

4.0 Transportation System Development

Transportation of people and freight will remain a vital concern as the OMEGA RTPO's transportation system is continually updated and developed through 2045. The growth of direct-to-door shipping (via online shopping), petrochemical industry, and small manufacturing firms in the region will continue to increase demand for truck traffic throughout the region. The roadway network will bear most of this increased demand, though tonnage on the Ohio River and on the region's railroads may also increase. Due to the challenging topography of the region, the growth of the rail system will likely be slower than other rural areas and will be in more targeted locations, serving mostly large manufacturers and processing plants.

Future development of the transportation system in the OMEGA RTPO will center on gaining efficiencies, improving safety for all users, and increasing resiliency to facilitate community and economic growth. Future expansions of the transportation network should encompass all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and Amish buggies. Major new construction for increased capacity will likely be limited to a few targeted corridors and highway interchanges.

4.1 Demographics

According to projections from the Ohio Development Services Agency's Office of Research, the OMEGA region is forecast to lose approximately 10,000 people or 1.66% of its population by 2040. This trend is indicative of the rural nature of the region, as other rural areas in Ohio are experiencing similar trends in population loss. Large numbers of people are leaving the region for increased job opportunities in larger urban areas, such as Columbus and Pittsburgh. The projections below are based on historical Census data and analysis of historical trends. Table 4-1 shows the projected gain or loss in population per county in the region.

County	Population 2018 Estimate	Population 2040 Projection	Percent Change
Belmont*	67,505	66,140	-2.02%
Carroll	27,081	23,390	-13.63%
Columbiana	102,665	104,710	1.99%
Coshocton	36,629	33,390	-8.84%
Guernsey	39,022	36,390	-6.74%
Harrison	15,174	15,100	-0.49%
Holmes	43,892	45,280	3.16%
Jefferson*	65,767	67,410	2.5%
Muskingum	86,183	81,900	-4.97%
Tuscarawas	92,176	92,840	0.72%
OMEGA Region	576,094	566,550	-1.66%

Table 4-1: 2040 Population Projections (source: Ohio Development Services Agency)

Local officials have questioned these current projections, as significant economic growth occurred during the 2010 decade, especially on the eastern side of the region. The current projections may change with the completion of the 2020 Census, and the OMEGA RTP0 is preparing for additional growth in the region, owing to the ongoing expansion of the petrochemical and logistics industries. If growth does occur in the region, it is likely to be at a slower rate than urbanized areas in the state. Preservation of existing assets will remain a key driver of the maintenance of the transportation system.

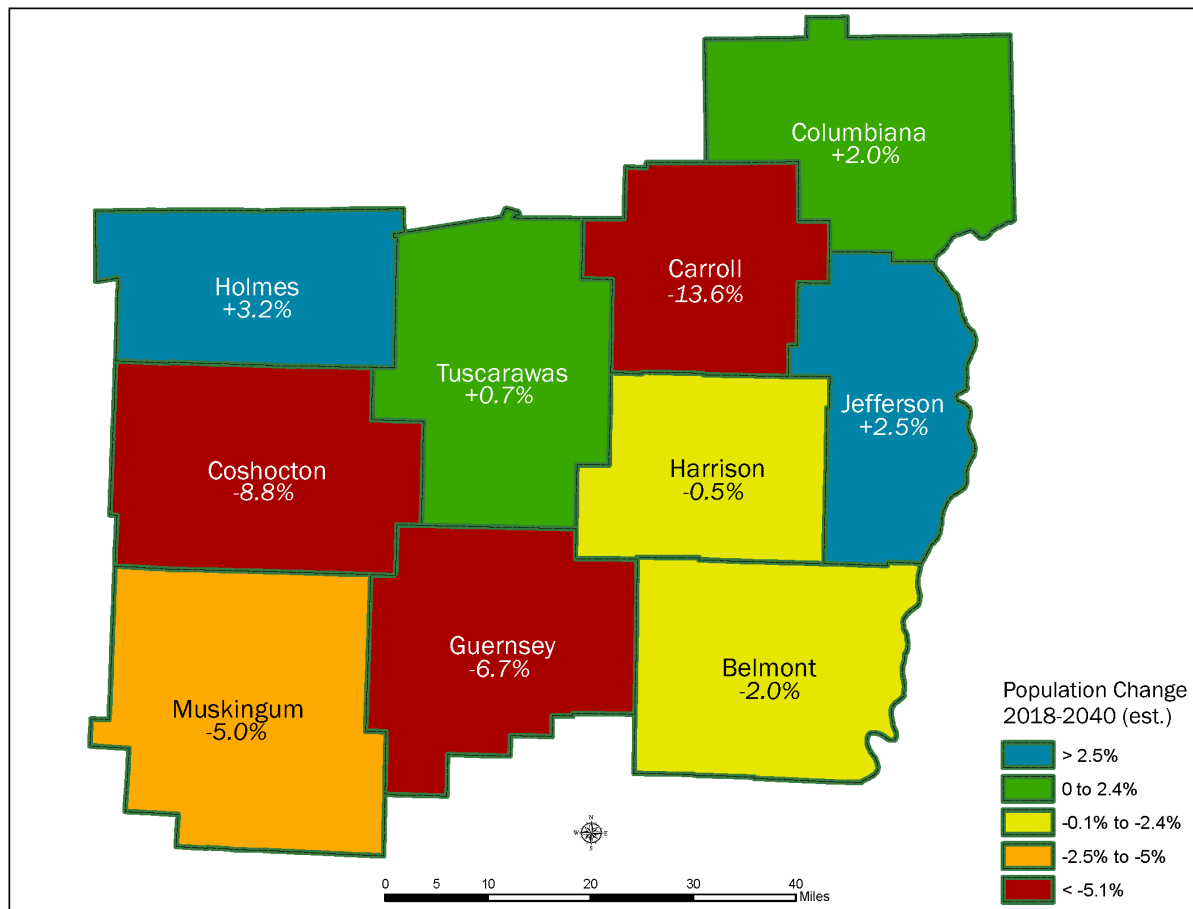


Figure 4-1: Population Change 2018-2040 (source: Ohio Development Services Agency)

Four counties are projected to gain population (Columbiana, Holmes, Jefferson, and Tuscarawas), one county is projected to stay nearly steady (Harrison), and five counties are projected to lose population (Belmont, Carroll, Coshocton, Guernsey, and Muskingum). In real numbers, the loss is small (in context of the regional and statewide population), and the level of demand on the transportation network will likely remain level or could even increase. Regardless of a population loss or gain, infrastructure will need to be maintained to ensure a safe, continuous network is available in the region.

4.2 Roadway Network

As shown in Figure 4-2, each county in the OMEGA RTP0 will see car growth rates on many portions of major roadways of at least 1.5% by the year 2045. Holmes County will see the greatest increase along the southern portion of SR 514 at 6.74% growth southwest of Nashville. Coshocton County will see the next largest increase in car volumes along the northern portion of SR 643 at 3.43% growth southwest of New Bedford. Additional motorized vehicles in both locations may increase the number of potential conflicts with non-motorized users, such as bicyclist and Amish buggies that are common in the nearby areas.

The growth projections were run primarily on the state-maintained system, except in areas with robust traffic datasets, such as municipalities, other federal-aid eligible routes, and important county roads (with data provided by county engineers). Growth on these higher-classified routes also indicate growth on the local feeder routes. In many areas, increased traffic is correlated with forecast population or employment growth near the affected area.

Most of the forecasted growth over the next twenty-five years is located primarily in rural areas, with a few exceptions. Areas near Calcutta (East Liverpool), Cadiz, Strasburg, and Newcomerstown will also see increased traffic. Increased traffic on rural highways will present a challenge, as many of the impacted routes are currently only two lanes, and some of the routes do not have accommodations for non-motorized users that use the routes currently. Additionally, many of the routes face challenging topography and curves, further complicating the synthesis of all users.

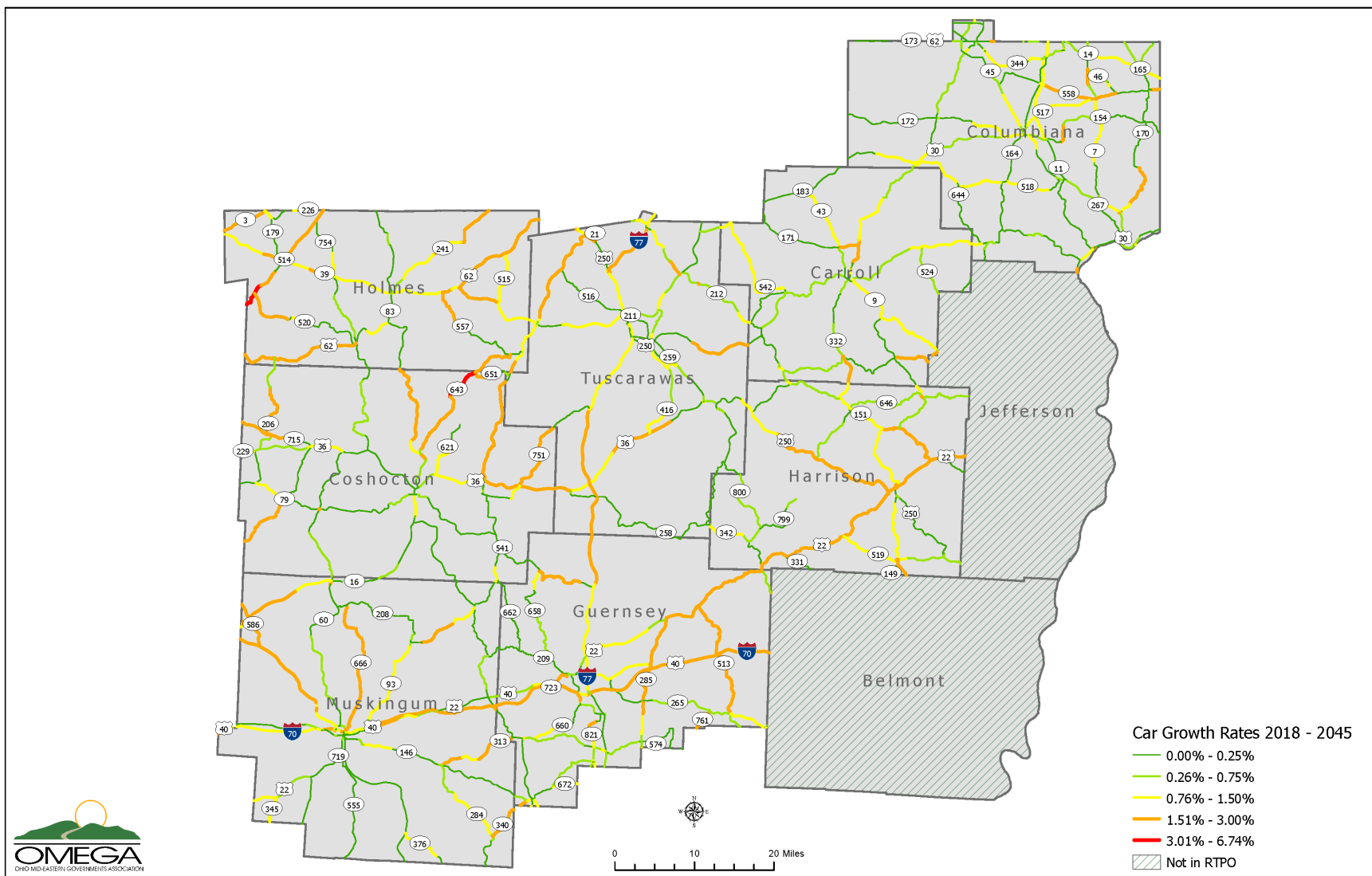


Figure 4-2: Car Growth Rates – 2045 Projection

As shown in Figure 4-3, total traffic volumes of both cars and trucks are predicted to increase by at least 10,000 vehicles on average per day along major roadways in all eight OMEGA RTP0 counties. I-70 from Zanesville to Cambridge will see a sizable increase in traffic volumes, with the highest projected traffic volumes in the region being on I-70 on the west side of Zanesville at nearly 73,000 vehicles per day. This substantial increase in traffic volumes may be attributed to the current and continued anticipated growth of the Columbus metropolitan area. According to 2018 Census Bureau estimates, the area has seen an increase in population of 10.8% since 2010, with a total of 2,106,541 total residents. By 2050, an additional 1 million people are expected to reside in the Columbus metro area. This continued growth in population and business centers over the next 25 years will result in significant increases in traffic volumes to and from Columbus along the I-70 corridor.

The logistics industry has impacted growth in the region and will likely continue with the exponential growth of direct shipping to consumers, and further expansion of the petrochemical industry. In the western part of the RTP0, companies such as Avon, Dollar General, and AutoZone have distribution centers. Further west, in Licking County, Amazon built a large fulfillment center, serving many communities in the RTP0. In the north and eastern part of the RTP0, the focus of logistics changes from distribution centers to support facilities for the petrochemical industry.

I-77/US 250 between Strasburg and New Philadelphia will also see a significant increase in traffic volumes, with totals between 50,000 and 58,000 vehicles per day. I-70 and most of I-77 will see increases in average daily traffic volumes, with total volumes ranging between 25,000 to over 73,000 vehicles per day, which may create congestion and safety issues as additional traffic is added to the existing roadways.

Other regional corridors with higher traffic volumes include SR 11 north of East Liverpool, US 22 in eastern Harrison County, and SR 39 in eastern Holmes County. SR 11 and US 22 link to the higher populated urban centers of Youngstown and Steubenville/Weirton, respectively. Distinctly, SR 39 does not link directly to a higher populated urban center, and instead is currently a two-lane rural highway and runs through the heart of Amish Country. This introduces high numbers of non-motorized users onto this same highway as high volumes of tourists, many that may be unfamiliar with the area.

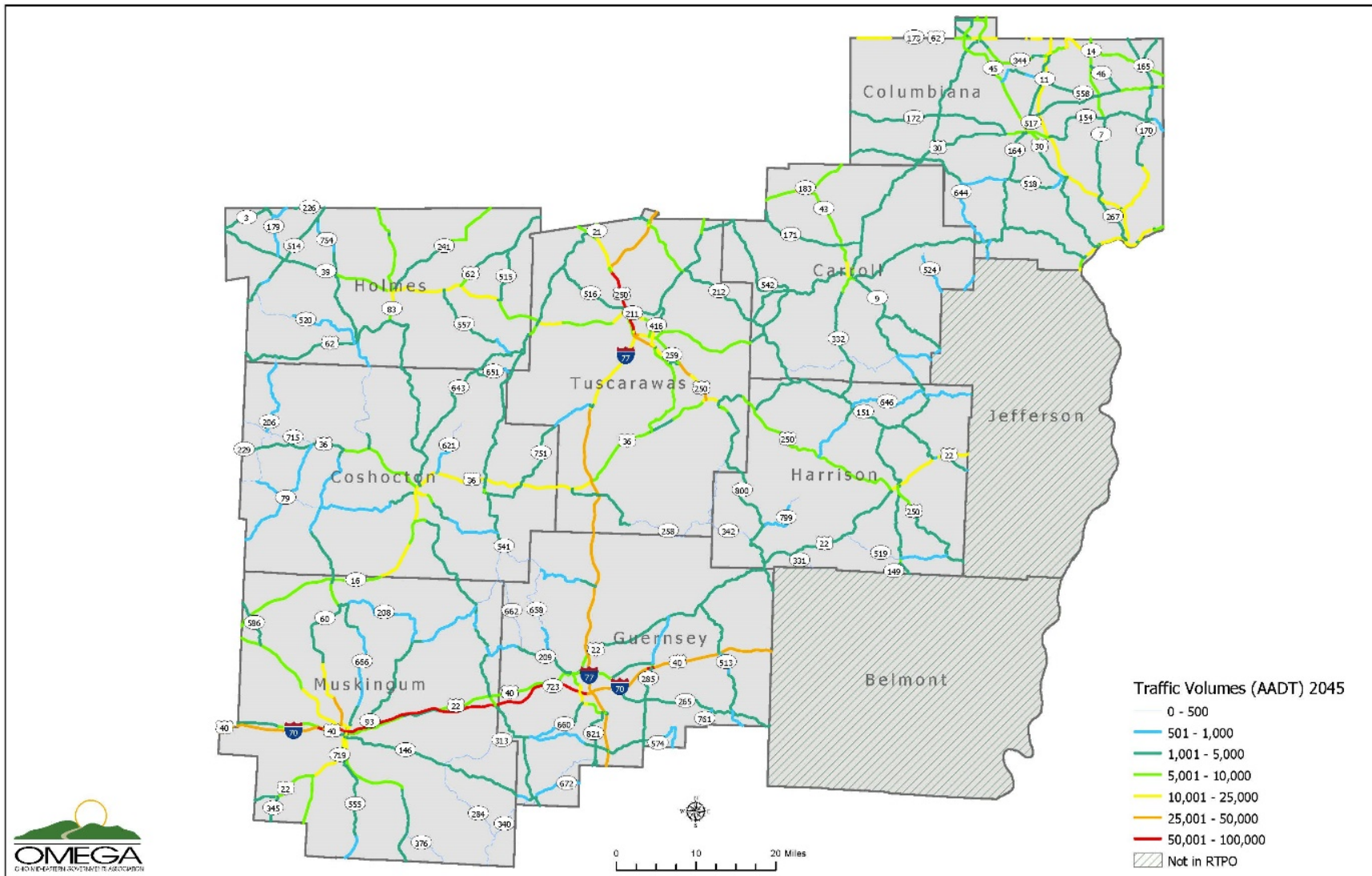


Figure 4-3: Traffic Volumes – 2045 Projection

As shown in Figure 4-4, many major roadways are expected to see an increase in truck growth rates between 3% to 4% by 2045. This is a region-wide phenomenon occurring in all eight RTPPO counties. Although truck growth rates are anticipated to increase in eastern counties of the OMEGA region due to oil and gas development, the regional growth suggests that this is not only due to oil and gas development. Rather, local deliveries throughout the region are also projected to increase, which may explain the high projected growth rates in truck traffic over the next 25 years.

Growing truck traffic engenders additional challenges, over and above additional traffic. The overall weight of trucks is greater than the average passenger vehicle, putting additional strain on aging infrastructure. Trucks are also hampered by low clearances on older overpasses, forcing them to make costly detours, increasing their mileage, emissions, and costs for maintenance. Furthermore, growth of truck traffic in areas that have not historically experienced high volumes of trucks may create new safety concerns.

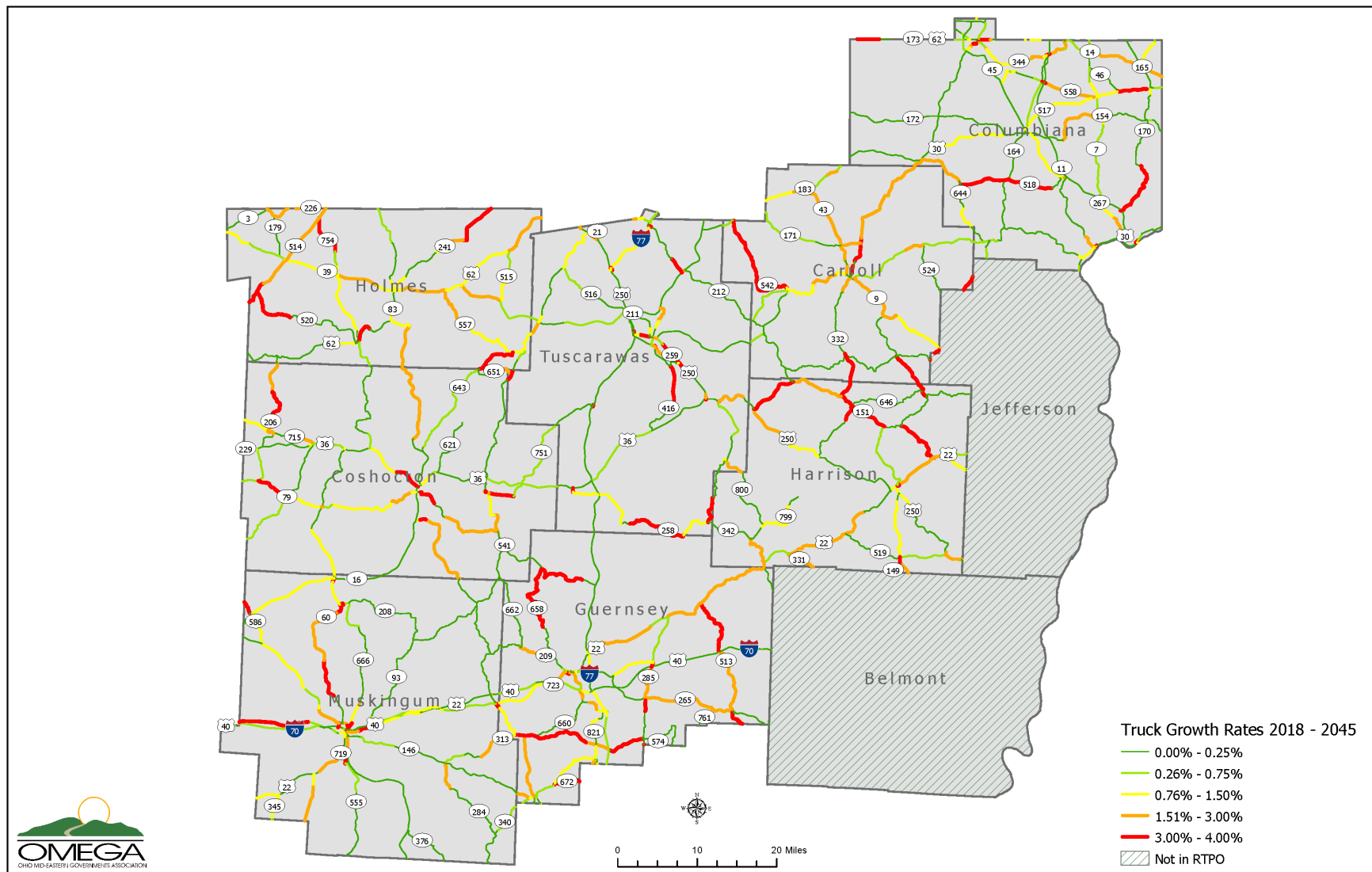


Figure 4-4: Truck Growth Rates – 2045 Projection

As shown in Figure 4-5, the projected change in truck volumes by 2045 is expected to increase by 7.5% to 15% or greater along portions of major roads in each of the eight RTPo counties. A portion of US 250 near the intersection with I-77 is predicted to see the largest increase in truck volumes at 17.9%. Portions of US 62 near Alliance and SR 46 near East Palestine in Columbiana County, US 62 near Killbuck in Holmes County, and SR 93 near Baltic in Tuscarawas County are also anticipated to see major increases in truck volumes of 15.8%, 15.1%, 15.5%, and 15.2%, respectively. Conversely, sections of roadways in each of the RTPo counties are also expected to see a decrease in truck volumes. SR 7 northeast of Wellsville in Columbiana County is projected to see the most significant decrease of 9.1% by 2045.

It should be noted that these truck figures may be not be entirely accurate due to the current and anticipated continued shale oil and gas development throughout the region. Because of this development, the region will likely see an even greater number of heavy trucks along major and local roads over the next 25 years, which is not reflected in ODOT's Congestion Management System (CMS) models.

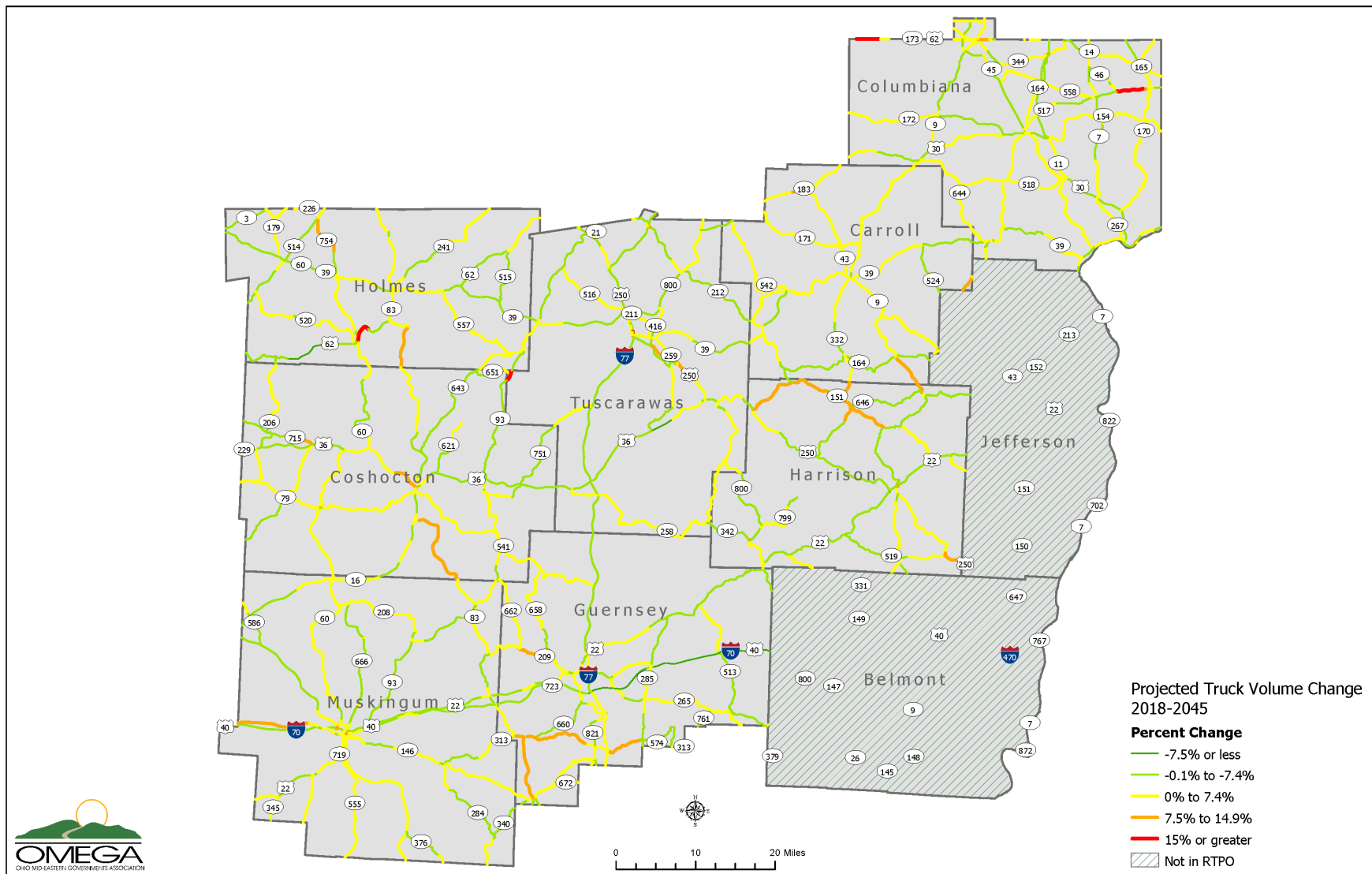


Figure 4-5: Change in Truck Volumes – 2045 Projection

As shown in Figure 4-6, the following major routes in the OMEGA RTP0 are projected to have a Volume to Capacity (V/C) ratio indicating near or exceeding capacity by 2045:

- **V/C = 0.8-0.99:**
 - SR 60 (Maple Ave), north of I-70
 - I-70 between Zanesville and Cambridge
 - I-70 between Cambridge and Old Washington
 - SR 209 (Southgate Parkway) near I-70 interchange in Cambridge
 - US 250 from Strasburg to SR 39 interchange in Dover
 - SR 416 from SR 39/800 to near US 250 in New Philadelphia
 - SR 800 between Dover and New Philadelphia
 - SR 14 on the east side of Salem
- **V/C = ≥1.0**
 - SR 60 (Maple Ave) in Zanesville, north of I-70
 - I-70 between Zanesville and Norwich
 - I-70 between New Concord and Cambridge
 - SR 209 (Southgate Parkway) near I-70 interchange in Cambridge
 - SR 39 at I-77 in Dover
 - US 250 from SR 39 in Dover to SR 39 in New Philadelphia
 - SR 39 from US 250 to near SR 800 in New Philadelphia
 - SR 416 south of US 250 in New Philadelphia
 - US 62 east of Alliance

Many of these routes which are predicted to be at or nearing capacity by 2045 also have a predicted Level of Service of D or worse.

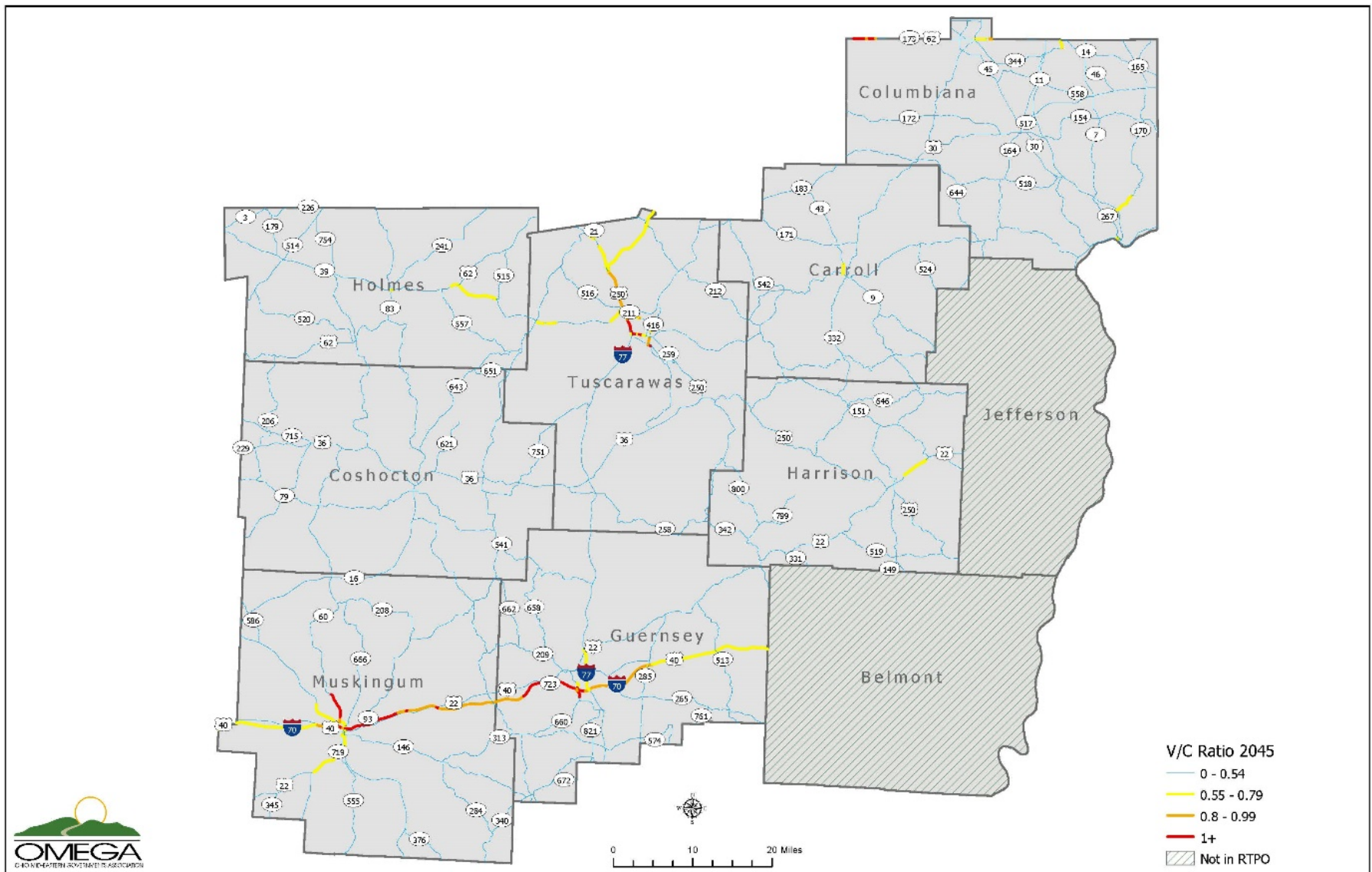


Figure 4-6: Volume to Capacity Ratio – 2045 Projection

As shown in Figure 4-7, several major routes within the RTPD are projected to have a Level of Service (LOS) of D or worse by the year 2045.

The following routes have a projected **LOS of D**:

- **Carroll County**
 - SR 43 from county line to Malvern
 - SR 183 from SR 43 to Minerva
 - SR 183 in Minerva
 - SR 43 from SR 183 to Carrollton
- **Columbiana County**
 - US 62 between Alliance and Salem
 - US 62 in north Salem at the Mahoning County line
 - SR 14 north of Washingtonville at the Mahoning County line
 - SR 14 in the City of Columbiana to SR 7
 - SR 7 from Mahoning County line to SR 46
 - SR 46 from SR 558 to East Palestine near SR 170
 - SR 14 from near SR 165 to Pennsylvania-Ohio border
 - SR 154 in east Lisbon
 - SR 170 north of East Liverpool
- **Coshocton County**
 - US 36 between Coshocton and Warsaw
 - SR 16 from Coshocton to Muskingum County line
- **Guernsey County**
 - I-70 from Old Washington to Belmont County line
 - I-77 from US 40 to I-70
 - US 40 from I-77 to SR 265
 - US 22 just east of I-77
 - SR 209 (Southgate Parkway) just south of I-70
- **Harrison County**
 - US 250 from SR 151 to US 22 in Cadiz
 - US 250 in Cadiz from US 22 to SR 9
 - SR 9 in New Athens from SR 519 to SR 149
- **Holmes County**
 - SR 39 from SR 754 to Millersburg
 - SR 83 from northern boundary of the Village of Millersburg to US 62/SR 39
 - US 62/SR 83 south of Millersburg
 - US 62/SR 39 from Millersburg to Berlin
 - SR 39 from SR 515 to Tuscarawas County line
- **Muskingum County**
 - SR 16 from Coshocton County line to SR 60
 - SR 146 from Licking County line to Zanesville
 - SR 60 between Dresden and Zanesville
 - SR 60 (Maple Ave), north of I-70
 - SR 666 in Zanesville, north of I-70
 - SR 93 from Perry County line to US 22
 - SR 60 north of Philo
 - US 40/22 from north of I-70 to Norwich

- **Tuscarawas County** SR 39 from Holmes County line to Sugar Creek
SR 39 between Sugar Creek and Dover
US 250 between Stark County line and Strasburg
I-77 from Stark County line through Bolivar
SR 212/800 southwest of Mineral City
SR 39 in New Philadelphia between I-77 and SR 800
SR 800 north of US 250 in New Philadelphia
SR 39 between New Philadelphia and Roswell
SR 259 from southeastern New Philadelphia to US 250

The following routes have a projected **LOS of E**:

- **Carroll County** SR 43 in Malvern
SR 43 in north Carrollton
- **Columbiana County** Northwest portion of SR 164 traffic circle in the City of Columbiana
US 62 between Alliance and Salem
- **Coshocton County** SR 16 just southwest of Coshocton at intersection with SR 83
- **Guernsey County** I-70 between Muskingum County line and Cambridge
I-70 between Cambridge and Old Washington
SR 209 (Southgate Parkway) in south Cambridge at the I-70 interchange
- **Harrison County** US 250 from Tuscarawas County line to SR 151
US 22 between Cadiz and SR 151
- **Holmes County** US 62/SR 39 just east of SR 557
SR 39 from US 62 to SR 515
- **Muskingum County** SR 146 west of Zanesville
I-70 from SR 60 to just west of Zanesville
SR 60 at southern boundary of Zanesville
I-70 east of Zanesville to Guernsey County line
- **Tuscarawas County** US 250 from SR 93 to Strasburg
US 250 from Strasburg to New Philadelphia
SR 39 in Sugar Creek
SR 39 between Sugar Creek and Dover
SR 800 north of US 250 in New Philadelphia
US 250 east of Dennison to Harrison County line

The following routes have a projected **LOS of F**:

- **Columbiana County** Northeast, southeast, and southwest portions of SR 164 traffic circle in City of Columbiana
- **Guernsey County** I-70 between Muskingum County line and Cambridge
- **Muskingum County** I-70 from SR 93 to central Zanesville
I-70 between Zanesville and Norwich
- **Tuscarawas County** US 250 from SR 39 in south Dover to I-77/US 250/SR 39 interchange in New Philadelphia
SR 416 south of US 250 in New Philadelphia

The following routes have a projected **LOS of F+**:

- **Columbiana County** US 62 between Alliance and Salem
- **Guernsey County** I-70 through Cambridge
- **Muskingum County** I-70 in central Zanesville
I-70 between Zanesville and Norwich

The projected increase in traffic volumes, high volume to capacity ratio, and poor level of service rating on many of the RTPPO's major roadways by 2045, along with continued oil and gas development, may result in further strain and deterioration of critical roadway infrastructure. This will result in a heightened need for resources to improve these roadways throughout the region over the next 25 years.

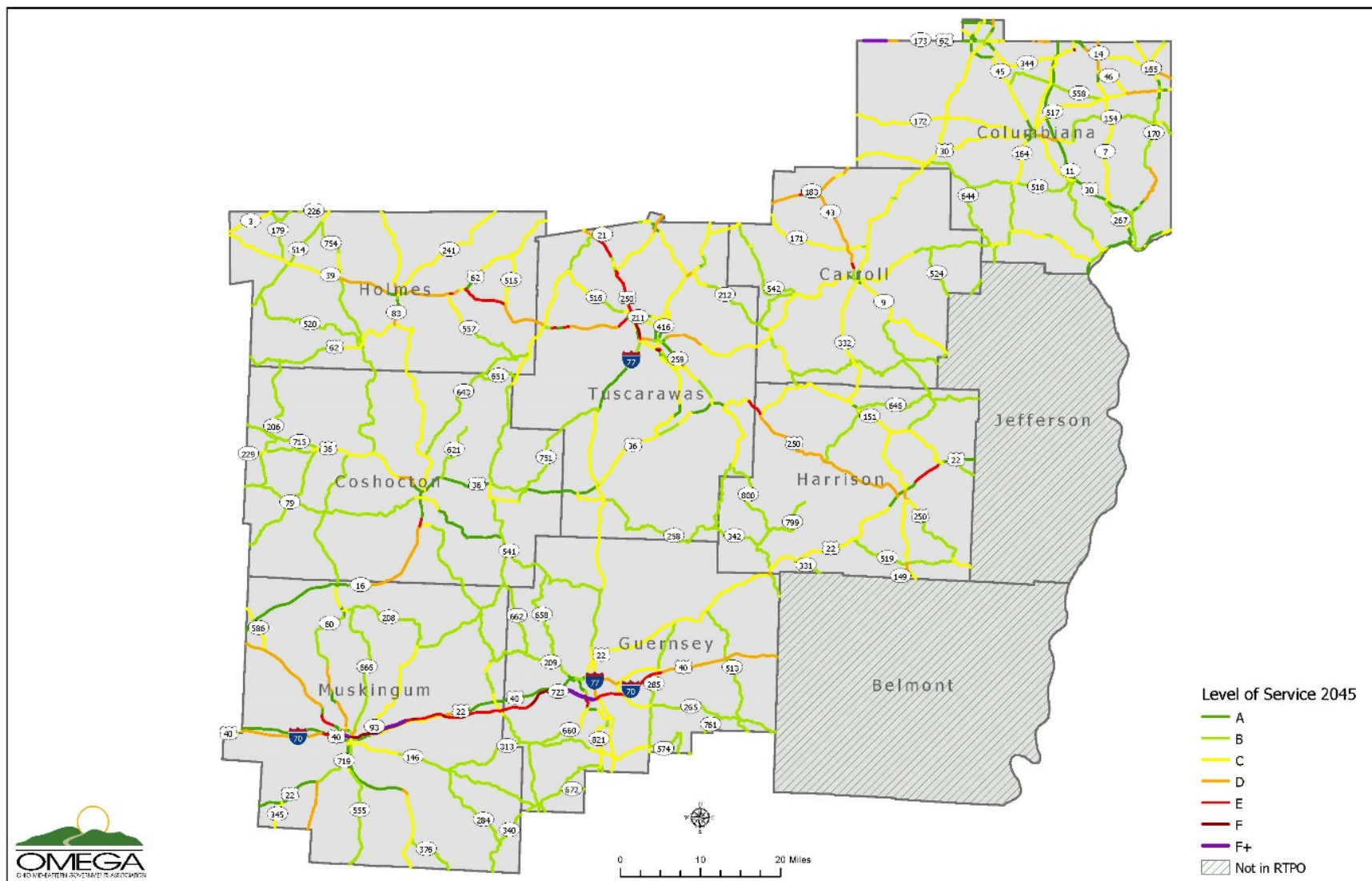


Figure 4-7: Level of Service – 2045 Projection

4.3 Bridges

By 2045, there will be 2,394 bridges in the OMEGA region aged 70 years or older, 1,913 of these in the RTP0 region and 1,143 of these bridges are on the local system. This equates to 33.4% of all bridges within the RTP0. These bridges will be at the end of their useful and intended lifespan and may require significant upkeep to prevent deterioration. These bridges will need to be monitored closely over the next 25 years. OMEGA will continue to review bridge data and update local databases as bridges are rehabilitated. For current bridges over 40 years of age, please see Figure 4-8.

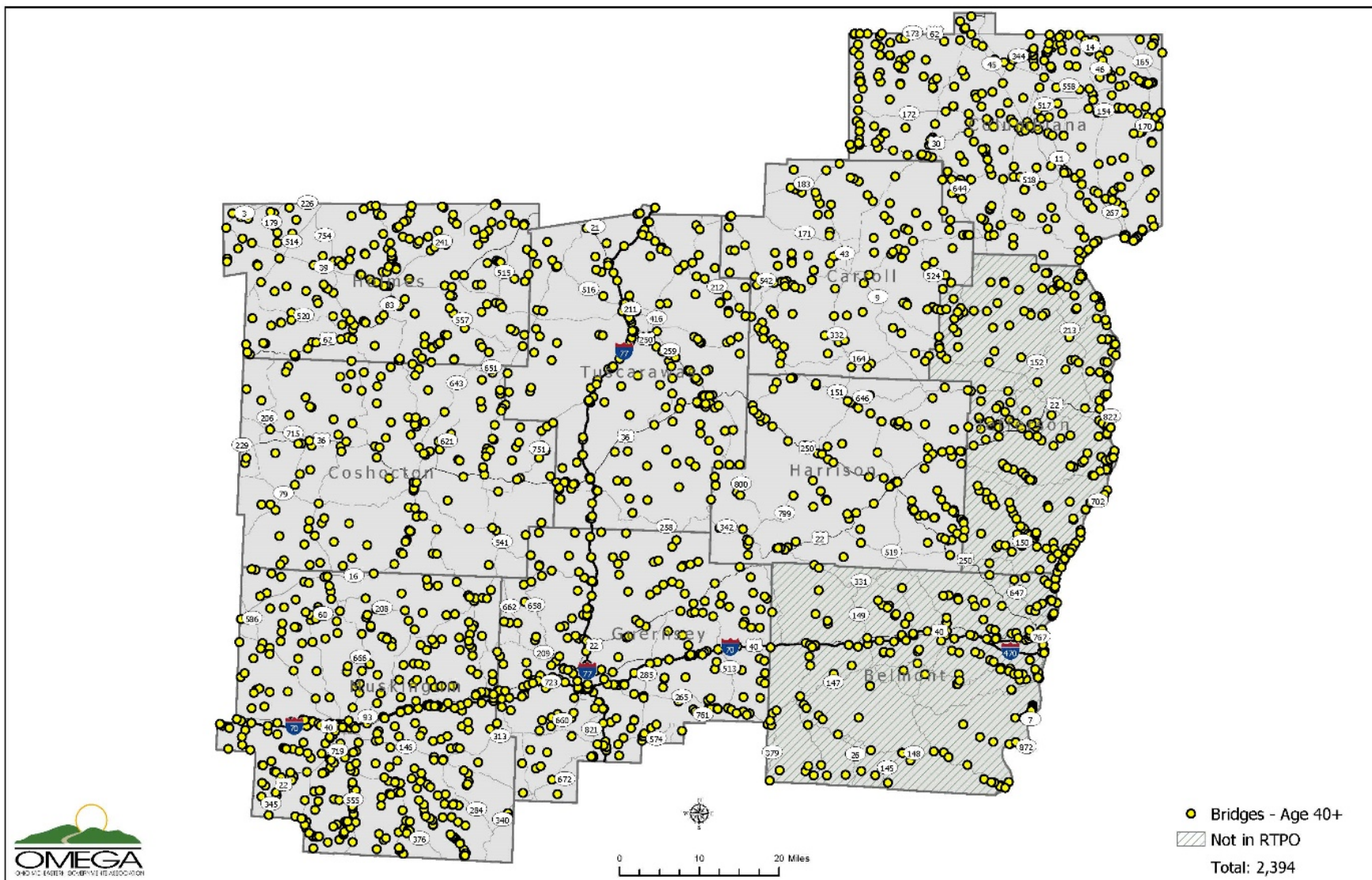


Figure 4-8: Bridges Age 40+ (70+ by 2045)

4.4 Transit Network

In 2019, OMEGA completed the first Regional Coordinated Public Transit/Human Services Transportation Plan for the region. The primary focus of this plan to address unmet transportation needs, develop goals and strategies to meet those needs, and identify projects that will improve transportation services throughout the region. This plan will also streamline the grant funding eligibility and processes. More importantly, the plan will help the region meet the overarching goal of the program to “Transport more people, especially seniors and people with disabilities, with quality service in efficient time at the lowest costs to the public and the providers.” Basically, everyone who needs a ride can get a ride.

The region has an aging population, and demand for transportation services is likely to increase to connect senior citizens and people with disabilities to the medical and additional services they will need. In conjunction with public and private transportation service providers, OMEGA's Transit Planner compiled the current status of the regional transit network, as well as unmet needs and gaps in service that need to be addressed in the future to improve and enhance mobility throughout the region. These unmet needs are addressed in Section 5 – Needs Analysis.

To access the full Regional Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan, please visit the OMEGA website: <https://omegadistrict.org/programs/transit/regional/>.

4.5 Active Transportation Network

Tuscarawas County and Harrison County have each developed county-wide trail plans. The plans' goals are similar in that they both aim to create a robust multimodal network to provide access to cultural, natural, and recreational resources and support community and economic development throughout the counties. Having these trail plans gives these counties a leg up when applying for funds related to active transportation moving forward, as they are demonstrating that they are forward-thinking and have an investment in the future of their communities.

Holmes County, in partnership with Ashland and Wayne Counties, are in the initial planning stages of the Mohican Valley Greenway Corridor Plan. Once completed, the plan aims to provide approximately 16.5 miles of new multimodal trail and parking facilities/access points along the section of the Mohican Scenic River Valley from the Loudonville Trail south to the Mohican Valley Trail along the Wally Road corridor.

Carroll, Columbiana, Harrison, and Tuscarawas Counties are also part of two larger trail network visions extending from eastern Ohio to Pittsburgh, and beyond.

- The Cleveland to Pittsburgh (C2P) Corridor is an envisioned 200+ miles multiuse trail corridor traveling from Cleveland, Ohio to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. 146 miles of this corridor will help complete the burgeoning 3,700-plus miles Great American Rail-Trail, spanning across the country from Washington, D.C. to Washington State. Carroll, Harrison, and Tuscarawas Counties have a total of approximately 30 to 50 proposed miles of trail segments contributing to the C2P Corridor.

- The Great Ohio Lake to River Greenway (GOLRG) is part of an envisioned mega-trail system beginning at Lake Erie in Ashtabula, Ohio and ultimately connecting to the Washington, D.C. trail system. Columbiana County has a proposed GOLRG greenway segment identified from Lisbon to East Liverpool at the Ohio-Pennsylvania state line, which will be the start of the proposed Ohio River Greenway Trail that will connect the great lakes region to the east coast.

As part of the region and state's ongoing development and implementation of new and existing trail plans, OMEGA is developing a Tri-County Active Transportation Plan with Coshocton, Holmes, and Tuscarawas Counties. These three counties have a large Amish population who already travel on foot, by bicycle, or by buggy as their primary mode of transportation to work, school, and throughout the community each day. According to the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College, the Holmes County area has the second largest Amish community in the world with over 35,000 Amish residents estimated living within the county in 2018¹. The goal of the Tri-County Active Transportation Plan is to create a connected network of multimodal facilities for people of all ages and abilities. This includes the construction of ADA compliant sidewalks, bicycle lanes, buggy lanes, and trails to promote and encourage healthy alternatives to driving, provide safe and reliable access using all modes of transportation, and boost community and economic development. As part of this effort, OMEGA will organize a group of key stakeholders to identify needs, gather input, discuss opportunities, and identify potential funding sources for underlined projects. Using GIS and input from the communities, OMEGA will gather data on existing active transportation infrastructure, planned future projects, crash locations, and begin identifying possible connections. See Section 3.3, Figure 3-15 for locations of currently known bicycle routes and facilities in the region.

Figure 4-9 shows the approximate locations of proposed active transportation routes envisioned for the future throughout the OMEGA region, along with current facilities. These proposed routes include, but are not limited to, designated bike lanes, trails, wide shoulders, buggy lanes, and active and abandoned railroads.

¹ <http://groups.etown.edu/amishstudies/statistics/twelve-largest-settlements-2018/>

4.6 Aviation, Rail, & Maritime Networks

Aviation

In 2014, ODOT completed a Focus and Economic Study on all public airports within the state. This study resulted in recommendations for each airport to enhance local aviation access, increase safety, and bring all airports into compliance with Ohio System Plan objectives. Each of the recommendations of the plan are specific to the general aviation category (1-3) of the airport. These recommendations provided the planning basis to pursue Federal Aviation Administration grant funds.

Typical recommendations of the study include, but are not limited to:

- Completion of parallel taxiways
- Visual Approach Aids
- Administrative or Terminal Building
- Automated Weather Reporting
- Instrument Approach Procedures
- Runway lighting

All recommendations from the 2014 study will be in **Appendix D**.

Rail

The Ohio Rail Development Commission released the updated State of Ohio Rail Plan in 2019. Contained in this updated plan were three statewide planning considerations that may impact the OMEGA RTP0 within the horizon year of this plan, 2045:

- 3-C Corridor Study
 - A study for the reintroduction of passenger rail service linking the three largest cities in the state. While this corridor would likely be located west of the RTP0, access to proposed stations may impact communities in the northwestern corner. Currently, this corridor remains in a planning phase.
- Ohio Hub Study
 - A study to determine the feasibility of reintroducing or enhancing passenger rail throughout the Midwest, focused on Chicago as the primary hub, and Ohio connecting the Midwest to the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. The 3-C Corridor is considered, as well as improved service between Cleveland and Pittsburgh (currently served by Amtrak once daily) and new service between Columbus and Pittsburgh.
- Hyperloop
 - A study to determine the feasibility of building a new type of transportation, like rail, though not technically a train. This new method of transport would be in a pneumatic tube and propel a vessel along a corridor at speeds exceeding 600 mph. The corridor linking Chicago to Pittsburgh, via Columbus, was a finalist in a global competition. The corridor would likely cross the RTP0 along an unspecified alignment.

Other potential rail considerations should also be considered for the OMEGA RTP0. A changing regional/national economy is impacting the role of rail. These new challenges, that will unfold over the next two and a half decades, will realign partnerships and form new alliances to expand, enhance, or revitalize rail service throughout the OMEGA RTP0:

- **Petrochemical Industry Expansion**
 - A newly developing petrochemical industry in eastern Ohio is a natural outgrowth of the expanding oil and natural gas extraction activities that have taken place in the region. Current refining capacity is largely on the US Gulf Coast, and processing plants to convert crude oil to usable polymers for the plastics industry are now being built/proposed near the Ohio River. Shipment by rail from nearby processing plants to plastics manufacturers would reduce costs and enhance the region's attractiveness for new companies to locate in or near the region.
- **Mineral Shipments Drop**
 - Nationwide, the number of tons of coal shipped via rail (or any other method) has continued to drop, due to the changing energy portfolios of domestic and international power suppliers. The OMEGA RTPO, formerly a large coal production region, has witnessed this decline of the past half century, with a steep decline in the late 2000's continuing through 2020. This trend is expected to continue.
- **Lack of Rail Served Industrial Sites**
 - Due to the large number of miles of abandoned rail mileage in the OMEGA RTPO, coupled with the development of new industrial sites has led to a shortage of developable, rail-served sites. Additional capacity will need to be built to connect new sites to the existing rail network.
- **Lack of Interchanges**
 - Topography and the deregulated rail sector combined to reduce the number of interchange points for rail traffic into and out of the OMEGA RTPO. Additional miles must be traveled to move freight from origin to destination, and this may necessitate the move from rail to truck for shippers to experience and time and/or cost savings. Additional capacity may be needed to improve connectivity of existing lines to facilitate the smoother transition of goods from one railroad to another.
- **Abandoned Corridors**
 - The high number of abandoned lines (over half of OMEGA RTPO rail mileage) poses a challenge for new development to occur. Extensive research must be done by prospective builders to ensure the status of land ownership along formerly abandoned corridors. The cost of installing new rail lines is also expensive and will require extensive financial commitment, likely from the private and public sectors.
- **Positive Train Control**
 - Positive Train Control is an advanced system of control, used by railroads to reduce the number of accidents involving rolling stock. Locomotives are fitted with a control unit that is constantly monitored by the dispatching railroad. If a switch is misaligned, a vehicle is stuck at a grade crossing, or another train derails, then all other rail traffic can be stopped or diverted. Challenges to the implementation are high costs, antiquated technology in existing locomotives, and the lack of a national standard software. As these challenges are addressed at the national and corporate levels, increased implementation may begin impacting regional and short line railroads.
- **Grade Crossing Issues**
 - Crashes at grade crossings have been reduced over the preceding thirty years but remain an issue.
- **Non-compatible Rail Assets**
 - Railroads were first developed in the 1800s and reached their zenith in the mid-1900s. Legacy infrastructure, such as bridges, remain in place nearly 80 years after

their construction. With advances in motor vehicle design and updates to engineering criteria, many of these structures are no longer compliant with existing standards and pose a challenge to the future development of areas throughout the RTPPO.

- Public Acquisition
 - A consortium of Tuscarawas County partners is seeking to acquire a CSX-owned, RJ Corman-operated rail line from Uhrichsville to Dover, Ohio. This public acquisition would enable the municipalities along the line to create a robust economic development strategy for the corridor. This strategy may include passenger/tourist railroad operations, continued freight operations, and additional location of new and expanding businesses to a rail line that interchanges with larger regional and Class 1 railroads to the north.

Maritime

With three major rivers in the OMEGA RTPPO region, both commercial and recreational maritime uses are projected to increase.

Commercial

Continued development of the Ohio River inland waterway system is critical to the economic success of the OMEGA region. The Ohio River is critically important to the region's economy for transport of oversized loads of equipment for natural gas-fired power plants, processing plants, and the potential ethane cracker plant in southeastern Belmont County. The OMEGA RTPPO access this waterway through Columbiana County, specifically in the City of East Liverpool and Village of Wellsville. The intermodal facility in Wellsville is capable of transferring freight from barges to either road or rail for final delivery. Additional road and rail capacity may be needed as this port matures and becomes more fully developed.

Along the Ohio River are port districts, which report the amount of tonnage of freight moved originating, terminating, or passing through the region. To the east of the OMEGA RTPPO, lies the Port of Pittsburgh, starting at the Pennsylvania state line. To the south lies the Port of Huntington Tri-state. There is no official designation between Gallia County, Ohio and the Pennsylvania state line, resulting in no data collection of freight originating or terminating in the region. OMEGA has worked with stakeholders to pursue the designation of this area as a new statistical port, which enjoys the support of a broad spectrum of private and public partners.

The designation of the new statistical port will enable regional stakeholders to accurately report data to encourage new development, advocate for increased maintenance spending from the US Army Corps of Engineers and calculate the impact to the regional economy. The data will also assist local entities in pursuing funding opportunities to expand or enhance their facilities.

The New Cumberland Lock and Dam is located near Stratton, Ohio in Jefferson County, south of the OMEGA RTPPO. These locks were opened in November 1959. The Pike Island Locks and Dams were opened in November 1963. This facility is in southern Jefferson County, near the Villages of Yorkville and Tiltonsville. Both facilities are critical to waterborne access to the OMEGA RTPPO and further into the Port of Pittsburgh, where the first ethane cracker in Monaca, Pennsylvania is located. Continued industrial development in the future along the Ohio River corridor is dependent on the safe operation of these locks and dams. By 2045, both facilities will be over eighty years old.

Recreation

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has designated three rivers as Water Trails, with another two (Tuscarawas and Walhonding) being considered for future Water Trail status. This designation is the result of local planning efforts to promote public boating (canoes, kayaks, etc.) for recreational purposes. Figure 4-10 shows the location of current and future Water Trails.

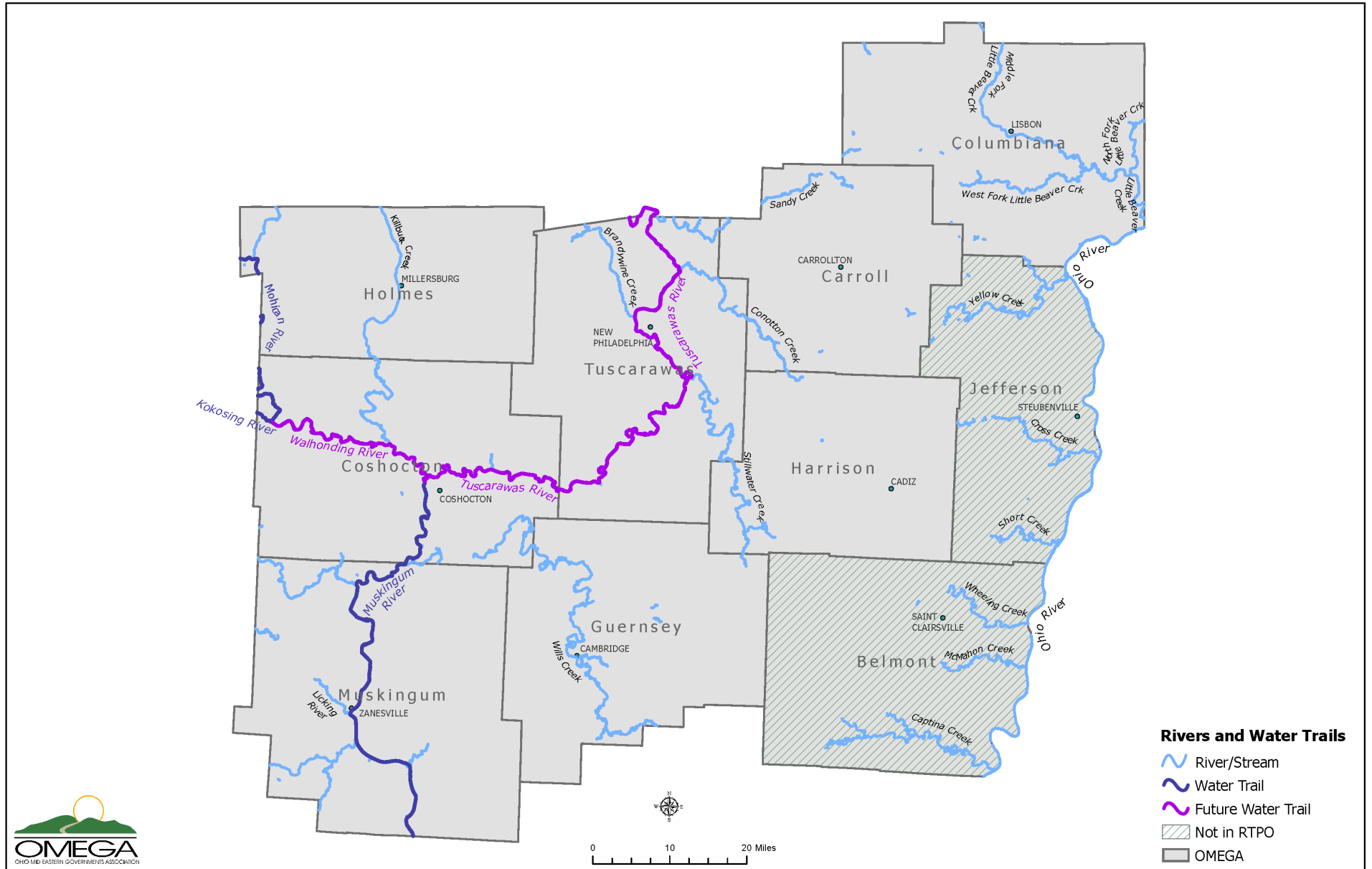


Figure 4-10: Current and Future Water Trails

4.7 Future Regional Developments

Throughout the region, there are several large developments proposed that will impact the transportation network. These developments are a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial sites, and spread throughout the RTPPO. Figure 4-11 shows the current shale oil and gas activity in the OMEGA region as of January 2020. Within the RTPPO region alone, there are 1,186 active wells, 165 permitted wells, 43 injection wells, and 5 processing plants. In addition to these wells and processing plants, there is another processing plant planned for northwestern Harrison County and the multi-billion-dollar ethane cracker plant planned for southeastern Belmont County. Though the ethane cracker plant is outside the RTPPO, the direct and indirect impacts to the region's transportation network will be felt within the RTPPO as additional industries seek to locate near their supply source.

Figure 4-12 shows several other proposed developments that will highly impact the local transportation network, both during construction and after opening. Freight shipments, consumers, and workers will increase traffic significantly in these locations.

- PTTGCA-Daelim Cracker Plant (Belmont County)
- Proposed mixed-use development west of I-77 at Exit 81 in New Philadelphia
 - May include big box stores, other retail/restaurants, and residential
- Proposed processing plant – northwestern Harrison County
- Dormitories added to Kent State University – Tuscarawas Campus in New Philadelphia
 - Historically this campus has been commuter students only
- Augusta Twp. Road Project, northeast of Carrollton
 - Growing businesses in the region are increasing heavy truck traffic on township and county roads. The proposed project would reconstruct two township roads to accommodate trucks and construct a new segment of a township road to intersect with another county road, enhancing ingress/egress of large trucks and consumers.
- Carroll County Commerce Park, northeast of Carrollton
 - New industrial park located off of SR 9
- D.O. Hall (south of Cambridge and I-70)
 - Expansion of existing industrial park near Cambridge
- National Road Business Park
 - Development of a new industrial park near the Airport Rd exit off I-70 east of Zanesville (Exit 160).

OMEGA has also highlighted two proposed corridors for future development, to enhance the efficiency of people and freight to access the region and to allow the region to be more economically competitive by providing ready access to a four-lane highway.

- US 30
 - Completion of a four-lane highway from Trump Avenue in East Canton to the intersection with SR 45 and SR 11 southeast of Lisbon in Columbiana County and improve connectivity to the Wellsville Port. This project would also add additional capacity to SR 43 to access Carrollton.
- Columbus to Pittsburgh Corridor
 - Completion of a four-lane highway along SR 16/US 36/US 250/US 22. Enhancements to this corridor would relieve traffic congestion along Interstate 70.

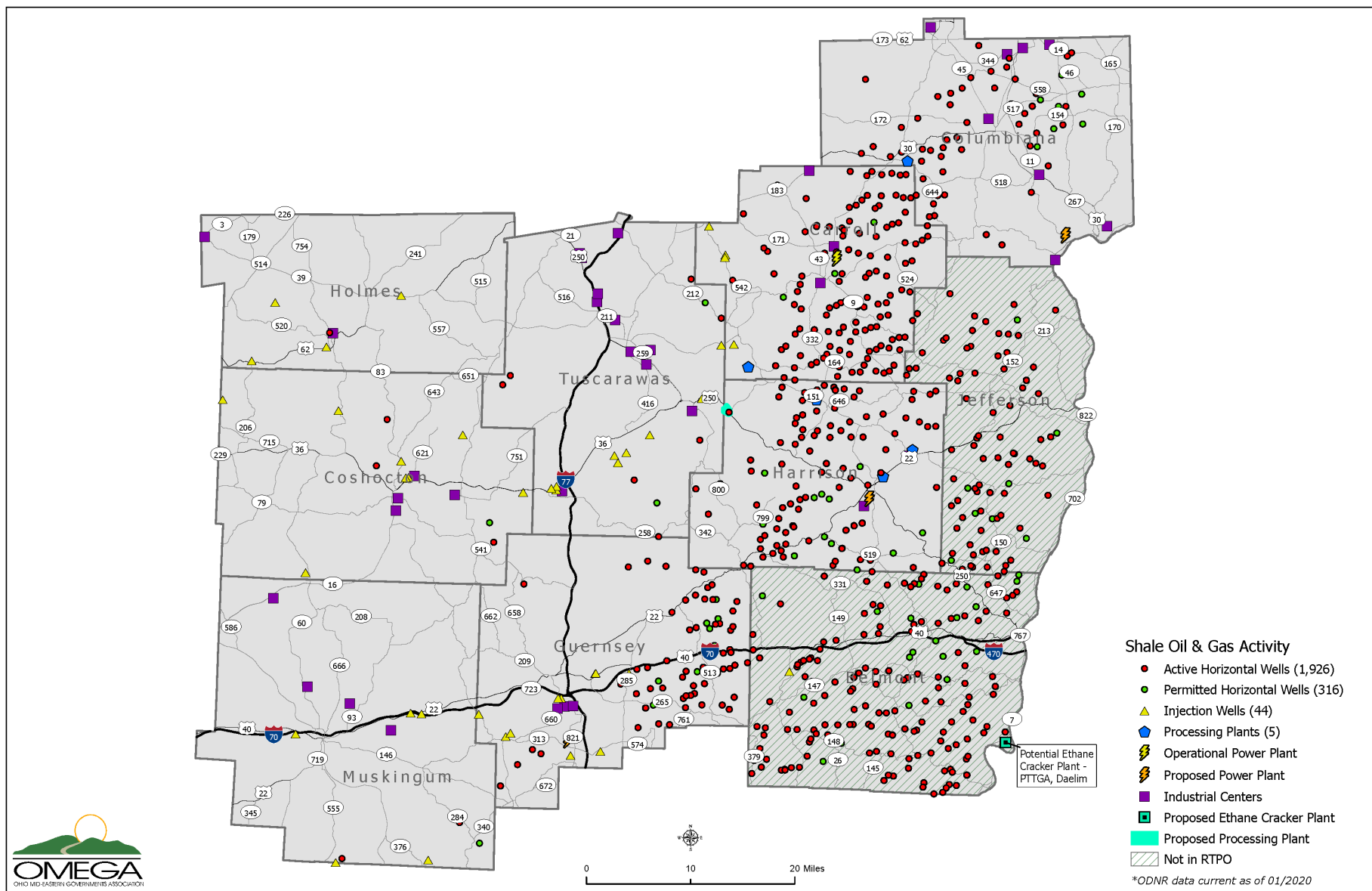


Figure 4-11: Shale Oil & Gas Development

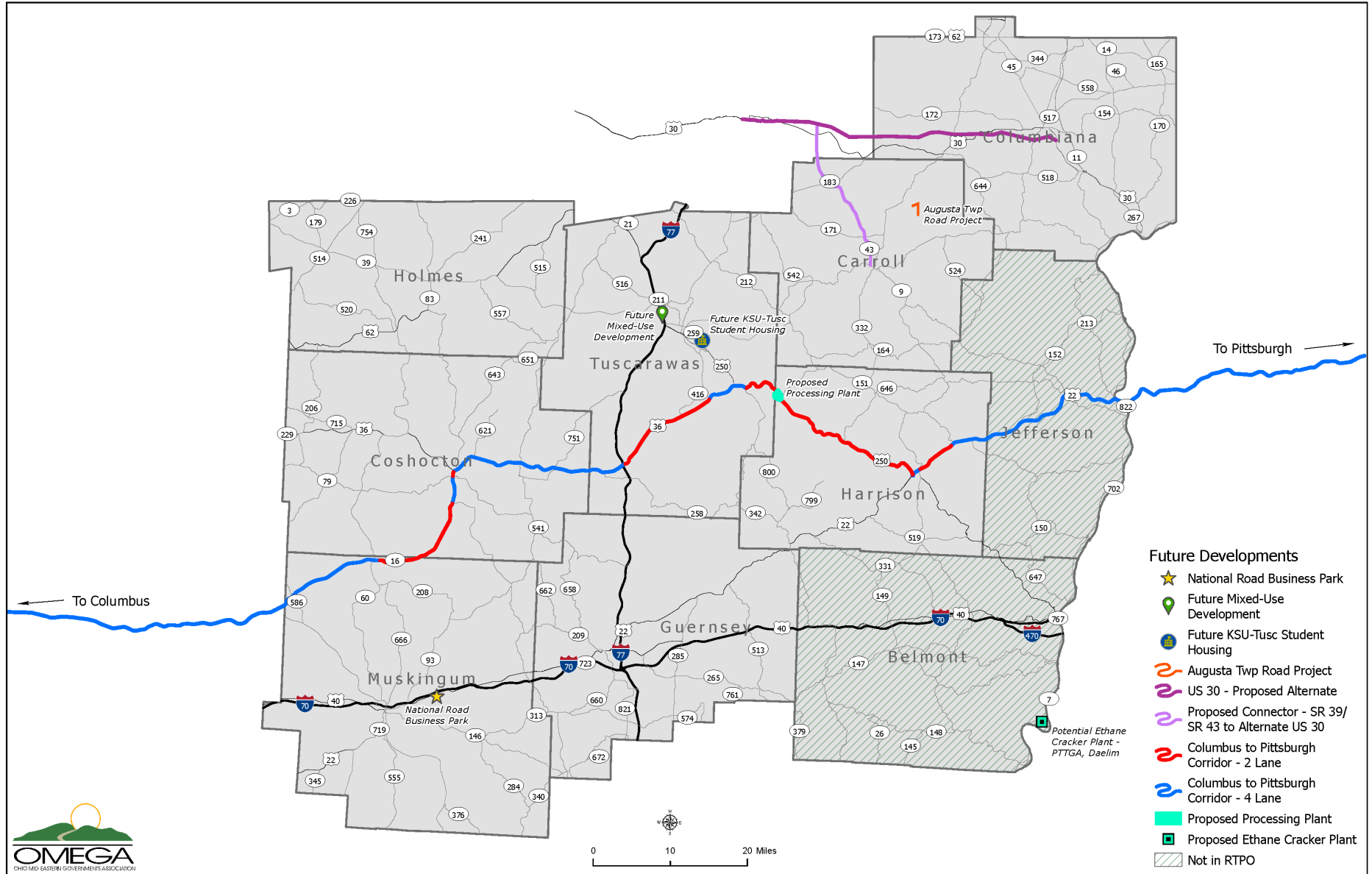


Figure 4-12: Future Regional Developments