Chapter 1
Transportation Planning for the OKI Region
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TRANSPORTATION PLANNING FOR THE OKI REGION

The OKI region is composed of eight counties in three states – Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn County in Indiana. Presently, transportation planning is undertaken for OKI counties in Ohio and Kentucky.

This plan — OKI 2030 Regional Transportation Plan 2004 Update— is an update of the long range transportation plan with the same title which was prepared in 2001. The update process is required three years after the plan’s certification and every three years thereafter. This update maintains a planning horizon of 2030. The key difference between this plan and its predecessor is the inclusion of 2000 Census data in the planning assumptions. As with previous plans, this plan conforms to air quality and financial conformity.

This update presents a plan to maximize the utility of the existing transportation facilities and services to reduce congestion and increase travel choices for people. This plan continues to place emphasis on Environmental Justice issues and Intelligent Transportation Systems. This plan identifies locations with safety issues and draws on a three-year data acquisition effort that provides baseline data on actual travel time on significant roadways in the region. Further, for the first time, the plan addresses regional transportation issues related to homeland security.

The 1993 and 1998 long range transportation plans were significant for setting a new direction for meeting this region’s transportation needs. The 1998 plan responded to the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990. These laws expanded the scope of transportation planning beyond improving mobility to include improving air quality and addressing a host of environmental, social, and financial issues affected by transportation. ISTEA’s successor, the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21) was enacted in 1998 and continues many of the same programs as ISTEA. Upcoming federal legislation to replace the TEA-21 surface transportation bill is anticipated to provide modified funding arrangements but retain most of TEA-21’s planning requirements.

Among the issues to be addressed as part of this transportation planning process are the “metropolitan planning factors.” ISTEA’s 16 planning factors were consolidated into seven factors in TEA-21 and are retained in the new legislation. A summary is provided in Appendix E that clarifies how each of these seven factors is addressed in this plan’s recommendations or reflected in the plan’s goals and objectives.
The impacts of the federal directives are evident in the Regional Plan’s recommendations. The recommendations place emphasis on expanding modal alternatives and improving the transportation system’s efficiency. More specifically, the recommendations for improving highways are accompanied by recommendations for improving transit service, using advanced technologies to move traffic more efficiently, applying strategies to help reduce drive-alone commuting, promoting ridesharing and bicycle and pedestrian travel, upgrading highway operating efficiency, and further exploring options for achieving plan objectives.

In addition to meeting the future travel needs created by growth and development, the plan’s recommendations address requirements for congestion management, air quality conformity, and financial constraints. To mitigate congestion, strategies for managing travel demand are considered for their regional applicability. To protect air quality, the plan’s recommendations are assessed to insure that future travel growth does not prevent the region from achieving air quality goals. To address financial concerns, the plan identifies revenue sources and distinguishes between expenditures needed to maintain our existing infrastructure and expenditures needed for capital and operational improvements.

Everyone has a role in meeting the new transportation challenges. Local governments, for example, are presented with increased opportunities to work together on multi-jurisdictional issues. To reduce congestion, public agencies and private employers are encouraged to take new initiatives. The public is asked to support new measures and change traditional travel behavior.

This continues a process designed to transform the region’s transportation system into one that offers a variety of modes and reduces the use of single-occupant vehicles (SOVs). The transportation system envisioned for this metropolitan plan is an intermodal system that expands travel options and improves and maintains transportation infrastructure.

Moreover, the transportation system must now be responsive to needs associated with homeland security. The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments is creating the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee to provide leadership and coordination of the many homeland security and domestic terrorism preparedness efforts in the region. The committee, comprised of the region’s county emergency management associations, county representatives and others, will review these individual efforts from a regional perspective to insure that no vulnerabilities exist in our region’s response efforts. The committee will strive to maximize public and private resources to assess our further needs so as to provide effective protection for the citizens of the OKI region.
Specifically, the Regional Homeland Security Coordinating Committee has been created to:

- Develop a Regional Emergency Response Plan to maximize local strengths while eliminating any weaknesses in local emergency response efforts
- Provide a forum for creation and implementation of new ideas related to homeland security
- Identify the appropriate clearinghouse for funding regional projects

Now is the time to start building a transportation system that serve future needs and contribute to a better quality of life for the people of this region.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
Transportation has long been a major contributor to the region’s prosperity and quality of life. For individuals and businesses, the efficiency of the transportation system in moving people and goods has a direct financial impact. From a broader perspective, the transportation system’s efficiency has repercussions for the entire economy.

In the year 2004 and beyond, the transportation system’s efficiency will become increasingly important as prosperity becomes more dependent on regional performance in a global economy. If steps are not taken to improve the region’s transportation system, it will become less efficient as evidenced by more congestion, reduced opportunity for travel by different modes, and poorer connections among modes. Transportation system inefficiencies could impede economic growth and lower the region’s competitive edge by adding to transportation costs and delays and reducing travel and transport opportunities.

In addition to its economic impacts, transportation also plays an important role in the quality of life. The interstate system, for example, has improved mobility at the same time that it has promoted a population and job shift from core areas to suburbs with significant social, environmental, and economic consequences. Transportation improvements will continue to affect development and travel patterns and opportunities.

This plan aspires to provide transportation opportunities in an equitable manner and is developed with considerable attention to Environmental Justice ideals. The transportation system should be balanced so that no group or groups of people assume a disproportionate share of positive or negative impacts. This plan will evaluate the impacts of proposed transportation investments to assure that positive and negative impacts of the investments are distributed in an equitable and meaningful manner.
The following goals define how to meet this region’s transportation needs both now and in the future. Each goal represents a key issue addressed in this metropolitan transportation plan. Objectives clarify how to achieve the goals.

1. Improve travel safety
2. Improve accessibility and mobility options for people and goods
3. Protect and enhance the environment
4. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system
5. Promote efficient system management and operation
6. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system
7. Support economic vitality

**Goal 1: Improve travel safety**
The transportation system should provide for reducing the risk of accidents that cause death or injuries and provide for the security of transportation users.

**Objectives**
- Reduce the number and severity of traffic accidents
- Increase security for travel by transit and non-motorized modes
- Facilitate use of improved design of shared roadways to increase safety for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians
- Reduce accidents occurring during transfers between transit and pedestrian facilities
- Expand the deployment of intelligent transportation infrastructure to reduce accidents and improve incident response time
- Facilitate implementation of Homeland Security measures to protect key regional infrastructure assets

**Goal 2: Improve accessibility and mobility options for people and goods**
To enable people and commodities to have greater accessibility and to be moved with greater speed and safety, major investments are needed to improve the transportation system and reduce congestion. Improvements are needed both for expanding the present system and improving its efficiency. Improvements should be sensitive to differences in development patterns and community needs with special consideration given to safe use of the transportation system by our region’s older population.

**Objectives**
- Improve the operating efficiency of existing infrastructure
- Expand transportation infrastructure to provide additional access and capacity for moving people and goods
- Reduce congestion by expanding alternatives to single-occupant vehicle travel and reducing peak hour travel.
• Acknowledge and incorporate the use of non-motorized travel (walking and biking) into the planning process as an alternative mode of travel and connector of modes
• Facilitate efficient intermodal transfers for both passengers and freight
• Expand the deployment of intelligent transportation infrastructure such as ARTIMIS

Goal 3: Protect and enhance the environment
Air quality is a major environmental issue in the OKI region. Much progress has been made in reducing mobile source emissions, but the impact of travel growth on total emissions could threaten the region’s ability to maintain federal clean air standards. Emission reductions are needed to protect air quality. Strategies that promote the effective and efficient use of land and natural resources would reduce mobile source emissions and would also have a beneficial effect on other environmental issues and quality of life. The transportation system, along with other infrastructure, has a significant impact on future land use. Transportation decisions should be consistent with local land use policies, resulting in travel and land use patterns that promote multimodal travel alternatives and reduced vehicle trips.

Objectives
• Reduce mobile source emissions
• Encourage use of alternative fuels by both individuals and vehicle fleet
• Encourage measures that reduce transportation’s impact on water quality and noise levels
• Facilitate greater use of non-motorized modes (walking, biking)
• Promote strategies that reduce travel
• Reduce travel by single-occupant vehicles
• Incorporate the recommendations of OKI’s Regional Land Use Commission into the transportation planning process

Goal 4: Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system
A functional transportation system is one that allows people and goods to travel efficiently between their desired destinations.

Objectives
• Optimize the surface transportation facilities access to airports, transit facilities, park and pool lots and freight intermodal facilities
• Plan in such a way that the functional design of a roadway is consistent with the intended use of the roadway
Goal 5: Promote efficient system management and operation
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.

Objectives
- Implement techniques that improve traffic operations including access management techniques that improve mobility and safety
- Advance the coverage area of intelligent transportation systems
- Identify and prioritize locations that require system enhancement and/or expansion
- Identify new or expanded transit services

Goal 6: Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system
Financial resources are needed to maintain the region’s transportation system and address its deficiencies. In light of limited federal and state resources, there is a real need to generate funds from within the region for transportation improvements. New funding sources are needed, particularly for capital formation, and strategies to use funds prudently.

Objectives
- Insure adequate funding to preserve and maintain the integrity of the existing transportation infrastructure
- Initiate efforts to establish a local revenue base to fund transportation system improvements

Goal 7: Support economic vitality
The transportation network can support the economic vitality of the region by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency

Objectives
- Implement techniques that improve traffic operations and mobility so that travel times are reliable and the cost of doing business in the OKI region is competitive and predictable
- Increase the coverage area and effectiveness of ARTIMIS so that traveler information is readily available and the impacts of incidents can be minimized