



Steering Committee

Summary of Regional Meetings, August 2012

Ohio Department of Transportation

Public involvement is the primary ingredient in a successful statewide transportation plan. A key component of ODOT’s public involvement strategy is the **Access Ohio Steering Committee**, comprised of representatives from various organizations, industries, and advocacy groups. Each member has a clear understanding of the transportation needs of his or her constituents and is charged with communicating those needs to ODOT.

In addition to meetings with the full committee in May and October of 2012, ODOT conducted a series of regional meetings in August 2012, aiming to provide an open forum and facilitate a deeper discussion of issues that are important to particular regions of the state. Following is a list of dates and locations, along with names of those in attendance. The handouts provided and notes from each meeting are attached.

August 13, 2012: Cambridge	
Name	Organization
Vince Rapp	ODOT Central Office
Greg DiDonato	OMEGA
Bret Allphin	Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley RDD
Misty Casto	Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley RDD
Ty Thompson	ODOT District 5
Scott Phinney	ODOT Central Office
Susan Daniels	Lawhon & Associates

August 14, 2012: Akron	
Name	Organization
Sara Walton	ODOT Central Office
Dan Moeglin	City of Canton
Tony Paglia	Youngstown-Warren Chamber of Commerce
Robert Brown	City of Cleveland
Brian Lynch	Cleveland Port Authority
Scott Phinney	ODOT Central Office
Jason Segedy	Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study
Susan Daniels	Lawhon & Associates



August 15, 2012: Findlay	
Name	Organization
Andrew Shepler	ODOT Central Office
Bill Lowe	Ottawa County Transit Agency
John Adams	Richland County Regional Planning Commission
William Homka	Hancock County Planning Commission
Scott Phinney	ODOT Central Office
Susan Daniels	Lawhon & Associates

August 16, 2012: Columbus (Part 1)	
Name	Organization
Dave Moore	ODOT Central Office
Penny Lovett	Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Rhonda Romano	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Kate Moening	Safe Routes to School Partnership
Sarah Biel	Ohio Poverty Law Center
Scott Phinney	ODOT Central Office
Andrew Hurst	ODOT Central Office
Susan Daniels	Lawhon & Associates

August 16, 2012: Columbus (Part 2)	
Name	Organization
Dave Moore	ODOT Central Office
Ben Wickizer	Sierra Club
Heather Bowden	ODOT Central Office
Matt Dietrich	Ohio Rail Commission
Art Arnold	Ohio Railroad Association
Thea Walsh	Ohio Department of Development
Larry Woolum	Ohio Trucking Association
Lisa Patt-McDaniel	Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
Derek Troyer	ODOT Central Office
Thom Slack	ODOT District 6
Scott Phinney	ODOT Central Office
Chuck Dyer	ODOT Central Office
Andrew Shepler	ODOT Central Office
Susan Daniels	Lawhon & Associates



August 17, 2012: Dayton	
Name	Organization
Mark Dongahy	Ohio Public Transit Association/Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority
Scott Schmid	Clark County Springfield Transportation Coordinating Committee/Ohio Association of Regional Councils
Steve Finke	City of Dayton
Catalina Landivar	Hamilton County Planning
Neil Tunison	Warren County Engineer/Ohio County Engineers' Association
Scott Phinney	ODOT Central Office
Andrew Hurst	ODOT Central Office
Susan Daniels	Lawhon & Associates



East and Southeast Region
OMEGA Office, Cambridge, Ohio
August 13, 2012 10:00 am

During introductions, attendees shared their involvement with transportation planning and top concerns on their minds. Discussion topics during introductions included:

- Is the state going to finish the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS)? Is that even the right thing to do? The local agencies want to be at the table for this discussion. MAP-21, the current federal transportation bill, encourages a closer relationship with locals in rural areas. OMEGA, as well as Buckeye Hills-Hocking Valley RDD, are looking forward to this opportunity. The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) currently funds access roads at \$1.0M annually, which may grow to \$3.0M annually.
- For ADHS in Ohio, all that remains to be completed is the SR 823 Portsmouth Bypass and the Waverly section of US 23. Scott Phinney discussed ODOT's commitment to SR 823, but indicated that ODOT is dealing with the challenge of financing it. The Waverly section has no champion at ODOT or among the local agencies.
- There is a great demand for access improvements due to growth of shale gas industry. There are approximately 14-18 months until the greatest amount of activity will occur. Even if access road funds go up to \$3.0M as mentioned, the funds may not meet the needs.
- MAP-21 authorizes only two years of federal funding. Does this leave uncertainty for planning long-term in general and for use of ADHS funds specifically?
- Both Buckeye Hills and OMEGA strongly advocate the establishment of Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs). Examples were brought up of RPOs in Oklahoma which have allowed locals to perform much needed planning tasks. An example was provided from Buckeye Hills as to the importance of planning in preventing unnecessary time and money commitments. The example discussed a recent road widening project that occurred without any planning studies and unknowingly created the need to move recently installed waterlines.
- Lack of transit is a primary concern in southeastern Ohio, particularly for the aging population. Need mobility for doctor visits, etc. It is difficult for the locals to provide services in places like Monroe Co. with small populations. The price of gas and economic conditions make it hard for people to get around. Getting to doctors' appointments 1-2 counties away and to work are among the issues facing residents of Appalachia. Private groups (such as churches and veterans' organizations) are the only entities picking up the slack but more needs to be done.



After introductions, Scott Phinney provided an overview of the packet of handouts. He indicated the desire to produce a thin *Access Ohio 2040* (AO40) document that is easily navigable. He described that the strategy for doing so would consist of a series of technical memorandums for each chapter, where the most important information from each would be inserted into the final AO40 plan. The “Setting the Stage” tech memo was discussed as an example. The attendees were asked to provide input on what issues they felt were most important to include in the AO40 plan document. Susan Daniels re-capped the issues raised to this point of the meeting, as examples of issues foremost on their minds that might be good priorities for the plan. (See underlined items above.)

The group then explored the above concerns further. The discussion is summarized below:

- Attendees noted that US30 will become more of a problem with pressure from shale gas industry and asked about the status of completing this corridor in eastern Ohio. Mr. Phinney mentioned that ODOT had begun a tolling study but took a step back because of the uncertainty arising from the shale gas growth. A cost estimate for the corridor estimated approximately \$900M to complete the corridor, with the high cost a result of the potential for encountering undocumented mine voids. Based upon this enormous cost, it is unlikely that tolling would come close to covering the expense.
- Attendees discussed the method of allocating ADHS funds (\$20M/year) as a challenge because even though there is no longer a required state funding match, \$20M per year barely scratches the surface of projects with total costs of hundreds of millions. In addition, concerns were expressed that the ADHS funding is no longer a set aside from other programs in MAP-21.

Mr. Phinney initiated a discussion of the context within which ODOT is operating for AO40 compared to the last version published in 2004. Scott discussed the status of ODOT in the early 2000's. ODOT was coming off a series of gas tax increases. Governor Taft had an emphasis on infrastructure as a part of the Jobs & Progress program. *Access Ohio 2004-2030* (released in 2004) was optimistic, listing billions of dollars' worth of projects. The new AO40 needs to have a different philosophy, with more emphasis on system preservation and less expansion of the system. There needs to be a tough look at the expansions, focused on the most urgent areas. The new analysis of corridors will be different than the old macro-corridors where each of the 26 corridors was put on equal ground. This time, ODOT will need to stratify the corridors based upon their importance, with the understanding that resources are limited.

- The attendees noted that ODOT should also consider exploring needs for rail and river access, rather than just roadway improvements, to take advantage of economic opportunities. For example, Monroe County is adjacent to the river but with no access to it. Mr. Phinney responded that high priority corridors are also water and rail, in addition to highways. ODOT needs to consider where intermodal facilities make sense.



For stratifying the corridors, ODOT is working to develop objective criteria, trying to use things that widely accepted. Categories to quantify importance: traffic volume, functional class, and connectivity.

- Attendees contrasted these criteria with ADHS and asked how you figure out what is the next step for Appalachia. The country had changed so much. How do we connect to those corridors that have been built? The area has I-70, I-77, US 33, US 35, but this still leaves large areas without access because they are on the low end of volume, connectivity and functional class.

Mr. Phinney acknowledged that the plan could focus exclusively on maintaining what we have, with keeping the current “haves” and “have-nots.” Alternatively, it could use a philosophy to provide more distribution of infrastructure. He stated that it is more likely that the plan will end up in the middle. It comes down to how far ODOT can stretch the dollars.

The group discussed the trends with gas tax revenue. The attendees noted that trucking fleets are converting more and more to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), which impacts the dollars ODOT receives without any reduction in traffic. The group acknowledged that the plan can discuss the challenges with funding, but potential solutions are in the realm of politics and policy, which is outside of ODOT’s direct control. Then Mr. Phinney opened the floor to any additional thoughts or comments:

- ODOT doing a better job getting input this time around. Website helpful.
- Question arose of how to tie ADHS into corridors or if that would happen.
- Consider improving some existing two-lanes (Super 2’s) to fix intersections or straighten sections rather than widening. How do you build the infrastructure to change your economic environment?
- Districts 5 & 10 should work with county engineers on parts of state highways that need to be addressed.
- Most people understand that new roads are not going to be a focus in the near future and the focus needs to be about improvements to current infrastructure.
- Based upon some Pennsylvania experience, the influences of the shale gas boom are temporary. The cycle to ramp up and ramp down is shorter than the coal industry. When it is over, at least the infrastructure will be there that these towns might not have gotten otherwise.
- ODOT decisions are becoming increasingly dependent on questions of return on investment (ROI). In order to make a case for any project ROI must be explored.



Northeast Region
AMATS Office, Akron, Ohio
August 14, 2012 10:00am

After introductions, Scott Phinney opened the meeting by discussing the intent to use some of the analysis for AO40 to provide support for ODOT's budget testimony before the Ohio General Assembly, anticipated for February 2013. ODOT's Director would like to have input from AO40 for his vision for ODOT.

Mr. Phinney discussed the packet of handouts, including the Chapter 5 updates and the executive summary for "Setting the Stage." He explained the approach of using tech memos for detailed analyses and then preparing a more compact plan document. He explained that ODOT wants steering committee feedback on what trends and key influences should be carried forward from the "Setting the Stage" technical memo to the plan document. Lastly, Mr. Phinney shared the draft goals, objectives and critical success factors.

Mr. Phinney then opened the floor for a general discussion of the needs of Northeast Ohio. He asked what issues Access Ohio must address. Following is summary of the discussion.

- Shale gas is important from Canton to Cambridge. The communities must deal with transportation and housing, which is key to capturing the economic development potential and capitalizing on these opportunities. There is increased traffic on rural roads that were not designed for it, with townships adjacent to Canton overwhelmed with truck traffic from drilling, fracking, and construction of pads. Lisbon has used Road Use Maintenance Agreements (RUMA) and now has more construction on their roads than before. ODOT has been helping locals with RUMA. The locals are trying to figure out which corridors need to be improved.
- How long will the boom-bust cycle really take for the shale gas industry in Ohio? Youngstown reports hearing that the cycle may be as long as 100 years. Youngstown is re-industrializing, which wasn't planned for, so there are some gaps. Access to rail and easy access to highway are needed. Old steel mills, which would be good redevelopment sites, are not near good highways, so they aren't attractive to companies. Highway access and rail are both critical. Cleveland reports that they have some areas with good rail access, but not always highway access (e.g. Opportunity Corridor).
- The Cleveland Port Authority reported that there was a discussion at the Northeast Ohio Trade & Economic Consortium (NEOTEC) Conference that there is a concern that shale gas resources will be exported out of Ohio. How do we keep these resources in Ohio? There is a lack of natural gas fueling stations. Water is important in addition to rail. Attendees noted that the challenge is to develop CNG facilities and make our own demand. Large fleets (e.g. Fed Ex) can convert to CNG but it is difficult for others due to lack of fueling stations. Transportation needs to adapt to



address capturing funding for non-gasoline/diesel vehicles. Mr. Phinney noted that AO40 will identify these problems but probably won't specify solutions to the funding problem, leaving that up to the legislature.

- Mr. Phinney explored further the topic of the boom to bust cycle for shale gas. The attendees indicated that the cycle will depend on what they find. Carroll County seems to be the apex, but there is still interest in other areas. Gas prices are down so the industry has slowed down for now, but this will pick back up. Utica shale has potential for "wet gas" with the oils and liquids that they still want. Pennsylvania was mostly Marcellus, which is dry gas. Port Authority said the conference indicated the cycle would be 20 years.
- Prioritizing system preservation is important. (Northeast Ohio, a 12 county area lost 7% population – fewer people than 1970's.) There are already many TRAC-funded projects in Northeast Ohio for system expansion of improvements; now need to focus on system preservation. AMATS "widens a road very rarely," only if there are serious safety or congestion problems. Improving physical conditions of the existing system can make areas more attractive. Mr. Phinney discussed the change in tone, since the last update published in 2004 to focus on system preservation with very limited expansion and stratifying the corridors to identify the most important.
- The group discussed concerns about core area preservation (like Cleveland or other small towns) to maintain urban areas and existing towns and villages. Investments should be directed to avoid spreading things out and maximize the use of existing infrastructure. Urban and rural goals often align, where each wants to preserve what they have. Mr. Phinney discussed the concept of identifying areas with excess capacity for economic development. He also discussed the concept of using small improvements to yield substantial benefits.
- The group expressed a preference to design roads to improve walkability and use transportation to support existing core areas or at least encourage compact development for any new areas. The group discussed the trend of reinventing urban settings by narrowing and providing on-street parking. AMATS discussed the Complete Streets policy. AMATS uses incentives through their funding programs to encourage it. Cleveland now calls this "Complete and Green Streets," since it also addresses storm water runoff with bio-swales or other infiltration measures.
- The group discussed that the current TRAC program primarily addresses system expansion. Since that is no longer the focus of ODOT, the TRAC system needs to change. The focus on vehicular capacity makes it difficult to figure out where other needs are covered in ODOT's program. (Urban re-development, rural access, rail access, etc.)



- The attendees asked that AO40 suggest policy changes. There was a discussion about current trends for young professionals and others moving back to urban areas. Some companies (or their employees) see the area and don't want to come, which impacts the ability to attract companies to Ohio. They want livable communities, education, security, and transportation. This is tied to job creation, but it is indirect and difficult to make a firm connection when a project isn't in a "greenfield" area.

Mr. Phinney agreed that ODOT needs better tools to quantify return on investments, not just for TRAC projects. Other programs will use AO40 as a foundation, this is a goal and a hope, but it is not certain that it can be achieved.

- The attendees asked that ODOT, at a minimum, "legitimize" the issue to provide "moral support" to complete streets so that locals do not get friction from ODOT districts. ODOT should support locals' efforts to get these approved, such as lane width issues.
- The group asked ODOT to consider rolling Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding to ODNR so they can administer it as they do independent trails funding from MPO's.
- Transit needs are inter-city and intra-city. Reverse commuting is another transit need. RTAs are funded primarily from county sales taxes, making it difficult to do regional systems. They can't provide services outside the county. There is a need for better coordination between RTA's. The state can provide a forum for having these discussions.
- The Northeast Ohio Sustainable Communities Initiative has identified areas of focus. NEOSCC.org has the current info, such as the summary of existing conditions and issues. The group is now developing a work program. The area is a "tech belt" that needs better connectivity, such as transit. Regional economic development efforts are all about connectivity. This broader area (Cleveland-Akron-Canton-Pittsburgh-Youngstown) should be considered for improved connections within the region (which should be considered in evaluation of corridors). Another example of an important regional connection is Dayton-Cincinnati. The old passenger rail effort made a mistake looking at Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati when the real needs are regional.

Mr. Phinney closed by noting that the next steering committee meeting will be held October 23rd, where ODOT will be prepared to share some completed analyses.



North and Northwest Region

Hancock Regional Planning Commission Office, Findlay, Ohio

August 15, 2012 9:30am

After introductions, Mr. Phinney provided an overview of the handouts, including the Task 5 status reports, the “Setting the Stage” executive summary (asking for input on what is important to include in the plan), and goals, objects, and critical success factors. He then opened the floor for discussion on transportation issues important to northern and northwestern Ohio.

- Hancock County noted that there are already planned investments in I-75 in northwestern Ohio, including the I-75/US23/US15 interchange area in Findlay, which addressed most of their larger issues. Noted that Toledo was unable to attend but that their issue is likely to be connectivity to Columbus.
- There are regional concerns about having poor access for attracting investment. There are concerns for safety of SR 2, where it is 4-lanes to the industrial park but then 2-lane to Toledo. Some commissioners have been concerned about this, but there are other perspectives as well.
- Agreement that preservation is important. In northern Ohio, road maintenance (due to freeze/thaw) is critical. It is not practical to make four-lane freeways to everywhere that someone wants to go. A good two-lane roadway is adequate for most connections.
- Concerns that the wording of the public survey pits roads versus transit. Public transit interests will emphasize the needs of the transit dependent, but it shouldn't be discussed as an “either/or” proposition. Funding coordination should be improved to eliminate duplication. Some congestion/environmental issues can be helped with transit. (“Can use your iPad while you commute.”) Mr. Phinney noted that the public survey indicated a strong interest in transit, both urban and rural areas.
- Get out of prioritizing projects well into the future. Need to consider more sustainable planning plus considering other revenue sources.
- Need to increase focus on sustainability. It is not practical to expand the system when you cannot afford to maintain what you have.
- In Northwest Ohio, bicycling is a big issue. Logistics is also big, due to access to I-75. Leaders



need to help people be more realistic about what to expect. (“You can’t build a road and get your dream industry.”)

- Regional planning agencies work with state agencies on economic development. Economic development planning should probably think more about ODOT as a player – the engineers/technical people for the state. ODOT can play a stronger role. (Utilities installed with road projects, for example.) One possibility is to form a regional partnership to share resources for developing along improved routes, like US 30. When ODOT does such a project, they should think more about zoning around interchanges and improvements and consider locations of water and sewer when choosing access locations. Even resurfacing projects that consider utility improvements can make a big difference.

Mr. Phinney described the financial condition of ODOT at the time of the last Access Ohio update compared to today with regard to funding, gas tax, and the level of proposed system expansion. He discussed that the focus of AO40 will be more targeted. Mr. Phinney also mentioned the concept of identifying areas of excess highway capacity that could grow without the need for additional infrastructure investment.

The remaining discussion was very free flowing. Some topics are captured below:

- Attendees discussed that there seems to be an attitude of “grow or die” for many communities, which may not be true. The engineering divisions can bring sanity to these localities. ODOT should keep the door open for local engineers and do more outreach to locals about what ODOT is doing.
- Some attendees had the opportunity to build stronger relationships with ODOT staff during the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) projects. These relationships have been valuable ever since.
- Road project updates should be shared with all transit providers so they know what to avoid.
- Local communities are trying to retrofit built communities with trails and address flooding problems. There should be more coordination among ODOT, county engineers, and planning organizations.
- Complete streets – ODOT needs a model for this to help locals with their goals. In some districts, the ODOT LPA coordinator helps locals with these issues.
- It was noted that there is a resistance to planning at times, with concern in rural areas in particular about ceding local control.



- Most people, regardless of politics, understand investing in infrastructure. Preservation message is something people are ready to hear. Government and politics are two different things. ODOT is not politics. ODOT does a good job being open to the public, but it is hard to get people to participate.
- Some people do scenario planning, based on migration, economics, etc. to look for future needs. Fragmented thinking creates the problems we have now.
- There has been a push back on the economy gained through freight from the lake. Asset management is also about community assets. (“Playing to your strengths.”)
- North central Ohio has US 30 and I-71, providing good regional access. There are also portions of US 30 being improved through town. The community works well with ODOT District 3, who are committed to helping Richland County.
- It was noted that planning is not required in Ohio and that ODOT is the only statewide planning agency.



Central Ohio and Statewide Organizations, Part 1

ODOT Central Office, Columbus, Ohio

August 16, 2012 10:00am

After introductions, Mr. Phinney started out by going through the packet of materials: Task 5 updates, “Setting the Stage” executive summary, goals, objectives and critical success factors. He asked the group to provide input on STS and on goals and objectives. Dave Moore suggested that the group give some input on critical success factors for measuring things that ODOT doesn’t have a lot of detail for.

Mr. Phinney noted that the next steering committee meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2012 at 10:00am., and then opened floor for discussion.

- The Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) National Partnership focuses on SRTS, but also on complete streets, to further policies at the local level. The goal is to offer opportunities to address short trips by methods other than personal car. (Noted the percentage of trips that are less than 10 minutes.) In addition to the potential for reducing obesity rates, active transportation is an asset to local communities. Transportation Alternatives (TA) help with health but also reduce the load on highways. ODOT should provide official emphasis on increasing pedestrians and addressing other needs.
- The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is focused on active transportation. ODOT’s proposed bike/pedestrian analysis discusses a gap analysis, which is fine, but a lot of other agencies are already doing that. The public wants to know what ODOT is doing to help fill those gaps. ODOT should challenge itself to treat these options as *transportation*. Advocates face a constant battle in Ohio that they do not face in other nearby states. For example, Pennsylvania embraces the concept of active transportation and works with RTTC and others to fill the gaps in trails, sidewalks, etc.
- The Ohio Poverty Law Center noted that the OPLC is aware of the need experienced by the poor for transportation to appointments and to work opportunities.
- The group asked about ODOT’s role in transit. Mr. Phinney discussed the limitations of the state gas tax that are in Ohio’s constitution and the limits of the federal gas tax. State match for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds cannot use state gas tax, so ODOT has to go to the general assembly for that money project-by-project. Mr. Moore explained that FTA funds to larger systems go directly to the urban areas. For rural areas, the money goes through ODOT. Mr. Moore noted the success of the Athens-to Cincinnati bus route.
- The group discussed that MAP-21 reduces total funding to alternative programs and lumped them together in one program so they now must compete with each other. The RTTC noted that the governor can opt out of the Transportation Alternatives (TA) funds and there will soon be a



campaign to encourage him to not opt out.

- MPO's are in control of over 50% of the new TA monies.
- The group stated that Map-21 is "several steps back" for bike/pedestrian advocates since there are no assurances for funding at all. Mr. Moore noted that the outcome is not entirely negative, because MAP-21 allows more flexibility and there will be some increased opportunities in direct allocations to MPO's.
- RTTC stated that the cost to build a mile of trail through ODOT is 2 to 3 times as much as doing so through Clean Ohio or other funding sources. There is some hope that MAP-21 will reduce the burden of the red tape.
- RTTC and SRTSNP have held webinars (or have them scheduled) to discuss the implications of MAP-21. Info is on their websites.
- The attendees noted that AO40 is a plan that will live long after MAP-21 has expired and that ODOT should not constrain itself because of it. AO40 should focus on what is important, not just what MAP-21 can pay for.
- Mr. Phinney discussed the state's current transportation program financial environment compared to when Access Ohio was last updated prior to 2004.
- The group said they were pleased to have the opportunity at this time to talk about how to fulfill the transportation needs of all constituencies.
- The Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging discussed that the elderly's biggest challenge is transportation to medical appointments. As there are fewer and fewer Medicaid and Medicare doctors the trips will get longer and longer. In addition, home healthcare aides often are transit-dependent and cannot travel to clients' homes in rural areas. OPLC noted that the Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will put even more pressure on those providers and transportation to get to them.
- Mr. Phinney asked how to measure that need. OPLC noted that they may data with numbers and locations of Medicaid physicians and agreed to follow up on that. It was also mentioned that the Kaiser Foundation or the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation may also have data.
- The Ohio Township Association noted that there are other concerns with implementing projects through ODOT besides the limited funding. Project timeframes are a concern for townships, who have seen projects held up and been frustrated by delays.



- Townships would also like to see flexibility in ODOT policies when locals want something different. Example: Residents wanting trees instead of noise barriers and ODOT not approving that.
- Townships are concerned about transit districts not being able to cross county lines.
- SRTSNP has heard concerns over design standards for trails and paths (examples – path width). Mr. Moore noted that ODOT most often follows American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. Path width can often be needed to allow for emergency vehicle access.
- SRTSNP has also heard concerns about the time it takes to go through the ODOT process. An example was a bike rack project where it has taken three years to go through the siting process to pour the pad.



Central Ohio and Statewide Organizations, Part 2
ODOT Central Office, Columbus, Ohio
August 16, 2012 1:00pm

During introductions, attendees shared their involvement with transportation. Several attendees had participated in past planning efforts and expressed frustration that they had yielded few results. There was some optimism that this effort will be different since it is occurring so early in the current administration.

After introductions, Mr. Phinney reviewed the packet of handouts: Task 5 status, "Setting the Stage" executive summary, and goals, objectives and critical success factors. He asked that the group read the STS technical memo and provide input on what issues to carry forward into the AO40 plan document. He also encouraged the group to review the goals and objectives.

There was a group discussion of the draft goals, objectives and critical success factors. Summarized below:

- The draft goals seem highway centric. ODOT should consider replacing "highway" with "transportation" where possible.
- There was a question about the measurement of "number of economic development projects," regarding whether this is number of jobs or size of business investment. Mr. Phinney indicated that the draft measure anticipates counting the number of distinct projects with specific locations and scope, typically short duration.
- There was a question about the meaning of return-on-investment (ROI) in the measures. Mr. Phinney indicated that ODOT is looking at how others measure ROI and still working on how this will be measured, with more focus on preservation and strategic use of expansion. Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) commented that the community services division of ODOD calculates it differently from the business services division. Mr. Phinney discussed the Cleveland project example that focuses on community benefits rather than transportation benefits and the challenge in measure that. The OCCH asked if ODOT can take into consideration the negative ROI from not maintaining existing infrastructure.
- The Ohio Rail Association (ORA) noted that ROI is both private benefits and public benefits. The Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) has tools to estimate these benefits. ODOT may want to look at all the models that are out there and also consider all modes of transportation.
- ORA noted that commercial users of infrastructure need to pay the full cost/fair share for using that infrastructure, otherwise the system will fail. ODOT does not have funding to maintain what they have. Where public/private benefits intersect, we need to look at assigning those costs



fairly. Ohio needs to look at different way of providing the funding. Mr. Phinney noted that it was not within ODOT's authority to suggest the policy solutions. Mr. Dyer noted that the discussion of the challenges is covered in the finance chapter.

- ORDC asked about the objective of “state of good repair.” Preservation for other modes (bike trails, rail, etc.) is also about preserving rights-of-way.
- Requirement for U.S. Army Corps permits for river access results in poor choices. Existing sites are used because they are permitted, even if they may be worse than other sites. New sites won't get permits for a long time.
- Mr. Phinney mentioned the concept of identifying areas with excess capacity. The Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH) noted that this additional capacity may not be in the areas with work force. ODOD noted that it may be in areas that are not appropriate for growth. ORA noted that there is competition among jurisdictions which impacts the ability of Ohio to plan with a larger view. OCCH noted that Ohio has the tools of identifying opportunity zones, which could be redefined to take such things into account.
- OCCH asked rather than being highway centric, are we considering the river? The more it is developed for transportation, this may help Appalachia.
- ORDC noted that the biggest requirements for the shale gas industry have been river, rail and highway access. There has been increased desire for rail sidings, which they may want as a hedge against trucking prices.
- ODOD noted that Access Ohio can inform local land use, but Ohio is a “home rule” state so Ohio must incentivize since we cannot mandate.
- ODOD reported that they are working on guidelines, the Site Ohio program, which will have rail and water certifications. This is a certification program only, not an incentive program. Guidelines will be draft at OAC this fall. Stakeholders meetings on these guidelines are scheduled for 8/27, 9/5, and 9/10. ODOD reported the draft guidelines will be completed this fall.
- ORA noted that the Central Ohio Freight Study did not look outside this area and there is a need to connect to out-lying areas like Coshocton, Zanesville, Mt. Vernon, and Lancaster. There is a need to connect smaller communities to each other, not just Columbus-to-Toledo, for example. Only ODOT can look at this due to others having only authority within their borders.
- ORDC noted that nodes of economic activities are connected by corridors, such as the Heartland



Corridor. It is transportation's job to "connect the dots."

- Northern Ohio is a big problem with rail bottlenecks. Sidings would require miles of track in order to clear the main line, which would make it impractical to locate a site there.
- ORA mentioned that redevelopment of manufacturing areas that form the core of a community help to protect existing assets. ODOT should look at which employers are "anchors" for different communities and consider how to support those. The group discussed that RG Steel was that anchor in Steubenville but is now dying. There isn't always a solution. Ohio has a tough task to decide where to invest pro-actively and where to just allow the market to work. There will be some big winners and some big losses. ORDC gave the example of highway or rail investments for coal-fired power plants, which will probably eventually be shuttered, but no one knows how long from now. In that situation, it is hard to know what to do.
- There was a discussion of whether ROI should include life cycle costs.
- The Sierra Club noted that the stated goal of "reducing Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) travel" belongs under the "stewardship" category.
- ODOT stated that ODOT should research transit connectivity for gaps and failures, in the private system to see what the public system needs to do. Crossing county lines is affected by how transit is funded. Mr. Phinney noted that there is a current research project on the duplications in transit-related services due to funding sources. ODOT noted that there are also private dollars in transit related-services that ODOT may not know about.
- The group discussed whether public transit systems are ever designed to make a profit.
- The group asked if AO40 will consider fuel choice: electric, CNG, diesel, gasoline. There was a discussion of the funding challenges for transportation in each case. ORA noted that there is reluctance to discuss charging based upon vehicle miles traveled (VMT), but that it may be the strongest solution. The group noted that there are studies from the Buckeye Institute and Cleveland State looking at user fees for transportation.

Mr. Phinney noted that the next meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2012.



**West and Southwest Region
MVRPC Office, Dayton, Ohio
August 17, 2012 9:00am**

After introductions, Mr. Phinney reviewed the handouts: Task 5 status updates; Setting the Stage (STS) executive summary, and goals, objectives and critical success factors. He noted that the fast pace for AO40 was due to the desire to use analysis from the plan to assist with preparation of the budget testimony to the General Assembly, probably in February. He also explained the philosophy of longer technical memos, with a shorter AO40 plan document. Mr. Phinney asked the group to review the STS tech memo on the website and provide input on what issues are most important to include in the plan. He noted that comments by mid- to late-September would be helpful, but there is no firm deadline.

Mr. Phinney stated that ODOT has not spent much effort informing the public on how transportation is funded, so ODOT cannot go to them with solutions until they understand the problems. Solutions to this problem are in the realm of policy and politics, which is outside of ODOT's control. AO40 will only identify the problems.

Attendees asked if the AO40 goals and objectives tie into MAP-21 requirement for critical success factors. Mr. Phinney answered yes, but noted that ODOT is still digesting MAP-21 to understand the implications. MAP-21 is two-year bill and things may change after that.

Mr. Phinney opened the floor for discussion of transportation issues important to West and Southwest Ohio. Some attendees represented statewide organizations in addition to their west/southwest regional roles, including: the Ohio County Engineers' Association, the Ohio Association of Regional Councils, and the Ohio Public Transit Association. Following is a summary of the topics:

- Revenue needs to be discussed in AO40 to show that all modes of transportation are underfunded in Ohio. Statewide funding was preserved for transit, but general funds were cut to communities who then cut back on funding for transportation for low-income and elderly.
- ODOT's public survey questions seemed short-term and seemed to pit modes against each other.
- Transit is a lifeline for elderly. The 21st Century Task Force also showed support for transit. The legislature needs to see gap between what we need versus what we have.
- Some topics from STS that should be added or emphasized more:
 - Trends about active transportation



- Concerns with climate change
 - Transportation needs for an aging population
 - Trends in reduced driving and the impact on gas tax revenues
 - Leveraging HUD, EPA, and other federal funds by better interagency efforts, with more emphasis on layering various agencies programs that have funding to work together on shared solutions
- Funding for major improvements like Brent Spence Bridge should show up somewhere in AO40. Maintaining critical transportation linkages – this is an important economic role of transportation.
 - Should consider exports and imports in economic discussion.
 - The Eastern Corridor project is a big area of concern. Need to talk about coordination with Transportation Improvement Districts (TID).
 - Consider effect of increased CAFÉ standards on gas tax revenue.
 - Battelle has done some work on VMT tax to replace the gas tax. (Mr. Phinney noted that Minnesota has looked at this.)
 - Some landlocked cities within urban areas have a serious need to improve local roads, but with reduced funding to locals these needs are unmet. AO40 should talk about the lack of funding for maintenance of all parts of the system.
 - After system preservation, economic development is the next more important need. But that discussion should not just be about new transportation facilities that just shift development around.
 - The cities expressed concern that legislators don't understand that people actually do walk and ride their bikes. The younger professional generation is moving to communities with these options. 98% of downtown housing in Dayton is occupied. Similar to Columbus, this is a big change from years past. Housing developers are now seeing this.
 - Highly developed areas in townships are also encouraging bike usage. The challenge is how to cross busy roadways. The transportation industry needs to develop a strategy to handle this. Pedestrians and cyclists need to understand that crosswalks don't make you safe. It isn't that simple. People are confused by traffic laws. Ohio laws typically require pedestrians to yield.



There needs to be better education for drivers and pedestrians.

- AO40 should discuss the trends and changes in attitudes about transportation. It should also discuss changes in technology.
- ODOT has been good at coordination with locals on detours, design standards, etc. Locally implemented projects are still faster, because environmental and right of way studies can add up to 2 years to the project timeline. Locals love the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) because they can do projects by “force account”, or design and bid them out without the environmental red tape. Some states (e.g. Kansas) allow sub-allocation of state gas tax funds to local jurisdictions to use on local roads. This is not permitted by the Ohio Constitution.
- There was a discussion about tolling. The big issue is how practical tolling would be. If you borrow to build it but you can’t get enough revenue to pay it off, then what happens? It is being studied now. There is a limit to how much the toll can bring in. Tolls are not always the answer. Some motorists may feel that having to stop to pay the toll is a big hassle and why not just add a penny to the gas tax instead.
- Need to discuss how to resolve performance and funding for bridges between states (WV & KY). Ohio only pays for portion in Ohio. How do we work with them to make sure they keep it in good repair?
- Is there a discussion of free-trade zones? Mr. Phinney noted that the statewide freight study is in-progress.
- Will the turnpike study be included in AO40? Mr. Phinney stated that it probably would not be included. It is a separate, on-going study.

Mr. Phinney noted that the next steering committee meeting will be held October 23, 2012.