CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Transportation improvements within the Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati area are coordinated through the planning efforts of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). The overall purpose of these efforts is to help assure that all modes of transportation are considered as the area prepares to meet future transportation and land use growth needs. The 2030 OKI Regional Transportation Plan, adopted in September, 2001 is the current plan for the entire OKI region which includes jurisdictions in Ohio and Kentucky. As part of their mission OKI also manages and coordinates many plans for specific jurisdictions, corridors, or transportation modes. This plan, The Campbell County Transportation Plan, has been prepared to address specific transportation needs within Campbell County, Kentucky.

There are sixteen political jurisdictions with Campbell County (fifteen cities, plus the Campbell County Fiscal Court representing the unincorporated portions of the county). Eight of the fifteen cities have their own planning commissions and comprehensive plans. Five cities plus the Campbell County Fiscal Court, representing the unincorporated parts of the county, share a joint planning unit known as the Campbell County & Municipal Planning & Zoning Commission. This joint planning unit also has its’ own comprehensive plan. The remaining two cities do not have a separate planning commission. Instead, these two cities handle planning issues administratively through their respective city councils.

This transportation plan is designed to provide more detail on transportation needs in Campbell County than those discussed in the 2030 OKI Regional Transportation Plan. This transportation plan has been prepared as an inclusive document for the entire Campbell County community. This transportation plan represents a more global perspective on transportation issues than the perspective offered in the individual comprehensive plans prepared for the various planning commissions within Campbell County. The global perspective is one in which the needs of the various cities and the county are looked at together and viewed as part of an interconnected system, both within the county and as part of the larger regional transportation system.

STUDY PURPOSE

Campbell County contains approximately 595 total miles of roads (118 miles of local streets\(^1\), 184 miles of county maintained roads, and 223 miles of state and federal roads). These roads provide the primary transportation needs for the approximately 89,000 residents (2000 U.S. Census) and many other users of these public roads. In 2002, upon request by the Campbell County Fiscal Court, the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI), serving as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky Region initiated this study of transportation needs within Campbell County, Kentucky.

\(^1\) Local streets were not included in this study
Four primary goals were identified from the outset of this planning process. The goals of this study and how they were implemented were:

Goal: Identify County-wide Needs on the State and Federal Highway System

**Implementation:** The Campbell County Transportation Task Force (CCTTF) identified, reviewed and provided local priority for the list of projects for the Unscheduled Needs List for state and federal roads serving Campbell County for OKI and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (See Chapter 3).

Goal: Identify Deficiencies on the County Owned Roadway Network

**Implementation:** Every county maintained road was surveyed and an inventory of existing conditions was prepared. Based on this survey the CCTTF in conjunction with the Project Management Team (PMT) prioritized county roads and developed a list of the top twenty road segments (See Chapter 3).

Goal: Identify Transit, Bike and Pedestrian Needs

**Implementation:** Existing plans and facilities for each of these alternative modes of transportation was reviewed. Recommendations were formulated that are intended to continue to incorporate these modes into the overall Campbell County transportation network (See Chapter 4).

Goal: Prepare a Financial Outlook

**Implementation:** Planning level costs and alternative program strategies for addressing roadway improvement needs have been identified (See Chapter 5). The plan also includes a series of "next steps" for consideration and action that are intended to implement recommendations in the plan (See Chapter 6).

**Funding Sources**

Funding for this project was provided by federal funds supplied by the Federal Highway Administration and KYTC through OKI, and by matching funds from the Campbell County Fiscal Court.

**Planning In the Regional Context**

The OKI region contains eight (8) counties located in three (3) states and contains approximately 1.8 million people. Campbell County contains approximately 89,000 people or approximately five (5) percent of the total population within the region. Campbell County is influenced by conditions that exist within the entire region. Transportation is one of the areas that is most influenced by conditions that occur outside of the county. OKI has conducted many planning studies to address transportation issues and several projects have been completed that have improved
transportation conditions in Campbell County (e.g., the Fort Washington Way improvements, construction of the Taylor-Southgate Bridge). This transportation plan will also become a part of the regional context along with other plans that have been recently completed or that are currently underway.

The 2030 OKI Regional Transportation Plan is the primary policy setting document prepared and maintained for the entire region. It is the basis for many other more specific plans that serve to provide more detailed review and analysis of transportation issues. Following is a brief review of other planning projects conducted by OKI that are anticipated to most influence future transportation decisions relating to transportation services in Campbell County.

**Eastern Corridor Study** – This study is a review and evaluation of transportation alternatives for a broad area of eastern Hamilton and western Clermont Counties in Ohio and Campbell County. This area is experiencing rapid urban development that generates significant daily traffic volumes. Much of this traffic utilizes I-275 and I-471 in Campbell County as the preferred route to employment in downtown Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky and other locations to the west. These interstate corridors currently provide much more efficient travel than roadways within eastern Hamilton County. This study encompasses a multimodal approach, including highway improvements, transportation system management, expanded bus service, and rail transit to potentially alleviate traffic congestion within the interstate corridors by providing other alternatives within Hamilton and Clermont Counties. Any solutions realized that reduce traffic through the Campbell County portions of the I-275 and I-471 will be beneficial to Campbell County.

**I-71 Corridor, Phase II** – This study, which covers the I-71 Corridor from Boone and Kenton Counties through Cincinnati and Hamilton County to southern Warren County, does not directly involve Campbell County. Campbell County, however, has already been benefited by the reconstruction of Fort Washington Way, as previously mentioned, which is part of this corridor. One element of this study, light rail transit, which has been identified as the preferred alternative for resolving issues along the corridor also includes a proposed route in Campbell County. The proposed light rail corridor in Campbell County would generally follow the corridors of I-471 and U.S. 27 and would terminate at U.S. 27 and the AA Highway in the City of Cold Spring.

**Central Area Loop Study** – This is a study of public transit needs within the urban core of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Limits of the study include Central Parkway in downtown Cincinnati, I-75, I-471, the 12th Street Corridor in Covington, and the 11th Street Corridor in Newport. Employment, residential density and extensive public activity areas within the area provide excellent opportunities for increased use of public transit. Implementation of recommendations in this study are anticipated to provide significant benefit to Campbell County. Following is a brief description of major recommendations contained in the Central Area Loop Study:
Transportation System Management (TSM) – implementation of measures such as dedicated transit lanes, transit signal prioritization and other methods to increase use of existing public transit services,

Streetcar – further investigation of modern street rail service in downtown Cincinnati, Newport and Covington,

Fourth and Fifth Streets (Covington and Newport) – numerous changes, such as traffic signal modification, additional left turn lanes, restriping of lanes, and additional signage to decrease congestion and to improve mobility,

Veteran’s Memorial Bridge – widening or replacement of this bridge that connects Newport with Covington over the Licking River at 4th Street in Newport, and,

Newport Light Rail Spur – further investigation of this potential connection through downtown Newport to connect with the proposed I-71 Light Rail line, previously discussed.

Other Plans and Projects - The recently completed Kenton County Transportation Plan and the 12th Street Improvement Project both have components beneficial to Campbell County. Road systems adjoining the two counties are important in providing regional connectivity. The TANK Strategic Plan, which includes Campbell County identifies strategies for increasing and improving transit services. In addition to daily bus routes TANK plans to continue to make systemwide improvements such as: park and ride lots, paratransit services, express service, and the Southbank Shuttle. More detail on TANK will be provided in Chapter 4.

PLANNING PROCESS/PROJECT OVERVIEW

Consultant Selection Process

Before the initiation of the Campbell County Transportation Plan, a Consultant Selection Committee (Selection Committee) was formed to select the most qualified and appropriate consultant to conduct the Plan. The Selection Committee comprised of six (6) members including: Judge/Executive Steve Pendery and Peter Klear from the Campbell County Fiscal Court, Greg Tully from the City of Newport, Bob Hill from KYTC, Andrew Johns from OKI, and Chuck Heilman from the Alexandria Community Business Association.

The Selection Committee met on Friday, March 22, 2002 to conduct their initial review and evaluation of the six proposals that were received. The Selection Committee then invited three finalists to make oral presentations on April 5, 2002. After careful deliberation the Selection Committee selected Wilbur Smith Associates to conduct the Campbell County Transportation Plan.
Campbell County Transportation Task Force

This plan has been prepared as an inclusive document for the entire Campbell County community. Preparation of this plan was guided by the Campbell County Transportation Task Force (CCTTF) and included a series of public meetings to seek input and comments from the general public, including residents, businesses and others.

OKI, in conjunction with the Campbell County Fiscal Court, assembled the Campbell County Transportation Task Force (CCTTF) to assist in the development of this plan. Participation on the Task Force brought together for the first time representatives from all local government jurisdictions and several agencies and organizations to work together on a county-wide project. Local governments involved were:

Alexandria  Highland Heights
Bellevue  Melbourne
California  Mentor
Campbell County Fiscal Court  Newport
Cold Spring  Silver Grove
Crestview  Southgate
Dayton  Wilder
Ft. Thomas  Woodlawn

Other participants on the Task Force included: the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Northern Kentucky University, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission, Alexandria Community Business Association, Campbell County Leadership Action Group, Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Campbell County Industrial Authority, Southbank Partners, Progress with Preservation, Sanitation District No. 1, Northern Kentucky Water District, Northern Kentucky Realtors Association, Northern Kentucky Homebuilders Association, Tri-County Economic Development Corporation, Owen Electric Coop, and the Campbell County Cattleman Association. As part of the process several presentations were made by representatives from the cities and agencies to provide insight into issues faced by their respective groups. This is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The CCTTF met regularly throughout this project, beginning in April 2002 and extending through June 2003, to provide input to OKI staff and the consultant team, including identifying local road and transportation needs, making final recommendations on state and federal roads, county road priorities, and on the final plan document.

Project Management Team

Staff from OKI, had primary responsibility for the day to day management of this project. To further insure that the project moved smoothly and to assist with other decisions and recommendations regarding the project, a project management team (PMT) was
organized. The PMT consisted of staff from OKI, the Campbell County Fiscal Court, the Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission and the consultant team. The PMT met monthly throughout the project.

**Government and Agency Input**

During the early part of this planning process all governments and agencies, participating on the CCTTF, were invited to present to the Task Force their issues regarding transportation project needs within their jurisdictions or that are otherwise important to serve their jurisdictions. Some governmental units participating on the Task Force chose to not make a presentation; however, each unit was supportive of the process. This proved to be a very successful venture which provided an opportunity for stakeholders to relate concerns, issues, and priorities to their peers. A comprehensive list of the issues identified is in Appendix A. The list includes a comparison of the projects to any plans that may already include the project, including this plan.

Following is a brief list some of the needs and issues identified.

**City of Alexandria**

- Completion of the KY 536 extension
- Upgrade KY 547 from KY 10 to the AA Highway

**City of Bellevue**

- Improve KY 8 between Riverboat Row and Berry Avenue
- Reconstruct the southbound exit ramp from I-471 to Route 8

**City of Cold Spring**

- Upgrade Pooles Creek No. 1 and add connection to Northern Kentucky University
- New intersection tying East Alexandria Pike intersection with Murnan/Pooles Creek No. 2

**City of Dayton**

- Evaluate KY 8 from I-471 through the city (this includes the City of Bellevue)

**City of Ft. Thomas**

- Grand Avenue traffic management
- East/west movement through city

**City of Newport**

- Reconstruct KY 9 along new alignment and connect with KY 8
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- New southbound I-471 exit ramp at KY 8/Cowens Drive
- New bridge connection with Covington at Fifth Street
- Improvements to Carothers Road/Grand Avenue
- Construct a connector through the Cote Brilliante Redevelopment Area.

City of Southgate

- Concerns about impact of new development on U.S. 27 and Blossom Lane area
- General traffic concerns throughout the city

City of Wilder

- Improve connectivity of city to surrounding areas
- Extend KY 9 to Newport/KY 8

Campbell County

- Maximize efficiency of U.S. 27 and KY 9 (AA Highway) corridors
- Improve east/west travel

Northern Kentucky University

- Improve Johns Hill Road
- Construct a Technology Triangle/NKU access road between I-275/KY 2345 and Pooles Creek Road No. 1/AA Highway
- Improved connectivity with community
- Community centerpiece of culture, entertainment and education.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A key component of the planning process was involvement of the public. The composition of the CCTTF was one method used to insure that a variety of views and needs were identified during the preparation of this transportation plan. In order to seek public input on transportation needs and comments on draft plan recommendation, the planning process included two (2) rounds of two (2) public meetings. These meetings were held at Campbell County High School in Claryville to provide accessibility to residents from southern Campbell County and at Newport High School to provide accessibility to residents from northern Campbell County. Each of these meetings was held using an "open house" format which allowed participants the opportunity to browse the materials and ask questions at their own pace over the course of several hours.

Notification of these meetings was an important factor in the success of the planning process. For each round of meetings a variety of methods was used to help insure that the public was informed about the dates, times and locations of them. Following are the methods of notification used for both rounds of public meetings:
• Cable TV Stations – Each station serving Campbell County was supplied with information to be placed on their community bulletin boards/calendars. These ran continuously for at least two weeks prior to each meeting date.

• Newspaper – Advertisements were placed in the Campbell County Recorder and the Kentucky Enquirer/Kentucky Post.

• Websites – The OKI and Campbell County Fiscal Court websites were also used to distribute information and to notify the public of public meetings.

• Targeted Groups – To ensure that a broad cross-section of the community was notified in accordance with environmental justice protocols, specific mailings were made to all individuals and groups identified through OKI's environmental justice coordinator. Additionally, mailing lists supplied by the Campbell County Fiscal Court were utilized. All groups, such as churches, schools, and other non-profit community organizations, that were included on the environmental justice mailing list were also asked to post flyers announcing the meeting, which were included in the envelope with announcement. Meeting notices were also provided to OKI Board of Trustee and Intermodal Coordinating Committee members.

• Campbell County Fiscal Court Announcements - The Campbell County Fiscal Court announced the meetings during their monthly televised meetings held prior to each of the public meetings. County Judge/Executive, Steve Pendery, issued press releases which resulted in several newspaper articles about the project.

Following is a synopsis of each of the public meetings, designated as Round 1 and Round 2.

Round 1 – Issues and Needs: Public meetings were held on November 18 and 21, 2002 to solicit input on transportation issues and needs in Campbell County. Over ninety (90) persons attended these meetings. Participants were provided with information in the form of handouts, and displays of maps were available that presented a variety of information from the inventory and analysis phase of this study (see Chapter 2). Each participant was provided with a questionnaire/survey designed to obtain input on transportation issues in Campbell County.

The questionnaire, which was completed by over half of the people (53 percent) that attended these meetings, asked for information/comments in the following subject areas: Multi-modal transportation (bus, rail, bicycle and pedestrian) and state and county roads. Each questionnaire included specific questions for response and also allowed for additional comments. Copies of the questionnaire and tallies of responses to the questions are included in Appendix A.

Round 2 – Comments on Draft Plan Elements: Public meetings were held on April 14 and 15, 2003 to solicit comments on the draft plan elements. Over fifty (50) persons attended these meetings. Like the first round of meetings, participants were provided
with handouts and displays of the draft plan maps were available for review. Comment sheets were available and in addition, the OKI and consultant team staff, were available to answer questions and provide other information that might be requested.

FINAL REPORT SUBMISSION

To be completed after final adoption/approval of reports by OKI, Campbell County Fiscal Court and the Campbell County and Municipal Planning and Zoning Commission.