

Draft Policies

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Policies express regional priorities and guide future action in our region. These proposed policies were developed to address On the Move Plan goals and the needs identified during the Plan process.

Passenger Goal: Our region will be a top quality multi-modal passenger transportation hub.

Policy 1: To provide more viable personal transportation choices, our region's policy is to support development of a **passenger transportation system providing a full range of integrated, interconnected modal choices** to insure mobility of all citizens and options that improve community and natural environments. Important steps towards this goal include:

1. Adopting a regional "complete streets" policy that calls for design of street corridors to serve multiple transportation modes, including pedestrians, bicycles and transit.
2. Increasing density of development, including infill housing in urban areas, to make multiple transportation modes feasible.

Policy 2: Public transit in our region lacks sufficient geographic reach. It does not serve rural or suburban areas such as City of Oregon and Springfield Township. To **provide transit throughout the region**, a truly integrated transit system that services all areas / people should be developed. More state / county transit funding is needed to make this feasible.

Policy 3: We need to **improve transit operations** and **expand hours of service**, which will require more money for transit. In addition, we should **make transit more user-friendly**, including better "policing" of bench conditions at bus stops and requiring businesses and other transit generators to provide transit amenities.

Policy 4: To improve intermodal connections and travel options within our region, we urge continuation and **increase of intercity bus service between communities** in northwest Ohio and southeastern Michigan.

Policy 5: We need to **address the lack of sufficient transportation for seniors, people with disabilities / special needs, and other nondrivers:**

1. All transit should be more senior-friendly, and accessible to seniors/disabled.
2. User-friendly traveler information should be made available for all transportation modes and connectivity between modes.
3. Local regulation should require 15 percent of fleets (for example, taxi cabs) to accessible to people with disabilities.

Policy 6: We need fast, convenient & affordable intercity passenger rail. We will join with other regions to push for **implementation of the Ohio Hub Plan for fast, frequent rail service** including a Toledo-Detroit connection via the Detroit airport. In addition we will support the Chicago Hub high speed rail plan linking our region to Chicago and Fort Wayne.

Policy 7: Our region supports **use of passenger transportation to support economic development**, including:

1. Tie multiple modes of transportation, including the bikeway network, to all major development and redevelopment areas.

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2. Increase transit-oriented development, which concentrates commercial space and a variety of housing options and around a transit stop. This compact, mixed use, and pedestrian-oriented development encourages more transit use, reduces congestion, increases property values, and reduces infrastructure costs.
3. Build the downtown circulator trolley system and the connecting Technology Corridor people-mover (see Plan Projects 6 and 10)

Freight Goal: Our region will be a world-class multi-modal freight transportation hub

Policy 8: To strengthen our role as a freight transportation hub, our region will work together to **implement Lake Erie West Global Logistics Center** business plan. This plan comprises four major freight facilities: Toledo Express Global Logistics Park (see Policy 9), Trans-Pacific Inland Port (see Plan Project 1 and Policy 10), Golden Triangle Distribution Corridor, and the Toledo Seaport (see Policy 11). We will identify needed improvements/ resources; support public/private infrastructure investment for the sites, and connectivity between them (on public roads or off-road).

Policy 9: A regional priority is to **expand use of the air freight mode and use of air facilities as intermodal hubs**. This will include increasing airport capacity throughout the region and providing good road access. We will develop Toledo Express Airport as a major intermodal hub, to be known as the “Toledo Express Global Logistics Park,” with needed infrastructure improvements (including Plan Projects C-3, 4, 59 and 60) and creation of a “transportation opportunity district.”

Policy 10: To expand freight capacity, we will work to **increase use of and multi-modal access to rail freight**. This will include supporting development of a Trans-Pacific Inland Port (see Plan Project 1), a rail/truck container facility designed to capture major freight flows from Asia, for distribution to the Midwest and eastern U.S.

Policy 11: Our region has an opportunity to **expand waterborne freight movement**. To do so, we will work to increase rail access to the Toledo Seaport, and we will support maximized use of the St. Lawrence Seaway and Great Lakes water system.

Policy 12: It is essential for our role as a freight hub to **improve road access and capacity for trucks, and reduce modal conflicts**. As part of this policy, we support:

1. Making the Ohio Turnpike more truck-friendly with "Easy Pass" electronic toll collection and quantity discounts.
2. Increasing the quality of township roads by requiring agri-business to meet same constraints as other industries, that is, eliminating exemptions that allow producers to use township roads without defraying costs of upgrades and maintenance.
3. Providing real-time information on road congestion via ITS that is suitable to trucker needs.

Research Goal Statement: Our region will be a center of transportation research and innovation.

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Policy 13: We need to **diversify fuels** for transportation, to insure fuel will be available on a long-term basis, with reduced dependence on foreign sources. To do so, our region will:

1. Support the work of a consortium of area universities to develop and commercialize hybrid vehicles.
2. Analyze current state and federal policies to propose changes and/or take advantage of existing policies in order to enhance alternative fuels production and use in our region.

Policy 14: With the amount of transported freight expected to double in the next 15 years, we need **innovative ways to move goods more efficiently**. Therefore, it is our region's policy that:

1. Local jurisdictions and planning/development agencies should seek to locate industrial and distribution facilities near existing transportation terminals and interchanges.
2. We encourage development of multi-trailer terminals at Ohio Turnpike interchanges.
3. We should identify examples of trucking company collaboration on deliveries, and support implementation of such a system.
4. We should research ways to improve efficiency of transfer of goods between transportation modes.

Policy 15: To build on regional strengths, we need to **support/expand transportation logistics and supply chain research** in the region. This research should include looking at the potential to coordinate transportation to common suppliers/locations.

Policy 16: To enhance economic and technical development, our region will work to establish the identity of the **Toledo Science and Technology corridor** and the movement of people and ideas within this corridor.

Policy 17: Our region supports creating **innovative traffic systems** to improve traffic flow, such as modern roundabouts (see Policy 19), coordinated signal timing on all major arterials, and freeway management systems and other Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Environment Goal: Our region and its transportation system will protect and sustain community and natural environments.

Policy 18: Because transportation choices and options impact the environment, our region's policy is to **encourage fuel efficient modes** of transportation (rail, water, hybrids, etc.).

Policy 19: We recognize that transportation and land use planning are interrelated, and both affect quality of life and patterns of development. To reduce sprawl and improve quality of life, our region will aim to:

1. Reduce driving by planning livable/workable communities (featuring higher density, mixed use, and transit-oriented development).
2. Coordinate county and local jurisdiction master plans and zoning plans.
3. Encourage state enabling legislation to establish transportation impact fees (on development) to reflect the real costs of development.
4. Require multi-use paths in site plans, with connectivity to adjoining development.

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Policy 20: Urban sprawl is consuming farmland and disrupting rural life. To **protect our rural areas**, we encourage governments to:

1. Require and/or provide tax incentives for greater land use density (such as cluster housing) for more efficient land use in developed areas and include parkland in development plans.
2. Provide financial incentives and tools to preserve farmland and natural areas.
3. Encourage county plan commissions to adopt a 20-acre rule (minimum lot size of 20 acres in agricultural areas).

Policy 21: Our region seeks to improve quality of life by **expanding pedestrian and bicycle transportation options**. We urge stakeholders to make commercial areas people-friendly, require sidewalks community-wide, and acquire property for rail-trail extensions and completion of the bikeway system.

Policy 22: To protect our environment, our region will **mitigate surface run-off** from roads and other transportation-related facilities with best management practices (BMP's) to improve water absorption. These include grass swales (rain gardens), storm-water detention, pervious surfaces, open pavers, and plantings of trees and native grasses.

Policy 23: To **improve air quality through reduced traffic congestion and improved traffic flow**, we will:

1. Work to put more freight on rails to lighten roadway traffic.
2. Make developed areas more conducive to walking.
3. Consider roundabouts as the preferred alternative for intersection improvements (see Policy 19).

System Preservation Goal: We will protect the region's investment by maintaining and preserving the existing system.

Policy 24: Our region needs to **maintain bicycle/pedestrian systems**. It is recommended that:

1. Political jurisdictions enforce their laws on construction and maintenance of walks.
2. Jurisdictions include in their snow/ice removal plans a policy concerning publicly owned walks/trails, and enact/enforce laws regarding clearing facilities adjacent to private property.
3. A mechanism be established to give townships authority over maintaining and clearing sidewalks.
4. Regional consistency in sidewalk/trail maintenance regulations be promoted.

Policy 25: To preserve our transportation system, we need to **overcome the lack of funds** needed to implement appropriate improvements. Therefore, our region supports:

1. Appropriate impact fees.
2. Placing emphasis on maintaining the system vs. capacity improvements.
3. Support sufficient and appropriate funding to maintain our multi-modal system (including seaport, airport, public transit, and rail facilities) in good condition.

Safety & Efficiency Goal: Our transportation system will be designed and operated to promote safe and efficient travel across all modes.

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Policy 26: Our region needs to **reduce congestion, improve safety, and manage traffic on arterials** (major non-expressway roads). To do so, we support the following:

1. A region-wide access management policy, and effective access management in land use plans
2. Use of speed and load limit rules as appropriate
3. Signal coordination, ITS, and roundabout intersections (see Policy 19)
4. Providing better and more convenient access to public transit
5. Corridor studies to determine how a travel corridor can function more efficiently

Policy 27: To **reduce truck-related congestion**, our region supports appropriate use of signage (for example, trucks in right lanes), uniform speed limits among all vehicles, and increase freight railroad usage

Policy 28: Our region will work to **improve safety at railroad crossings**.

Policy 29: Our region will work to **improve safety through better utilization of traffic control devices**. We encourage:

1. Video detection systems at more signalized intersections (aiding detection of motorcycles and bicycles).
2. Reviewing quantity and location of signs, and removal of unwarranted traffic signals and other traffic control devices.
3. Regular upkeep of signage.

Policy 30: Our region needs to **improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists on busy streets**. It is regional policy to:

1. Consider adding bicycle facilities (bike lanes or paths) with roadway construction projects.
2. Consider improving ped/bike access as bridges are redecked, rebuilt or newly constructed.
3. Provide education about and enforcement of the uniform vehicular code for bicycles.

Policy 31: To **improve safety at the I-80/90/SR795 and I-75 interchange**, our region supports use of electronic passes to increase throughput and reduce traffic backups at the turnpike interchange.

Policy 32: To **increase operational efficiency in work zones**, our region supports:

1. Following the state Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices procedures for work zones.
2. Employing ITS equipment to detect backups and alert drivers.
3. Enforcing construction zone speed limits and the “assured clear distance” law (mandates that a driver be able to stop within the distance he can clearly see).

Policy 33: Intersection policy in support of roundabouts: After completion of thorough analysis, when the analysis shows that a roundabout is a prudent and feasible alternative, it is regional policy that a **roundabout should be considered a preferred alternative** due to the proven substantial safety benefits and other operational benefits.

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General objectives for intersection planning and design are to provide adequate sight distances, minimize points of conflict, simplify conflict area, limit conflict frequency, minimize severity of conflicts, minimize delay, and provide acceptable capacity for the design year.

Roundabouts are frequently able to address the above objectives better than other intersection types in both urban and rural environments and on high and low speed highways. Thus, when a project calls for new or reconstructed intersections, a roundabout alternative is to be analyzed to determine if it is a feasible solution based on site constraints including right-of-way, environmental factors, and other design constraints. Exceptions to this policy are when the intersection:

- Has no current or anticipated safety, capacity or other operational problems
- Is within a well working coordinated signal system in a low speed (less than 5 mph) urban environment with acceptable crash histories
- Is where signals will be installed solely for emergency vehicle preemption
- Has steep terrain that makes providing an area and grading at 5 % or less for the circulating roadways infeasible
- Has been deemed unsuitable for a roundabout by a qualified professional engineer with significant experience in roundabout design and operations.

Funding Goal: Our region will be successful in obtaining adequate funding for transportation facilities.

Policy 34: Our region should **more efficiently use currently available funds and maintain appropriate balance** between system preservation and capacity expansion. We encourage government agencies to:

1. Accurately research the cost of maintaining and improving their roads with public staff, compare those costs to private contracting, and use the most efficient approach.
2. Cost out rehabilitation strategies using life-cycle considerations, not just initial capital comparisons and not always a “worst first” strategy.
3. Use new methods to stretch funding including design/build, and construction warranties for extended periods.
4. Use best available technology to build long-lasting roads

Policy 35: We **encourage more regional cooperation** to get the most out of current funding. Recommended strategies are:

1. Research current joint projects and group purchasing to determine if they could be expanded to other jurisdictions for even greater cost savings. Potential project types include purchase/fabrication of signs and signals, mill and fill along jurisdictional boundaries (e.g. city-township), contracting projects and services, salt purchase (bring in by ship—sell to other local jurisdictions?), materials purchases (e.g. asphalt), and purchase of equipment (e.g. milling machines).
2. Research current joint operations and maintenance efforts to determine if they could be expanded to other jurisdictions. Potential project types include snow plowing and traffic signal coordination.
3. Educate the public on existing cooperation to gain their support.
4. Create a regional database of existing cooperative governmental ventures and opportunities.

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5. Reward cooperative projects via regional project selection criteria.
6. Encourage jurisdictions to use state purchasing agreements and/or local multi-jurisdictional agreements.
7. Encourage local jurisdictions to specialize in services or materials and make these available to other jurisdictions rather than duplicating efforts.

Policy 36: We will work together to **ensure that the region gets its fair share** from current funding sources. We support efforts to reduce / eliminate federal earmarks, since they don't add to the total federal transportation dollars that come to our region.

Policy 37: Our region supports **increasing dedicated funding from traditional sources** to meet growing transportation demands. We urge leaders to continue to ensure that dedicated transportation taxes are used for transportation purposes. We also support:

1. Efforts to implement a mechanism to maintain the purchasing power of current transportation-related taxes over time. (This would increase gas tax revenues to keep pace with inflation in road construction costs.)
2. Research to identify correlation between transportation investment and economic development and other public benefits. (The results of such research could support more transportation investment and increased tax initiatives.)
3. Educating elected officials on how local jurisdictions are using current dollars efficiently to maintain and improve the current system, in order to gain their support for more transportation funding.

Policy 38: We support **finding innovative ways to get additional funding** for transportation system upgrades. As federal and state funding source provide less for local needs, our region should research mechanisms to raise additional transportation funding locally for priorities in our region. Some possibilities include:

1. Impact fees and tax increment financing (TIF) districts on new development (including residential), especially where new transportation facilities or improvements will be required
2. Multiple jurisdiction transportation improvement districts (TID),
3. Multiple jurisdiction property tax, general or fuel sales tax, and/or income tax for transportation uses
4. Expand statewide bond issues and/or develop other statewide mechanisms directed to local jurisdictions
5. New, different region wide mechanisms to fund a truly regional public transit system over the long term
6. Mechanisms to raise additional transportation funding locally for paratransit and shared ride services for the whole region
7. Coordination of funding / compacts across the state line to address transportation issues on a truly regional basis

Policy 39: Our region will work to **balance the split of funding between modes** based on regional priorities and needs. We encourage multi-modal design of all projects [*“complete streets”*]. We support changing project selection criteria to reward projects that incorporate multimodal elements such as bike lanes or paths with street upgrades; street upgrades with transit shelters, bump outs, and other accommodation; and Park and Ride facilities.