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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Franklin County Commissioner Brown and Union County Commissioner Stolte to Co-chair MORPC's new Sustainability Advisory Committee

(Columbus – September 2, 2014) Central to its mission, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) has been focused on sustainability issues in coordination with its members and key stakeholders. MORPC recently formed a new Sustainability Advisory Committee among its top-level committee structure to address important regional issues related to environmental sustainability, including air quality, water quality, local food, trails, energy, materials use, growth, and planning for Central Ohio's local governments and communities. The Committee will support the sustainability priorities of the MORPC member governments, and its work will be integrated with MORPC's strategic plan, its public policy agenda, and the Green Pact.

The committee is chaired by Franklin County Commissioner Marilyn Brown and Union County Commissioner Steve Stolte will serve as vice chair.

"With the launch of this committee, MORPC is taking a bold leadership step," said Franklin County Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "By advocating for and supporting the best ways in which our communities can exist in productive harmony with our environment, we can ensure the health of our natural resources while fulfilling the social, economic, and safety requirements of our region for generations to come."

"I am very optimistic about this endeavor. The sustainability of a community depends on creating and maintaining economic, environmental and social health, and fostering broad-based citizen participation in planning and implementation," said Stolte. "Communities that engage citizens and institutions to develop sustainability principles and a collective vision for the future and apply an integrative approach to environmental, economic, and social goals are generally likely to be more successful."

MORPC engages regional stakeholders in four working groups to provide guidance and share best practices, each focused on one of MORPC's key sustainability program areas. MORPC also coordinates the Central Ohio Green Pact, a network of communities and significant organizations that have made a commitment to ten general values to preserve natural resources, increase recycling, reduce energy consumption, and maintain the overall quality of life in the region.

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Working to Build a Better Region

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The committee will include the following members:

- Dale Arnold, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation Director, representing MORPC's Energy & Air Quality Working Group;
- Mark Barbash, Finance Fund, Executive Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, representing MORPC's Regional Food Council;
- Kate Bartter, Institute for Energy & the Environment at The Ohio State University Executive Vice President, representing the education sector;
- Michelle Crandall, Dublin Assistant City Manager, representing the Green Pact;
- Scott Griffin, Greif Incorporated Vice President, representing the business community;
- Jack Knapp, Accurate IT Services Business Development Manager, representing MORPC's Materials Management Working Group;
- Erin Miller, City of Columbus Environmental Steward, representing the Green Pact;
- Tom Pendrey, Donato's Chief Operating Officer, representing the business community;
- Maryellen O'Shaughnessy, Franklin County Clerk of Courts, representing MORPC's Greenways & Water Quality Working Group; and
- Paul Wise, Genoa Township Administrator, representing the Green Pact.

"Sustainability is central to MORPC's mission and important to all our members," said Christina O'Keeffe, MORPC Director of Energy & Air Quality. "We are excited to have the expertise of our Sustainability Advisory Committee as a valuable resource to support the call to action locally in response to regional and national issues facing our communities that enrich our environment and improve our economic productivity."

The Sustainability Advisory Committee will be instrumental in serving as a voice for sustainability on MORPC's Commission and advise the sustainability-focused programming administered in MORPC's departments of Planning & Environment and Energy & Air Quality.

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is a voluntary association of local governments and regional organizations which envisions and embraces innovative directions in economic prosperity, energy, the environment, housing, land use, and transportation. Our transformative programming, services and innovative public policy are designed to promote and support the vitality and growth in the region.