Appendix E

Metropolitan Planning Factors
APPENDIX E

METROPOLITAN PLANNING FACTORS

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) identified 16 “metropolitan planning factors” to be addressed in transportation planning processes. ISTEA’s successor, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), maintained the core transportation planning requirements but consolidated the 16 metropolitan “factors” into seven broad “areas” to be considered in the planning process, both at the metropolitan and statewide level. These areas, anticipated to be focal points once again in upcoming federal legislation replacing TEA-21, have provided the basis for this plan’s goals and objectives. These factors and their reflection in various aspects of the plan are as follows:

1. **Improve travel safety.** Anticipated emphasis on safety in the upcoming re-authorization legislation has prompted particular focus on this topic in this long range plan update. Chapter 7, devoted to the topic of vehicular safety, identifies the highest crash rate locations in the region and recommends that engineering studies be conducted on crash locations where congestion does not appear to be the primary contributor. Chapter 10 describes integration of ITS with other agencies and systems, such as 911, to facilitate emergency response. Chapter 11 includes several recommendations for safety of bicycle and pedestrian travel. One recommendation is that roads identified in the OKI Bike Route Guides be maintained so that “recommended bike routes” are not degraded for safe bicycle travel, and “alternate bike routes” and “not recommended” roads are improved for safer bicycle travel. Another recommendation in the chapter states that a commitment should be made to maintain pedestrian facilities, to remove debris and encroaching plant material and to repair deteriorated paving.

2. **Improve accessibility and mobility options for people and goods.** Chapter 5 provides information to help determine future travel needs in the region, including population and household projections, anticipated age structure changes, employment projections, and commuting patterns. Chapter 9 discusses means to improve traffic operations, such as access management and improved signalization, thereby increasing accessibility. By enabling roadways to perform more efficiently, operational improvements increase roadway capacity, which will help reduce the need for expansion projects and help preserve and maintain the existing infrastructure. Preservation of right-of-ways recommended in Chapter 12 safeguards rail transit as a mobility option in the future.
Recommendations from Chapter 15 include studying ways to move freight efficiently in all multimodal corridor studies.

3. **Protect and enhance the environment.** Chapter 3 deals with transportation initiatives to clear the air. One project highlighted in the chapter is the Regional Ozone Coalition, a voluntary association of local governments, organizations and businesses committed to reducing smog in the Greater Cincinnati region. This local commitment, which began in 1994, encourages voluntary efforts by individuals and businesses to reduce ozone-forming activities on forecasted high ozone days. Chapter 4 provides information on current transportation systems (e.g., public transit, vanpooling, and park-and-ride lots) that promote energy conservation through reducing single-occupant vehicles (SOV) operating in the region. Chapter 11 recommends improvements to the regional trails network and street system to encourage greater use of walking and bicycling, which would have the effect of conserving fuel, reducing vehicle emissions and improving personal health. Chapter 12 focuses on transit improvements, makes recommendations for expansion of transit services, facilitation of transit usage through technological improvements, and construction of transit centers and park-and-ride lots. In addition, development of rail transit in the Eastern Corridor and the central riverfront area is recommended to reduce travel by single-occupant vehicles, thereby reducing vehicular emissions.

4. **Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system.** Chapter 12 provides recommendations to improve the connectivity between various modes of transportation in the region. Proposed rail transit developments would integrate transit services to rail sites. Transit centers, including the intermodal transit center in downtown Cincinnati, are facilities where transfers can be made between bus routes and rail transit lines, or between different transit lines. The plan recommends that 23 transit centers and 12 park-and-ride lots be constructed in the region. Chapter 15 highlights the importance of integrating the various freight transport modes — roadway, rail, water, air, pipeline and intermodal — and recommends the continued monitoring and facilitation of the movement of freight in, around and through the region.

5. **Promote efficient system management and operation.** Chapter 6 provides information on managing congestion in the region. The Congestion Management System (CMS) is a systematic process for managing congestion that provides information on transportation system performance and on alternative strategies for alleviating congestion and enhancing the mobility of persons and goods to levels that meet state and
local needs. Chapter 8 deals with strategies for managing travel demand that focus on changing travel behavior to mitigate traffic congestion, in lieu of building infrastructure to accommodate travel needs. Chapter 9 provides information on improving traffic operations including access management techniques that improve mobility and safety. Finally, how to enhance our intelligent transportation system is discussed in Chapter 10.

6. **Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.** Chapter 4 provides a snapshot of the region’s existing transportation system. In the ever-changing transportation environment, this overview serves as a baseline to which policies, alternatives and improvements can be referenced. Chapter 10 highlights the plan’s effort to optimize the existing system through recommendations for applying operational improvements and expanding the use of intelligent transportation system technologies. Chapter 13 provides information on highway expansion, but gives funding priority to system preservation and allocates a sizeable portion of available revenues to this purpose.

7. **Support economic vitality.** The economic vitality of the OKI region is a central issue in the development of the transportation plan, as shown through the plan’s emphasis on ideas that address this issue. Chapter 5 analyzes the region’s demographic trends and notes that the population in the OKI region is projected to grow 20% and employment to increase 25% over the planning period. Chapter 6 provides a list of management strategies and technologies to deal with this growth through development and travel pattern ideas. In addition, OKI’s Land Use Commission is in the process of developing policies that will promote the economic vitality of the region. Finally, Chapter 10 deals with expanding the region’s Intelligent Transportation System to include most of the interstate roadways as well as key arterials to reduce congestion and delay. This recommendation, along with others in the chapter, help support the economic vitality of the OKI region by increasing productivity and efficiency in the transportation system, thus increasing the competitiveness of the metropolitan area.