



REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Buckeye Hills - Hocking Valley Regional Development District

February 28, 2014

Dear RTPO Partner:

The enclosed information is being provided to give you an overview of the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) program at Buckeye Hills, and your role as a Technical Advisory or Citizens Advisory Committee (TAC/CAC) member.

Your active participation is vital to the success of our regional transportation planning activities. You know your community, the people, the resources, and the needs of the area you live and work in. We ask you to bring this knowledge to the table as we examine transportation related issues, policies, and projects, that will impact the eight county region.

I hope you find the information helpful to building an understanding of how the RTPO program at Buckeye Hills works. I look forward to working with you and all of our partners during our transportation planning process. Please contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Regards,

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COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ORIENTATION

FEBRUARY 2014

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PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The most recent surface transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) was signed into law on July 2, 2012. Language from MAP-21 influenced the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to create the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) pilot program to expand transportation planning activities in the state. In order to facilitate the expanded transportation planning activities, ODOT has designated rural multi-county planning agencies as Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) to provide a mechanism for rural communities to participate in the transportation planning process.

The pilot program includes the following action items to be undertaken by Buckeye Hills:

- The formation of three transportation related advisory committees – Policy, Technical, and Citizens, to provide input throughout the planning process;
- The creation and adoption of a public participation plan;
- The creation and adoption of a comprehensive regional transportation plan inclusive of all modes of transportation;
- The moderation of a continuous and comprehensive public participation process, which will last the duration of the pilot program period.

In order to fulfill the role of liaison between local governments, constituents, interested parties, and our partners at the state and federal level, Buckeye Hills will utilize a decision making process that has proven to be successful in other regional endeavors in the past.

The Ohio RTPO pilot program was initiated in July 2013, and will conclude in June 2015. All five non-MPO regional councils in Ohio are participating in this pilot program. Ohio has a successful MPO program in the state with 17 participating partners. Each of the RTPO pilot program participants has been paired up with an MPO partner to provide mentorship and guidance throughout the program.

Funding is being provided for RTPO activities by ODOT and by the participating RTPO agencies. The RTPO program is funded on a reimbursement basis, with a 10% local match required.

OVERVIEW OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS

Transportation planning plays a fundamental role in the state, region, or community's vision for the future. It includes a comprehensive consideration of possible strategies; an evaluation process that encompasses diverse viewpoints; the collaborative participation of relevant transportation-related agencies and organizations; and open, timely, and meaningful public involvement.

Federal law under 23 USC § 135(a) requires states to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive statewide transportation planning process (3-C Process) that considers all modes of transportation and provides for consideration and implementation of projects, strategies, and services that will:

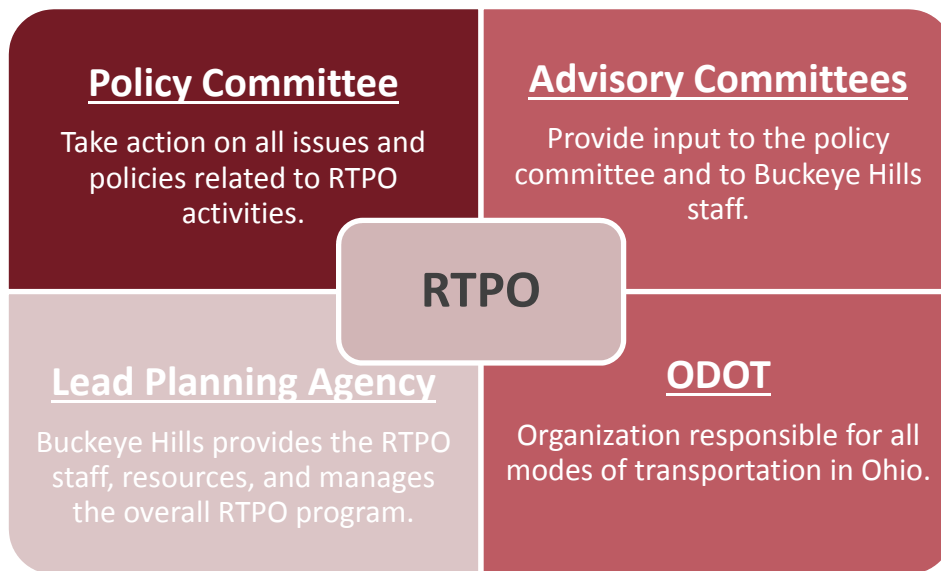
- Support the economic vitality of the United States;
- Increase the safety and security of the transportation system for both motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
- Protect the environment, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State & Local growth and economic development;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation; and,
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

In Ohio, local transportation planning has been traditionally completed by ODOT staff in district offices throughout the state. The purpose of the RTPO program is to enhance the transportation planning activities already being undertaken by ODOT, and to expand the planning activities to include traditionally underserved areas of Ohio through the creation of RTPOs.

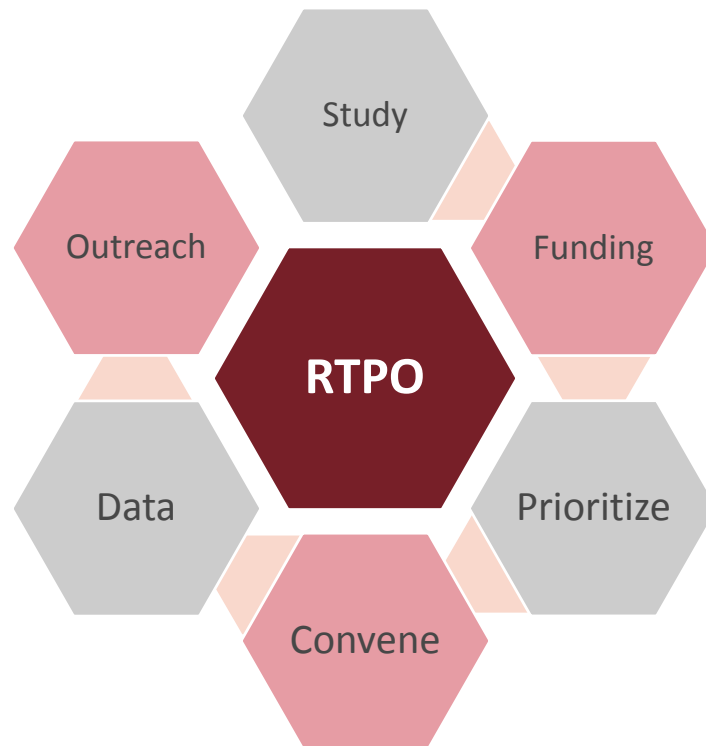
WHAT IS AN RTPO?

Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPO) are formed in Ohio by Councils of Governments or other regional council organizations that represent a county or a group of geographically contiguous counties and local governments. The Council of Governments or regional council serves as the lead planning agency that provides the staffing and other material resources necessary to carry out the RTPO activities for the service region. Buckeye Hills RTPO serves eight counties in southeastern Ohio; Athens, Hocking, Meigs, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, and Washington. In all, the RTPO pilot program in Ohio is providing transportation planning activities to 36 counties in Ohio.

The RTPO program has four major partners working in collaboration to produce the items specified in each agency's scope of work. The four partners and their relationships are illustrated below.



Each of the partners listed in the diagram above plays a unique and important role in ensuring that the objectives of the RTPO program are achieved.



CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

As part of the RTPO program, Buckeye Hills will perform, at a minimum, the following activities:

- Complete a 5 year regional multimodal transportation planning study for the eight county region;
- Provide a forum for public participation in the transportation planning process for the region;
- Become a resource to local parties in the areas of transportation related project funding;
- Gather, organize, and analyze transportation data and information;
- Act as a clearinghouse for transportation related information to local governments, interested organizations, and persons;
- Act as a convening party on behalf of interested parties in the region including ODOT, local government, interested organizations, and persons to facilitate discussion regarding transportation related issues.

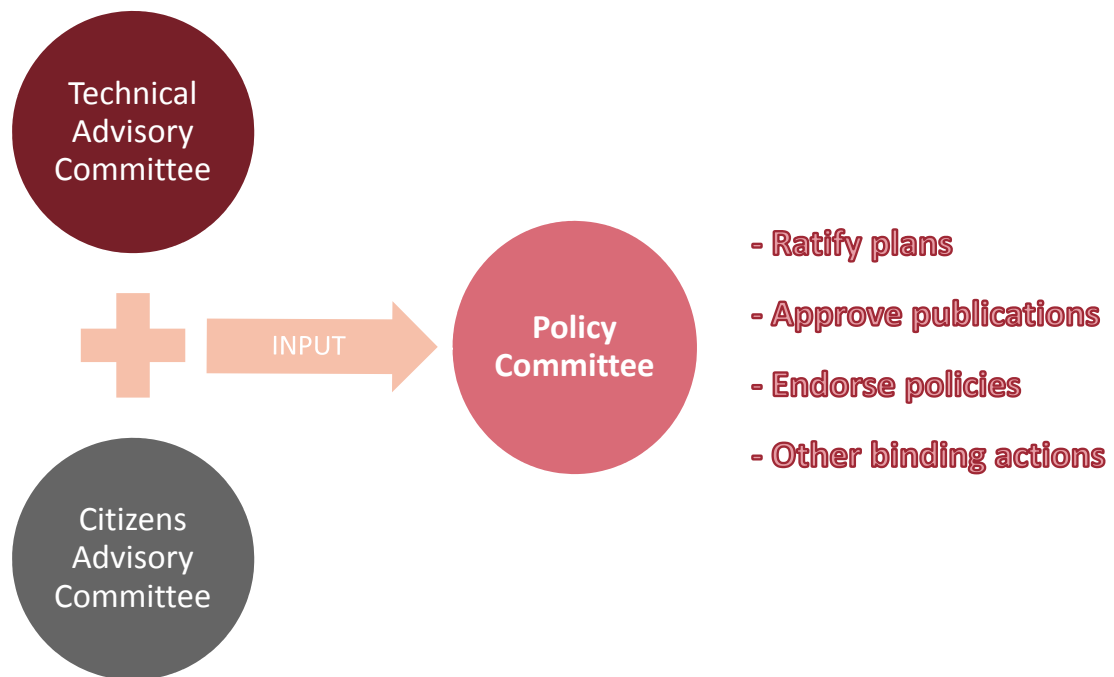
RTPO PLANNING CALENDAR

As stated earlier, the RTPO program in Ohio is currently a two year pilot program. During this two years Buckeye Hills has been tasked with completing a series of work items. Those items are listed below with their tentative completion dates (items subject to change during the program period).

- **July 1, 2013** – RTPO program commenced.
- **August – September 2013** – Hire Transportation Planning Manager.
- **September – November 2013** – Committees organized, established, and seated.
- **December 2013** – Public Participation Plan adopted.
- **March 31, 2014** – Goals and Objectives section finalized.
- **July 31, 2014** – Existing Conditions section finalized.
- **November 30, 2014** – Future Conditions section finalized.
- **February 28, 2014** – Needs Analysis section finalized.
- **April 30, 2015** – Fiscal Analysis section finalized.
- **April 30, 2015** – Public Participation section finalized.
- **May 31, 2015** – Transportation Plan Document finalized.
- **June 30, 2015** – Transportation Plan Document adopted.

RTPO COMMITTEES

In order to successfully carry out the activities of the RTPO work plan, Buckeye Hills will utilize two voluntary standing committees that exist to provide perspectives and input to policies, projects, and other issues related to transportation planning in the region. The Citizens Advisory Committee and The Technical Advisory Committee both convene to discuss relevant issues, items in the transportation plan document, to discuss projects, and to generally provide recommendations to the Policy Committee. The Policy Committee will then evaluate all the input and take binding action on behalf of the RTPO and Buckeye Hills.



POLICY COMMITTEE

The Policy Committee is composed of Buckeye Hills' existing Executive Committee. This committee, upon recommendations from the Technical Advisory and the Citizens Advisory committees, can take action on items related to transportation policy or transportation activities being undertaken by Buckeye Hills as part of the RTPO program. The Policy Committee will be responsible for the final review and adoption of all RTPO planning documents, plans, and other publications. A permanent standing agenda item has been added to the Executive Committee agenda for RTPO related business. The Buckeye Hills Executive Committee meets the first Friday of every month at the Buckeye Hills offices in Marietta, Ohio. All meetings of the RTPO Policy Committee are advertised within the region and are free and open to the public.

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Technical Advisory Committee is organized to provide technical input on topics relating to transportation such as design standards, best practices, materials input, construction or engineering techniques, and other detail related information that will be of use to Buckeye Hills staff as they complete the comprehensive transportation plan for the region. Members of this committee will generally be individuals with relevant professional experience that is technical in nature who can serve as subject matter experts in any mode of transport.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will be initially comprised of members of the Ohio Public Works Commission District 18 Executive Committee, with additional stakeholders appointed to ensure as many modes of transportation are represented as possible. #

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Citizens Advisory Committee is organized to allow citizens who are interested in transportation planning activities an opportunity to provide input on the planning process. Members of this committee will represent contingents of the population in the region including neighborhood groups, clubs and enthusiast groups (such as hiking or mountain biking), special interest groups (such as wildlife, agricultural, and conservation groups), or any other engaged citizens who have transportation interests.

It is our goal to represent as many modes of transportation on this committee as possible, with a goal of having each county represented by at least one member.

COMMITTEE MEMBER SERVICE

Members of the Citizens and Technical Committees are be asked to serve a two year term of service. No limit will be set on how long a member may serve on either committee as long as they remain active and in good standing with other committee members and Buckeye Hills staff. Resignation from the committee will be accepted in writing 30 days prior to a meeting of the member committee. Committees will meet quarterly at a minimum, with regular communication taking place via email, web conference, telephone, and physical mail.

YOUR ROLE IN THE RTPO

As committee members and stakeholders in the RTPO program, our success depends on your **active engagement** and participation. Our region is diverse, and so a diverse group of motivated individuals is necessary to accurately represent the needs, interests, and wishes of our constituency. Our purpose is to effectively communicate the transportation needs for our region to our partners at the state and federal level, as well as to parties within the area that may be unaware. Our intent is that committee members have a two way relationship with RTPO staff, Buckeye Hills staff, other committee members, and any other interested parties.

Below are some additional reasons why your active participation is so important to our work, and what you can expect to experience as a committee member.

UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE

As a committee member, you represent a unique viewpoint from within the community in which you live, from the industry you work in, and from the experiences you've had with transportation in the region as a resident. You know the local areas well—its people and its resources. You have a feeling for what types of policies and strategies may work and what types may not. Those insights are what we seek as we try to better understand the transportation challenges and opportunities that face our region.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Committee members have an opportunity to provide perspective and insight on information gathered as part of the planning process, as well as feedback on potential transportation improvements as they are developed within the region. In doing so, you and your fellow committee members will play a critical part in shaping the future of transportation in the Buckeye Hills region for decades to come. We are not asking you to be a planner or writer; rather, to act as a sounding board for the residents and interests of the areas you represent in the region. It is our perspective that transportation planning should happen with a community, not to a community

NETWORKING

Committee members know others in their area that have a keen interest in the way in which the area's future transportation needs should be managed. These others may include friends, neighbors, business associates, or others vitally interested in the future of the area. By inviting these individuals to participate in the planning process, members can help make sure that all important viewpoints are embodied in the planning process. Invite your local RTPO representative to pertinent organizational meetings, like Chambers, Rotary or other organizations for timely transportation updates or formal presentations. Committee membership also affords members the opportunity to freely exchange information, ideas, and perspectives with representatives from other areas, other industries, and other

backgrounds. These networking opportunities provide the framework for building meaningful relationships and partnerships that will benefit the RTPPO program and the region.

PUBLIC MEETINGS FACILITATION AND SUPPORT

Committee members are encouraged to engage others in the RTPPO program, in their communities, and to welcome newcomers. During the RTPPO program, public meetings will be held in each member county. Committee members are encouraged to attend the meetings in their areas, and to encourage others to participate as well.

For further information about the RTPPO program at Buckeye Hills please contact:

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