



Analysis of Proposed Cincinnati Charter Amendment

Cincinnati - OKI Facts

Cincinnati residents are **18.5%** of the Ohio population.

From 2010-2028, Cincinnati projects received **31.4%** (\$234.8 million) of OKI's Ohio dollars.

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|--|-----------------|
| ➤ Direct Grants | \$143.3 million |
| ➤ Grants in City (Banks, WH viaduct, etc.) | \$8.6 million |
| ➤ MLK Interchange (SIB loan) | \$9.8 million |
| ➤ Metro in City (62% of Metro service) | \$72.2 million |

Cincinnati chooses the projects it wants to seek funding for.

- OKI does not tell any local government what projects to pursue; a bottom-up approach.

Cincinnati - OKI Facts

Cincinnati can appoint two Directors

- Elected official
- Representative of planning commission

Other Directors that represent Cincinnati residents

- Hamilton County Commissioners
- Hamilton County Engineer
- Ohio Dep't of Transportation

Directors from City partners (City appoints some leaders)

- SORTA
- Port Authority of Greater Cincinnati

Additional analysis shows those 2 Directors from Cincinnati represent 1.7% of OKI's Board AND the city has received 31% of OKI's Ohio dollars

OKI Governance

OKI was formed by nine (now eight) counties with the approval of the three states' Governors.

The eight counties are the only **Members** of OKI.

Articles of Agreement are OKI's "constitution."

- Only the Members, acting unanimously, can amend the Articles.

Bylaws are OKI's "laws" of governance.

- Bylaws can be amended by a majority vote of Executive Committee.
- Cannot conflict with Articles.

Board of Directors

Articles, per federal and state laws, determine who can be a Director on OKI's Board.

Articles ensure that OKI's 118 Directors represent the region:

- Counties (8)
 - Large and small cities and villages (46), and townships (11)
 - Planning agencies
 - Transportation agencies
 - State transportation departments
 - The general public and community partners
- Executive Committee too.

Bylaws provide that each Director gets one vote.

Proposed Cincinnati Charter Amendment

The Coalition for Transit and Sustainable Development of the Devou
Good Foundation has filed this proposed Charter Amendment for
the November 2024 ballot:

“Article XVII – Membership in a Metropolitan Planning Organization

(1) The City may commence or maintain membership in a Metropolitan Planning Organization (‘MPO’) only when both the following conditions are met: (a) the voting power of the governing board of the MPO is apportioned proportionally based on population, not including those statutorily-required voting members; and (b) members that represent local governments have at least 90% of the total votes on the governing board.

(2) In the event that an MPO does not comply with section (1) of this Article, the City shall withdraw its membership from the body if the voting system is not corrected within 60 days of the effective date of this Article.”

What Happens if the Charter Amendment Is Approved?

Would OKI be forced to change its governance structure?

- No. Cincinnati's Charter does not govern how OKI works.

Could Cincinnati leave OKI?

- No. Cincinnati is not a Member of OKI, so it cannot withdraw from OKI.
- No. OKI is the MPO for the region; federal law prefers one MPO per region absent extraordinary circumstances.

Could Cincinnati stop participating in OKI's decision-making?

- Yes, but that would give Cincinnati less say in regional planning, not more.

How Could OKI Change Its Governance?

Could OKI change the composition of its Board of Directors?

- Yes, if unanimously agreed by the eight Member Counties.
- If a “substantial change,” would *also* require approval of the Governors AND local governments representing 75% of the region’s population including largest city.
- Moving to proportional representation is a substantial change.

Could OKI change the number or weight of Directors’ votes?

- Yes, if approved by a majority of the Executive Committee AND the Governors AND local governments representing 75% of the region’s population including largest city.

Could the Region Form a Second MPO?

What is required to form a second MPO?

- Approval of the Governors AND OKI's Board.

Federal law *strongly discourages* multiple MPOs for one region.

“To the extent possible, only one MPO shall be designated for each urbanized area.” 23 C.F.R. 450.310(e).

Governors and OKI must “determine that the size and complexity of the urbanized area make designation of more than one MPO appropriate.”
23 C.F.R. 450.310(e).

Is This Happening Elsewhere?

The proposed Charter Amendment language is nearly identical to a Houston charter amendment, which passed in November 2023.

Key differences between this region and the Houston region:

- Houston MPO pop. = 7,297,022; OKI pop. = 2,120,427.
- Houston is a Member of the MPO it seeks to change.
- Houston received significantly less than its proportion of certain federal flood-relief funding (\$9mm of \$488mm), which led to controversy.

The amendment has NOT changed Houston's operations or voting structure. Houston REMAINS a full participant in the MPO's work, including important Chair positions.

We are not aware of any other region contemplating a change.

Summary

- Because of you, OKI represents the best of our region.
- We represent the entire community.
- We work across party lines, state lines, and boundary lines.
- We work bottom-up to fund your communities' priorities.
- We are leading the way to a sustainable energy transportation future.
- Our team is a group of award-winning, top-notch experts.

Summary

- Cincinnati gets at least its fair share of funding.
- Cincinnati is well-represented here.
- Changing governance would be disruptive and significant hurdles discourage it.