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MORPC Announces 2014 Green Region Award Winners

(Columbus – October 10, 2014) The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC's) 2014 Summit on Sustainability and the Environment took place October 10 at Hilton Columbus Downtown. The inspiring event featured a variety of educational sessions about energy, water quality, transportation and local food. The event also marked the occasion for MORPC's fifth annual Green Region Awards.

The Green Leader Award recognizes an individual or entity exemplifying outstanding leadership and innovation in seeking comprehensive sustainability solutions to address key challenges facing the region. Erin Miller, Get Green Columbus, won the Green Leader Award. The Mayor's Office of Environmental Stewardship, led by Miller, manages the Get Green Columbus Initiative focusing internally on city operations as well as externally partnering with stakeholders from throughout the community. To assist in guiding the efforts of Get Green Columbus, the Mayor convenes an advisory group of city staff and community, business and environmental experts known as the Mayor's Green Team. The group is further supported by working groups with a focus on: Transportation; Growth and Development; Education and Engagement; Energy; Business; Greenspace and Green Buildings.

After launching RecyColumbus, the most celebrated project in the history of the Get Green Columbus initiative, the City was challenged to continue this great progress into 2014 with the launch of CoGo Bike Share, car sharing services and announcement of the expansion of the residential recycling program among other successes. Most recently, the Columbus Energy Challenge was announced with the goal of having 70 percent of commercial and industrial buildings over 50,000 square feet registered in the program and a 20 percent reduction in building energy use by the year 2020.

In 2012, commercial buildings in Columbus used approximately 4.4 billion kWh of electricity and 104.4 million ccf of natural gas; expending approximately \$316 million on energy costs. Reducing usage by 20 percent would save over \$60 million annually and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Columbus by over 720,000 metric tons of CO₂e. That is equivalent to removing over 150,000 cars off the roads or from powering 65,000 homes for a year.

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The Green Collaborative Achievement Award recognizes a group of entities or individuals who have shown effectiveness in producing environmental accomplishments through a collaborative effort. This award went to Genoa, Liberty, and Orange Townships - Multi-Jurisdiction Recycling/Waste Hauler Contract. The Boards of Trustees of Genoa, Liberty and Orange Townships collaborated together to create a unique contract that would greatly increase curbside recycling and waste pickup, along with saving their residents millions of dollars.

In June of 2014, the Boards of Trustees of all three townships awarded a 3 year contract to Rumpke Waste and Recycling Services. This collaboration united the most densely populated area of Delaware County on one contract. An estimated 22,900 households will save over \$4.7 million over the contract life. The monthly rate awarded was \$12.95, the lowest rate in Central Ohio for unlimited curbside recycling and waste services. Genoa Township and Orange Township have enjoyed separate curbside recycling services for the past 8 years. This was the first time that the 5,717 households in Liberty Township have bid out the service. Since their average price per month was \$28.00, their residents alone will save more than \$3 million over the contract life.

With the able assistance of the Delaware County Prosecutors office, the three townships also included in their bid specifications a provision that would allow other local jurisdictions to receive this same low price, and begin a curbside recycling and waste program with the same terms. Typically, State laws are restrictive for statutory governments; these boards have utilized bid laws, business savings, and the recycling market to create a win-win solution for the region, consumers, and environment.

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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.