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Citizens Involvement Committee

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Agency: Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study

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Summary

- AMATS is launching an interactive map that will help the public visualize and follow Transportation Improvement Plan projects and their impact on local stakeholders.
- The Transportation Improvement Plan and Transportation Outlook 2050 are nearing finalization. Final versions will be posted to the [AMATS website](#) within the next few weeks.
- AMATS is likely to meet federal certification requirements for its planning process and has received national recognition for its Congestion Management Plan.

Follow-Up Questions

- Does the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) development of air mobility routes mean Ohio is preparing for the possibility of future consumer drone delivery?

Notes

Planning Administrator Matthew Stewart welcomed the committee and the public to the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He reviewed the agenda before moving into the Transportation Improvement Program FY 2026-2029 (TIP) items.

[Meeting packets including the agenda, final content](#) from the Transportation Improvement Program FY 2026-2029, and the Transportation Outlook 2050 - Regional Transportation Plan (TO2050) were distributed several days before the meeting, along

with the meeting link.

All presentation slides from AMATS and the Ohio Division of the Federal Highway Administration were provided upon request afterwards and [can be found here](#).

AMATS staff in attendance also included:

- GIS Coordinator Seth Bush
- Mobility Planner Heather Davis Reidl
- Transportation Planner Jeff Gardner
- Director Curtis Baker
- GIS Technician Amelia Hoffmeier

[Transportation Infrastructure Planner Samuel Wallace](#) from the Ohio Division of the Federal Highway Administration also attended.

Transportation Improvement Program FY 2026–2029

Stewart said the TIP includes revised plans for projects already approved in 2023. His comments primarily covered where they were in the report process.

- The public comment period for the report is now over.
- The final draft was approved by the Technical Advisory Committee
- There have not been any major changes since the March 20 Citizens Involvement Committee (CIC) meeting; there have been small movements of money due to updates such as right-of-way changes.
- A more in-depth review of the projects included in both the TIP and TOP was given at the March 20 meeting, for which [notes can be found here](#).

Interactive TIP Map Demonstration

Hoffmeier presented a new, public-facing, interactive map of the TIP. The map allows users to search by project number, visualize where projects are taking place, and compare projects against area demographic information.

- This web interface will be live on the AMATS website within the next week. Projects are currently searchable by project number through [this list](#).

Adopting Transportation Outlook 2050 — AMATS Regional Transportation Plan

Stewart gave an overview of the TO2050. Smaller reports AMATS completes inform this

federally required plan, such as the Congestion Management Process, Planning Data Forecast, Annual Crash Reports and Freight Plan. This plan is compiled every four years and adjusted based on current goals and financial projections.

- Projects in this report have now been mapped against various demographics impacted, such as carless households. This information was not yet complete at the last meeting.
- The Technical Advisory Committee will be asked to approve the plan next week, and the plan will remain compliant for five years
- Within the next few weeks, the final TO2050 document will undergo a more extensive design process and be posted on the AMATS website at <https://www.amatsplanning.org/transportation-outlook>.

Transportation Management Area Certification Process

The majority of the meeting time was given to Wallace, who joined as a guest to provide an overview of the certification process AMATS goes through and to seek public comment on citizen involvement. Public comment for certification will remain open for 30 days. Comments can be provided by emailing Wallace at samuel.wallace@dot.gov.

Wallace's slides provided a high-level overview of the TIP, TO2050, certification, and how the various reports AMATS compiles fit together.

- Every four years, AMATS goes through a federal certification process by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA). They were reviewed last week and found fully compliant in preliminary review. The full report of their findings will be issued by June or July.

The process

The TIP and TO2050 reports determine how federal funds are spent in metropolitan areas and establish groundwork for future transportation projects. With limited funding, these projects are prioritized during the reporting process

Public Comment

Wallace formally asked for comments and if the public had an adequate opportunity to participate in the planning process. Two residents said AMATS was responsive and they enjoyed participating in the CIC meetings. They also asked Wallace:

- If there was any danger of changes to plans due to federal budget cuts.

- Stewart said they feel more confident than they did [a few months ago](#).
- Wallace said they are not authorized to answer the question.

- If it was possible to build highways over railways since they do not use airspace.
 - Wallace said they are unauthorized to comment on specific projects but there is an interest in pursuing this and it has been done in the past. They said railroad companies own the right of way and usually don't want to give it away or sell it. Rails-to-trails programs follow a similar process and have similar challenges.
- If there was any transit planning for vertical takeoff or if the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) controls this.
 - Wallace said ODOT is doing some research and development on air mobility routes. Four or five have been identified in the state, and some testing has begun on automated aerial vehicles for things such as medical supply delivery.

Meeting reminders

Stewart concluded the meeting by thanking attendees and reminding them of two upcoming public meetings.

- **May 15:** Strategic Highway Safety Plan
 - 5-6:30 p.m. at ODOT District 4
- **May 21:** Access Ohio
 - 5-6:30 p.m. at ODOT District 4

The meeting ended at 7:41 p.m.

Notes to reader: Unless quotation marks are used, all text is paraphrased. If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at documenters@signalakron.org with "Correction Request" in the subject line.