

What is Transportation Conformity?

The transportation conformity process is a way to ensure that transportation projects meet air quality goals in order to be eligible for federal funding and approval.



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NOACA is required to carry out a continuing, coordinated and comprehensive (3C) planning process for transportation improvements in the region. As a result of that planning process, the need for new capacity additions to our roadway or transit system are periodically identified. Examples of capacity additions include new roadways, freeway lanes or interchanges or new transit facilities.



Ohio is required to participate in planning to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for various criteria pollutants. These include carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, lead, sulfur dioxide and particulate matter. These pollutants are referred to as criteria pollutants because the Clean Air Act identifies specific goals for their concentration in the air around us. States develop plans known as State Implementation Plans (SIP)s to identify how they will achieve the goals identified in the Clean Air Act. The SIPs contain budgets that identify how much of various pollutants different source categories are allowed to emit. Mobile sources (cars, trucks & motorcycles) are one of the budgeted categories.

Conformity links the 3C transportation planning process with the SIP process. Capacity additions result in changes in emissions from mobile sources. These changes must be checked against or conformed to the budgets in applicable SIPs. A conformity finding declares that the emission changes resulting from a revised transportation network do not exceed emission budgets in the SIP. If the revised network does not conform to the SIP it cannot be constructed.

It is important to note that a demonstration of conformity is not a demonstration of attainment. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determines attainment of the air quality standards through an evaluation of monitoring data.

Please see the Web site for more information about transportation and air quality.