses on high priority, strategic issues facing the region over a 20-year time horizon. The plan will not attempt to address all regional issues; it is not a comprehensive plan. In addressing the most Strategic Regional Issues, the plan will establish both long-term directions through strategic regional goals as well as short-term policies and benchmarks to guide implementation efforts.

Adapting to Change

Third, the plan is intended to be a dynamic document. It should evolve as the tri-state continues to grow, and it should be regularly evaluated and updated.

The purpose of the strategic regional policy plan includes:

- Moving the region toward realizing a common vision, especially as the vision relates to linking land use and transportation planning;
- Encouraging land use patterns that promote multimodal travel and the efficient uses of land, natural resources, and public facilities and services;
- Focusing on high priority, strategic issues facing the region over a 20-year time horizon;
- Bringing about consistency between the long-range transportation plan and local land use policies;
- Providing a framework to link the planning and implementation activities of various entities;
- Providing a framework to tie planning to capital budgeting;
Preparing the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

- Providing a basis for OKI’s decisions regarding transportation projects;
- Emphasizing consensus and coordination between local governments, regional entities, state and federal agencies, and the public; and
- Serving as a key resource for community education efforts on issues related to growth and development, transportation and a host of other interrelated topics.

Instead of producing a future land use map that would presume to tell local governments where to establish certain land uses, this strategic regional policy plan will establish measurable policy statements that address a 20-year vision and the high priority, strategic issues facing the region. These could be used to guide local and county jurisdictions to ensure that land use and transportation linkages are considered in all planning processes.

Organization of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Ultimately, the strategic regional policy plan will be organized as follows.

The LUC’s mission, its Vision for Stewardship and Supporting Stewardship Principles will be included. The mission and vision establish the context and long-term aim for the plan.

The Strategic Regional Issues will be included (the strategic issues categories or topics will be the basis for the plan’s organization), and the potential strengths, opportunities and challenges facing the region will be articulated.

Rounding out the plan will be measurable and achievable policies that move the region closer to accomplishing the LUC’s mission, realizing the vision, and addressing the Strategic Regional Issues.

How the Strategic Regional Policy Plan Will Be Used

Various institutions within the region that affect regional policy – whether they are public, private or non-profit, or citizen-based – may use the strategic regional policy plan.

For example, the plan should be used by OKI in its transportation programs to address OKI’s federal mandates. The plan could offer guidance to local governments in areas of policy development, land development, and capital budgeting, because public investments in infrastructure greatly affect land development and land use decisions affect infrastructure investments. The strategic regional policy plan may encourage various conservation-oriented non-profit organizations to look at natural resources extending beyond their agency’s service area. The plan can also illustrate how the economic development community ties into transportation, housing, and other issues.

Upon its completion, policies in the strategic regional policy plan should be applied within the context of the overall intent of the plan;

Upon its completion, policies in the strategic regional policy plan should be applied within the context of the overall intent of the plan; hence, no policy should be applied in isolation.
hence, no policy should be applied in isolation. For example, an economic development policy, if applied in isolation, may be in direct conflict with natural resource policies in the strategic regional policy plan. In that instance, the overall and long-term benefits and costs to the region should be carefully considered.

Successful implementation that moves the region toward its vision and goals is the ultimate test of a good strategic regional policy plan; however, coordinated policy implementation to realize regional goals presents tremendous challenges. It is hoped that the Land Use Commission’s process in developing the strategic regional policy plan has begun to build the basis for coordinated policy development and implementation in the tri-state region.

After its approval by the Commission, the Board of Trustees will take action to make the plan an official OKI document. OKI will also provide tools such as model ordinances, processes and techniques that further the Commission’s mission and vision, and that local governments may consider adopting.

Conclusion

The ongoing process of developing the strategic regional policy plan has made evident that now more than ever residents of the OKI region live their lives at the scale of the region – moving through multiple jurisdictions several times a day to work, shop, recreate, or seek entertainment. Thus, the fate of any individual community is inherently connected to the fate of the region. The OKI Regional Council of Governments is committed to working closely and cooperatively with local governments, the private and non-profit sectors, and the citizens of the region to maintain an exceptional place to live and work in the years to come. It is hoped that the strategic regional policy plan will be one tool for achieving that aspiration.