



MORPC LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR U.S. SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

One of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) chief public policy goals is to achieve an advanced, inclusive, and exceptional transportation system that connects Central Ohio's people and products to the world.

In order to achieve this goal, it is essential to find new long-term funding mechanisms at the federal level of government. With the House congressional leaders' recent unveiling of their infrastructure package framework and President Trump's infrastructure proposal earlier in his administration, we appreciate the national dialogue regarding the critical role federal investment plays in supporting local and regional infrastructure needs.

With the reauthorization of the FAST ACT approaching this fall, we believe there is an opportunity for both sides of the aisle to work together in improving the nation's infrastructure. We urge you to consider the following recommendations.

ROBUST REVENUE TO ENSURE HIGHWAY TRUST FUND SOLVENCY

The federal gas tax has not increased in 26 years. Congress must close the existing funding gap immediately by increasing and indexing existing federal fuel taxes. Doing so will move the country toward near-term solvency. This will provide a bridge to identify, study, and implement a long-term solution such as a vehicle miles traveled user fee.

INCREASE AUTHORITY OF AND FUNDING FOR NON-METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS TO INCENTIVIZE RURAL PLANNING AND URBAN-RURAL COLLABORATION

To ensure services are carried out efficiently, we suggest developing a pilot incentive program to study and/or implement shared administrative services, mergers, or similar streamlined, coordinated regional processes between a metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and a rural transportation planning organization (RTPO) in the same metropolitan statistical area. This incentive could be via a one-time boost in Surface Transportation Block Grant funding.



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

DEDICATED DOLLARS FOR NON-TRADITIONAL AND EMERGING TRANSPORTATION TECHNOLOGIES

Robust infrastructure funding for the studying, planning, impact, and deployment of the following emerging technologies:

- Hyperloop
- Connected & Autonomous Vehicles
- Advanced Tunneling
- Data Enabled Infrastructure
- V2G (Vehicle to Grid) and related technologies

In conjunction with the Midwest Connect corridor, which would form a megaregion by connecting Columbus to Chicago and Pittsburgh, MORPC recently submitted a proposal for a Hyperloop Certification Center in Central Ohio. Our proposal provides Virgin Hyperloop One the ability to collaborate with the nation's largest independent vehicle test facility and proving grounds at the Transportation Research Center, where we can partner in developing hyperloop technology. We look to build upon our ongoing collaboration to seek federal resources and leverage these efforts to bring the world to Ohio and to certify the hyperloop technology together.

INCREASE FUNDING FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Effective planning crafts solutions that address a variety of transportation needs. Additional funding can support the increasingly complex array of activities and analyses regional planners face.

INCREASE TAP DOLLARS FOR REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORKS

MORPC supports an increase to the Transportation Alternatives Program, which would be vital to funding the Central Ohio Greenways (COG). The COG Board – a MORPC committee comprised of public, private, and non-profit organizations – actively works to fulfill its vision of creating a world-class network of trails easily accessible to every resident. Our Regional Trail Vision identifies a community-supported desire to add approximately 500 new miles of trails to the existing trail network of more than 230 trail miles.

Joseph Garrity

Director of Government Affairs & Strategic Initiatives

T: 614.233.4127 | C: 614.273.4292

jgarrity@morpc.org



For more information on MORPC's government affairs efforts, visit morpc.org/GovAffairs.