

MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

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December 10, 2020

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**Re: Conclusion of MORPC Smart Region Task Force**

Dear MORPC Commission Members:

We are pleased to present to the Commission the ground-breaking work of the Smart Region Task Force. Central Ohio is recognized nationally and globally as a leader in testing and deploying smart technologies to improve public services and quality of life for our residents. The City of Columbus won the USDOT Smart Cities Challenge, launching the Smart Columbus initiative; the NW 33 Innovation Corridor Council of Governments was established to create the US 33 Smart Mobility Corridor; the City of Westerville was named a 2019 Global Top 7 Intelligent Community; and the City of Dublin, home to the Global Institute for the Study of the Intelligent Community, hosted the 2020 Intelligent Communities Forum Global Summit. As these and other initiatives emerge, interest in smart cities technologies continues to rise in communities throughout Central Ohio. To leverage these efforts and respond to an expressed need among MORPC members for guidance and resources about smart cities issues, the Smart Region Task Force was formed.

The Smart Region Task Force was a member-focused committee chartered in 2018 to prepare and guide Central Ohio communities for smart infrastructure technologies by developing a shared vision for a "Smart Region," examining the potential benefits and costs of smart infrastructure investments, and collaboratively generating regional policies and guidelines to fully leverage opportunities for technological advancements and sustained vitality. Representatives of member communities composed two-thirds of the task force, while leaders and technical experts in the field rounded out the membership.

In meetings over the course of 2018-2020, task force members had the opportunity to engage in discussion with experts in several fields, including smart mobility, connected and autonomous vehicles, broadband and digital infrastructure, digital inclusion, and electric grid modernization, and shared their experiences with their own initiatives to educate themselves and establish a common knowledge base. The Task Force was also asked to develop an agreed-upon definition for a Smart Region, and to complete work on three deliverables.

The Task Force defined a Smart Region in this way:

***A Smart Region collaborates across communities to leverage emerging technologies and data to provide services more effectively and improve the quality of life of all residents.***

**William Murdock, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Karen J. Angelou**  
Chair

**Erik J. Janas**  
Vice Chair

**Chris Amorose Groomes**  
Secretary



The three deliverables the Task Force was charged with producing include:

- **Smart Streets Policy** This policy ensures that MORPC's infrastructure investments are planned, selected, scoped, designed, constructed, and maintained in a manner that advances a Smart Region. It requires project sponsors to take certain considerations regarding digital infrastructure into account during project development, document the findings, and provide a rationale for its decisions.
- **Smart Region Playbook**: This document guides MORPC's work and incorporates the task force's recommendations across MORPC's ongoing activities. It also includes recommendations that extend into the activities of local governments, other public agencies, advocacy groups and private sector partners to advance a Smart Region.
- **Smart Region Resource Guide**: This is a tool to share basic information about smart communities with local leaders in Central Ohio. It gives them enough background to get started by presenting project-specific best practices, policies, funding opportunities and case studies.

Now that the task force has completed its work, we present it to the Commission, and urge you as community leaders in Central Ohio, to work together to achieve the vision of a Smart Region. The task force has identified the following actions members can take to advance this vision:

- Develop local Smart Streets Policies to ensure digital infrastructure is given serious consideration and incorporated whenever feasible in the community's infrastructure investments, using the MORPC Smart Streets Policy as a guide.
- Collaborate with other communities in your efforts to build and deploy emerging technologies to improve people's quality of life.
- Include emerging technology applications, broadband connectivity, digital inclusion, data collection and analysis, etc., in project scopes and deliverables.
- Take advantage of educational opportunities and the resource guide to build capacity within your community and the region.
- Support the creation of a regional open data portal.
- Participate in the development and implementation of a regional broadband plan.
- Provide MORPC with geocoded data for the location, type and specifications of publicly owned digital infrastructure as it is installed
- Have policies in place to guide the collection, use and sharing of data and to ensure the security and privacy of the system and the data within it.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed their time and talents to this effort. Below is a list of the appointed members of the Task Force.

- Dana McDaniel, City of Dublin – Chair
- Joe Stefanov, City of New Albany – Vice Chair
- Paul Benedetti, Logan County Commissioner
- Terry Emery, City of Marysville
- Courtney Falato, OSU Smart Cities
- Todd Fortune, LCATS
- Matt Greeson, City of Worthington

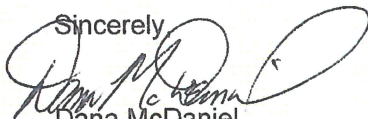


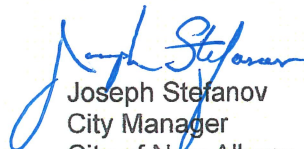
- Anthony Jones, City of Gahanna
- Rocky Kambo, City of Powell
- Holly Mattei, Violet Township
- Scott Miller, Ohio University Russ College of Engineering
- Eric Phillips, Union County Chamber of Commerce
- Joanna Pinkerton, Central Ohio Transit Authority
- Letty Schamp, City of Hilliard
- Kelly Scocco, City of Columbus Public Service
- Angela Siefer, National Digital Inclusion Alliance
- Keena Smith, Franklin County Board of Commissioners
- Mayor Ike Stage, Grove City
- Mike Stevens, City of Columbus, Smart Columbus
- Jonathan Stewart, MORPC Community Advisory Committee
- Emille Williams, Central Ohio Transit Authority
- Matt Windholtz, Battelle

There were others who contributed to the Task Force in various ways, and we also appreciate their support.

We hope the work of the task force can serve as a foundation for smart efforts in each of our communities and for working together to achieve the vision of a Smart Region.

Sincerely,

  
Dana McDaniel  
City Manager  
City of Dublin

  
Joseph Stefanov  
City Manager  
City of New Albany

