

1.1 POLICIES

Policies are not asphalt and steel, but they can be powerful tools for regional action.

The policy statements developed for the “On the Move: 2015-2045 Transportation Plan” provide a framework and guidance for the efforts of transportation stakeholders to accomplish our mutual vision. These policies were developed in response to identified needs and opportunities. They were the third type of “solution” the planning committees could consider. While no specific dollars are committed to implement policies, they have the potential to inform and guide action across the region.

The 26 policies, listed by plan goal, are as follows. (Note that the policy numbers do not indicate priority order.) As part of plan implementation, these policies will be actively promoted in the region:

1 ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY GOAL: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE COMMUNITY AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS.

Policy 1: Our region will **protect and improve air quality** to improve personal health and allow for further economic development, by

1. Supporting development and use of fuel efficient and non-motorized modes of transportation (rail, water, bicycling, and walking).
2. Supporting use of cleaner fuels, including provision of alternative fueling stations.

Policy 2: Our region will **support balanced growth** to protect the natural environment and existing communities, by:

1. Encouraging development in existing communities with existing road and utility infrastructure, in order to reduce loss of prime farmland, wetlands, and other natural areas, and to decrease the need to build and maintain more infrastructure.
2. Encouraging more mixed-use development, increased densities, traffic calming, and transit-oriented development to promote walkability and decrease the need for driving to destinations.
3. Encouraging state enabling legislation to establish transportation impact fees (on development) to reflect the real costs of green field development, and/or providing incentives for infill development.

Policy 3: Our region will **protect and improve water quality**, and slow the increase in stormwater-related flooding, by:

1. Mitigating surface run-off from roads and other transportation-related facilities with best management practices (BMPs) to improve water absorption, especially use of “green infrastructure” such as grass swales, pervious surfaces, and plantings of trees and native grasses.
2. Aiming to reduce unneeded pavement through “road diets” and carefully considering the need to add lane miles to the existing road and highway system.
3. Promoting reduction of farmland run-off that contributes to the growth of algae in Lake Erie.

Policy 4: Our region supports the ongoing development of a network of **state scenic byway designated roads**. Benefits of scenic byways include preservation of natural resources and economic benefits from tourism. We support byway designation for the original US 24 between Napoleon and Waterville since that section is no longer part of US 24.

2 PERSONAL MOBILITY GOAL: IMPROVE THE QUALITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND EFFICIENCY OF THE MULTIMODAL PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

Policy 5: To provide more viable personal transportation choices, our region supports development of a **passenger transportation system providing a full range of integrated, interconnected modal choices** to insure mobility of all citizens and improve community and natural environments.

Policy 6: Our region will **improve pedestrian and bicycle networks and connectivity** to accommodate safe, efficient, accessible, and convenient non-motorized travel trips for work, school, shopping, entertainment, and recreation. To accomplish this, we will:

1. Continue to improve our counting program for pedestrian and bicycle traffic to better understand how and when (time of day, time of year) people are using the network, what its key corridors are, and where improvements are most needed.
2. Encourage increased use of the pedestrian/bikeways network through the installation of wayfinding and route signage, bicycle parking, and amenities for bicyclists and pedestrians.
3. Acknowledge the varying skill levels of cyclists and improve the network to attract new users while also addressing the needs of experienced users. Increase personal transportation choices across a broad range of users.
4. Preserve abandoned rail road and other linear corridors for future bicycle, pedestrian, and utility use.

Policy 7: Our region will **improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists**. Action steps will include:

1. Promote educational campaigns to increase awareness of traffic laws; educate and encourage law enforcement agencies to engage with motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians to enforce rules, particularly in high crash locations.
2. Support safe routes to school programs to address pedestrian/bicycle routes, funding, infrastructure (including more sidewalks and curb cuts), etc.
3. Promote opportunities to improve the skills of bicyclists regardless of age.
4. Track per capita crash rates for pedestrians and bicyclists through the use of safety data to set goals for safety improvements and crash reduction strategies.

Policy 8: Our region will **enhance regional economic competitiveness** through these actions:

1. Promote implementation of the regional complete streets policy to create more livable, walkable, and bikeable communities within the region.

2. Promote collaboratively developed educational campaigns that build awareness of non-motorized mode choices.
3. Strengthen the regional network by building cooperative relationships among communities and other public, private, and non-profit partners.
4. Invest in high-capacity transit corridors along with transit-oriented development which concentrates commercial space and a variety of housing options around major transit stops. This compact, mixed use and pedestrian-oriented development encourages more transit use, reduces congestion, increases property values, and reduces infrastructure costs.

Policy 9: Our region will support **broadening and strengthening public transit** in our region, through these actions:

1. Develop a truly integrated transit system that services all areas and people.
2. Support implementation of the Ohio transit needs study recommendations, including establishing a state legislator panel to identify dedicated state funding for transit.
3. Improve transit operations and expand hours of service, which will require more money for transit.
4. Increase intercity bus and passenger rail service and between communities and major destinations such as airports in northwest Ohio and southeastern Michigan.
5. Implement regional transit by developing a broad-based funding mechanism (such as a regional sales tax.)

Policy 10: Our region will **enhance transportation for seniors, people with disabilities, and other non-drivers**, by:

1. Encouraging private providers (for example, taxi cab companies) to make their vehicles accessible to people with disabilities.
2. Implementing the adopted public transit-human services transportation coordination plans that call for coordinating resources, providing for mobility management, and creative and effective use of available federal funds.

Policy 11: We will support **modernization and expansion of intercity passenger rail service**

1. Support the long-term goal of implementing statewide and interstate high-speed passenger rail with fast, frequent, and reliable service.
2. Work to preserve and improve existing service in the Chicago-Toledo-Cleveland and eastbound corridors and develop new service in the Detroit-Toledo-Columbus corridor.
3. Partner with freight railroads to reduce conflicts between freight and passenger service, improve rail infrastructure, and create new passenger routes.
4. Educate public transit stakeholders on the benefits of preserving and expanding passenger rail service.
5. Work to improve multi-modal access to rail stations to better connect population centers with passenger rail service.
6. Support the use of public/private partnerships where appropriate in addressing passenger rail needs.

3 CONGESTION REDUCTION AND SYSTEM RELIABILITY GOALS: REDUCE CONGESTION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY SYSTEM; IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

Policy 12: Our region needs to **reduce congestion and manage traffic on arterials** and expressways. To do so, we support the following:

1. A region-wide access management policy and effective access management in land use plans
2. Signal coordination, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), freeway incident management programs, and roundabout intersections (see Policy 26)
3. Upgrading area expressways, including freeway entrance ramp metering
4. Corridor studies to determine how a travel corridor can function more efficiently

Policy 13: To **reduce roadway congestion**, our region supports measures to reduce travel demand and motor vehicle miles traveled through:

1. Increased freight railroad, water transport, and pipeline capacity and usage.
2. Providing better and more convenient access to public transit.
3. Providing rideshare and implementing vanpool programs to reduce the number of individual work trips.
4. Completing the regional bikeway network.
5. Providing pedestrian facilities and developing denser, more walkable neighborhoods.

4 FREIGHT GOAL: STRENGTHEN FREIGHT ACCESS TO NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE MARKETS TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Policy 14: Strengthen the region's position as a multimodal freight hub.

1. Support a strategy of marketing the Toledo region as a desirable location for industry based on the connectivity and reliability of the freight transportation network.
2. Ensure the reliability of the freight transportation network by addressing needed improvements in infrastructure, access, and freight flow.
3. Support the use of public/private partnerships where appropriate in addressing freight transportation needs.
4. Plan for the potential impact freight-generating facilities could have on the regional transportation system and on the community.

Policy 15: Improve access, capacity, and reliability for highway freight.

1. Support efforts to improve highway infrastructure, reduce bottlenecks and modal conflicts, implement truck-friendly design elements, and provide adequate truck parking.
2. Provide efficient and reliable highway connections for industry by maintaining first and last mile connectors and using managed access along important freight corridors.
3. Ensure commercially viable access to Michigan-legal heavy load routes in Lucas, Fulton, and Williams counties that are vital to interstate and international flow of commerce.
4. Promote the development of connected and automated technology for commercial vehicles and support the use of alternative fuels.

Policy 16: Expand regional freight capacity by **supporting the increased use of rail freight.**

1. Support efforts to improve rail access to industry, improve highway connections to rail terminals, and reduce rail/highway conflicts.
2. Support the development of satellite industry near major rail terminals.
3. Work with railroads to alleviate blocked crossings and to provide access and track time for the completion of highway, bridge, and utility projects that intersect railroad property.

Policy 17: Expand the use of **waterborne freight**, support the development of a **viable air freight industry**, and support the **use of pipelines** where appropriate.

1. Support infrastructure and capacity improvements and work to improve highway and rail access at the Port of Toledo.
2. Ensure routine dredging of the Toledo Harbor to maintain safe and commercially viable navigation and develop a plan to dispose of dredged material in an environmentally acceptable and financially feasible manner.
3. Support the operation and potential expansion of air freight service and work to increase airport capacity and efficiency with infrastructure improvements as needed.
4. Support the use of pipelines as an efficient and cost-effective mode to deliver commodities, with the utmost consideration toward impacts to public safety, the environment, and the community.

5 INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITION GOAL: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO A STATE OF GOOD REPAIR.

Policy 18: To preserve our transportation system, our region will work 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.
4. Planning for extreme weather events, including more funding for maintenance and repair reserves, environmental solutions, and avoiding building on flood plains.

Policy 19: To better **manage the maintenance of good infrastructure condition**, our region supports:

1. A management system for bridges that relies on targets for sufficiency ratings and functional class
2. A management system for pavement, based on pavement condition rating (PCR) and functional class
3. Coordination of infrastructure projects (for example, pavement and drainage projects)
4. Coordination and possible management of culverts (for stormwater management)
5. Implementing the Deighton System for pavement projects. This will aid with scenario planning and is the system being used by ODOT.
6. Implementing a public input (reporting system) tied to a Geographic Information System (GIS).

Policy 20: Our region will work to **maintain bicycle and pedestrian systems**. It is recommended that:

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

6 SAFETY GOAL: REDUCE TRAFFIC-RELATED FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES ACROSS ALL MODES.

Policy 21: Our region will work to ensure that timely, reliable, and comprehensive **crash data is available** in order to better understand and improve transportation safety:

1. TMACOG will regularly produce a multimodal safety report analyzing crash data for the region.
2. Law enforcement agencies are urged to provide the most accurate possible crash reports, since these are the basis of all crash data.
3. Local jurisdictions are urged to conduct detailed engineering safety studies of high crash locations to develop appropriate countermeasures.

Policy 22: Our region will work to **improve safety at railroad crossings**.

Policy 23: 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 and maximizing its visibility, especially as the number of older drivers increases.
4. Appropriate use of signage (for example, trucks in right lanes), and uniform speed limits among all vehicles

Policy 24: Our region needs to **improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists on all streets**. It is regional policy to:

1. Consider adding pedestrian and bicycle facilities (bike lanes or paths) with roadway construction projects.
2. Consider improving ped/bike access as bridges are re-decked, rebuilt, or newly constructed. Bridges over or under major barriers – expressways, railroad tracks, and rivers – should be considered for inclusion of raised sidewalks and striped/signed bike lanes as part of a “complete streets” policy and to eliminate choke points.
3. Provide education about and enforcement of the uniform vehicular code for bicycles.

Policy 25: To **increase safety and maintain operational efficiency in work zones**, our region supports:

1. Following the state Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices procedures as appropriate 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 or she can clearly see).

Policy 26: Intersection policy in support of roundabouts: when thorough 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 and other operational benefits. Exceptions to this policy are when the intersection.

1. Has no current or anticipated safety, capacity or other operational problems
2. Is within a well-coordinated signal system in a low speed (with 85th percentile speeds less than 25 mph) urban environment with acceptable crash histories
3. Is where signals will be installed solely for emergency vehicle preemption
4. Has steep terrain that makes providing an area and grading at 5 percent or less for the circulating roadways infeasible

5. Has been deemed unsuitable for a roundabout by a qualified professional engineer with significant experience in roundabout design and operations.