

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

THE 2040 OKI REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

This is the metropolitan transportation plan for the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI). OKI is the federally designated regional transportation planning entity for Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren counties in Ohio; Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties in Kentucky; and Dearborn County in Indiana. Figure 1-1 presents the eight-county, tri-state OKI region. All figures in this plan, unless otherwise noted by a source, originated internally from OKI staff efforts or previous OKI plans.

Figure 1-1: The OKI Region



As the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO), OKI must ensure that the region it serves has a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process that results in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and supports regional community development and social goals.

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 2012 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 between 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 region's 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 have an effect on development, travel patterns and opportunities.

This document, the *OKI 2040 Regional Transportation Plan*, defines the policies, programs, and projects to be implemented over the next 20plus years to create an integrated, intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. The plan's recommendations cover the following types of surface transportation infrastructure: roadways, public transportation, freight, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and bicycle/pedestrian facilities.

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 provides transportation opportunities in an equitable manner and is developed with attention to environmental justice populations and specialized needs. Recommendations were evaluated to assure that positive and negative impacts of the proposed transportation investments are distributed in an equitable and meaningful manner.

RELATED PLANS, PROGRAMS AND COMMITTEES

There are several plans and planning processes that served as precursors to this *2040 OKI Regional Transportation Plan*. Some of the most significant ones are described below. Additional plans and standing OKI committees are discussed in their appropriate chapter. For example OKI Land Use Commission is discussed in

Chapter 4 along with a brief overview of the environmental and land use planning OKI accomplishes through the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP)*.

Unified Planning Work Program

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) document is prepared annually by OKI in cooperation with local and state officials, transit agencies and others, and documents all planning activities anticipated during the fiscal year regardless of funding sources, while incorporating the comprehensive multi-modal planning process. This continuous planning process is responsive to the needs of the local area and to the changes occurring in the region for which current data concerning land use, travel and transportation facilities must be continuously maintained. The Fiscal Year 2013 UPWP was approved by the OKI Board of Directors in April 2012.

Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) document is normally developed every two years and reviewed periodically in cooperation with state and local officials, regional and local transit operators and other affected transportation, regional planning and implementing agencies.

The OKI Board of Directors through Resolution 2011-15 adopted the latest TIP, *OKI Fiscal Year 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program*, in April 2011. The document was forwarded to the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC), the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) divisions in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region V and the Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) for review and approval.

The TIP consists of improvements recommended from the short-range planning process, elements of the transportation plan and the transit development programs of the various transit systems. Specifically, the TIP: 1) identifies transportation improvements recommended for advancement during the four year program period; 2) indicates the area's priorities; 3) groups improvements of similar urgency and anticipated staging into appropriate staging periods; 4) includes realistic estimates of total costs and revenues for the program period, including year of expenditure cost estimates; and 5) is financially constrained. The entire TIP is tested to establish its conformity with the State Implementation Plan for air quality.

The TIP includes project-by-project listings which are modified periodically and contain: 1) sufficient descriptive material of work, termini and length to identify the project; 2) estimated total cost and the amount of federal funds proposed to be obligated during the program year; 3) proposed source of federal and

non-federal funds; and 4) identification of the recipient and state and local agencies responsible for carrying out the project.

Board of Directors

More than 100 members serve on the OKI Board of Directors, the governing body of the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments. The Board brings together leaders from government, business and civic institutions. Board members represent local government, planning commissions, chambers of commerce, public transit authorities, state departments of transportation and environmental organizations. The Board's organizational strength and vision enables OKI to effectively address regional transportation, environmental and economic issues. Through ongoing collaboration, a wide range of agendas, priorities, and solutions are focused into a viable plan of action that generates measurable results. The Board meets on a quarterly basis.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee oversees the findings of the many advisory groups. This diverse group is selected from the ranks of and by the full Board of Directors. The Executive Committee has authority to make all policy decisions for the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee meets monthly to discuss agency programs, establish policies, adopt plans and resolve issues.

Intermodal Coordinating Committee

The Intermodal Coordinating Committee (ICC) is an advisory subcommittee to the Board of Directors and Executive Committee on technical matters related to the transportation planning process. The ICC holds regular monthly meetings. It is composed of representatives of the various municipal and county departments involved in the transportation planning process as well as various state and federal agency staff.

The ICC's primary responsibility is to review and comment on the agency planning tasks described in the UPWP. These include the updates to this plan, analyses of operational issues in the thoroughfare system, recommendations for various transportation investment programs, and the public involvement process for OKI as the MPO.

COORDINATION WITH FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

This plan is intended to comply with statewide and metropolitan transportation planning regulations issued by the United States Department of Transportation's (US DOT) FHWA and FTA governing the development of transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas. This plan was prepared in accordance with federal statute (23 CFR Part 450), which requires the development and update of

transportation plans every four years in air quality maintenance or non-attainment areas.

National Air Quality Standards

Air quality designations are based on comparisons of actual pollutant emissions against the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The OKI region was previously nonattainment for both the ozone and fine particulate (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS. In 2011, the US EPA determined that the OKI region had attained both the ozone and fine particulates standards and was reclassified as a maintenance area. By the end of 2012, it is anticipated that a more stringent ozone NAAQS will cause the region to once again be designated nonattainment.

OKI's previous plan, the *OKI 2030 Regional Transportation Plan*, was updated in 2008 and the US DOT approved the Transportation Conformity Determination on September 26, 2008. The 2030 Plan and Conformity Determination will lapse on September 26, 2012. In conjunction with the approval of this *OKI 2040 Regional Transportation Plan*, the OKI Board of Directors approved the Conformity Determination whereby this plan will not contribute to the exceedance of any NAAQS. The procedures for the quantitative conformity analysis were reviewed by an interagency consultation process and are based on population, employment and travel projections. A more detailed discussion of OKI's air quality conformity is presented in Chapter 16.

SAFETEA-LU Requirements

Passed in August 2005, the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU) is the most recent federal transportation legislation. SAFETEA-LU established new and revised requirements for statewide and metropolitan transportation plans and programs, as well as the underlying planning processes. Compliance with SAFETEA-LU's new and revised planning provisions has been required for new plans since July 1, 2007. These provisions are set forth in SAFETEA-LU, and described more fully in the joint regulation issued by the FHWA and FTA (23 CFR Parts 450 and 500 and 49 CFR Part 613: Statewide Transportation Planning; Metropolitan Transportation Planning). These requirements include:

- **Security of the Transportation System**

The statewide metropolitan planning process and the metropolitan planning process for a metropolitan planning area shall provide for consideration of projects and strategies that will increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users [49 USC 5303(h)(1)(C) and 23 USC 134(h)(1)(C)]. OKI compliance with this requirement is described in Chapter 6 of this plan.

- **Potential Environmental Mitigation Activities**

MPOs and Departments of Transportation (DOTs) are to include in their metropolitan and statewide transportation plans a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan. These discussions are to be developed in consultation with federal, state, and tribal wildlife, land management, and regulatory agencies [49 USC 5303(i)(2)(B), 5304(f)(4)(A)(B) and 23 USC 134(i)(2)(B)]. OKI compliance with this requirement is presented in Chapters 4 and 16 of this plan.

- **Utilization of a Participation Plan**

MPOs are to develop and utilize a participation plan. A participation plan is to be developed in consultation with all interested parties and provide that all interested parties have reasonable opportunities to comment on the contents of the transportation plan [49 USC 5303(i)(5)(B)(i) & (ii) and 23 USC 134(i)(5)(B)(i) & (ii)]. The Board of Directors approved the *OKI Participation Plan* in June 2007. An update to this plan was approved by the OKI Executive Committee in May 2010. The information presented in Chapter 2 and detailed in Appendix C of this plan is in direct accordance with the most current *OKI Participation Plan*.

- **State and Local Agency Consultations**

MPOs and DOTs are to consult, as appropriate, with state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning the development of an LRTP [49 USC 303(i)(4)(A), 49 USC 5304(f)(2)(D)(i), and 23 USC 134(i)(4)(A)]. The LRTP shall be developed, as appropriate, in consultation with state, tribal, and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation [49 USC 5304(f)(2)(D) and 23 USC 135(f)(2)(D)]. The Secretary of US DOT shall encourage each MPO to consult with officials responsible for other types of planning activities that are affected by transportation in the area (including state and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, and freight movements) or to coordinate its planning process, to the maximum extent practicable, with such planning activities [49 USC 5303(g)(3) and 23 USC 134(g)(3)]. OKI compliance with this requirement is accomplished as presented in Chapter 4 of this plan.

- **Public Information Format and Techniques**

The MPO and state DOT shall, to the maximum extent practicable, employ visualization techniques to describe plans [49 USC 5303(i)(5)(C)(ii), 23 USC 134(i)(5)(C)(ii)], and 5304(f)(3)(B)(ii). MPOs and DOTs shall, to the maximum extent practicable, make public information on the transportation plan available in electronically accessible format and means, such as the World Wide Web, as appropriate to afford reasonable opportunity for consideration of public

information [49 USC 5303(i)(5)(C)(iii), 23 USC 134(i)(5)(C)(iii), and 23 USC 135(f)(8)]. OKI compliance with this requirement is met with the information presented in Chapter 2 of this plan and detailed in Appendix C.

- **Coordinated Plan**

Proposed projects under three FTA formula funding programs—*Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities* [49 USC 5310(d)(2)(B)(i) & (ii)]; *Job Access and Reverse Commute* [49 USC 5316 (g)(3)(A) & (B)]; and *New Freedom* [49 USC 5317 (f)(3)(A) & (B)]—must be derived from a locally developed and coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan. Local officials will determine the appropriate “lead” which may or may not be the MPO. The OKI Board of Directors approved a *Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for the OKI Region* in August 2007. An update to this plan was recently approved by the OKI Executive Committee in May 2012. Findings and recommendations from this most recent update are presented in Chapters 4, 10 and 14.

- **Annual Project Listing**

An annual listing of projects, including investments in pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, for which Federal funds have been obligated in the preceding year shall be published or otherwise made available by the cooperative effort of the state, transit operator, and metropolitan planning organization for public review. The listing shall be consistent with the categories identified in the TIP [49 USC 5303(j)(7)(B) and 23 USC 134(j)(7)(B)]. OKI publishes an Annual Listing of Obligated Projects in the OKI Region prior to the close of every calendar year. The latest such listing for Fiscal Year 2011 was completed on December 8, 2011 and is available at www.oki.org.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS MADE

In addition to noting the changes in federal requirements made over time to the plan, it is important to identify the projects that have been completed since the 2008 update. A summary of progress made is included as Appendix A. The appendix is separated into six categories by type of project and includes bicycle projects, enhancement projects, Land Use Commission recommendations, TIP projects, transit services and corridor studies. This list illustrates the span of transportation plans and projects that affect residents, businesses and workers in the region and will impact future planning efforts.

PLANNING FACTORS

In concert with the directives of SAFETEA-LU, 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. Like its predecessor, the plan continues to place emphasis on community impacts and public participation. This plan also draws on an ongoing data acquisition effort that provides baseline data

on observed travel time for significant roadways in the region and identifies locations with safety issues. This plan's base year for data modeling is 2005 with the exception of freight data which used 2009 as a base year. This plan's planning horizon has been extended to 2040. As with previous plans, this plan conforms to air quality standards and is fiscally constrained.

Among the issues to be addressed as part of this transportation planning process are the metropolitan planning factors retained and expanded upon in SAFETEA-LU. OKI has established a set of eight planning factors which define the goals which must be met to address the region's transportation needs both now and in the future (Figure 1-2). Each planning factor represents a key issue that has been considered and reflected in this plan. Objectives clarify how the planning factor has been achieved in this plan.

**Figure 1-2
OKI 2040 Regional Transportation Plan Goals**

Economic vitality
Safety
Security
Accessibility and mobility options
Environmental protection, energy conservation and sustainable development
System integration and connectivity
Efficient system management and operations
Preservation of the existing system

Economic Vitality

The transportation network can support the economic vitality of the region by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency as shown through the plan's emphasis on ideas that address this issue. Chapter 4 discusses the OKI Land Use Commission's development of policies that will promote the economic vitality of the region. Chapter 3 analyzes the region's demographic trends and notes that the population in the OKI region is projected to grow 23 percent and employment to increase 26 percent over the planning period. Chapter 7 provides a list of management strategies and technologies to deal with this growth through development and travel pattern ideas. Finally, Chapter 11 deals with expanding ITS to reduce congestion and delay.

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

- Increase security for travel by transit and non-motorized modes

Safety

The transportation system should provide for reducing the risk of crashes that cause death or injuries. Chapter 5 is devoted to the topic of vehicular safety. The highest crash rate locations in the region are identified. Engineering studies are recommended for problem locations. Chapter 11 describes the integration of ITS with other agencies and systems to facilitate emergency response. Chapter 13 includes several recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian travel safety.

Objectives

- Reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes
- Expand the deployment of ITS to reduce crashes and improve incident response time
- Reduce crashes occurring during transfers between transit and pedestrian facilities
- Facilitate use of improved design of shared roadways to increase safety for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians

Security

A regional security strategy relates to sustainable prevention, detection, response and recovery efforts to protect regional transportation systems' critical infrastructure from terrorism and natural disasters. Chapter 6 documents actions and strategies being implemented throughout the region for strengthening regional security.

Objectives

- Facilitate implementation of homeland security measures to protect key regional infrastructure assets
- Incorporate the transit providers' system security program plans into this plan and other regional transportation planning efforts
- Collaborate with agencies throughout the region to assist in developing security goals and appropriate strategies
- Utilize the most current technology and guiding principles in helping to minimize risks to regional security

Accessibility and Mobility Options

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 the region's older population. Chapter 3 provides demographic 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 7 discusses means to improve roadway travel 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 10 safeguards rail transit as a mobility option in the future. Chapter 12 presents a summary of the OKI Regional Freight Plan which includes recommendations that facilitate efficient freight movement throughout the region.

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 SOV travel and reducing peak hour travel
- Expand the implementation of ITS such as Advanced Regional Traffic Interactive Management and Information System (ARTIMIS)
- Acknowledge and incorporate the use of non-motorized travel (walking and biking) into the planning process as an alternative mode of travel and means of connecting modal options
- Facilitate efficient intermodal transfers for both passengers and freight

Environmental Protection, Energy Conservation and Sustainable Development

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 natural resources would reduce mobile source emissions and would also have a beneficial effect on other environmental issues and quality of life. Chapter 10 focuses on public transportation improvements including making recommendations for expansion of bus service, facilitating bus ridership through technological improvements, and construction of transit hubs and park and ride lots.

In addition, development of rail transit in the Eastern Corridor is recommended to reduce SOV travel, thereby reducing vehicular emissions. Chapter 13 includes planning efforts to encourage walking and bicycling, which would have the effect of conserving fuel, reducing vehicle emissions, and improving personal health. Chapter 14 provides information on current transportation systems operating in the region such as ridesharing and teleworking that promote energy conservation

through reducing SOVs. Chapter 16 deals with transportation initiatives to improve air quality and other environmental factors. One project highlighted in the chapter is the Regional Clean Air Program, a program committed to reducing smog in the region. This local commitment, which began in 1994, encourages voluntary efforts by individuals and businesses to reduce ozone and particulate matter pollution.

The OKI Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) calls for sustained cooperation and coordination among transportation planning, land use planning, housing, capital budgeting, natural resource and economic development organizations. The transportation system, along with other infrastructure, has a significant impact on future land use, economic development, and the environment. 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. Chapter 4 discusses the SRPP and regional sustainability efforts integrating land use and transportation planning.

Objectives

- Reduce SOV travel
- Facilitate greater use of non-motorized modes (walking, biking)
- Promote strategies that reduce motorized vehicular travel
- Reduce mobile source emissions
- Encourage use of alternative fuels by both individuals, public transportation providers and private freight fleets
- Encourage measures that reduce the impact transportation has on water quality and noise levels
- Implement the recommendations of the SRPP
- Improve consistency between local land use planning and regional transportation planning
- Consider local planning recommendations as part of transportation studies, transportation improvements and funding prioritization
- Promote regional and local land development techniques and policies that create transportation choices and that ensure coordination between the provision of public facilities and services and land development and redevelopment

System Integration and Connectivity

A functional transportation system is one that allows people and goods to travel efficiently between their desired destinations. Chapter 10 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 hubs, including the intermodal transit center in downtown Cincinnati, are facilities where transfers can be made between bus routes and proposed rail transit lines, or between different transit lines. Chapter

12 highlights the importance of integrating the various freight transport modes such as roadway, rail, water, air and intermodal and recommends the continued monitoring and facilitation of the movement of freight in, around, and through the region. Chapter 13 encourages the creation of linkages between roadway and transit with bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Objectives

- Plan in such a way that the functional design of a roadway is consistent with the intended use of the roadway
- Optimize the surface transportation facilities access to airports, transit facilities, park and ride lots and freight intermodal facilities

Efficient System Management and Operations

The Congestion Management Program (CMP) 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 7 provides information on managing congestion in the region. Chapters 9 through 14 address different strategies for managing travel demand that focus on altering travel behavior to mitigate traffic congestion, in lieu of building infrastructure to accommodate travel needs.

Objectives

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

Preservation of the Existing 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. Each travel mode has its own chapter in this plan. Each chapter begins with a snapshot of the region's existing transportation system. In the ever-changing transportation environment, these overviews serve as a baseline to which policies, alternatives and improvements can be referenced. Chapter 9 highlights the plan's effort to optimize the existing system through recommendations for applying roadway operational improvements. In addition, information on roadway expansion is provided however funding priority is given to system preservation with the allocation of a

sizeable portion of available revenues to this purpose. Chapter 11 discusses expanding the use of ITS technologies to optimize the existing system.

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

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The impacts of the federal directives are evident in the plan's recommendations. The recommendations place emphasis on expanding modal alternatives and improving the transportation system's efficiency. More specifically, the recommendations for improving roadways are accompanied by recommendations for improving transit service; using advanced technologies to move traffic more efficiently; applying strategies to help reduce SOV; promoting ridesharing, bicycle and pedestrian travel; upgrading roadway 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 sustainable development, safety, security, congestion management, fiscal constraint, special social and economic populations, and the environment with a particular emphasis on air quality conformity. To tie together local growth and development with regional transportation planning, the reciprocal impacts of land use and transportation are examined to reach continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative solutions. To reduce the risk of crashes that cause death or injuries, the plan analyzes data in order to advance projects which address the region's safety needs. To respond and recover from manmade and natural disasters, OKI utilizes the most current technology and guiding principles in assisting collaborative regional security planning. To mitigate congestion, strategies for managing travel demand are considered for their regional applicability. To address financial concerns, the plan identifies revenue sources and distinguishes between expenditures needed to maintain existing infrastructure and expenditures needed for capital and operational improvements. To secure an active and representative participation from all segments of the community and minimize the extent of adverse impacts, OKI analyzes the social, economic, and environmental effects of proposed actions taking into consideration the needs of Environmental Justice populations in its transportation planning process and decision making activities. 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.

Everyone has a role in meeting 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 consider altering traditional travel behavior.

This plan continues a process designed to transform the region's transportation system into one that offers a variety of modes and reduces SOV travel. The transportation system envisioned for this plan is an intermodal, multimodal system that expands travel options and improves and maintains transportation infrastructure. Finally, improving the project delivery process must be a key goal. Developing and implementing projects more quickly will reduce project costs and provide higher user benefits.

Project Recommendation Process

To respond to the region's transportation needs and create the plan's recommended multimodal improvements, OKI evaluated all proposed transportation improvement projects using an iterative quantitative and qualitative process. The starting point for this plan update was the project listing from the 2008 plan. Added to the 2008 plan list were locations identified through the Congestion Management Process and all amendments made to the plan since 2008. Amendments reflect recommendations identified by regional and local transportation studies completed since 2008.

An initial draft list was distributed to local communities with the request that they provide a local prioritization (high, medium or low), detailed description, primary purpose, and cost estimate for all of the projects located within their communities. They were also asked to identify any needed, but missing projects from the draft list.

Staff then applied the project scoring process (Appendix B) to a new list of more than 600 multimodal projects. The prioritization process assigns numerical scores for 11 to 15 criteria depending on the project's mode (transit, freight or roadway). The criteria include the following items: impact to economic vitality, environmental justice populations, air quality, and the environment; local priority; inclusion of multimodal investments; inclusion in local and regional studies; average daily traffic volume; facility type; crash rate; impact on improving safety; existing congestion; 2040 level of service; impact on improving level of service; percent trucks; feasibility; impacts to transit operation and ridership; implementation time frames; and freight criteria. Finally, the financial resources available were considered to determine the number of projects that could be included in a draft list to produce a fiscally constrained plan.

The OKI Board of Directors and ICC reviewed the list and provided comments. The list was adjusted as necessary to produce a draft plan project list. The draft list was presented to the public via www.oki.org and a series of eight public open houses held in April 2012.

Staff reviewed and incorporated suggestions into the list of projects. The OKI Board of Directors, ICC and local and state agencies were once again asked for comments. Staff made modifications to the list based on all comments received to determine the final list of projects included in this plan. Recommended transportation improvement projects are presented in separate chapters of this plan based on these respective travel modes: roadway (Chapter 9), public transportation (Chapter 10), Intelligent Transportation Systems or ITS (Chapter 11), freight (Chapter 12), bicycle and pedestrian travel (Chapter 13), and other travel mode alternatives (Chapter 14). Recommendations for further transportation study are also included (Chapter 8).

Finally, the plan requires adoption by the OKI Board of Directors. Projects included in the plan will be eligible to advance to the TIP once a sponsor and funding is identified.

SUMMARY

Today, the OKI region has an extremely diverse, well-developed transportation system for the mobility of both people and goods. It includes roads and rails, highways and bridges, buses, trucks, planes, and bicycles. Transportation options must be reliable, flexible and affordable enough to safely connect people to each other, to their workplaces, to the institutions that matter to them and to the services on which they depend. The system must also support the region's economic vitality and development demands. This plan works to address these public interests and travel demands to result in a coordinated regional roadmap for guiding transportation improvements for the next 20 plus years.