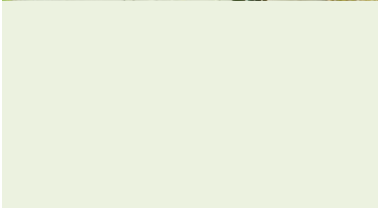
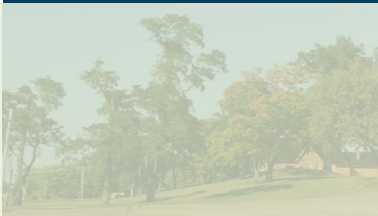


2011-2012

STRATEGIC PLAN

Working to Build a Better Region



A Guiding Framework for our Work in Central Ohio

The future is bright for the central Ohio region. Our thriving metropolitan area of more than two million people in the 12-county region is also at the heart of the largest concentration of population and economic activity in North America. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, central Ohio is again the leader in the state for growth. Our continued efforts and commitment to creating new, bold strategies and collaborating are what makes our region stand out nationally and globally.

Since 2008 when the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) adopted its first strategic plan, the organization has transformed itself into a critical resource and relevant forum. During this time, our region and country also faced many unprecedented events that will have great influence on central Ohio's future. Our country experienced the worst economic recession since the Great Depression; central Ohio's housing building boom dramatically slowed down; and commuting costs have become unpredictable due to fluctuating gasoline costs.

Today and going forward, it's going to take a different way to compete in the global marketplace, but MORPC is confident that our region is positioned for more success. In 2012, over 2,000 researchers and practitioners from around the world will attend EcoSummit in Columbus to participate in a weeklong conference on the restoration of ecosystem services. The creation of Columbus2020! illustrates the region's unique ability to collaborate for economic prosperity and enhancing the quality of life of all our communities and residents. While this effort is just underway, its potential is unlimited and it already achieved a significant accomplishment by creating a strong foundation and framework for collaborative economic development.

We are also in the middle of creating a new planning framework for the region. Shaping our Future provides forward-thinking, bold ideas and goals to prepare and position central Ohio to thrive. It will lay out strategies that will allow our region to grow and develop in a way that is sustainable, provides a high quality of life and is attractive to all people.

MORPC's public policy and advocacy efforts have developed a strong voice for the region at the Statehouse and in Washington, DC. Despite significant challenges and budget problems confronting government at all levels, MORPC is confident that its efforts will ensure our communities are able to provide valuable input and ideas that will benefit central Ohio.

Success and prosperity for communities will look very different in the future. Therefore, the MORPC board created this Strategic Plan to be not just a blueprint for MORPC but also a guiding framework for the entire region. We encourage you to join us in steering the change.

Chester R. Jourdan, Jr., Executive Director

Derrick R. Clay, MORPC Board Chair

MISSION

MORPC will be the regional voice and a catalyst for sustainability and economic prosperity in order to secure a competitive advantage for central Ohio.

ASPIRATIONS

For our community we aspire to...

- Be the respected regional voice, serving as the expert
- Be the regional convener, serving as the honest broker
- Be bold and entrepreneurial, addressing needs creatively
- Affect regional, state and national policies, changing the ground rules for our work
- Provide inspiration for building a better region, opening minds to possibilities

For our members we aspire to...

- Provide value to our membership, being relevant and responsive to them
- Increase membership, elevating our regional capacity
- Foster a diverse participation, reflecting the interests and complexity of the region

For our staff we aspire to...

- Provide meaningful programs and services, serving the region's needs
- Facilitate engaging meetings at all levels, gaining active participation
- Maintain a facility that reflects the values of the organization, meaning what we say
- Build and maintain staff that reflects the mission, aligning the resources

Regional Leadership

MORPC is a dynamic organization that must continually adapt to changing regional, state, national and global conditions. Given current national and local economic issues, development trends and changing demographics, the need for our regional leadership has never been more important. The strategic plan describes MORPC's approach to fulfilling this imperative.

UPDATING THE PLAN

In December 2010 MORPC's leaders held a retreat to shape the organization's priorities and aspirations with the aim of providing direction for an update to the 2008 Strategic Plan. The retreat affirmed the Plan's high-level ideas and focused on ways to improve its effectiveness. The updated Strategic Plan serves as a tool to communicate MORPC's relevance to regional audiences and to strengthen alignment within the organization.

THE PLAN STRUCTURE

The Strategic Plan has an external focus. It describes what MORPC aspires to be for the central Ohio region and how the organization will go about achieving that end.

MISSION. MORPC's aspirations are articulated in our mission, which is to *be the regional voice and a catalyst for sustainability and economic prosperity in order to secure a competitive advantage for central Ohio.*

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES. Supporting the mission are four strategic priorities that describe the focus of the services MORPC provides. The six goals of Shaping the Future give focus to the priorities.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS. Cutting across all of the strategic priorities are six areas of emphasis that will be MORPC's focus over the next five years. Within each area of emphasis are desired outcomes that will be sought rather than specific approaches.

"Even as this economy falters, Ohio could benefit from the next one that's emerging. Your strengths are just as real and relevant as the current crisis."
—Brookings Institution, Feb 2010

"America's challenge is to convert the dynamism emerging in Ohio's metropolitan areas into solutions that are pragmatic, far reaching and critical to this moment. The most important action you take in the aftermath of this recession is to build for the future. The stakes could not be higher."
—Brookings Institution, Feb 2010

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Described below are MORPC’s four strategic priorities. They should be thought of as the focus of service delivery and guided by the goals of Shaping Our Future.

ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY

MORPC is the only regional entity in central Ohio that has the perspective, talent and credibility to marshal communities in creating sustainable prosperity. MORPC will continue to seek resources and facilitate programs that address: providing energy self-sufficiency and reliability; protecting critical water; soil and other natural resources; managing material flows efficiently; ensuring food system security; planning for sustainable growth; and maximizing fiscal responsibility. Watershed planning, transportation planning, Shaping Our Future, EcoSummit 2012, among others, have the opportunity to advance the environmental stewardship agenda for MORPC and central Ohio.

ADVOCATING ON PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES

Local governments have a compelling and urgent need for coordinated advocacy on their behalf at the state and national level. MORPC will provide government affairs efforts on behalf of its members and the region to ensure the needs of local governments in central Ohio are clearly articulated in a coherent voice. The recession and the compounding impacts on local government needs will place MORPC in a pivotal role to demonstrate value to current and potential members through advocacy and public policy, as well as to broader regional stakeholders.

GOALS FOR SHAPING OUR FUTURE

A planning framework for the region

In collaboration with the central Ohio communities, a multi-year effort—Shaping Our Future—will be facilitated to create a physical planning framework for the region. Six goals have been established.

- **Position central Ohio to attract and retain economic opportunity to prosper as a region and compete globally.**
- **Use public investments to benefit the health, safety and welfare of people.**
- **Promote the reduction of per capita energy consumption and the production of energy from renewable local sources to increase affordability and resilience of regional energy supplies.**
- **Preserve and protect natural resources to maintain a healthy ecosystem.**
- **Increase collaboration to maximize the return on public expenditures.**
- **Create sustainable neighborhoods to improve residents’ quality of life.**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

FACILITATING A COMPREHENSIVE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

MORPC advocates for a sustainable region through a variety of planning efforts, programs, and educational opportunities with the goal of improving the quality of life for residents of central Ohio. Under the umbrella of lifelong communities, MORPC addresses community development as well as many facets of housing including energy usage and efficiency, affordability, health, safety and accessibility. Foreclosure prevention is woven throughout all stages of housing development by working to keep people in their homes and to help stabilize communities that have been impacted by foreclosure.

SUPPORTING PERSONAL AND FREIGHT MOBILITY CHOICES

As the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Franklin, Delaware and portions of Fairfield and Licking counties, MORPC has tremendous influence over where and how transportation investments occur in the region—especially inside of the MPO area. This responsibility makes MORPC uniquely positioned to influence the region’s growth patterns by promoting multi-modal transportation choices including travel by highways, transit, passenger rail, bicycling, and walking; reducing the demand for driving alone; and moving freight by highway, rail, or air. MORPC will promote transportation investments and policies that support sustainable prosperity, while fulfilling its mandate to enhance personal and freight mobility, improve transportation safety, ensure the transportation system is adequately maintained, reduce congestion, and meet air quality standards.

The strategic priorities support MORPC’s commitment to be a catalyst for economic prosperity and work collaboratively with public and private entities focused on economic development and job creation in central Ohio.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

MORPC's six areas of emphasis cut across all of the strategic priorities.

OVERCOMING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS OF THE REGION'S JURISDICTIONS

ISSUES

The compounding effects of the recession have placed increasing fiscal pressures on local governments. Public policy advocacy, as well as facilitation of issues like consolidation of services and cross jurisdictional cooperation, will be critically needed.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

MORPC uses its role as a convener to usher in a new era of regionalism in central Ohio that helps address immediate needs and creates long-term legacy of collaboration. Local governments adopt fiscal impact analysis as an integral part of development planning.

LEADING TO

- Greater financial stability/sustainability among local governments.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

BRINGING CLARITY TO MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGES (BY-LAWS, VALUE, DIVERSITY AND RECRUITMENT)

ISSUES

Over the past five years, net membership has increased marginally. It is desirable to retain and expand membership and to improve the diversity of members. MORPC is constrained by its by-laws, which place limits on certain types of members, and a lack of clear benefits of membership.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The organization grows in membership by reducing hurdles for potential members, clarifies the tangible and intangible benefits of inclusion while enhancing membership services. A more diverse and expansive membership emerges, representing public jurisdictions (municipal and otherwise), businesses, and other organizations.

LEADING TO

- A larger number of members.
- Greater participation from members.
- Increased recognition of the value of MORPC to its members.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

EXPLORING A MORE DELIBERATE APPROACH FOR OBTAINING RESOURCES

ISSUES

Most of MORPC's budget comes from grants and sponsorships (over 92 percent in 2010). Departments are individually responsible for identifying, applying for and managing a multitude of grants, each with unique requirements. This situation inevitably creates redundancies and takes resources away from the direct work effort of each department. The current approach may not be the most efficient way to obtain resources for the organization. Similarly, local governments may need greater support connecting to and obtaining resources.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

MORPC's approach to securing financial resources is centralized, more focused and involves MORPC board member input and support earlier in the process. The region and our communities receive greater grant assistance to meet needs and support innovative programs and projects. Funding that MORPC pursues must be in alignment with other parts of this Strategic Plan as well as MORPC's Public Policy Agenda and department work programs.

LEADING TO

- Improved financial stability and overall resources within departments and the overall organization.
- A greater amount of time spent by staff on direct, project-specific tasks.
- Increased support provided to members so they have greater resources.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

INITIATING A LONG-TERM REGIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

ISSUES

There is no vision or plan for the physical development of the multi-county region of central Ohio. Billions of dollars of public and private investment are made without a clear idea of the return on investment and long-term consequences. The region's economic development leaders need a physical framework plan that compliments their investments, policies and messages.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Initially, a vision for the physical form of the region to serve the needs of a diverse population will be developed and embraced by the existing Green Pact communities and additional communities that subscribe to the Green Pact. The initial work will be the first step of Shaping Our Future, for a multi-year planning program. The initial group of regional planning "champions" will inspire other communities to plan and implement in a more collaborative manner.

LEADING TO

- A robust regional plan embraced by hundreds of local communities in the 12-county region.
- A more rational and sustainable use of land and fiscal resources in local communities and in the region.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

INSTITUTIONALIZING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

ISSUES

The implementation of the Strategic Plan depends on its incorporation into all aspects of the organization.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

There should be consistency within committees and all departments on the expectations of the plan. Tasks included in individual job descriptions and work plans should be tied directly to Plan goals.

LEADING TO

- MORPC Board utilizes the Strategic Plan as a guide for policy decisions and direction.
- Departments utilizes the Strategic Plan as a guide for future projects.
- The staff recognizes it as integral reasoning behind their specific role.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

MAXIMIZING LONG-TERM POTENTIAL OF ECOSUMMIT 2012

ISSUES

MORPC's leadership role in EcoSummit 2012 offers a unique opportunity to enhance the organization's relevance to the region and the state. The organization must use the spotlight as a vehicle to leverage long-term benefits for itself and central Ohio.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

Successful execution of the conference will enhance the organization's reputation and further establish central Ohio as a progressive region interested in sustainable growth, thereby allowing it to retain and attract businesses and professionals involved in restoring ecosystem services. The event would create a legacy of sustainability extending far beyond the week of the conference.

LEADING TO

- An advanced dialogue about environmental sustainability, leadership and stewardship.
- Demand for greater leadership and support from local governments, private sector stakeholders, nonprofits, foundations, and institutions of higher education.

MORPC OFFICERS

Derrick R. Clay, Chair
Marilyn Brown, Vice-Chair
Eric Phillips, Secretary

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chester R. Jourdan, Jr.

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS**Cities**

Bexley
Canal Winchester
Chillicothe
Columbus
Delaware
Dublin
Gahanna
Grandview Heights
Grove City
Groveport
Hilliard
London
Marysville
New Albany
Pataskala
Pickerington
Powell
Reynoldsburg
Upper Arlington
Washington Court House
Westerville
Whitehall
Worthington

Counties

Delaware
Franklin
Pickaway
Ross

Townships

Bloom
Etna
Franklin County Township Trustees Assoc.
Granville
Violet

Villages

Baltimore
Brice
Cardington
Commercial Point
Harrisburg
Lithopolis
Lockbourne
Marble Cliff
Minerva Park
Mount Sterling
Obetz
Plain City
Riverlea
Shawnee Hills
South Bloomfield
Urbancrest
Valleyview
West Jefferson



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio 43215
Tel: 614.228.2663 Fax: 614.228.1904
www.morpc.org