



OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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JOHN R. KASICH, GOVERNOR • JERRY WRAY, DIRECTOR

Good Afternoon members of the Sunset Review Committee, my name is Jennifer Townley, Deputy Director of the Division of Planning for the Ohio Department of Transportation. It is my pleasure to testify today on the significance of the Transportation Review Advisory Council, or (TRAC).

The TRAC was established by the Ohio General Assembly in 1997, and charged with developing and overseeing a project selection process for major new transportation capacity projects (ORC 5512.02), or projects in what is now known as the "Major New Capacity program." These are projects costing more than \$12 million which add transportation capacity, and are critical to the mobility, economic development, and quality of life of the citizens of Ohio.

The Major New Capacity project selection process operates under the purview of the TRAC. The council was established by Ohio Revised Code in 1997 at ODOT's request. It is a permanent body of predominantly non-ODOT personnel which develops and modifies a project selection process and which approves major new projects for funding.

The TRAC has nine public members and is chaired by the Director of the Ohio Department of Transportation. Six members are appointed by the Governor and one each by the Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and the President of the Ohio Senate. Members have overlapping terms.

The TRAC members have diverse backgrounds and expertise that they bring to the council such as economic development, experience with local governments, and business management. The diverse background of these 9 members allows the TRAC to balance competing interests in a timely, efficient and responsive manner. Four ODOT employees provide approximately 400 work-hours annually to the TRAC.

In accordance with the law, the Director of Transportation biennially provides the TRAC with a report on the money available for new construction for the following four-year period. The Director provides funds for new construction only after assuring that system preservation needs have been met. The use of the new construction funds is the responsibility of the TRAC, but the TRAC does not have authority over other aspects of the Department of Transportation.

The council usually meets monthly. They work with the ODOT Division of Planning to develop a scoring system to determine the merits of a project. Factors that are evaluated include economic development, job creation and local money offered for a project. TRAC members vote on the approval of the Major New Construction Program List of funding commitments for preliminary engineering, detailed design, right-of-way and project construction. Projects receiving funding commitments are placed into three "tiers" based upon the level of project development.

Ohio is one of the few states that has developed such a model. Many states have tried to replicate this model but they have failed. However, for nearly two decades, Ohio has had an open, inclusive project selection process that has continued through four administrations.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.