

2024-2050 COLUMBUS AREA METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Chapter 7: Project Evaluation & Fiscal Constraint

The MTP is required to be fiscally balanced, meaning in aggregate the cost of the projects identified must be within the forecasted revenue through 2050. This chapter describes the assumptions used for estimating project costs, and then summarizes the revenue sources used in forecasting the amount of transportation funding that will be available in the future.

Because the plan must be fiscally balanced, all of the candidate projects cannot be included, due to the aggregate cost being greater than the forecasted revenues. To help determine which projects will best help advance the regional transportation goals and therefore should be included in the MTP, project evaluation criteria were developed and a selection process put in place. This chapter also describes the selection process used to identify projects to be included in that plan that will both advance the transportation goals and be financially feasible.



7.a Project Cost Estimates

An estimate of the cost of the proposed projects is necessary to determine the number of projects that could be funded within the MTP horizon year of 2050. For projects that are included in the TIP or other special studies, individual project-specific costs are readily available and these are incorporated. Where the project-specific costs are not readily available, a generic project cost estimating procedure is used. This generic cost estimating methodology is based on the prevailing unit cost estimates from “Budget Estimating Guidelines” prepared by the ODOT Office of Estimating, and uses the unit costs of different types of roadway work based on ODOT’s let projects.

Projects in the MTP are classified into the following primary types:

Freeway-Related

- New Freeway - The construction of a new limited access freeway where none previously existed.
- Convert to Freeway – The conversion of an existing roadway (typically a divided 4- or more lane expressway) to a full limited access freeway.
- Major Freeway Widening – The addition of one or more lanes in each direction along an existing freeway.
- New interchange – The construction of an interchange where none existed. It could be to replace an existing at-grade intersection along an expressway or a new access point on a freeway.
- Interchange Modification – Modification to an existing interchange to provide for additional capacity.
- Lane Management – Involves inclusion of technology to manage travel lanes along a freeway corridor, which would allow the use of shoulders for vehicles during higher volume periods of the day.

Non-Freeway Roadways

- Major Surface Street Widening – Typically involves the addition of one or more travel lanes in each direction.
- Minor Widening - Typically involves the addition of a continuous center turn and/or the addition of turn lanes at a series of intersections along a corridor.
- New Roadway – The construction of a new road where none existed previously.
- New Bridge – Typically isolated locations for which only a new bridge is needed and not related roadwork. Could be for vehicle use or a railroad bridge.
- Intersection Modification – Typically involves the addition modification of an existing isolated intersection to add

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Bike/Pedestrian

- Sidewalk – a stand-alone project to add sidewalk to at least one side of roadway.
- Bike lane or wide shoulder – A stand-alone project to add bike lanes or wide shoulders alongside existing vehicle travel lane(s).
- Multiuse Path – A stand-alone project to provide a path allowing for two-way bike & pedestrian travel. This could be alongside a roadway or a waterway.
- Add complete street facilities – This description is used where a stand-alone project to have a bike and/or pedestrian facility has been identified but the specifics of how that would be accomplished are not yet known.

Transit

- Local or Express Bus Service – Individual local and express bus routes are not listed in the MTP. These are captured by line items in the project listing.
- High-Capacity Transit – Corridors for transit beyond local or express bus service. These could be Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Light-Rail Transit (LRT), Commuter Rail or intercity rail.

Management and Operations

- Management and Operations – These are general MTP line items that provide for maintaining the existing roadway facilities such as resurfacing, reconstruction and other maintenance activities.
- ITS – These are projects beyond regular maintenance of the system that will employ technologies to improve the operations and efficiency of the transportation system.
- Access Management Controls – Modifications along a corridor to consolidate intersections/driveways to improve safety and preserve capacity of a corridor without adding additional lanes.
- Operational Changes – Modifications within the roadway that will reallocate the pavement to be more multimodal, perhaps removing travel lanes to make the facility more of a complete street or adding parking.
- Convert to/from One-Way – Modification of the corridor to turn existing one-way street to two-way or a two-way street to one-way.

Year	Inflation Rate
2025	5.20%
2026	4.90%
2027	4.00%
2028	3.20%
2029-2034	3.00% per year
2035-2050	2.50% per year

Table 7.1

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For the freeway, non-freeway, and bike/pedestrian project types a generic cost estimating methodology was applied when a more specific cost was not available. For both the freeway and non-freeway projects they would include appropriate pedestrian facilities and bike facilities to make the facility a complete street. MORPC works with the transit agencies to develop costs related to transit projects. Cost estimates for other project types or strategies are taken from special studies or estimated on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, specific management and operations projects generally are not individually identified. The line items in the project listing for these encompass aggregate amounts expected to be expended on these activities during the transportation plan time frame.

The cost of each project or strategy identified in the project listing is shown in expected year of expenditure dollars, thus incorporating expected future inflation. ODOT tracks inflation trends and estimates inflation rates into the future. The MTP inflation rates shown in Table 7.1 are based on the ODOT projections.

7.b Financial Plan and Constraints

The 2024-2050 MTP assumes that funding will grow at moderate levels as outlined in the BIL. This growth would then continue beyond the time period of the BIL with subsequent Federal legislation. Likewise, at the state and local levels there will be modest growth in overall transportation revenue through 2050. However, overall more growth will come more from local and private sectors for expansion of the system, as preservation, maintenance and management of the existing system are the priorities for the state and federal transportation dollars.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING SOURCES

Numerous sources of funding have traditionally been used to finance transportation. The state and federal governments levy gasoline taxes and transportation-related fees. Some of the proceeds are shared directly with local governments. Local governments also levy license fees. In addition, many of them have property and income taxes used for operations and capital improvements. The private sector is often required to contribute new or improved transportation infrastructure to facilitate their developments.

Currently, sales taxes constitute the bulk of the funding for transit. Transit also receives Federal Transit Administration funding as well as funds from the Ohio general fund. No state gas tax dollars assist with funding transit operations or capital.

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The following list shows the major sources of funding available for transportation system improvements in Central Ohio.

Federal Sources

- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) Funds
- Interstate Maintenance Funds
- Surface Transportation Program (STP) Funds
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Funds
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Funds
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program
- Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (BR)
- Safety Program
- Special Project Earmarks
- Federal National Discretionary programs (RAISE, INFRA, etc.)
- Urbanized Area Formula Program Grants—Sections 5307 and 5340
- Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Persons with Disabilities—Formula Grant Section 5310
- Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Grants—Section 5339 State Sources
- Capital Investment Grants (CIG) - Section 5309

ODOT

- State-Controlled Gas Tax Allocated Across Many State Programs
- General Revenue Funds for Transit
- Ohio Public Works Commission – State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP)
- Ohio Public Works Commission – Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP)
- Ohio Development Services Agency – Roadwork Development (629) Program

Local

- License Plate Registration Fees
- Portion of State Gas Tax
- Sales Tax
- General Revenue (primarily from income tax)
- Special Purpose Sources (tax-increment financing, transportation improvement districts, joint economic development districts, development assessments, etc.)

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FUNDING FORECAST

The majority of the federal and state sources listed previously are funneled through ODOT. ODOT has various programs to manage its transportation system, utilizing funds from the appropriate sources. In addition, portions of some of the federal and state funding are passed on to MORPC, the County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO) and the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Central Ohio districts to distribute to projects. Furthermore, local funding varies greatly from one community to another. For these reasons, the forecast of available funding is divided into the following categories:

- TRAC
- ODOT
- National Discretionary
- STP-M (MORPC-controlled STP funds)
- CMAQ-M (MORPC-controlled CMAQ funds)
- TAP-M (MORPC-controlled TAP funds)
- CRP-M (MORPC-controlled CRP funds)
- CEAO
- OPWC
- Local Public
- Private
- Other
- FTA, State and Local Transit
- Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI)

These categories were selected because they most easily could be distinguished from each other from the point of view of who controls them and how the funds are used. In balancing the transportation plan budget, the most likely funding sources are assigned to each of the potential projects. The source is identified based on the scope of the project and its eligibility for that funding source, combined with historical practice for the community and projects of that scope. Each of the categories is briefly described below with base forecasting assumptions for each. Generally, historical information was used as the basis for the forecasts with growth to reflect year of receipt dollars.

Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC)

The TRAC manages ODOT's funding for new facilities and major expansion projects. These projects add lanes to freeways, build bypasses, expand existing interchanges, build new interchanges, fund major transit expansion and intermodal/multimodal terminals. ODOT funds the TRAC from a variety of sources depending upon the nature of the project, the funding sources for which it is eligible, and the funding available in a specific program.

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In March 2023, the TRAC approved the list of projects to use TRAC funding through 2026. The TRAC has committed approximately \$132 million to projects in the MORPC area from 2024 through 2026, out of a statewide total of \$698 million (an average of \$233 million a year). The MTP assumes that approximately \$170 million will be available statewide in 2027, grow at an annual rate of 2 percent, and that the MORPC area will receive its proportional share based on population through 2050. The slight increase in amount per year will come from the historical increase that occurs with a new federal transportation bill and perhaps adjustments to state funding. These assumptions are shown in Table 7.2.

TRAC Commitments to MPO Area, 2024-2026	\$132.3
TRAC Commitments Statewide, 2024-2026	\$697.8
MPO Share of TRAC Commitments, 2024-2026	19%
Assumed Statewide Budget, 2027	\$170.0
Assumed Budget Growth Rate, 2027-2050	2.0%
Assumed Statewide Budget, 2027-2050	\$5,171.7
Projected MPO Share of Population, 2027-2050	17.8%
Projected MPO Share of TRAC, 2027-2050	\$928.1
Projected MPO Share of TRAC, 2024-2050	\$1,060.4

Table 7.2

ODOT

The ODOT category encompasses the remainder of the funds controlled by ODOT that the TRAC does not manage. The majority of these funds are for management and operations activities across a variety of program areas, such as major bridge, major rehabilitation, safety and ODOT district bridge and pavement programs. Funds from these programs are also occasionally used for minor and major arterial widening projects. Increasingly, these funds are used to supplement TRAC funds on large expansion projects to the extent that the project is also addressing the physical decay of the facility.

One component of the ODOT funds addresses safety problems. ODOT currently budgets \$150 million statewide annually for its safety program. This amount is assumed to have a 2% annual growth and that the MORPC area will receive its population proportion share through 2050. These assumptions are shown in Table 7.3.

Available Statewide, 2024	\$183,000,000
Annual Growth Rate, 2024-2050	2.0%
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2024-2050	17.5%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
Safety Funds Available to Area, 2024-2050	\$1,167,555,857

Table 7.3

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A second component of the ODOT category is used for intersection improvements and minor and major widening projects along non-freeways. These are generally included in the ODOT district office allocations. These funds are generally used for projects on state and US routes. Occasionally, these funds support projects funded primarily by TRAC. Recent TIP data was reviewed to identify the amount of ODOT-controlled funds (not TRAC or safety) used for minor and major widening projects. The MTP assumes this trend will continue through 2050 with a small annual growth. These assumptions are shown in Table 7.4.

Arterial Widening Funding	
Annual average	\$6,500,000
Annual Growth Rate	2.0%
Funds Available to Area, SFY 2024-2050	\$229,738,105

Table 7.4

A third component of the ODOT category is general system preservation funds used on major freeway-related rehabilitation projects that also include capacity expansion. Recent TIP data was reviewed to identify the amount of ODOT-controlled funds (not TRAC) used for freeway expansion. There are several freeway expansion projects ODOT is pursuing that are using preservation funds. The MTP assumes an annual amount of \$15 million with a small annual growth through 2050. These assumptions are shown in Table 7.5.

Arterial Widening Funding	
Annual average	\$6,500,000
Annual Growth Rate	2.0%
Funds Available to Area, SFY 2024-2050	\$229,738,105

Table 7.5

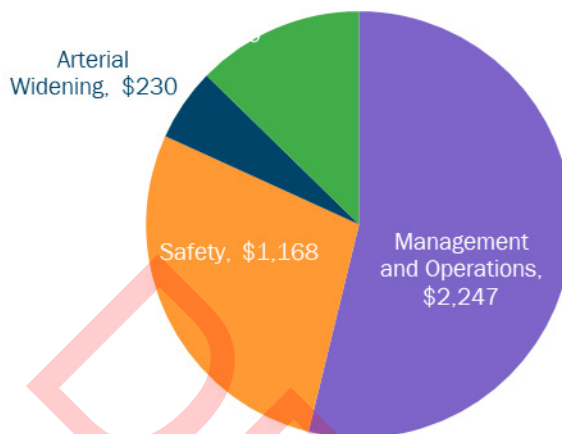
The ODOT funding summarized in Tables 7.4 and 7.5 would be funding that would be used on the individually listed transportation system expansion projects. However, ODOT emphasizes a “fix it first” approach that provides funding for management, operations and preservation activities to keep pace with the anticipated inflation levels. Thus, a large part of ODOT funding is on just preserving and maintaining the existing system without expansion. Recent TIP data was reviewed to look at ODOT funding for projects that were only maintenance and preservation projects. The annual average was \$63.6 million in the MPO area. Assuming an annual increase of 2.5% per year yields approximately \$2.247 billion through the year 2050. This is also shown in Table 7.6.

ODOT Maintenance & Operations Funding (Based on SFY 24-27 TIP Data)	
SFY 24-27 MORPC Area annual average	\$63,554,549
Annual Growth Rate	2.5%
Funds Available to Area, SFY 2024-2050	\$2,246,592,158

Table 7.6

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The total of all non-TRAC ODOT funding is shown in Figure 7.1.



Forecast of Total ODOT Funding	
Management and Operations	\$2,246,592,158
Safety	\$1,167,555,857
Arterial Widening	\$229,738,105
Non-TRAC Freeway Widening	\$530,164,857
Total ODOT Funding	\$4,174,050,977

Federal National Discretionary programs (RAISE, INFRA, etc.)

Since 2009, the U.S. Department of Transportation has annually conducted a solicitation and selection process for the at least one national discretionary grant program. It began with the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) competitive grant program. In its initial year as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), \$1.5 billion was available nationally. From 2010 through 2019, the annual amount has ranged from \$474 to \$1.5 billion million. In 2012, the MORPC area received \$16 million in TIGER funds for a project in the Rickenbacker area. The program continues now under the RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) name.

The FAST Act also established a new national competitive freight grant program. It is known as the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program. This program was continued in the BIL. The average annual funding for it over the 5-year BIL is \$1.45 billion. With the Columbus area a growing region with freight and logistics an emphasized and important part of our economy, several projects in the MTP will be strong candidates for either the RAISE or the INFRA grant programs. The region's population represents about 0.50% of the nation's population.

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The BIL established a variety of additional competitive grant programs for transportation projects. This included the Bridge Investment Program, The Reconnecting Communities Program, and Safe Streets and Road for All (SS4A). The addition of these programs represented a significant increase in federal discretionary funding opportunities.

The MTP assumes the continuation of national competitive grant programs through 2050 at approximately \$7.9 billion annually with modest growth and that several projects will receive funding totaling \$1.25 billion, or approximately 0.50% of the \$251 billion estimated to be available through 2050.

STP-M

MORPC has available a certain amount of STP funds both by formula and at ODOT's discretion. These funds are used primarily for arterial major widening projects, arterial minor widenings, intersection improvements, and expansion of bike and pedestrian infrastructure. The average amount of these funds that has been made available historically, including the effects of obligation limitations, was reviewed. MORPC used ODOT's projected allocation for SFY 2024 and assumed modest growth through 2050. Table 7.7 shows the resulting projection.

ODOT Allocation SFY 2024	\$28,000,000
Annual Growth Rate	3.0%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
Total Available	\$1,139,869,739

Table 7.7

CMAQ-M

At ODOT's discretion, MORPC has had a certain amount of CMAQ funds available. These are typically used for transit bus replacements, intersection improvements, minor arterial widening projects, travel demand management programs and air quality awareness programs. As of the fall of 2013, MORPC no longer receives a direct allocation from ODOT of CMAQ funds specifically for the planning area. The funds historically allocated to MORPC are now pooled with the funds formerly provided to each of the eight large MPOs in the state. The eight large MPOs have cooperatively developed (with ODOT's concurrence) the Ohio Statewide Urban CMAQ Committee (OSUCC) to solicit, evaluate, and select projects to use the pooled CMAQ funding. The MTP assumes that MORPC will receive its population share of funding as shown via ODOT's projection for SFY 2024 of what would have been allocated to MORPC prior to the pooling policy. The MTP assumes that the allocation will continue to grow at 3 percent annually through 2050.

Table 7.8 shows the resulting projection.

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ODOT Allocation SFY 2024	\$14,000,000
Annual Growth Rate	3.0%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
Total Available	\$569,934,869

Table 7.8

TAP-M

MORPC has available a certain amount of TAP funds both by formula and at ODOT’s discretion. These are primarily used for pedestrian and bikeway projects. The average amount of these funds that have been made available historically, including the effects of obligation limitations, was reviewed. MORPC used ODOT’s projected allocation for SFY 2024 and assumed modest growth through 2050. Table 7.9 shows the resulting projection.

ODOT Allocation SFY 2024	\$2,800,000
Annual Growth Rate	3.0%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
Total Available	\$113,986,974

Table 7.9

CRP-M

MORPC has available a certain amount of CRP funds both by formula and at ODOT’s discretion. These are primarily used for pedestrian and bikeway projects, and also roadway projects which will reduce emissions. The average amount of these funds that have been made available historically, including the effects of obligation limitations, was reviewed. MORPC used ODOT’s projected allocation for SFY 2024 and assumed modest growth through 2050. Table 7.10 shows the resulting projection.

ODOT Allocation SFY 2024	\$2,800,000
Annual Growth Rate	3.0%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
Total Available	\$113,986,974

Table 7.10

County Engineers Association of Ohio - CEAO

ODOT sub-allocates funding to County Engineers Association of Ohio. The allocation statewide for 2024 is \$19 million of HSIP funds for safety projects, \$14 million of STBG that are generally used for minor arterial widening projects; and \$74 million of HBP that are used for bridge replacements. No matching funds are required for HSIP funds, but project sponsors must provide a 20 percent match to STBG and the LBR funds. The MTP assumes that the planning area will receive an amount proportional to its share of the state’s population, and that the program will grow at a rate of 2.5% annually. Table 7.11 shows the CEAO funds expected to be available to the planning area for road and bridge projects through the year 2050.

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	HSIP	STP	Local Bridge
Annual Statewide Sub-Allocation, 2024	\$19,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$74,000,000
Annual Growth Rate, 2024-2050	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2024-2050	17.5%	17.5%	17.5%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27	27	27
Total Available by Source	\$127,896,017	\$94,239,170	\$498,121,328
Total Available CEAO		\$720,256,515	

Table 7.11

OPWC

Ohio Public Works Commission District 3 (Franklin County), District 17 (Delaware, Licking and Fairfield counties, among others) and District 11 (Union County, among others) awards funds to projects in MORPC’s planning area. In most cases, local agencies making use of District 3 OPWC funds to upgrade their highway systems include some improvements that are equivalent to MTP project type of “minor widening/safety improvement.” Central Ohio communities are more likely to use OPWC funds than federal funds for these purposes because of the greater administrative burden of using federal funds.

OPWC allocates funding to districts around the state based on population. OPWC awards funding from the State Capital Improvements Program (SCIP) and the Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP). Ohio voters in 2014 approved an amendment to the state constitution to extend the SCIP program through SFY 2026. It allows the state to fund the program by issuing general obligation bonds up to \$200 million in SFYs 2022 to 2026. The MTP assumes that the SCIP program will continue at \$200 million annually with \$25 million bump ups every 5 years through 2050. The LTIP program receives about \$61 million per year from a one-cent state fuel tax. The MTP assumes that LTIP funding would remain at these levels through 2050.

Table 7.11 shows the OPWC funds expected to be available to the planning area for road and bridge projects through the year 2050. As stated above, these funds are most often used on minor widening types of projects. Funds used for other infrastructure (sewers, water, etc.) and loans were excluded.

SCIP Funds Statewide 2024	\$200,000,000
SCIP Available Statewide 2024-2050	\$7,100,000,000
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2024-2050	17.5%
SCIP Funds to MPO Area	\$1,255,633,726
Proportion for Road & Bridge Projects 2020-2024	74%
SCIP Funds for Road & Bridge Projects MPO Area 2024-2050	\$926,215,074

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LTIP Funds Statewide 2024	\$61,000,000
LTIP Available Statewide 2024-2050	\$1,647,000,000
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2020-2050	17.5%
LTIP Funds to MPO Area 2024-2050	\$287,556,950
Total OPWC Funds for Road & Bridge Projects	\$1,213,772,024

Table 7.12

Local Public Funds

Most local governments allocate their own dollars through a capital improvement program that includes transportation improvements. This may include funds from general revenue or other special-purpose sources. Although local governments go through cycles of experiencing budget problems, it is expected that the local governments will continue to have funds available for system management, operations, preservation and expansion.

Local funds are often used to match state and federal dollars or repay OPWC loans. The amount of local funds typically needed to match the state and federal funds is shown in Table 7.12. For OPWC projects, local funding sources provided approximately 75 percent of the total costs over the last five years. ODOT and other non-local sources have provided additional funds for these projects.

In addition to the funds for matching state and federal funds, local governments completely fund some projects themselves. During the development of the TIP, MORPC contacts the local governments and reviews the CIPs to identify significant locally funded projects to include in the TIP. Recent TIP data was analyzed, and approximately \$40 million of local dollars per year (not matching federal or state funding) in system expansion projects were included. These projects include major and minor widening, intersection/interchange upgrade, new roadway and new bikeway projects.

Finally, local governments also spend funds on management, operations and system preservation projects such as resurfacing, minor repairs, signal system maintenance and others. These items are not typically included in the TIP due to their small scale. MORPC reviewed local CIPs and estimates that approximately \$100 million is currently spent per year, in aggregate, on these activities. The total local government funds available are shown in Table 7.12.

Source	Available	Local Match	Local Amount
STP-M	\$1,139,869,739	20%	\$284,967,435
CMAQ-M	\$569,934,869	10%	\$63,326,097
TAP-M	\$113,986,974	20%	\$28,496,743
CRPM	\$113,986,974	20%	\$28,496,743
ODOT Safety	\$1,167,555,857	20%	\$291,888,964
OPWC	\$1,213,772,024	75%	\$1,819,187,111

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CEAO Safety	\$127,896,017	0%	\$0
CEAO STP	\$94,239,170	20%	\$23,559,793
CEAO BR	\$498,121,328	20%	\$124,530,332
629	\$102,316,813	20%	\$25,579,203
COTF	\$52,841,249	25%	\$17,613,750
Local Expansion	\$40,000,000	/year	\$1,413,772,953
Local M&O	\$100,000,000	/year	\$3,534,432,383
		Total Local	\$7,655,851,508

Table 7.13

Private Funds

Various private sources may include direct contribution of dollars or improvement of the facility by the private sector. These are mostly done as new facilities through vacant land that is being developed or modifications to existing facilities impacted by the development of vacant land. Local governments are increasing the burden on developers to pay for transportation and other infrastructure changes needed to support the new developments they are building. Table 7.13 shows the amount of private funds expected through the year 2050.

Estimated Available 2024	\$22,000,000
Projected annual growth	2.5%
Number of years, 2024-2050	27
Total Available Private Funds	\$834,064,016

Table 7.14

Other Funds

Other funds include five small programs and other unique situations. These are Roadwork Development (629) Program, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), ODOT TID Supplemental Funding, Clean Ohio Trail Fund (COTF) and Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Other funds may also be congressional earmarks, innovative financing techniques, or other unique situations.

The purpose of the 629 program is to fund public roadwork improvements that support the expansion or attraction of businesses. For FY 2024 \$15.2 million was appropriated statewide. The transportation plan assumes that the planning area will receive an amount proportional to its share of the state's population. Table 7.14 presents the resulting projection.

FY24 Appropriation Statewide	\$15,200,000
Annual Growth Rate, 2024-2050	2.5%
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2040-2050	17.5%
Number of Years, 2020-2050	27
629 Funds Available to Area, 2020-2050	\$102,316,813

Table 7.15

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SAFETEA-LU established the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program to improve the ability of primary and middle school students to walk and bicycle to school safely. MAP-21 folded the federal program into the TAP. However, ODOT continues to administer the SRTS, making statewide TAP funds available to local sponsors in the planning area. The program provides federal transportation funds for right-of-way and construction phases of infrastructure projects, among other eligible activities. ODOT continued to use a range of 10 to 30 percent of SRTS funds for non-infrastructure activities. The program does not require local matching funds. The program is currently funded at \$5 million per year. The MTP assumes the state’s allocation will show small growth annually from 2024 to 2050, and that the planning area will receive an amount proportional to its share of the state’s population. The MTP also assumes that infrastructure projects will receive 80 percent of available funding.

Available Statewide, 2024	\$5,000,000
Estimated portion for infrastructure projects	80%
Annual Growth Rate, 2024-2050	2.5%
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2024-2050	17.5%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
SRTS Funds Available to Area Infrastructure, 2024-2050	\$26,925,477

Table 7.16

The state created the Clean Ohio Trails Fund, administered by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), as part of the Clean Ohio Fund program. The Recreational Trails Program makes federal transportation funds available for recreational trails and facilities for both non-motorized and motorized users. The RTP funds are distributed to states by legislative formula that accounts for the estimated amount of non-highway recreational fuel use in each state. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources administers the program in Ohio. Right-of-way and construction for trail development are among several eligible activities. The amount available from ODNR for the two programs statewide in 2024 is \$7.85 million per year. The MTP assumes that the state will continue the program growing at an annual rate of 2.5 percent. MORPC projected the funding available to the planning area by assuming it will receive an amount proportional to its share of the state’s population.

Available Statewide, 2024	\$7,850,000
Annual Growth Rate, 2024-2050	2.5%
Average Proportion of MORPC Area to State Population, 2024-2050	17.5%
Number of Years, 2024-2050	27
COTF Funds Available to Area, 2024-2050	\$52,841,249

Table 7.17

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The MPO area includes five Transportation Improvement Districts (TID). TIDs are county level entities that provide another tool to implement projects. They are often used for multi jurisdictional projects with a variety of project partners and funding sources. ODOT supports TIDs by providing \$4.5 million a year to projects sponsored by TIDs with no more than \$500,000 per project. The MTP assumes an average of one project a year will get ODOT funding in the MPO for a total of \$13.5 million through 2050.

The MTP also includes projects for the region's rail system, which could include upgrades to intermodal yards, new tracks, bridge clearance projects or road modifications to increase access to intermodal yards. Likewise, access road projects at the major airports are included in the transportation plan. These projects are not likely to be done with the traditional transportation system resources. These are expected to be funded by the private sector, the airports themselves or perhaps a port authority mechanism. Approximately \$100 million for these projects is estimated in the region through 2050.

Other funds may become available such as congressional earmarks or tolling, but these cannot be forecasted at this time. Figure 7.2 provides a summary of all of the other funding forecasted.

Other Sources	
Roadwork Development (629)	\$102,316,813
SRTS	\$26,925,477
COTF & RTP	\$52,841,249
ODOT TID	\$13,500,000
Rail and Airport Related	\$100,000,000
Total Other Sources	\$296,000,000

Table 7.18

FTA, State and Local Transit

As described in Chapter 4 two urban transit systems provide the majority of the transit service to the region. Delaware County Transit is a very small urban system, while COTA provides the vast majority of the service. Currently, the total local state and federal funding supporting Delaware County Transit is about \$2.5 million per year. COTA, on the other hand, has an annual capital and operating budget of close to \$200 million per year. The MTP assumes Delaware County Transit will continue with moderate growth. The remainder of this subsection will focus on COTA's funding forecast.

COTA currently operates on a 0.5 percent sales tax. Half of that is permanent and half is a 10-year levy approved in 2016. The sales tax is collected in Franklin County and portions of most of its municipalities that extend into contiguous counties and generates approximately \$182 million a year. The MTP assumes COTA's sales tax to grow an average of 2.5 percent annually through 2050.

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Several federal funding programs support transit. Federal Section 5307 Urban Formula grants are based on various demographic, service level, and ridership variables. Factors in the formula that allocates grants to urbanized areas are estimated based on an assumed annual growth in total Section 5307 funds, adjusted to account for increases in COTA's transit service and demographic base over which these grants are applied, to the extent necessary. Section 5339 Bus and Bus-Related discretionary and formula grants can be used to purchase buses and bus-related assets. Federal Section 5310 funds support transportation for the elderly and those with disabilities. In total these federal sources account for about \$27 million a year. The MTP assumes this continues with modest growth.

Fare revenues are based on COTA's projected ridership for existing bus services, as well as projected ridership from COTA's Long-Range Transit Plan. Currently this is approximately \$14 million per year. The MTP assumes fair revenue to grow modestly as a result of increasing passengers and an increase in average fare paid per passenger which is adjust for inflation generally every three years.

Other transit-related revenue such as advertising, lease income and some state operating assistance, is based on current budget values adjusted annually to account for growth in inflation, level-of-service, ridership, and/or demographics.

In the FY 2020-2021 state budget new state revenue was provided for transit. Although modest, it represents a first step for the state to support transit throughout the state. For COTA the amounts to \$2.5 million. The MTP assumes this will continue with modest growth through 2050.

In FY 16 COTA was successful in receiving a small starts FTA grant of \$38 million for the Cleveland Avenue BRT, the first BRT route in the region. The discretionary Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program provides funding for small starts investment projects such as bus rapid transit. As the region develops the additional high-capacity transit corridors included in the MTP, FTA grants and additional local funding support will be necessary. The MTP assumes the region will be successful in obtaining future FTA grants for these. In total over the next 30 years, the amount of grants for these would be an additional \$750 million. The MTP assumes additional local support through 2050 to develop the high capacity corridors would total about \$6.3 billion.

In summary, Table 7.19 provides the forecasted funding from federal, state, and local sources for transit from 2024-2050.

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Transit Funding Through 2050 (Millions)	
Existing Sales Tax	\$6,950
Passenger Revenue	\$540
Existing Federal	\$1,010
Misc Other Sources	\$430
State Assistance	\$93
New Local	\$6,310
New Federal	\$750
Total	\$16,083

Table 7.19

Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI)

As part of COTA's high-capacity transit initiatives, a proposed 27.5% of any additional sales tax revenue generated by COTA above the current 0.5% tax would be set aside for funding transit supportive infrastructure projects. These projects will generally expand bike and pedestrian infrastructure to connect to the transit system. TSI funding is projected at approximately \$50 million annually and expected to grow moderately through 2050. In total the MTP assumes \$1.9 billion in TSI funding will be available in the region through 2050.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FUNDING SUMMARY

Table 7.20 and Figure 7.3 provide a summary of the expected funds available through the year 2050 for the transportation system from all sources. Figure 7.3 collapses the 12 categories from Table 7.20 into 8 funding categories.

Transportation System Funds Expected through 2050 (millions)	
Category	Total
TRAC	\$1,060
ODOT	\$4,174
National Discretionary	\$1,250
STP-M	\$1,140
CMAQ-M	\$570
CRP-M	\$114
TAP-M	\$114
CEAO	\$720
OPWC	\$1,214
Local	\$7,656
Private	\$834

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Other	\$296
TSI	\$1,904
Transit: FTA, State, Local	\$16,083
Total	\$37,129

Table 7.20

7.3 Additional Funding Options

MORPC is proactively seeking additional funding for the transportation system. MORPC is active at both the state and federal level to explain the need for additional funding. A variety of options is continuously being discussed. These options include a variety of potential options to raise revenue for transportation projects. Some of these alternative financing mechanisms are briefly described below, with a few being new to Ohio.

ADJUSTING MOTOR FUEL TAXES

The Ohio General Assembly raised the motor fuel tax in 2020 for the first time since 2003. This was a very positive step in realizing the need to provide more transportation funding and taking action.

Some states allow for automatic increases in their fuel taxes by indexing the taxes to the Consumer Price Index or a similar metric, to try to keep revenues for transportation improvements in line with cost increases. A variation on this is to index the motor fuel excise tax to fuel prices, to try to maintain the level of revenues, even as prices of fuel increase, and the amount of fuel sold drops. Indexing can also include a ceiling or floor on the indexed rate. The neighboring states of West Virginia and Kentucky, for example, have some variability built into their fuel taxes.

Another option to adjust for the amount of fuel sold, used by some states, is to implement a fuel sales tax. Some states use this in combination with the more traditional fuel excise tax.

ADJUSTING VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEES

Adjusting vehicle registration fees can be another method to generate additional funds for transportation. Vehicle registration fees are relatively inexpensive to administer and can be collected from non-gasoline vehicles that may not be subject to fuel taxes. Registration fees can be keyed to a vehicle's size and its effect on the roads (larger vehicles pay higher rates).

Vehicle fees can also be based on the vehicle value. Such a tax would be a progressive tax and would have good revenue-generating potential and less cost to taxpayers. This type of tax may also be deductible for individual federal income tax purposes.

TAX ON SALE OF NEW AND USED VEHICLES

A tax on the sale of new or used vehicles could be dedicated to transportation purposes. This is done in several states and has potential to generate significant funds.

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CONGESTION-RELATED FEES

Congestion fees are charged to drivers based on the current level of congestion and may vary throughout a day. It is not widely used in the U.S., except on some existing toll facilities and on some public transit systems. This is a potential revenue generator and also a tool to discourage travel during the busiest times. The fee can also be indexed to inflation.

TOLLS ON ROADS, LANES, OR BRIDGES

With appropriate legislation, private entities could initiate proposals for a new toll facility. Tolls also could be used on new truck lanes or high-occupancy vehicle lanes. Tolls can also be added to capacity additions to existing facilities.

VEHICLE-MILES-OF-TRAVEL (VMT) FEES

This is a concept, where fees would be tied to the amount of travel someone does; those who put more miles on their vehicles would pay more. This is made increasingly feasible by new technology. This a longer term option and could be used to supplement or replace fuel taxes. A few states have completed preliminary studies on the use of this new concept.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Public-private partnerships (PPP) can be used to fund road construction, operation or maintenance. Public-private partnerships are more commonly used in Europe and have been tried by some states in the U.S. It has the potential for significant cost savings and can facilitate access to private capital. ODOT recently initiated one of its first large PPPs in southern Ohio for the Portsmouth bypass, which is now under construction.

7.4 Project Evaluation and Selection Process

The development of this plan, covering the years 2024-2050, is a collaborative effort of all the jurisdictions within the MORPC MPO area. The strategies projects included in the MTP represent the consensus of these jurisdictions as to the transportation system investments that are to take place through the year 2050 with the federal, state, local, private and other financial resources reasonably expected to be available within the planning area.

Most of the strategies mentioned throughout the previous chapters and summarized in Chapter 8 address maintaining and expanding the transportation system. The specific transportation infrastructure projects included in the MTP are listed in Section 8.#. These include a few general listings, which provide for maintaining the existing transportation system, including transit operations. The majority, however, are individual projects to add capacity to the transportation system.

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The planning process leading to this MTP identified over 1800 candidate projects to expand the transportation system. The total cost for these far exceeds the amount of financial resources reasonably expected to be available through the year 2050. Therefore, a selection process was established to determine which projects and strategies to include in the MTP.

As discussed in Chapter 1, goals and measurable objectives were established for the MTP. During the establishment of these, evaluation criteria were also established to evaluate the transportation system expansion projects. The evaluation criteria are tools to help ensure consistency between plan recommendations and the goals. These criteria were applied to the candidate transportation projects considered for inclusion in the MTP.

In applying the evaluation criteria, the projects were divided into similar project types. Quantitative measures were compared against the distribution of values within that project type to help gauge how a project measures relative to similar projects. Each project also received a statement about qualitative criteria, taken into consideration in assigning the score for the corresponding goal. In evaluating the projects, each received a score on a 0 to 20 point scale relative to each of the six goals. The criteria measures helped MORPC staff subjectively assign a score to the project relative to each goal. One can find more information on the criteria, scores and rankings in Appendix B.

As mentioned above, the criteria were tools in the development of the MTP. The scores provided a starting point to identify the projects that would likely best help achieve the measurable objectives. The score for each goal was considered, along with knowledge of the communities' desires and input received through 2023, which led to the development of the first draft of projects that was made available for member and public comment in February 2024.

Another consideration in the selection of projects as discussed in Section 7.2 is the forecasts of funds reasonably expected to be available through the year 2050. The different funding sources generally are used for different project types. Each strategy or project was matched to the appropriate funding source(s). In aggregate, the compilation of project types and strategies in the transportation plan must align with the funding available to fund those types of projects and strategies.

Although the evaluation process attempts to capture the major considerations in selecting projects, there are always special considerations that need to be addressed either as a general strategy or with regard to a particular project. These could include the needs of special populations, environmental considerations and development and economic impacts. Additionally, public input always plays a role in determining the final MTP strategies and projects. MORPC received comments continually throughout the process.

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Based on feedback during the various comment periods and additional refinement of the funding forecasts, an updated project list was included as part of the draft of the complete MTP that was made available for public comment in March 2024. Further comments were received through early-April 2024. These comments were considered for additional refinement to the funding forecast and to the projects to be included in the MTP.

7.5 Fiscal Constraint Summary

The project listing in Chapter 8 identifies the estimated time period for each project. Projects that are on the SFY 2024-2027 TIP or a local government capital improvement program have a specific year identified for construction. These are near-term projects that are actively under development and for which the project sponsor is able to provide a construction year. Correspondingly, the cost shown in the project listing is in construction year dollars. Most of the remaining projects are classified into a period of by 2030 (near-term), 2031-2040 (medium-term), or 2041 to 2050 (long-term). For all projects not in the 2024-2027 TIP with a specific cost, a total cost range is provided to reflect the uncertainty in the year of construction and the ultimate scope of the project since there has been little to no project development work completed for it at this time. A few project listings are line items to reflect ongoing activities throughout the transportation plan period with the cost reflecting an estimate of the aggregate amount to be expended between 2024 and 2050.

Table 7.22 summarizes the estimated cost by project type for the specific projects and strategies presented in the project listing.

In total, the MTP includes \$35 billion in strategies and projects. Of this \$13 billion is for expansion of the transportation system, while the majority, \$17 billion, is to maintain the existing system.

The specific projects identified in the MTP are a type of strategy. Some items in the project list encompass the ongoing operation, maintenance, and preservation of the existing transportation system. This includes, in general, the operation and expansion of transit service. However, most of the items listed are projects to expand the physical components of the transportation system. The MTP includes projects that add approximately 48 miles of freeway widening, modify 23 freeway interchanges and build 8 new ones. Projects to expand the arterial and collector roadways include 90 miles of new road segments and through lane additions on 93 miles of roads. There are projects totaling 120 miles that are minor widening on arterial and collector roadways impacting approximately 117 intersection projects. The arterial and collector projects will include accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists. The MTP also includes approximately 725 miles of standalone bike/pedestrian projects, including sidewalk on every arterial or collector roadway within the urbanized area that currently is missing sidewalk. It also includes an increase in fixed-route transit service hours including 5 high capacity corridors.