

## 1.0 Why Should You Read This?

### 1.1 Crossroads State

Kentucky is located in the center of the eastern United States bordered by seven states and three major rivers—the Mississippi, Ohio, and Big Sandy. Kentucky’s location within the nation’s major highway, rail, inland water and air transportation routes places it within 500 miles of most major industrial centers in the central and the eastern United States as shown in **Figure 1.1A**. This combination of central location and accessibility to major multimodal transportation routes makes Kentucky a uniquely attractive environment for business, industry and tourism – a true “crossroads” state.

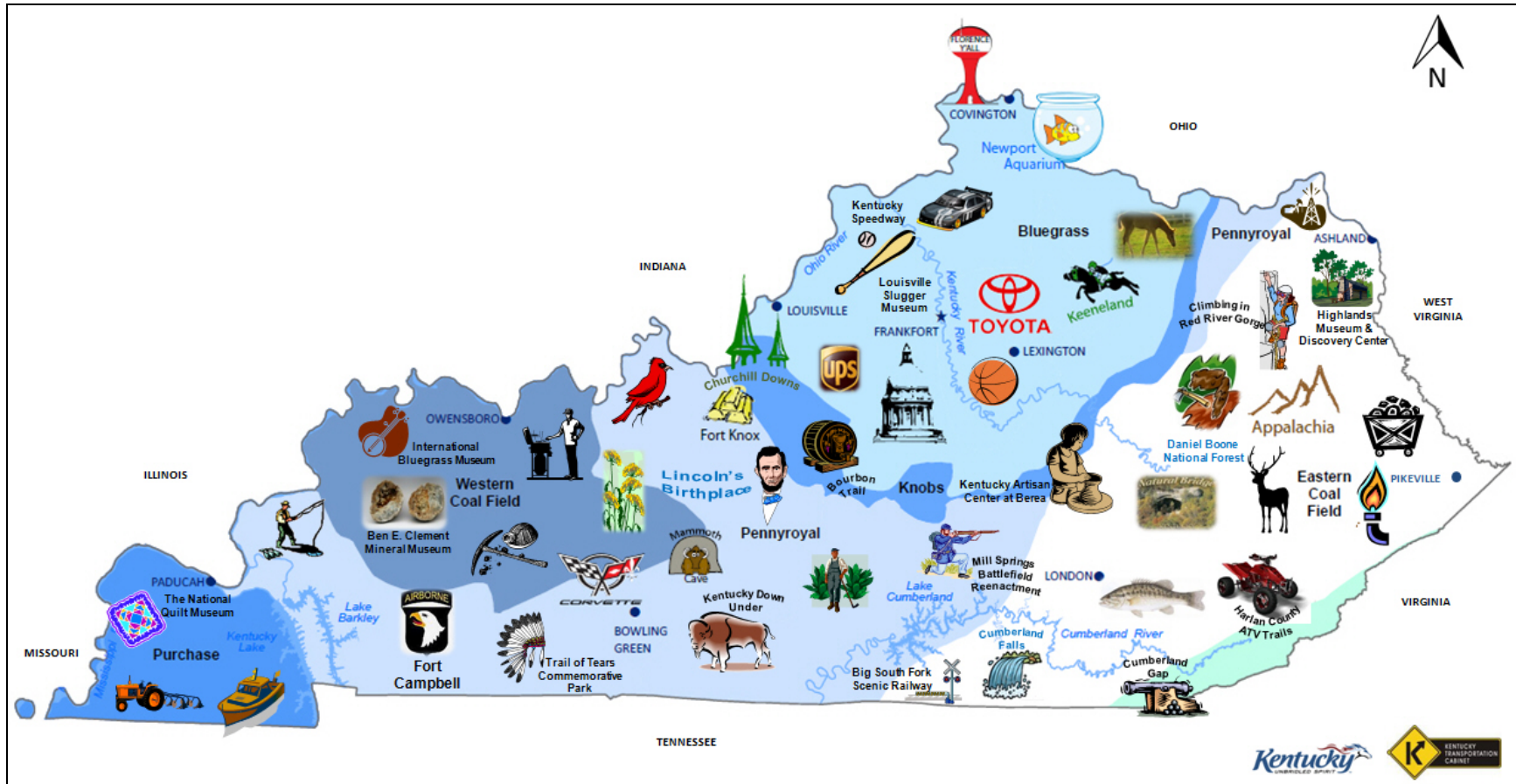
### 1.2 Unique State

The 40,000 square miles within Kentucky’s borders encompass a geographic diversity that presents a multitude of challenges for the development of an efficient, effective transportation system. On the following page, **Figure 1.2 A** shows the various regions and points of interest within Kentucky. The Eastern Region of the state is rugged and mountainous, covered with forests, dissected by streams, plagued by spring flooding and rockslides and in need of safe connections to the state’s urban centers and interstate highways. The Western Region, bordered by the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, is a rural, low plains area subject to frequent flooding. While Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley provide plentiful recreation and tourism opportunities, the area would benefit from improved connections to regional centers for increased economic opportunities.



Figure 1.1A – Kentucky – A Crossroad State

## KENTUCKY LONG-RANGE STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN



**Figure 1.2 A – Kentucky Geographical and Point of Interest Map**

The Northern Region boasts a combination of small mountains, verdant horse farms and more highly developed areas. The Southern Region is comprised of rolling hills and fertile farmland. Networks of caves and caverns, including Mammoth Cave National Park, are natural treasures that also affect the surface development of the towns and small cities that dot the landscape.

Kentucky's people are as diverse as its landscape. The Commonwealth is comprised of citizens from a variety of race, age and economic groups throughout 120 counties. While some counties located in the more urban areas of the state have experienced substantial population growth in the past decade, several counties in very rural areas have lost population.

## KENTUCKY LONG-RANGE STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A safe and reliable transportation system that connects across this diversity is vital to Kentucky's future economic growth, national competitiveness and overall quality of life. To provide a safe and reliable transportation system for the next twenty years, state and regional transportation planning must be both coordinated and comprehensive. The development of an effective transportation plan must take into consideration Kentucky's unique geographic and demographic challenges as well as evolving transportation systems and the demands of the 21st Century. A dynamic global economy, rapidly developing technologies, security concerns, congestion and safety issues, coordinated land use, limited funding and escalating costs are some of the most significant factors to be considered.

The dependence on the transportation system for the state's economic quality of life has long been recognized in Kentucky. As early as 1953, this realization led to the development of the Commonwealth's first long-range transportation plan. Titled *A Highway Program for Kentucky*, the report boldly stated that "continued change is characteristic of a dynamic economy, and highway affairs must keep pace. Continued planning and restudy of all pertinent matters by all highway agencies is essential to properly advise legislators and the public on the needed changes of the future."

As part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) required each state DOT to develop a "continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive" statewide multimodal planning process, to include the development of a long-range statewide transportation

plan. As a result, a Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP) was developed by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) in 1995 and updated in 1999. Both Plans included policy direction and specific projects for each transportation mode for two timeframes: a short-range element of up to six years and a long-range element of six to twenty years. A 2006 LRSTP update shifted away from a hybrid policy/project-oriented format to one that is purely policy-based, providing a basis for meeting the vision for Kentucky's transportation system by clearly identifying goals, policies and needs as well as the necessary analysis tools. The *2014 Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan (LRSTP)* is an update of this policy-based format under CFR 23: 450.214 and Title 23, U.S.C. Sec. 135.

Although primarily a statewide policy plan, the 2014 LRSTP also incorporates, by reference, the Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTPs) of Kentucky's nine Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), which include fiscally-constrained projects and components as well as policy.

With each update, the KYTC has evolved its planning process to meet the challenges of limited resources and the demands of future transportation users while taking advantage of the opportunities for the application of improved technologies in our transportation network. 2014 LRSTP improvements include enhancing the public input and participation process, refining the project identification and prioritization process, incorporating performance management principles and tools and finding ways to incorporate and address federally required planning factors.

### 1.3 Where Are We Going?

Transportation is the way we move people and things from one place to another. Kentucky's transportation system is inextricably woven into the fabric of the state's quality of life. The environment, education, economy, health care, and the time we enjoy with our families and friends are all, to varying degrees, affected by and dependent upon our transportation system. Transportation is and will always be important because we need to travel to our jobs, take our children to school, go to the grocery store, obtain medical attention, attend recreational activities or just visit our relatives and friends. **Figure 1.3 A** depicts examples of trips we make that utilize our transportation system. While the majority of our trips will be taken via automobile, we must be cognizant of the fact that they may involve any of a variety of other transportation modes.

While the transportation system provides the means for trips, those trips take time: a valuable and limited resource, both in business and in our personal lives. An efficient transportation system allows people and goods (freight) to get to the workplace, enables produce to arrive at its destination before it spoils, and provides access to emergency services in times of crisis when every moment can mean the difference between life and death.

### 1.4 What Trips Do Our Goods Make?

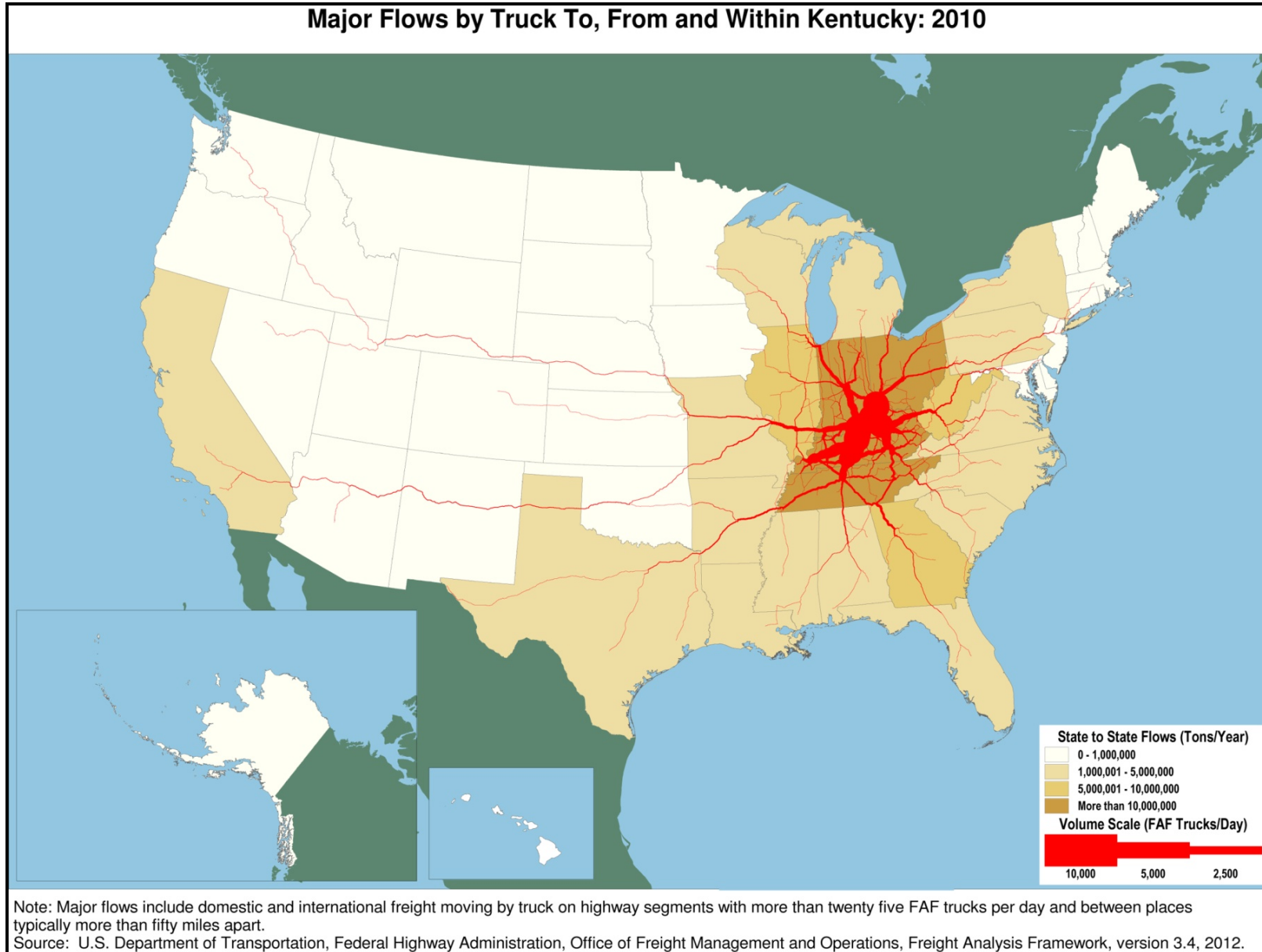
Kentucky's leaders and transportation officials understand the essential role transportation plays in the state's economic and social well-being. An effective transportation system facilitates the distribution of raw materials and finished products from one point to another.



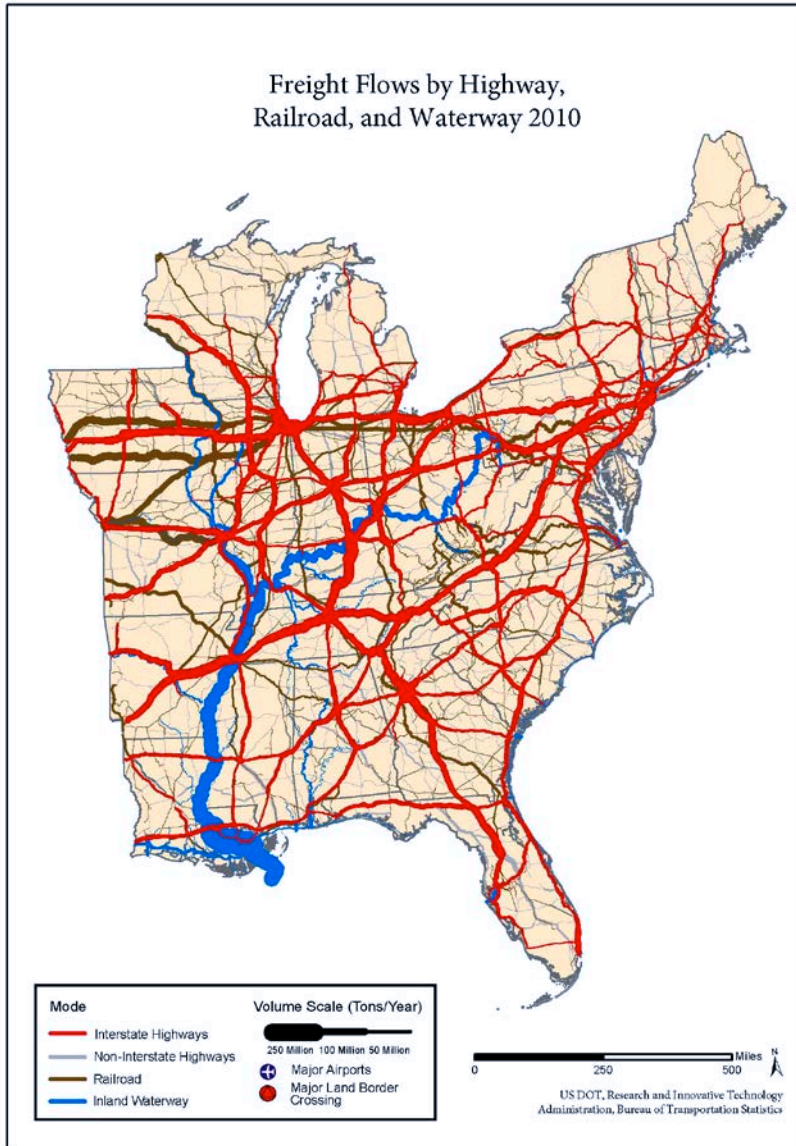
**Figure 1.3 A – Transportation and Our Trips**

It increases productivity and improves delivery performance. We rely on effective transportation to bring goods to our stores and services to our doorstep, and to make sure Kentucky exports are delivered to customers across the nation and around the world.

On the following page, **Figure 1.4 A** shows freight movement (trips taken by our goods) by truck to, from and through Kentucky as part of the Freight Analysis Framework (FAF) to help meet the needs that improve our quality of life.



**Figure 1.4 A – Kentucky – Freight (Goods) Routing to, from and through Kentucky via Truck**



**Figure 1.4 B** provides a regional view of the movement of freight by highway, railway and waterway. This map shows the significant role Kentucky plays as a “Cross Roads” state in the transfer of goods from a regional and national perspective. We must always keep in mind that regardless of the trip our goods take, most start with a truck and end with a truck.

As we look to the future, our transportation system can only function when adequate investment is made to develop and maintain its infrastructure. This investment of resources does not necessarily mean that the KYTC controls or funds all its elements. For safe and successful trips to continue over the next twenty years, it will require efficient use of all the KYTC resources to support the critical publicly-owned elements of the transportation system as well as close working partnerships with private sector owners of other transportation system components such as rail, aviation and waterways.

While the KYTC cannot foresee all challenges Kentucky’s transportation system will encounter over the next twenty years, this Plan represents its policy, priorities, and direction for addressing, within funding limitations, the major issues and obstacles it may face through 2035.

The KYTC hopes that you find this document educational and a valuable long-term resource for transportation in Kentucky.

Figure 1.4 B – Kentucky Crossroads State for Freight