

U.S. Department of Transportation

**Research and Innovative
Technology
Administration**

***Strategic Plan
2008-2012***

Innovation for a Nation on the Move

RITA Strategic Plan, 2008–2012

Table of Contents

Message from the Administrator	3
Transportation Vision for 2030.....	5
RITA’s Legislative History	8
RITA’s Vision and Mission	9
RITA’s Strategic Goals.....	10
1. Guide Investment to Maximize the Impact of USDOT’s RD&T Resources	10
2. Enable and Expedite Innovation into the Transportation Enterprise	12
3. Inform Transportation Decisionmakers.....	14
4. Expand a World-Class Knowledge Base	16
5. Instill Organizational Health and Excellence.....	18
RITA’s Assets.....	19
Statement on Agency Values.....	23

Safety . . . Systems Performance . . . 21st Century Solutions

A Message from the Administrator



Paul R. Brubaker

Welcome to the Research and Innovative Technology Administration's (RITA's) Strategic Plan. It is designed to lay out a clear vision for how we operate over the next five years in order to achieve our mission and ensure that research management and activities are directed toward achieving measurable improvements in saving lives, improving mobility, and ensuring the health and well being of our Nation's transportation enterprise. This strategic plan describes RITA's vision, mission, goals, and strategic objectives.

This plan is a management tool. Its strategic objectives will drive the tactics we will employ to manage our portfolio and achieve results. We will align and train our people with the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities they require in order to achieve the objectives we describe. Our budgets will be developed and executed in a manner consistent with achieving our organizational objectives. We will use the plan's strategic objectives to define, automate, manage, and support processes. In short, our people, processes, programs, initiatives, and resources will be focused on achieving the strategic objectives we present here.

At the core of the plan is RITA's statutory mandate under the Mineta Act to coordinate research programs throughout the Department to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. This mandate cannot be fully achieved without a fundamental change to the historic research culture of the Department. It requires the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to create an enterprise-wide strategic research focus with full transparency. Without such a change, we will continue to advance research agendas developed in modally focused silos. This can result in a less than desirable return on our precious research investment. Application of a rigorous and disciplined process to organize, select, and coordinate research activities across the Department is required to maximize investment and to ensure that taxpayer dollars are effectively directed to the Nation's most pressing short- and long-term transportation challenges.

A focused, measured research program will help us ensure that the national transportation system can effectively, efficiently, and safely move people and goods across our Nation in a manner that will sustain and improve our quality of life and ensure our global economic competitiveness. If we fail to leverage our research, congestion will worsen, opportunities to improve road safety will not be maximized, our environment will suffer, and transportation's impact on climate change will be exacerbated.

We must do better. Advances in technology, innovation, and research will enable us to make profound improvements in our system that will lead to substantial reductions in congestion, improvements in safety, energy independence, and a robust and efficient supply chain. Demonstrating technologies and innovation ensure moving these advances toward commercialization by improving partnerships with the public and private sector to transfer these technologies faster. Collaboration among the research community by leveraging technological advances in communication and media will significantly enhance our knowledge-sharing capability

in some very exciting and nontraditional ways. Most importantly, collaboration will increase the velocity of advances and applications of new and exciting developments that can do everything from reducing life-cycle infrastructure costs to saving lives.

We cannot begin to achieve our goals without improving and increasing our understanding of system and safety performance. Without appropriate and timely metrics and measurements, we have no way to know how proposed programs, policies, and practices will impact—positively or negatively—our transportation system.

As part of a focused national research agenda, we also recognize that the Department must learn to reengineer its own administrative and regulatory processes in a manner that can speed much needed improvements into the field so we do not delay the implementation of lifesaving technologies and methods through excessive industrial age bureaucratic processes—simply because we have always done it that way. We intend to direct some portion of research to this long-standing issue so advanced safety and mobility technologies can be introduced to the public sooner.

Clearly, RITA intends to meet its statutory obligations and transform the Department's transportation research enterprise over the next five years. This plan represents RITA's guiding document as it moves forward in support of the Nation's transportation goals.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul R. Brubaker", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Brubaker
Administrator

In January 2008, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) released *Transportation Vision for 2030*, in accord with the Department's strategic plan and objectives. The *Vision* is designed to guide the Department's research, technology, and investment decisions, in order to improve safety and system performance and find 21st-century solutions to the challenges facing the Nation's intermodal transportation system. The RITA *Strategic Plan* aligns with *Transportation Vision for 2030* and the U.S. DOT's strategic goals: safety; reduced congestion; environmental stewardship; global connectivity; security, preparedness and response; and organizational excellence.

USDOT Strategic Goals

- Safety
- Reduced Congestion
- Environmental Stewardship
- Global Connectivity
- Security, Preparedness, and Response
- Organizational Excellence

Transportation Vision for 2030 details challenges in passenger and freight transportation, such as record-level gridlock at our Nation's airports, seaports, and on our highways. It also points out flaws in the current system of transportation financing and the need to improve the use of technology. *Transportation Vision for 2030* outlines USDOT's "pathway" to addressing these challenges, such as safety-oriented technology programs, congestion reducing

technologies and pricing models, increased energy efficiency and alternative fuels, and public-private partnerships.

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION

The Nation's passenger transportation system and infrastructure is world class, but we will improve its safety, security, efficiency, and reliability. We will waste less time and fuel while stalled in traffic jams, and less time and money will be wasted as a result of airline delays. There will be less transportation-generated pollution and noise in our communities. We will have increasing access to high-quality public transportation during peak travel periods. Our vehicles will accommodate alternative fuels and new energy-saving technologies. America, as a result, will be significantly less dependent on foreign oil. Our transportation system will minimize greenhouse gas emissions and be prepared for the impacts of climate change. Technological innovation will improve the way that people and goods move around the country and the world.

FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION

The U.S. freight transportation system will ensure the safe, secure, efficient, and reliable movement of goods and bolster the Nation's economy while improving environmental quality. Hazardous materials will safely, securely, and efficiently move through the air and on the railroads, seas, waterways, and highways. They will reach their destinations on schedule, in time to fuel our automobiles and to heat and cool our homes and offices.

FINANCING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Transportation system financing will include a clear link between costs and revenues. The system will be flexible as costs change and nimble when making adjustments required by its customers.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

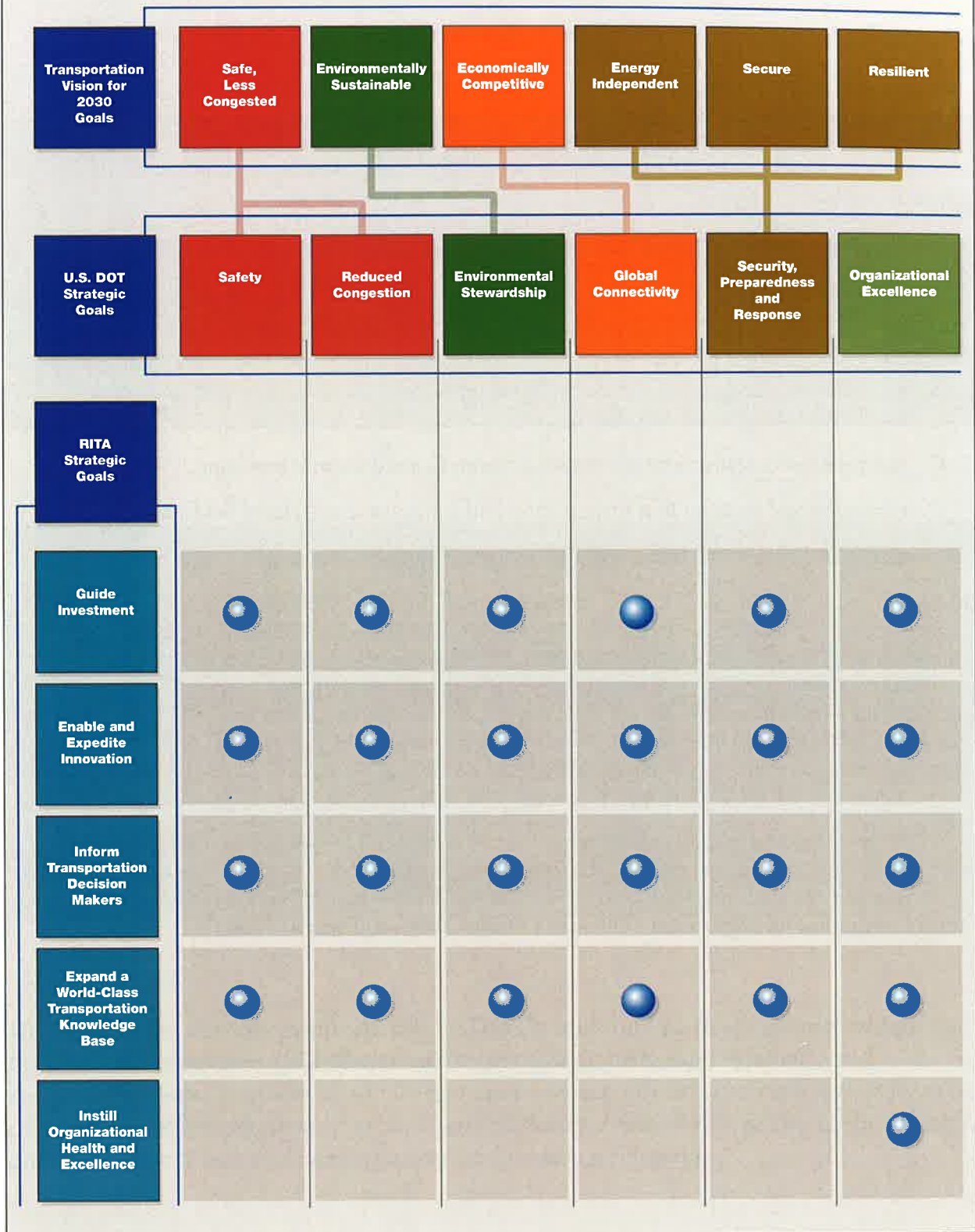
The U.S. transportation system will be innovative and incorporate efficient, integrated, cost-effective, sustainable, and intermodal transportation solutions. Continued introduction of new concepts and new technology will lead to dramatic improvements in our Nation's world-class transportation system and will involve the transformation of knowledge into new products, processes, and services to serve the public more effectively.

THE VISION FOR 2030

The transportation system in 2030 will be:

- **Safe, Less Congested**
Free all of us to make daily decisions, confident that people and goods will reach their destinations safely and on time.
- **Economically Competitive**
Strengthen America's leadership role in the global economy and spur economic growth and job creation.
- **Energy Independent**
Guarantee our energy independence by reducing our Nation's dependence on foreign oil.
- **Environmentally Sustainable**
Ensure environmentally sustainable communities and curb greenhouse gas emissions.
Provide security for national and international passenger, freight, and hazardous materials movement.
- **Resilient**
Prepare for, respond to, and be resilient to man-made and natural disruptions.

RITA's Strategic Goals Aligned with U.S. DOT's Strategic Goals and "Transportation Vision for 2030" Goals



On November 30, 2004, President George W. Bush signed into law the Norman Y. Mineta Research and Special Programs Improvement Act of 2004, Public Law 108-426. The legislation created two separate new administrations, the Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). It dissolved the Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA). By realigning existing USDOT entities, RITA now brings together important research, technology, and data-collection assets.

Specifically, the Mineta Act mandate, given to RITA by Congress, is to “carry out powers and duties prescribed by the Secretary for—

- A. coordination, facilitation, and review of the Department’s research and development programs and activities;
- B. advancement, and research and development, of innovative technologies, including intelligent transportation systems;
- C. comprehensive transportation statistics research, analysis, and reporting;
- D. education and training in transportation and transportation-related fields; and
- E. activities of the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center....”

On August 10, 2005, President George W. Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009. SAFETEA-LU authorized Title V programs including Surface Transportation Research, Training and Education, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), University Transportation Research, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Research, ITS Deployment, and other research and technology programs. With the passage of SAFETEA-LU, RITA was positioned to lead in achieving effective strategic planning, providing relevant data and analysis, coordinating cross-modal RD&T programs, and facilitating the deployment of transportation technologies.

Other legislation also impacts the agency’s resources and strategic direction, such as the Federal Aviation Administration’s reauthorization specific to RITA’s airline data program, as well as the Energy Bill, which formally established the Department’s Office of Climate Change and the Environment.

RITA's Vision

The leader in enabling innovation, knowledge sharing and coordinating multimodal research investment across the Nation's transportation enterprise.

RITA's Mission

Establish a national transportation research agenda that supports the achievement of America's transportation goals through the effective coordination and performance of research and knowledge sharing across the Department and the deployment of leading edge, cross-cutting technologies.

RITA's mission directly supports the USDOT's mission: *To develop and administer policies and programs that contribute to providing fast, safe, efficient, and convenient transportation at the lowest cost consistent with the national objectives of general welfare, economic growth and stability, the security of the United States, and the efficient use and conservation of America's resources.*



RITA's five strategic goals are to:

1. Guide Investment to Maximize the Impact of USDOT's RD&T Resources
2. Enable and Expedite Innovation into the Transportation Enterprise
3. Inform Transportation Decisionmakers
4. Expand a World-Class Transportation Knowledge Base
5. Instill Organizational Health and Excellence

RITA's strategic goals focus on the processes of conducting research and development, encouraging innovation, and providing data and training that cut across the outcome-based goals in the USDOT Strategic Plan. Each RITA goal thus contributes to the accomplishment of each of the USDOT goals.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1:

Guide Investment to Maximize the Impact of USDOT's RD&T Resources

Measure and track performance and net benefits for USDOT RD&T dollars invested; establish a clear alignment between USDOT's priorities and strategic objectives; and assess the tradeoffs between potential research benefits, costs, and risks. Work to ensure effective public investment in Federal transportation RD&T by review of RD&T programs and budgets to ensure that they most effectively and efficiently address Departmental objectives and priorities. Achieve greater RD&T budget transparency.

The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission highlighted the critical role of Federal transportation RD&T leadership in its December 2007 report, Research, Development & Technology: A Coherent Transportation Research Program for the Nation as 1 of 10 program areas in which Federal surface transportation investment should be concentrated. The Commission Report states that "the Federal Government is best suited to monitor the vast scope of research activities underway across the Nation and the world, targeting funds to research gaps." This language builds on congressional views expressed in Title 23 of the U.S. Code: "research and development are critical to developing and maintaining a transportation system that meets the goals of safety, mobility, economic vitality, efficiency, equity and environmental protection."

Outcome

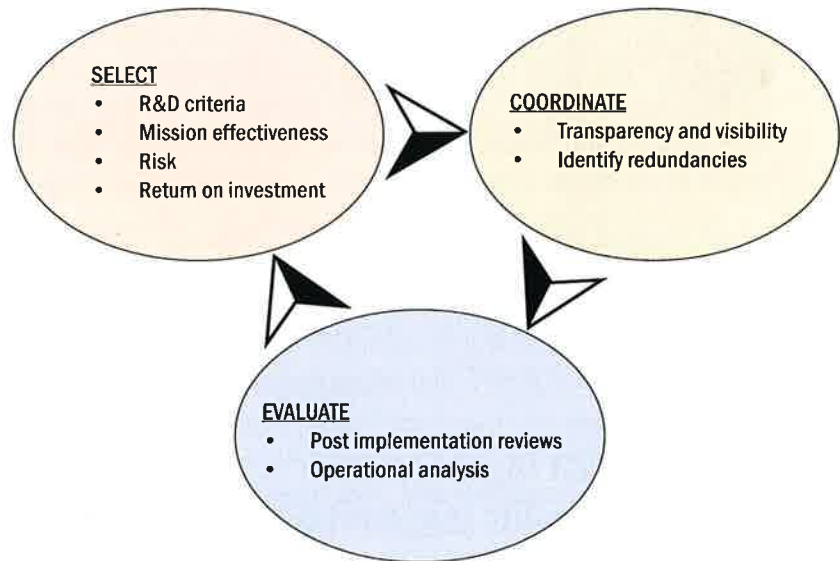
The impact of USDOT's Federal investment in RD&T is maximized and fully aligned with national priorities and USDOT's transportation strategic goals: safety; reduced congestion; environmental stewardship; global connectivity; security, preparedness, and response; and organizational excellence. Moreover, DOT RD&T budget transparency is achieved.

Research Planning and Investment Coordination

Strategic Objectives

- Balanced
- Aligned with department goals
- Maximize value

Strategic Investment Criteria



Strategies

To achieve its objective for guiding investment and maximizing the impact of USDOT's RD&T resources, RITA will:

- **Establish the National Transportation Research Agenda:** RITA will establish and publish the national transportation research agenda aligned with the Nation's transportation objectives in coordination with the Department's multimodal Research Investment Board and the broader transportation community.
- **Execute and Direct the Research, Planning, and Investment Coordination (RPIC) Process within USDOT:** RITA will coordinate RD&T investments through the Research, Planning, and Investment Coordination (RPIC) process. An adaptation of the Capital Planning and Investment Control processes developed in response to the Clinger-Cohen Act, the RPIC processes are iterative with inputs coming from across DOT and feeding into the budget lifecycle.

RPIC's benefits include increased collaboration between operating administrations and the ability to achieve DOT's RD&T strategic objectives; clearer alignment between RD&T initiatives with strategic objectives; a forum for measuring and tracking performance and net

benefits for dollars invested; a framework for assessing tradeoffs between potential research benefits, costs, and risks; and a protocol for setting RD&T priorities and making appropriate RD&T resource shifts based on priorities at an enterprise level.

Completing development of a searchable RPIC database will improve the transparency of USDOT's research portfolio and budget utilization. RITA has set up a prototype online database to trace DOT's RD&T spending, with the goal to achieve greater budget transparency and bring into one database all of the RD&T data that is currently scattered among many agencies and not easily accessed, certainly not through one user-friendly location. The RPIC database will provide RITA with a critical tool for achieving its mission to coordinate DOT's more than \$1 billion research investment, and will allow policy makers, researchers, and others to search for RD&T information by research topic, funding level, grant description, contractor, State, congressional district, and more.

- **Lead, Engage, and Involve the RD&T Planning Council and Planning Team in RD&T Planning Efforts:** Lead and involve the internal USDOT RD&T Planning Council and RD&T Planning Team in the RPIC and the RD&T strategic planning processes and ensure a maximum return on investment of Departmental research resources as well as their close alignment with USDOT objectives and priorities and the President's R&D investment criteria.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2:

Enable and Expedite Innovation into the Transportation Enterprise

Provide leadership to the USDOT and the transportation community by accelerating, enabling, and facilitating transportation innovation through a variety of methods, including the advocacy of cross-cutting RD&T aligned with USDOT's strategic goals.

Outcome

Innovations have been introduced into the transportation system that involve all modes and that result in improvements in safety, congestion reduction, environmental stewardship and energy independence, global connectivity, organizational excellence, and overall transportation system performance.

Strategies

To achieve its objective for enabling and expediting innovation within the transportation enterprise, RITA will:

- **Provide Thought Leadership and Identify Gaps and Priorities:** Work across the Department and with the transportation community to anticipate and prioritize future transportation challenges and opportunities, identify technology and knowledge gaps, and enable needed innovations. Conduct forums and outreach in order to bring diverse communities together to find common ground and common understanding of challenges and strategies for tackling the Nation's toughest transportation issues and achieving USDOT's strategic goals.

- **Lead Multimodal Research, Development, and Technology (RD&T) and Accelerate the Implementation of Transportation Technology and Institutional Innovation:** Serve as USDOT's principal advocate for, and advisor on, multimodal transportation RD&T and RD&T investment, for both passenger and freight transportation issues, in step with achieving the USDOT's goals and the *Transportation Vision for 2030*. Efforts in this area will be aligned with the following Communities of Interest:
 - **Multimodal and Transportation Systems Research**
Contributes to a compelling vision of the 21st century transportation enterprise and supports decisionmaking in the development, management, operation, and financing of an integrated multimodal national and global transportation system that is safer, less congested, and meets the 21st century mobility needs for goods and people.
 - **Safety Systems Management**
Serves as a national and international resource for knowledge exchanges on the acquisition, maintenance, distribution, and analysis of transportation safety data with the goal of reducing the number of transportation-related deaths and reducing the severity of transportation-related injuries and property damage.
 - **Environmental Stewardship and Energy Independence**
Provides support at all levels of government and industry on decisionmaking relative to: (1) the selection, utilization, and impact associated with the use of alternative energy resources (e.g., petroleum, biofuels, electricity, and hydrogen) to power transportation enterprise; and (2) the impact and mitigation of transportation-related global warming, air, noise, and water pollution. Works to establish a multimodal approach to and program for addressing Departmental issues related to energy conservation and energy delivery.
 - **Logistics and Transportation**
Enhance global connectivity through RITA's overall freight transportation effort, which includes research on reducing related congestion at our borders, seaports, and on our major surface transportation corridors; national and international port operations and security; transportation and logistics chain resilience; freight demand modeling; and alternatives for freight infrastructure financing. Maintain overall cognizance of the implications of shifting global passenger and freight flows and their implication for the transportation and logistics infrastructure. Ensure knowledge exchange on resiliency of global transportation and logistics chains when subject to natural and man-made disruption.
 - **Physical Infrastructure**
In the face of ever-increasing demand and accumulated loads, maintain cognizance and promote technical support in the inspection, maintenance, and rehabilitation of the existing and future transportation infrastructure including vehicles, guideways, and intermodal facilities. Maintain a knowledge base including utilization of new materials, engineering concepts, and institutional approaches to ensuring the infrastructure is safe, less congested, and resilient in its ability to respond to natural and man-made disturbances.

- **Navigation, Communication, and Surveillance Infrastructure**
RITA serves as the focal point for the interagency coordination and understanding of the civil sector requirements and technologies for space and ground-based positioning, navigation, and timing systems in step with National Space Policy Directive-39. Navigation, Communication, and Surveillance is critical to the Nation's transportation infrastructure and involves cross-cutting technology that supports multimodal applications.
 - **Human Factor Research and Applications**
Provides means for knowledge exchange within the national and international community with the goal of advancing human factors research and its role in transportation safety and efficiency. Pioneers new inter-relationship between humans and current and emerging automation technology to enhance transportation safety, security, and productivity with due concern for the unintended consequences of automation.
 - **Intelligent Transportation Systems**
Lead the research, development, and demonstration and accelerate the implementation of ITS solutions to achieve dramatic improvements in surface transportation safety, congestion reduction, and environmental sustainability. Improve situational awareness and real-time information on all roads and all modes to improve safety for the traveling public while reducing gridlock and its impact on our quality of life. Enable technologies to reduce congestion, including seamless electronic payment processing and integrated parking, transit, congestion pricing, and tolling and complete trip payment options. Foster new institutional relationships and partnerships to enable better use of technologies in transportation.
 - **Materials**
New materials including nanotechnology will impact all areas of transportation and lead to a safer, less congested, and more efficient and cost-effective transportation network. Knowledge will be shared on new light-weight composite materials for transportation vehicles, materials with extended life for supporting infrastructure, and nano-structured catalysts for hydrogen fuel cells.
- **Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR):** Through the SBIR program, invigorate small businesses in the United States to ensure that new technologies focus on smart transportation solutions. Link the SBIR program to the RPIC process in an effort to improve the return on investment and help ensure that the topics identified in each solicitation are consistent with USDOT strategic goals and *Transportation Vision for 2030*.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Inform Transportation Decisionmakers

Inform transportation leaders and decisionmakers through reliable data, information, analyses, and evaluation. Develop a systematic evaluation capacity for transportation research programs and projects.

Outcome

USDOT and other transportation policy and decisionmakers will have access to the relevant, accurate, timely, and reliable information and analyses needed to make informed decisions and improve safety, reduce congestion, and boost overall system performance.

Strategies

- **Demonstrate Relevance of Research and Statistical Information:** Continuously communicate with stakeholders and customers in providing statistical products and services that meet priority needs of policy leaders and decisionmakers. Solicit, consider, and respond to numerous decisionmaker and customer requests for statistical products.

Two key initiatives to support this strategy would be:

- **Expand Delivery of Trend Analyses:** Identify customer and stakeholder needs for transportation trend analyses, and develop new capacities to deliver this data.
 - **Strengthen Intermodal Statistical Information:** Improve availability of intermodal data and develop a mechanism to make this information easily accessible.
- **Generate High Quality, Accurate, and Timely Data on Safety, System Performance, and Costs:** Acquire and develop data sets and institutionalize the regular production and availability of statistics relevant to transportation safety, congestion reduction, system performance, and costs. Develop statistical products and services that will enhance knowledge regarding other pressing domestic and international transportation topics.

A key initiative to support this strategy would be:

- **Strengthen the BTS Aviation Data Program (Uses, Analysis, Quality, Accessibility, and Dissemination):** RITA/BTS provides extensive data on airline activities to the USDOT, Congress, industry representatives, and the general public. RITA/BTS acquires data related to airline passenger traffic, cost of air travel, on-time performance, and financial data. RITA will review and identify current and projected stakeholders' needs, and assess current practices and information technology with respect to meeting those needs. In addition, RITA has reviewed current sources of airline data, data processing routines, database software, and agency organizational capacities. Based on this assessment, RITA is and will be better positioned to strengthen the BTS Aviation Data Program.
- **Build a Robust, World-Class Research Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration Capability:** Through multimedia research knowledge sharing and collaboration, reduce DOT's research redundancy, sharpen research knowledge, tap subject matter expertise, significantly improve collaboration among the research community, and generally advance the state and quality of the research results. This effort will initiate with the University Transportation Centers and expand to the research community-at-large based on the communities of interest.
 - **Create, Manage, and Share Transportation Statistical Knowledge and Research Findings:** Ensure that statistical and research products and services meet priority needs and enhance

knowledge regarding domestic and international transportation topics. Ensure transportation leaders, decisionmakers, and the broader transportation community have increased access to data and information by strengthened communication and publicity of key results.

- **Enhance Communication on the Significance and Relevance of UTC Research:** Publish an annual report highlighting the comprehensive research and contributions of the UTCs in achieving USDOT's strategic goals. Broadly disseminate the report within the USDOT and the broader transportation community.
- **Design, Develop, and Implement Executive Safety Education Opportunities:** Provide information and training that enables decisionmakers to create and implement policies that reduce transportation-related crashes through the subject matter expertise of its transportation safety professionals.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4:

Expand a World-Class Knowledge Base

Invest in the agency's higher educational and training resources and apply their full capabilities to the challenges and opportunities facing the Nation's transportation system.

Outcome

The agency's educational and training resources are aligned with the Department's goals for safety; reduced congestion; environmental stewardship; global connectivity; security, preparedness, and response; and organizational excellence.

Strategies

To ensure a world-class workforce, training, and university research capability, RITA will:

- **Invest in the Knowledge Base:** Invest in university-based centers of excellence, including the University Transportation Centers (UTCs), to advance innovation, research, education, and technology transfer and to prepare the future transportation workforce.

Three key initiatives to support this strategy would be:

- **Identify Synergies and Strengthen the Connection between the University Transportation Centers (UTC) and the DOT's Research Priorities:** Foster a closer connection between UTC research and the needs of the operating administrations

and DOT. As USDOT continues to tackle tough transportation challenges, ensure that the research of the UTCs is fully leveraged and readily available. Increase UTC connections to DOT's strategic goals and RD&T priorities and programs.

- **Strengthen Oversight and Management of the UTC Program:** Work with the operating administrations to increase technical oversight of the individual UTCs' selection and evaluation processes for research. Provide leadership and guidance for the UTCs to ensure that they attract the best students to transportation careers and conduct research and technology transfer that is relevant and in support of national transportation goals.
- **Develop Student and Faculty Exchange Programs:** Develop and implement a student exchange program that will enable UTC graduate students to serve internships with USDOT. Provide opportunities for faculty to apply for sabbatical opportunities with the Department. These two initiatives will help us better identify and recruit students and faculty who may want to embark on a career at USDOT, as well as provide our UTC students with valuable job experience.
- **Provide Training and Services to Support the Department's Goals:** Continually provide worldwide training, products, and services to the public and private sectors that promote advances in safety procedures, share best safety practices, and improve congestion reduction and accident prevention strategies across all modes of transportation.

Two key initiatives to support this strategy would be:

- **Broaden Base of Stakeholders Taking Advantage of RITA's World Class Training Services:** Strengthen communication of RITA—the Transportation Safety Institute's and the Volpe Center's—training capabilities and garner support and recognition for its contributions in this important area. Continue to meet customer needs by incorporating existing and evolving technologies in the development of training programs. RITA will promote and communicate its capabilities and services to existing and potential sponsors, stakeholders, and industry. TSI, Volpe, and the ITS JPO will provide worldwide training, products, and/or services for people in the public and private sectors through innovative, state-of-the-art methods and technologies that contribute to meeting USDOT's strategic objectives.
- **Continually Develop the Next Generation Transportation Workforce:** Ensure that the transportation workforce has the skills needed for successful deployment of innovations through professional capacity building and fee-for-service training.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Instill Organizational Health and Excellence

Align, manage, and develop resources to ensure effective and efficient operation of the organization.

Outcome

Unprecedented commitment to continuous improvement in organizational performance resulting in a highly trained, motivated, and innovative workforce; enhanced control measures; and improved decisionmaking processes.

Strategies

- **Build Talent by Strengthening, Developing, and Investing in Human Capital:** Empower employees in a positive, supportive organizational environment that is conducive to achieving excellence and organizational health in an environment where all employees participate, learn, grow, and are respected.
- **Ensure Sound Financial, Budget, and Performance Integration:** Ensure budget and financial management processes support and balance organizational needs and fiscal responsibility. Provide relevant and reliable financial information that links resources and results to program managers for their use in improving performance and accountability.
- **Heighten Awareness of RITA through Improved Communication:** Develop an effective and efficient communications capability accurately tailored to meet the needs of the organization that utilizes the best resources available from current technology.
- **Improve Internal Processes to Efficiently Utilize Resources:** Practice good stewardship of resources by institutionalizing effective business processes to streamline and clarify repetitive internal activities. Identify and prioritize common activities, address areas of need, and solve process-related challenges throughout the organization. Increase productivity by eliminating redundancies and missteps due to a void in clear formal guidance.
- **Establish RITA as a Leader in Digital Government:** The world is undergoing a third major wave of industrial revolution brought about by rapid progress in information technologies and globalization. Business processes and relationships are being fundamentally transformed. The Federal Government has undertaken a major review of the way we do things and how the public sector can harness information technologies. The vision of RITA is to be a leader in digital Government—better serving its needs and those within the transportation industry.

RITA now brings together critically important research, technology, and data collection assets of the USDOT including:

Research, Development, and Technology

RITA coordinates the USDOT's roughly \$1 billion research portfolio through the Research Planning, Investment, and Coordination (RPIC) process—a systematic approach to selecting, coordinating and evaluating research, development, and technology investments. An adaptation of the Capital Planning and Investment Control processes developed in response to the Clinger-Cohen Act, the RPIC processes are iterative with inputs coming from across DOT and feeding into the budget lifecycle.

RPIC's benefits include greater collaboration between Operating Administrations and the ability to achieve DOT's RD&T strategic objectives; clearer alignment between RD&T initiatives with strategic objectives; a forum for measuring and tracking performance and net benefits for dollars invested; a framework for assessing tradeoffs between potential research benefits, costs, and risks; and a protocol for setting RD&T priorities and making appropriate RD&T resource shifts based on priorities at an enterprise level. RPIC works to ensure that greater RD&T budget transparency is achieved across DOT.

Through an unprecedented focus on RD&T planning and coordination, fosters collaboration in research activities within DOT, across the Federal Government, and with partners in State and local transportation agencies, not-for-profit institutions, academia, and industry, including coordination of activities of the Department's Research Investment Board.

Serves the Department and the broader transportation community by pushing the outer limits of multimodal transportation technology and working collaboratively across USDOT's operating administrations and Secretarial offices to advance cutting-edge technologies, including: nanotechnology, advanced materials, remote sensing for crossmodal infrastructure evaluation, and advanced energy conservation technologies.

University Transportation Centers

Directs and provides Federal oversight of the University Transportation Centers (UTC) Program, ensuring greater alignment with national transportation objectives and goals. The UTC Program invests in university-based centers of excellence to advance innovation, research, education, and technology transfer. The program is managed by RITA and funded by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration. The focus of the UTC program is multimodal and supportive of the USDOT's strategic objectives. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 (SAFETEA-LU) authorized the most significant expansion of the UTC program to date, increasing the annual funding for the program and the number of UTCs from the 33 established in Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) to 60. With the expansion of the UTC program comes new opportunities for it to make an even greater contribution to transportation research, education, and technology transfer.

The John A. Volpe National Transportation Systems Center

An innovative, fee-for-service organization, the Volpe Center, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, is an internationally recognized Federal center of transportation logistics and expertise. Through rapid response and critical long-term analytical, scientific, and engineering support to the USDOT and others, this systems center helps decisionmakers define problems and pursue solutions that will lead transportation into the 21st century. The Center applies its unique multidisciplinary, multimodal, technical capabilities to promote and enable technological and process innovation in response to and in the achievement of U.S. transportation goals and national priorities.

The Volpe Center plays a unique role in looking across the transportation enterprise to anticipate future transportation issues and challenges so as to better prepare and inform Departmental and other transportation decisionmakers. Funded through work agreements with multiple USDOT and non-DOT agencies, the Volpe Center supports multiple USDOT's modal administrations and offices, other Federal agencies, State and local governments and organizations, foreign governments and entities, and the private sector.

The Transportation Safety Institute (TSI)

The Transportation Safety Institute in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is the Nation's leading provider of transportation safety training. The TSI educates more than 50,000 professionals each year in state-of-the-art safety methods and technologies.

The TSI assists DOT modal administrations in accomplishing their mission-essential training requirements. Since its inception, TSI has expanded its clientele to keep up with the needs of the Department and transportation industry. The Institute offers premier transit, aviation, motor carrier, traffic safety, hazardous material, and risk management training nationally and internationally.

The TSI supports several key strategies in USDOT's Strategic Plan. It sponsors and participates in conferences, seminars, and meetings at which transportation consumers and providers can share advances in safety technology, regulation, and procedures. The TSI uses DOT web sites to communicate information on best safety practices, educational materials, consumer information, and other materials relating to safety. The TSI also improves safety in all modes through outreach, education, collaboration with public and industry safety partners, demonstration programs, consumer information, and strategic media usage. Through training transportation industry safety professionals in accident investigation and prevention, TSI accomplishes these strategies and supports the Department's safety objectives. At the same time, TSI provides subject matter expertise to decisionmakers and the public in transportation safety.

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS)

The BTS will continue to focus on three key areas, each mandated by legislation: compiling, analyzing, and publishing a comprehensive set of transportation statistics; making statistics readily accessible; and implementing a long-term data collection program. A leading source of multimodal transportation data for the Federal, State, and local governments; metropolitan

planning organizations; transportation-related associations; the private sector (including the freight community); and the public, BTS is working to strengthen its role as a primary source of aviation and multimodal freight data. BTS will place heightened emphasis on the provision of safety and system performance data.

As one of the Federal statistical agencies, BTS maintains a special degree of objectivity and independence. BTS products include reports to Congress and the Secretary of Transportation along with stakeholders in the transportation community. BTS efforts focus on getting and helping to interpret data objectively that can be used to better inform decisionmaking, regardless of what the data show. BTS will continue to focus on providing transportation data and analyses for policymakers in areas such as transportation economics, airline, freight and travel statistics, and geospatial information. BTS is also home to the National Transportation Library.

The Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO)

RITA's ITS JPO focuses on intelligent vehicles, intelligent infrastructure, and the creation of an intelligent transportation system through integration with and between these two components. The Federal ITS Program supports the overall advancement of ITS through investments in major initiatives, exploratory studies and a deployment support program. Increasingly, the Federal investments are directed at targets of opportunity—major initiatives—that have the potential for significant payoff in improving safety, mobility, and productivity.

The ITS JPO performs collaborative research and encourages deployment of advanced communications-based information and electronics technologies. When integrated into vehicles and the transportation infrastructure, ITS technologies have significant potential to relieve congestion, improve safety, and enhance system performance and productivity.

The ITS program carries out its goals through research and development, operational testing, technology transfer, training and technical guidance in the areas of intelligent vehicles, advanced traffic and transit management, commercial vehicle operations, public safety, traveler information, and intermodal freight.

Moving forward, RITA will complete the transfer of the ITS JPO to RITA, providing necessary administrative funding and staff.

Positioning, Navigation, and Timing

RITA's PNT and spectrum management responsibilities provide a unified, robust, and effective approach to the Department's responsibilities in this dynamic and critical infrastructure technology field that is revolutionizing not only our transportation infrastructure, but countless other commercial, scientific, and homeland security applications in the United States and around the world.

Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (PNT) services are critical to the transportation infrastructure and involve cross-cutting technology that supports multimodal applications. U.S. Space-Based PNT Policy states that the United States must continue to improve and maintain GPS, augmentation systems, and back-up capabilities to meet growing national,

homeland, and economic security requirements, as well as those from the civil, commercial, and scientific communities. This supports DOT safety, mobility, security, and global connectivity goals.

The President authorized a new national policy on December 8, 2004, that establishes guidance and implementation actions for space-based positioning, navigation, and timing programs. The policy recognizes that “over the past decade the Global Positioning System (GPS) has grown into a global utility whose multiuse services are integral to U.S. national security, economic growth, transportation safety, and homeland security, and are an essential element of the worldwide economic infrastructure.”

This National Space Policy Directive identifies DOT as the focal point for civil GPS representation. It also established a National Space-Based PNT Executive Committee co-chaired by the Deputy Secretaries of the Department of Defense and Department of Transportation.

Statement on Agency Values



RITA adopts the following organizational values, aligned with its vision and in step with the values set forth in the Department's Strategic Plan:

Integrity

RITA is committed to ensuring the integrity of its agency. RITA sets high standards for itself in the conduct of its work. RITA takes a professional, objective, fact-based, fair, and balanced approach to all of its activities. Integrity is the foundation of reputation, and RITA's approach to its day-to-day work on behalf of the American people will assure both. When RITA's workforce commits, it delivers.

Respect

RITA is committed to respecting individual differences, recognizing individual and team contributions and respecting the need to balance work and personal lives.

Customer and Stakeholder Focus

RITA is dedicated to delivering budget results that matter to the American people, on time, and within budget. RITA strives to understand and meet the requirements and needs of our stakeholders and customers through our unwavering commitment to public service, innovation, creativity, and sustained excellence.

Bold, New Ideas

RITA staff are committed to introducing bold, new ideas into the transportation enterprise in order to advance America's national transportation agenda.

Professionalism and Excellence

As dedicated and accountable public servants, RITA staff exemplify the highest standards of excellence, integrity, courtesy, and respect. RITA encourages and supports employees in advancing their skills and knowledge in technical and managerial areas.

Innovative and Collaborative Work Environment

RITA staff supports each other, respects diversity in people and ideas, encourages innovation within the organization, and values our relationships with our stakeholders and colleagues in the Department. RITA supports a progressive work environment that is conducive to innovation by employing flexible work schedules, teleworking, effective internal communication mechanisms, simplicity in procedures, and recognition for innovative approaches to accomplishing mission activities.

