

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Specific issues or programs require special institutional attention in response to changing strategic conditions. The department designates these as strategic initiatives, in order to advance processes or programs to meet new challenges. Strategic initiatives bridge the gap between mature processes and programs, which have existing performance measures, and new programs that require the development of policy, processes, resource allocation or other action.

The preceding discussion of department goals demonstrates how the department has established and attained impressive gains in most of its measurable conditions.

Delivery of the Governor's Jobs and Progress Plan is a keystone to the department's success in safety, congestion and economic development. Funding the program provides an unprecedented opportunity and responsibility for the department to deliver large and complex projects. The first initiative positions the department to deliver this record-level program.

The second strategic initiative is to continue advancement of the department's safety goals. The 2004 – 2005 business plan set auspicious safety goals, and 2004 witnessed positive gains in fatal crash frequency. Measurable safety indicators vary by district, however, and long-term crash reductions

will require better performance. The safety strategic initiative maintains the department's focus on this effort.

Strategic initiative three stems from ODOT's value of a flexible, well-trained work force. By continuing the Highway Technician training to its conclusion in this biennium, this strategic initiative advances the department's goal of effective resource management.

The fourth strategic initiative advances the use of business tools to continuously improve ODOT's county operations. This initiative focuses on affordably ensuring operational sufficiency.

Lastly, strategic initiative five continues development of ODOT's pavement management system, which helps to advance the department's system preservation goal.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE ONE –

DELIVER THE JOBS AND PROGRESS PLAN

In the 2004 and 2005 biennium, ODOT progressed aggressively on Governor Taft's Jobs and Progress Plan. ODOT delivered \$349 million in right of way, preliminary development and construction plans in 2004 and another \$571 million in 2005. That effort represented the largest two-year Major New Construction program in ODOT history. It also represented an accomplishment of more than 98 percent of the Jobs and Progress Program for that biennium.

The Jobs and Progress Plan is vital to preserving mobility in Ohio's large cities. In Toledo, for example, almost 15 percent of total freeway traffic occurs in congested conditions; the Jobs and Progress Plan will reduce this to just under 8 percent. The plan will reduce or curb the growth of congestion in Ohio's other seven urbanized counties and address some of the worst accident locations as well.

For the 2006 and 2007 biennium, ODOT's record pace of Major New Construction delivery needs to continue. For SFY 2006, ODOT must deliver \$647 million in construction, right of way, preliminary development and related actions. In SFY 2007, that grows again to \$840 million for Major New Construction alone.

The size of the Major New Construction program for 2006-2007 will be 62 percent greater than the record program in

the previous biennium. While delivering that huge program, ODOT will be preparing for a record program in 2008, which represents another 20 percent growth in the annual Major New Construction program.

This schedule represents five consecutive years of ever-growing record project delivery. Such an ambitious schedule will tax ODOT's ability to plan, design, bid, construct, inspect and finance projects. The magnitude of effort will be the largest at the department since the 1960s.

Strategic Initiative One for SFY 2006-2007 will continue to deliver Governor Taft's Jobs and Progress Program as represented by the current program approved by the Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC). In this initiative, every district and division will be responsible for bringing the TRAC approved projects in on time and on budget.

THE STEPS THAT MUST BE ACHIEVED IN SFY 2006 AND 2007 INCLUDE:

- Every district and the divisions of Planning and Production must deliver the 2006 and 2007 Major New Construction program in accordance with the costs and schedule of the January 12, 2005 TRAC list. Project names, PIDs, and milestone dates, as of April 14, 2005, are included as an appendix to this business plan starting on page 77.
- The Deputy Director of Information Technology and the Assistant Director of Planning and Production must ensure that by December 31, 2005, personnel in every district and the Central Office Planning and Production Division is trained and using the new Jobs and Progress Plan tracking system. This system mirrors the new Project Development Process and is devised to allow ODOT to keep the massive Jobs and Progress Plan projects on schedule, within scope and within budget. The new system will provide the structure for constant oversight of the program.
- By December 2005, the Assistant Director of Planning and Production and the Assistant Director of Highway Management must have coordinated in-depth workshops and reviews of the cost, scope, schedule, maintenance of traffic and constructability of the major Jobs and Progress Plan projects.
- The divisions of Legislative Services, Finance and Planning must collaborate to promote the best federal funding formulas possible in the federal transportation re-authorization bill expected to be enacted in calendar year 2005. Then, the divisions will provide an updated fiscal forecast for the Jobs and Progress Plan/TRAC program. The TRAC list will be amended, if necessary, to reflect the final federal revenue projections.
- By December 2006, the Division of Construction will prepare, with the districts, a work plan for how the Major New Construction workload will be administered in SFYs 2006, 2007 and 2008.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE ONE –
DELIVER THE JOBS AND PROGRESS PLAN
CONTINUED

- Because ODOT may not receive the full amount of federal funds it was anticipating, the department will adjust its Major New Construction program. Approximately six of the largest TRAC projects will be analyzed in greater detail to determine how they could be reduced in cost but still achieve the greatest congestion relief and accident reductions. The six projects or collections of projects will be:

- The U.S. Route 24 project from the Indiana border to Maumee;
- Phase II of Interstate 75 in downtown Dayton;
- The Columbus Interstates 70/71 Split;
- The Columbus North Outerbelt interchanges;
- The Cleveland Innerbelt; and
- The collection of Interstate 75 projects in Hamilton County.

By the end of calendar year 2006, the divisions of Planning and Production, with the appropriate districts, will analyze these projects in greater detail. They will determine which

components of these projects contribute disproportionately to accident reduction and congestion relief. Then, they will determine if the projects can be separated into phases, which could be built for lower cost but still with independent utility. The intent will be to build these projects in phases. ODOT has taken this approach in the past. The Interstate 670 Spring/Sandusky Project and the Collector Distributor/Morse Stelzer Interstate 270 projects in Columbus were broken into independent sections and constructed over the course of a decade. Each section of the projects provided benefit and complemented the later sections when eventually constructed.

ODOT will not slow down or lose focus on the Jobs and Progress Plan merely because the total amount of planned revenue may not be available. Instead of the TRAC program averaging \$600 million over four years, the reduced list will still exceed an average of \$500 million annually. The program will remain the largest in ODOT history and one of the largest in the country.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE TWO –

REFINE, RE-FOCUS AND RESPOND TO OHIO'S HIGH-CRASH LOCATIONS

As with the Major New Construction program, ODOT had record success in the past biennium with its Safety Work Plan Efforts. Ohio's fatality rate fell from 1.31 to 1.16 fatalities per 100 million miles of travel. Ohio's national fatality rate went from 21st best to 9th best during the biennium. The department delivered more than 700 low-cost safety projects, it doubled its high-crash program and its county forces achieved all their roadway improvement goals.

While progress was made in important areas, progress was not made in all areas. The total number of crashes has fallen but not dramatically. Rear-end crashes continue to grow. Injury crashes remain nearly as high as before the initiative began. ODOT cannot declare victory and must continue to find strategies to further reduce crashes if it is to meet its goals.

ODOT's long-term strategic safety goals are to:

- Reduce crash frequency by 10 percent by 2015;
- Reduce rear-end crashes by 25 percent by 2015; and
- Reduce the state fatality rate to 1.0 per 100 million vehicle miles travel by 2008.

TO CONTINUE PROGRESS TOWARD THOSE LONG-TERM GOALS AND TO BUILD UPON SUCCESSES FROM THE 2004-2005 BIENNIUM ODOT WILL PURSUE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES IN THE 2006-2007 BIENNIUM:

- Because nearly 45 percent of all fatalities occur on local roads not part of ODOT's state highway system, the department will prioritize the counties with the highest local roadway fatalities and highest fatality rate. It will launch outreach efforts to those counties. It will give priority in pass-through federal funds to the counties with these disproportionately high crash areas. ODOT will seek to engage local officials to improve their high-crash locations, much as ODOT has reached out to local governments which have excessively poor bridge and pavement conditions.
- Because the number of rear-end crashes has not decreased as hoped, ODOT will analyze in great detail where rear-end crashes are occurring. It then will review the top locations to determine what additional strategies could be effective. These crashes appear to be growing disproportionately in some districts and on some routes. ODOT will prioritize these routes and locations to develop a systematic effort to achieve its long-term goal of a 25 percent reduction by 2015.
- Some districts have experienced overall accident reduction trends, while others have not. In the next biennium, each district which is not experiencing decreases will be analyzed in greater detail. ODOT will "drill down" into the district-by-district data to seek trends and insight into what strategies may be effective in those areas that are not experiencing crash decreases.
- ODOT assumes that the massive Major New Construction program under way through 2012 should significantly reduce crashes at Ohio's most congested locations. In SFY 2006, ODOT will analyze past Major New Construction projects to determine what level of crash reduction occurred when the projects were completed. Then ODOT will extrapolate estimated crash reductions from future projects to determine district-by-district how much progress in crash-reduction ODOT may achieve by these projects through 2012. With those estimates, ODOT will attempt to project how much progress toward its 2015 goals can be expected through current efforts.
- The Deputy Director of Information Technology will ensure that necessary information system enhancements are provided so that ODOT can analyze locations and display all necessary data for this initiative.
- Each district will again develop a biennial safety plan to address its high-crash locations and deliver its portion of the statewide safety program.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE TWO –
REFINE, RE-FOCUS AND RESPOND TO OHIO'S HIGH-CRASH LOCATIONS
CONTINUED

- The Office of Roadway Safety and Mobility and the Division of Highway Operations will jointly develop a force-account safety program for ODOT's county forces. This program will identify a series of improvements that ODOT county forces can make to address roadway deficiencies that can contribute to crashes.
- ODOT will implement a "safety corridor" program. This program will determine whether high numbers of crashes are occurring over long corridors but are escaping detection because current crash reporting practices emphasize "spot" locations. On long corridors that have elevated crash rates, ODOT will partner with the Ohio Department of Public Safety, local law enforcement and local citizens to identify strategies to reduce crashes.
- By December 2005, ODOT will develop a comprehensive highway safety plan, which is inter-disciplinary and inclusive of all levels of government. The plan will identify safety emphasis areas, with specific strategies to address crashes and fatalities. Safety emphasis areas are not limited to crash type, but rather can include population sectors, driving behavior or a number of other factors.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE THREE –

COMPLETE THE HIGHWAY TECHNICIAN COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAM

This initiative for 2006-2007 will conclude the first major phase of the Highway Technician (HT) Series launched in late 2003. The HT Series includes a broad classification of employees and a comprehensive training academy. The focus of both is to provide training and certification of employees involved in construction and highway management.

The premise of the HT Academy is to incorporate a flexible blend of maintenance and construction duties into one classification series.

When paired with the delivery of the Jobs and Progress Plan and keeping pace with the ambitious schedule of planning, design and ultimately construction, the full implementation of the HT Series is imperative. Construction experience,

completion of HT Academy course work and certifications will provide a sufficient number of trained inspectors to support the delivery of the Jobs and Progress Plan.

In this initiative, every district will be responsible for assuring construction experience. HT Academy training is made available to all employees affected by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

THE STEPS THAT MUST BE ACHIEVED IN SFY 2006 - 2007 INCLUDE:

Course Development, Deployment And Training Opportunities:

- By January 1, 2006, finalize development and deployment of Level 2 and Level 3 courses and certifications to fully establish the viability of the HT Series and its related Academy.
- By January 1, 2006, provide a sufficient number of training sessions in each district for Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 courses and related certifications to meet the requirements of the MOU. Pre and post testing for each course will be offered online.
- By January 31, 2006, deploy online internal certification tests for General Knowledge, Earthwork, Drainage, Pavements, Traffic Control Devices, Structures and Contract Administration for eligible employees to successfully complete the HT Academy for full utilization in the construction and maintenance areas.
- By November 26, 2006, to enter the HT Series as an HT Level 2, 1,316 eligible employees will need training to complete HT Level 1 courses and certifications. By district, the classifications of Highway Technician 1, Highway Maintenance Worker 3, and Bridge Worker 1 are impacted as follows:

District 1	95	District 7	140
District 2	65	District 8	96
District 3	99	District 9	100
District 4	137	District 10	134
District 5	95	District 11	77
District 6	157	District 12	121

- By November 26, 2006, to enter the HT Series as an Highway Technician Level 3, 365 eligible employees will need to be provided training opportunities to complete HT Level 1 and 2 courses and certifications. By district and Central Office, the classifications of Material Controller 1, Material Controller 2, Highway Maintenance Worker 4, Route Marker 2 and Bridge Worker 2 are impacted as follows:

District 1	34	District 7	38
District 2	21	District 8	43
District 3	32	District 9	29
District 4	24	District 10	23
District 5	31	District 11	27
District 6	28	District 12	24
Central Office		11	

- By November 26, 2006, to enter the HT Series as an Highway Technician Level 4, 263 eligible employees will need to be provided training opportunities to complete HT Level 1, 2 and 3 courses and certifications. By district



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE THREE –
**COMPLETE THE HIGHWAY TECHNICIAN
 COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING PROGRAM** *CONTINUED*

and Central Office, the classifications of Project Inspector 1, Project Inspector 2, Material Controller 3 are impacted as follows:

District 1	13	District 7	28
District 2	18	District 8	23
District 3	15	District 9	25
District 4	26	District 10	17
District 5	16	District 11	14
District 6	35	District 12	31
Central Office		2	

- By January 1, 2007, complete development and deployment of Level 4 courses and related certifications.

Construction Experience Requirements:

- By November 26, 2006, 237 Highway Maintenance Worker 4, Bridge Worker 2 and Route Marker 2 need 12

months of construction experience. District projections include:

District 1	22	District 7	29
District 2	8	District 8	24
District 3	26	District 9	19
District 4	17	District 10	15
District 5	15	District 11	19
District 6	22	District 12	21

- By 2010, a total of 1,473 Highway Technician 2s will need 12 months of construction experience. District projections include:

District 1	122	District 7	143
District 2	113	District 8	104
District 3	113	District 9	102
District 4	139	District 10	138
District 5	114	District 11	87
District 6	175	District 12	123



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOUR –

CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE COUNTY OPERATIONS BY USING BUSINESS TOOLS

This initiative for 2006 - 2007 will further the evolution and use of private sector tools to operate county maintenance facilities, and their related annual work plans, more in line with acceptable business practices. This initiative will place an increased focus on measuring the cost and quality of ODOT's basic maintenance activities, building logically upon the steady and fundamental improvements made in county operations through prior initiatives.

In 2002, ODOT adopted a strategic initiative to redefine the products of the county workforce. In that initiative, eight primary county roadway maintenance Organizational Performance Index (OPIs) indicators were developed to define the standard of maintenance to be achieved on its roads. In addition, ODOT measured 100 percent of the state highway system and set goals for each county to achieve in these eight measures as part of the initiative. Through that initiative, ODOT defined the primary business products of the county operations and clearly set objectives for the counties to meet.

Also in 2002, ODOT launched a strategic initiative to create a Cost Accounting System. This system allowed ODOT to more accurately measure its cost of doing business by capturing the total cost of labor, equipment, materials, buildings and administrative overhead. With this cost information, ODOT has been able to measure the cost of its activities and compare those costs to the private sector and/or like ODOT operations. The cost accounting system has steadily improved since it was adopted.

In 2004, using the OPI standards already in place, ODOT moved toward attaining and sustaining a "Steady State" of system conditions. The intent of this strategic initiative was to meet the county OPI goals and to determine the level of effort needed to sustain those high level of conditions indefinitely. All the standards were met by March 2004, and as a result, ODOT dramatically reduced its roadway deficiencies.

In the year since the goals were reached, the counties have routinely sustained those goals and achieved the steady state as defined by a continued, high level of performance for a predictable and affordable level of effort.

Also in 2004, a strategic initiative was established to implement a comprehensive training and certification program for approximately 2,500 construction and highway management employees. This led to the creation of the Highway Technician Series, which provided for a broad classification of employees who are well trained and flexible in both construction and highway maintenance. As part of that initiative, ODOT began an historic level of training in how to perform maintenance and construction activities in accordance with the ODOT Materials and Construction Specifications manual (Spec Book). Once fully trained and certified, ODOT workers will be qualified to either inspect basic construction projects or to perform ODOT maintenance projects to the same level as private-sector contractors.

These initiatives have created a strong foundation for a better-trained, better-informed workforce and have led directly to substantially improved maintenance conditions on Ohio's roads.

Strategic Initiative Four will build upon these earlier efforts and use them to evolve the county operations to the next level of professionalism.

THIS INITIATIVE WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS IN 2006 AND 2007:

- The Division of Finance will complete a cost-accounting analysis, which captures the total cost of ODOT's maintenance activities. It will capture not only the cost of labor but also the cost of the equipment, facilities, materials, supplies and administrative support necessary

to perform ODOT maintenance work. With this information, ODOT can analyze its maintenance costs the same way a construction contractor can analyze construction costs to prepare a bid. With this information, ODOT county managers can determine which activities they are



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FOUR –
CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE COUNTY OPERATIONS
 BY USING BUSINESS TOOLS *CONTINUED*

competitive at performing and determine inefficient activities. The divisions of Finance and Highway Operations will develop a standard process for each county manager to conduct this analysis.

- The County Work Plans will then be augmented in SFY 2007 to put more emphasis on cost-effective activities and to shift non-cost effective, in-house activities to contractors.

ODOT has published a fiscal plan through the year 2015, which is based on retaining the current workforce size at 6,031 employees. All ODOT financial planning is based on retaining the size of the current workforce. ODOT has staffed its county workforces to conduct snow and ice operations in the winter, maintenance operations year-round and construction inspections throughout the construction season.

ODOT is determined to continuously improve. ODOT can use its cost-accounting data and its better trained workforce to determine which in-house work it can perform as efficiently and as effectively as the private sector. Maintenance work can be performed to the level of the Spec Book where applicable. The cost of equipment, materials, facilities, labor and administrative support can be fully captured to ensure that ODOT is using its resources most efficiently. If certain types of work require specialty equipment that is expensive but infrequently used, it may not be economical for ODOT to do such work. State Force Accounts, by law, place limitations on ODOT that prohibit certain types of projects by size and/or dollar amount. Currently, ODOT conducts only limited analysis as to the cost-effectiveness of its activities.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVE FIVE –

CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE THE PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROCESS

ODOT will continue this previous initiative into SFY 2006-2007. Progress was made in the past biennium, but a comprehensive pavement management process was not completely developed, explained and implemented. State pavement conditions overall continue to meet statewide goals, but statewide averages tend to mask certain conditions. Two-lane pavement conditions narrowly met ODOT's statewide goals. The miles of "mediocre" two-lane pavements remain higher than optimal. In addition, to sustain good pavement conditions into the future for a reasonable cost, establishing and maintaining uniform pavement degradation rates across the state is essential.

IN THE NEXT BIENNIUM ODOT WILL:

- Identify and publish a comprehensive cradle-to-grave pavement management process, which details how the department builds, monitors and maintains its pavements over their life to ensure they provide good service for a reasonable cost in terms of money, performance and maintenance of traffic.
- Ensure poor-performing pavements are identified and analyzed so that lessons may be learned from their performance to improve the performance of other pavements.
- Ensure that all districts which have higher-than-average rates of pavement degradation have clear plans in place to restore their system to acceptable, long-lived conditions.
- Ensure that all design and testing processes are thoroughly analyzed to ensure ODOT is using acceptable pavement mixes and appropriate materials.
- Determine what information technology enhancements are necessary to ensure decision makers within ODOT can fully exploit the pavement data in order to make intelligent short-term and long-term pavement- management decisions.

The Assistant Director of Planning and Production, the Assistant Director of Highway Management and the Deputy Director of Information Technology share accountability for this initiative.

