



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

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Columbus, Ohio 43215  
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## NOTICE OF A MEETING

**COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

**May 31, 2023**  
**5:30 p.m.**

## Microsoft Teams meeting

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[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 243 030 431 20

Passcode: 2mDoDw

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[\(888\) 595-9475,,75911882#](#) United States (Toll-free)

Phone Conference ID: 759 118 82#

## AGENDA

- 5:30 p.m. Welcome & Introductions** – LaGrieta Acheampong, Chair
- 5:32 p.m. Approval of May 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes**
- 5:33 p.m. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Report** – Nick Gill, MORPC
- Transit Agency Reports
    - Delaware County Transit – Nick Gill, MORPC
- 5:45 p.m. 2024-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan**
- 2024 - 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update – Maria Schaper, MORPC
- 6:00 p.m. Informational Items**
- LinkUS Update – Elliott Lewis, MORPC
  - Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) Applications & MPO Prioritization Process – Elliott Lewis, MORPC
  - Gohio Mobility Presentation – Emma Strange, MORPC

**William Murdock, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Erik J. Janas**  
Chair

**Chris Amorose Grooms**  
Vice Chair

**Michelle Crandall**  
Secretary

- Technical Assistance Program Updates – Jordan Petrov, MORPC

**6:45 p.m. Other Business**

**7:00 p.m. Adjourn**

PLEASE NOTIFY CHUCK RATLIFF AT 614-233-4115 OR EMAIL [cratliff@morpc.org](mailto:cratliff@morpc.org) TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE FOR THIS MEETING OR IF YOU REQUIRE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE.

**The next CAC meeting is  
July 31, 2023, at 5:30 p.m.**

# Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: **May 1, 2023**  
Time: **5:30 p.m.**  
Location: **MORPC**

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## **Members Present**

|                               |                    |                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Acheampong, LaGrieta (online) | Girves, Catherine  | Rollins, Helen |
| Allman, Bill                  | Needleman, William | Samuels, Tiana |
| Bohnert, Eli                  | Paul, David        | Synk, Erin     |
| Crump, Wendi                  | Roehm, Bob         | Weiss, Ira     |

## **Guests**

Doza, Elliot  
Ellingsen, Kelsey

## **MORPC Staff**

|                |                   |                        |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Gill, Nick     | Ratliff, Charles  | Rapp, Melissa (online) |
| Graham, Thomas | Schaper, Maria    |                        |
| Jurist, Niel   | Strange, Emma     |                        |
| Noll, Jennifer | Whetstone, Brandi |                        |

### **I. Welcome & Introductions**

- Vice-chair Rollins called the meeting to order at 5:29 p.m. There was a quorum present.

### **II. Approval of February 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

- Vice-chair Rollins asked for a motion to approve the February 27, 2023, meeting minutes. Mr. Weiss moved; Ms. Synk seconded; and the motion passed.

### **III. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Report – Nick Gill, MORPC**

- Mr. Gill mentioned the CAC March/April update email sent to the committee on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 3:10 p.m. Since there was not a meeting in April, this email included the MPO Report for April and provided links to the presentations given to the Transportation Advisory Committee on April 5, 2023.
- Mr. Gill provided an update on Delaware County Transit (DCT) initiatives stating that they are in the beginning stages of their Strategic Plan. DCT is looking to adopt new dispatching software and is working with a vendor on the implementation. They are also having a technology assessment to ensure best practices and alignment with resources for growth of service. Mr. Gill closed the DCT update stating that the agency serviced over 10k trips in March, the first time this year, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in the agency's history.
- Ms. Ellingsen began the COTA update by introducing themselves and Elliott Doza. Ms. Ellingsen mentioned that COTA is on a triennial service change

schedule. During the month of May, COTA will begin conversations around the next service changes that will take effect in September. The first public meeting will be on May 18, 2023, at 6 p.m. and the next on May 23, 2023 at noon.

- Ms. Ellingsen mentioned the national workforce shortage that all transit agencies are experiencing and informed the committee that COTA held its largest hiring event ever in April and sent out 140 conditional offers for employment, pending drug tests and background checks.
- Ms. Ellingsen concluded by introducing Elliot Doza and briefly explained the nature of the COTA's Short Range Plan.
- Mr. Doza provided information on COTA's Short Range Transit plan, which is done in coordination with MORPC's Transportation Improvement Program update. This plan is updated every two years and is a vital tool for planning and development to assess initiatives, challenges, and opportunities. This plan also addresses service operations and improvements and prioritizes expenditures, service, and funding.
- Mr. Doza stated that COTA has lost over 48% of its weekday ridership since 2019 and addressed operator and operating revenue shortages. (Graphically shown)
- Mr. Doza informed the committee that the focus on outward growth continues. Some preliminary service recommendations include increased connections to various locations within their service area. These recommendations require further public review. Mr. Doza mentioned that there is also a demand for increased COTA // Plus services in certain areas and briefly reviewed the LinkUS initiative.
- Mr. Doza closed by outlining the next steps which include engaging front line staff outreach, revised recommendations based on feedback, and finalizing the Short-Range Transit Plan.
- Mr. Allman asked about potential confusion regarding LinkUS branding utilizing a capitalized "US" vs a lowercase "us", stating that he originally misunderstood the US as referring to the United States. Elliott Doza responded that he would consult with his branding team and that he was unsure which of those two branding choices were the official brand COTA has created.
- Mr. Allman stated that when they were working in Chicago years ago, they hired commuters to serve as train conductors and ticket takers for commuters to and from downtown Chicago. Mr. Allman stated that he was unsure if a similar process could be put in place for bus operators to help alleviate the COTA operator shortage. Mr. Doza replied that they would pass that idea along.
- Ms. Girves inquired about the part of the presentation that mentioned difficulty reaching Columbus neighborhoods for engagement. Mr. Doza clarified that it is specific to commissions that COTA meets with and the challenges around that. COTA is increasing efforts in this area.
- Ms. Girves said that they were pleased to see the phasing approach for outward growth and mentioned the continuing problem for second and third shift workers in historically marginalized population areas. Mr. Doza stated that part of this plan is launching on demand zones, for example, the Hilltop or Southside zones, which will provide vital connectivity.
- Mr. Paul expressed their delight in seeing the East to West connection along 161 as part of the plan for increased connections.
- Ms. Samuels asked how safety, specifically with regards to walking paths, fits into this plan. Mr. Doza stated that for transit, COTA has no impact on safety

with regards to right of way, but they do work with local police departments on safety as it pertains to COTA bus stops. Mr. Gill mentioned MORPC's safety program which is geared specifically towards transportation safety.

- Mr. Needleman asked what COTA will do for the increased connections and service if they do not receive the 2024 levy increase in funding. Mr. Doza clarified that the Short-Range Plan is not contingent on LinkUS funding but rather assumes the current 0.5% sales tax levy.
- Vice-chair Rollins asked if there is a retention plan for the 140 offers of employment sent after the hiring event. Ms. Ellingsen clarified that these are contingent offers. The candidates need to pass a background check and drug test. The success of the event will be measured by how many candidates reach employment status. They hope to hold more events of this type. Mr. Doza added that there is also a challenge with absenteeism which further exacerbates the problem with operator shortage.
- Ms. Noll continued the MPO Report with an update on the Central Ohio Greenways program. Work is underway for the Greenways trail network Wayfinding Strategy, funded by a grant from the ODOT State Planning & Research Program. MORPC will be working with Columbus-based firms Designing Local and Urban Decision Group on this project to create an easy-to-understand wayfinding approach that is user-friendly, clear, and consistent. The goal is to create a framework for determining what important information goes on a trail sign and to build a wayfinding system that supports the diverse spectrum of trail users here in Central Ohio. The wayfinding strategy is also intended to be replicated, to help other regional trail networks across the state apply this system in their communities.
- Ms. Noll continued stating that the Urban Trail Town update to the Trail Town Framework will begin in May 2023. With the help of Amy Camp of Cycle Forward, who led the development of the original Framework, MORPC will augment that work with an update that evaluates the unique opportunities, needs, and experiences of urban and suburban trail communities. The project will work with a few Franklin County communities beginning this summer to collect data and perspectives from trail users, businesses, and other community stakeholders for this project.
- Ms. Noll closed their report stating that as work gets underway with these projects, Greenways Program Manager Melinda Vonstein will be here to share updates in the future. For more information, reach out to Melinda at [mvonstein@morpc.org](mailto:mvonstein@morpc.org).

#### **IV. Resolutions**

- Proposed Resolution T-5-23 Adopting the SFY 24-27 Transportation Improvement Program – Thomas Graham, MORPC
  - Mr. Graham presented information on what the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is and how it fits into the MPO's required products. Mr. Graham explained that through the TIP, residents and communities can see what transportation projects in their area are receiving funding during the next four years. Mr. Graham stated that the final TIP was submitted to ODOT and U.S. DOT on May 1<sup>st</sup>. The TIP includes 2.68 billion dollars of transportation infrastructure investments. Mr. Graham concluded their presentation, covering the public involvement process that was used during

review of the draft TIP. No public comments were received regarding projects included in the draft TIP.

- Ms. Synk asked if an overview could be given of the comments received during the public involvement process. Mr. Graham stated that the comments that were received were geared more towards ODOT's TRAC program and were focused on a proposed new interchange which was not included in the TIP.
- Mr. Allman expressed concern about the feasibility of still receiving federal funding given the debt limit being discussed in Congress. Mr. Gill answered that we don't know enough about the mechanism involved to sufficiently address the question.
- Vice-chair Rollins asked for a motion to approve Resolution T-5-23; Mr. Weiss moved; Mr. Allman seconded; and the motion passed.
- Proposed Resolution T-6-23 Acceptance of the MORPC Fiscal Year 2024 Planning Work Program – Nick Gill, MORPC
  - Mr. Gill informed the committee that the Planning Work Program, also known as the PWP, outlines the scope of work and the funding associated with the activities of the MPO.
  - Mr. Gill stated that Formula-Funded Planning Program Projects have a total budget of \$4,254,279. Special Studies have a total budget of \$2,433,158, and Ridesharing and Air Quality Projects have a total budget of \$1,325,000.
  - Vice-chair Rollins asked for a motion to approve Resolution T-6-23; Mr. Weiss moved; Mr. Paul seconded; and the motion passed.
- Proposed Resolution T-7-23 Certification of the MORPC Metropolitan Transportation Planning Process – Nick Gill, MORPC
  - Mr. Gill explained that this annual resolution covers the self-certification of MORPC as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and states that we are following all laws and regulations.
  - Vice-chair Rollins asked for a motion to approve Resolution T-7-23; Ms. Girves moved; Mr. Bohnert seconded; and the motion passed.

## **V. 2024-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

- 2024 - 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update – Maria Schaper, MORPC
  - Ms. Schaper provided an update to the 2024 - 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which is one of the primary products the MPO produces. Ms. Schaper discussed the focus on the fiscal balance component and the key determinants in what projects can be included in the MTP.
  - Ms. Schaper covered the primary sources of funding and the assumption that funding will continue to be on the levels given in Bipartisan Infrastructure Funding, U.S DOT discretionary funding, and State level funding. The same assumption is applied to local agencies, private, and new funding sources.
  - Ms. Schaper concluded the update with covering where we are in the process. MORPC is currently working on getting population and employment projections. An interactive web map is expected to be ready in June. A full MTP draft is expected in early 2024 with the MTP adoption in May of 2024.



## VI. Informational Items

- Air Quality Update – Brandi Whetstone, MORPC
  - Ms. Whetstone informed the committee that we are in ozone monitoring season, which lasts from March 1<sup>st</sup> through October 1<sup>st</sup>. Sign up for air quality alerts at [morpc.org/airquality](http://morpc.org/airquality). MORPC will issue these alerts when air quality reaches unhealthy for sensitive groups levels.
  - Ms. Whetstone discussed Air Quality Awareness Week, May 1, 2023, through May 5, 2023, which is a national initiative to raise awareness on air quality and its impact on health and precautions that can be taken to improve the air we breathe.
  - Ms. Whetstone discussed particulate matter pollution, also referred to as PM2.5. MORPC submitted a comment letter to the U.S. EPA regarding strengthening the PM2.5 standards. Ms. Whetstone referred to a recent report by IQAir which stated that Columbus is the most populated major city in the country. MORPC and the EPA found that this report is inconsistent with the data and information both agencies have and shows that we have gone 12 years without exceeding the standards and in 2022, 96% of all days were within the Good AQI category. Ms. Whetstone stated that the American Lung Association's report gives Columbus a B grade for both ozone and particulate matter.
  - Ms. Whetstone mentioned the Idle Free program which raises awareness about harmful effects of unnecessary idling and to reduce air pollution. This program is in partnership with local governments, schools, businesses, and hospitals.
  - Ms. Whetstone informed the committee that drivers can waste 1 to 2 tanks of gas per year idling and doing so for more than 10 seconds wastes more fuel than restarting the engine.
  - Ms. Whetstone closed the air quality update by informing the committee that MORPC can provide policy templates for the Idle Free program. Once the policy is adopted, MORPC provides free parking lot signs to remind drivers not to idle their vehicles unnecessarily.
- Energy Grant Funding-Project Updates – Brandi Whetstone, MORPC
  - Ms. Whetstone discussed the Charging & Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) discretionary grant program. This is a competitive grant program designed to strategically deploy publicly accessible EVE charging and alternative fueling infrastructures within a community and along designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs). There are two program tracks: Community Program and Corridor Program. MORPC is leading a regional approach. The application deadline is May 30, 2023. The team is still seeking EV charging site hosts and match funding for the installation. Contact Brian Filiatraut at [bfiliatraut@morpc.org](mailto:bfiliatraut@morpc.org) for more information.
  - Ms. Whetstone informed the committee about the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program. This is a two-phased program providing states and local governments funding to develop and implement plans to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. The City of Columbus and MORPC are co-leading this effort with other partners. The application deadline is May 30, 2023. Contact Brian Filiatraut at [bfiliatraut@morpc.org](mailto:bfiliatraut@morpc.org) for more information.
  - Finally, Ms. Whetstone discussed the Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG) Program which is a formula-based and competitive grant

opportunity to implement strategies that reduce energy use and emissions and improve energy efficiency. Small to medium local governments that are ineligible for formula grants are eligible for competitive funding through the U.S. Department of Energy. Collaborative applications are encouraged. The concept paper is due June 5, 2023, and the full application deadline is August 7, 2023. Contact Brian Filiatraut at [bfiliatraut@morpc.org](mailto:bfiliatraut@morpc.org) for more information.

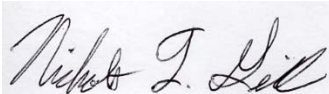
- Mr. Weiss asked what is being done to ensure most of the charging stations will be fast charging. Ms. Whetstone suggested that Brian Filiatraut is the best contact to discuss this matter. Ms. Whetstone did say that there is a certain number that is targeted but was unsure of the exact number.
- Mr. Roehm expressed confusion with the pollution information on the IQAir report. Ms. Whetstone stated that this is a misleading report. They combined EPA regulatory data, which comes from precise monitors that serve a specific purpose, with data that came from air sensors. MORPC felt that putting together data from sources that serve very specific purposes would mischaracterize a region's air quality.
- Mr. Allman asked if IQAir could face litigation for publishing a misleading report. Ms. Whetstone did not think so. This was a global report that does not consider things happening at the local level.

**VII. Other Business**

- Mr. Gill reminded the committee that the next meeting on May 31, 2023, is a Wednesday because of Memorial Day.

**VIII. Adjourn**

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.



Nick Gill, Secretary

**Community Advisory Committee**





# METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION REPORT

June 2023

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## PROGRAMMING

Nick Gill, Transportation Study Director– [ngill@morpc.org](mailto:ngill@morpc.org)

### Transportation

Nick Gill, Transportation Study Director – [ngill@morpc.org](mailto:ngill@morpc.org)

#### Metropolitan Transportation Plan:

- Review maps for the traffic analysis zone level 2050 population and employment forecasts were prepared and reviewed internally. A web map is also being developed to share with technical staff in each jurisdiction to review the zonal level forecasts for reasonableness.
- Candidate projects have been added to the MTP database and a public interactive web map is being developed for the purpose of reviewing and commenting on candidate projects and also for the public and stakeholders to make new project suggestions.

#### Transit, Mobility & Human Services:

##### *Mobility Management*

- The yearly survey for the Regional Mobility Plan update has been launched and is collecting responses until August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Anyone who needs a copy of the survey in Spanish, Somali, or Arabic or needs assistance with the survey can contact Emma Strange at [estrange@morpc.org](mailto:estrange@morpc.org).
- Submitted an Ohio Transit Partnership Program (OTPP) application for ODOT Region 6 Regional Mobility Plan administration.

##### *FTA Section 5310 Designated Recipient*

- Completed the FY22 5310 program awards in the U.S. DOT TrAMs system.

##### *Gohio Commute*

- MORPC welcomes Bridges Community Action Partnership to the Gohio Commute platform. They will promote rideshare to their employees in their six offices in Delaware, Champaign, Logan, Madison, Shelby, and Union Counties.

- A Bike to Work Challenge on the Gohio Commute platform was held from May 8<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> to promote biking to work. This challenge was cross promoted with the Ride Your Bike Work event organized by MORPC staff and partners in the region. The ride was attended by over 50 participants.

## Transportation Planning Activities:

### *US 23 Connect Study*

- The ODOT team is developing public engagement materials in preparation for public and stakeholder engagement events this summer. Exact times and locations will be posted here when available: <https://publicinput.com/23connect#0>.

### *LinkUS Mobility Initiative*

- Two interagency agreements were drafted between COTA and MORPC as part of the development and administration of the Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) committee and program. Both the COTA and MORPC Boards will be asked to take action in the coming months to execute these agreements.
- MORPC is working with LinkUS partners to continue the development of the Transit Supportive Infrastructure Committee by preparing for a regional workshop to be held on June 9, 2023.
- Assisted COTA and LinkUS partners with a TRAC submission for the West Broad Street corridor for construction funding.

## Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO):

- The CORPO Committee met on May 1, 2023.
- Benchmark data for the performance measures were developed to be shared with members and to inform the identification of project priorities for the CORPO Transportation Plan.

## Active Transportation Planning:

- The next MORPC Active Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13, 2023 from 10 a.m. to noon. Anyone interested in attending can email Lauren Cardoni at [lcardoni@morpc.org](mailto:lcardoni@morpc.org).
- MORPC hosted a virtual group viewing of the May APBP monthly webinar. The next webinar is on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. The topic for the June webinar is: “More than a cycle lane: How investment in better walking and cycling networks improves accessibility for people with disabilities.” These webinars are eligible for 1.0 hour of AICP Certification Maintenance credit. Contact Jordan Petrov at [jpetrov@morpc.org](mailto:jpetrov@morpc.org) if interested in attending any of the MORPC group viewings.
- Work continued with Franklin County Public Health (FCPH) to provide active transportation planning assistance to Franklin Township and help the City of Reynoldsburg develop a Complete Streets Policy.
  - A stakeholder workshop was held at the City of Reynoldsburg on May 1, 2023 that engaged staff from the City of Reynoldsburg and other important partner agencies in

discussions about challenges and opportunities regarding complete streets in Reynoldsburg.

- A second stakeholder workshop was held with Franklin Township on May 25, 2023. The discussion focused on an assessment of existing conditions for walking and bicycling in and around Franklin Township.

### Transportation Safety:

- MORPC participated in the following safety committee meetings and safety-related events during the month of May:
  - The monthly Franklin County Traffic Fatality Review meeting on May 4, 2023.
  - The Vulnerable Road Users Meeting, hosted by the Injury Biomechanics Research Center at Ohio State on May 24, 2023.
  - ODOT Speed Zoning Committee 2.0 meeting on May 30, 2023.

### Technical Assistance Program:

- Work has continued with all five communities awarded technical assistance services. Initial meetings and conversations with key stakeholders have been scheduled or are already underway.
- MORPC and Violet Township hosted a collaborative stakeholder workshop on May 8, 2023 to review existing plans, current active transportation conditions, as well as opportunities for infrastructure improvements throughout the township. Stakeholders included staff from Violet Township, the City of Reynoldsburg, the City of Pickerington, ODOT District 5, and other important local partners.
- MORPC and Brown Township hosted a collaborative stakeholder workshop on May 12, 2023 to discuss opportunities for connecting the township into the regional Central Ohio Greenways trail network. Stakeholders included staff and trustees from Brown Township, as well as staff from the City of Hilliard, the Franklin County Engineer's Office, and other key local partners.
- MORPC and Berlin Township hosted a collaborative stakeholder workshop on May 17, 2023 to review existing conditions, current plans, and opportunities for connections into the regional Central Ohio Greenways trail network. Stakeholders included staff and trustees from Berlin Township, Brown Township, and Orange Township, as well as staff from ODNR, the Delaware County Engineer's Office, and other key local partners.
- MORPC and Grove City hosted a second stakeholder workshop on May 23, 2023 that focused on opportunities to enhance bicycle facility connections between the community and Scioto Grove Metro Park.

### Infrastructure Funding:

#### *Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)*

- The SFY 2024-2027 TIP was submitted to ODOT and USDOT on May 1, 2023 and will go into effect July 1, 2023.

### *MORPC-Attributable Funding*

- New and updated MORPC funding commitments are being programmed by ODOT. Project sponsors should expect to receive instructions from ODOT District staff for programming new projects.

### *Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)*

- Applications for District 3 (Franklin County) SCIP and LTIP funding for SFY 2025 are now open. Applications will be due on September 1, 2023.

### *Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC)*

- The 2023 TRAC application cycle is May 1<sup>st</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup>. The next regularly scheduled TRAC meeting will take place June 28, 2023.

### *Federal Competitive Programs*

- Continued to learn more about the 2023 Safe Streets for All opportunities and support application efforts in the region.
- Coordinated with regional partners in response to the US EDA's Regional Tech Hubs NOFO release.

### *Competitive Advantage Projects (CAP)*

- The CAP website was updated with the removal of former projects. These one-page project descriptions were removed from the CAP website and interactive web map.
- The CAP team is finalizing projects of regional significance. This includes the creation of three new CAPs to highlight these regional efforts.

## **Economic Development**

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS):**

- MORPC had a quarterly check-in with US EDA project officers regarding the status of the EDD designation and anticipate more information in the coming months.

### **Brownfield Assessments:**

- The Brownfield team has begun to prepare for the upcoming FY24 brownfield assessment funding opportunities with federal training resources and discussion with contractors and US EPA contacts.

# PLANNING

Kerstin Carr, Chief Regional Strategy Officer & Sr. Director of Planning – [kcarr@morpc.org](mailto:kcarr@morpc.org)

## Community Development

### Central Ohio Greenways (COG):

- The COG Board met May 17, 2023 to discuss the Draft Strategic plan action item updates and to hear staff reports regarding the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Bike Month plans, the Central Ohio Blueways Panel, Riverfest, and other topics. The COG Board will meet again on July 19, 2023 to approve an update to the COG Strategic Plan.
- The COG Trail Development Working Group is offering advice to MORPC's technical assistance program, an updated trail count program, and trail vision refinements. The Working Group will meet again on June 15, 2023.
- The COG Marketing/Communications Working Group is advising on website upgrades, social media calendar development, the Wayfinding Project, and the Trail Town Framework Development. The Working Group will meet again on June 14, 2023.
- MORPC has signed a contract extension with Cycle Forward to begin the second phase of the Trail Town Framework as well as a contract with Designing Local to begin a Wayfinding Strategy project. COG partners began installation of five new permanent trail counters along the Ohio to Erie Trail in April.
- MORPC submitted a proposal to The Columbus Foundation to conduct a Natural Asset Inventory in Franklin County. If funded, MORPC will develop a database of watershed-related natural resources in Franklin County to support prioritization of development. The database will help inform strategies to limit impacts to our natural resources and protect water quality.
- COG will be supporting a MORPC application to the federal Safe Streets and Roads for All program. The applications will include a Safety Action Plan Update, a Vulnerable Roadway Users Supplemental Action plan to include a Trail Count Program action item, and COG Trail Access Demonstration Project(s).
- MORPC hosted the triannual COG Forum on April 19, 2023. Presenters from City of Columbus, City of Hilliard, Franklin County Engineers Office, City of Whitehall, and Franklin County Metro Parks presented on the MORPC-funded Trail/Bike projects. Attendees also heard general updates from Franklin County Metro Parks staff, and LinkUS updates from COTA staff. The next COG Forum will be held remotely on August 16, 2023.

### Central Ohio Blueways:

- The Central Ohio Blueways Advisory Panel met May 10, 2023 to review the key themes of a series of one-on-one meetings with the Panel Members. Highlights included common concerns over the management of litter, increased interest in Blueways leading to development, and safety issues related to a lack of awareness of the dangers of high and low flow conditions. Relatedly, opportunities discussed included educational outreach and resources on how to read and interpret flow rates, the potential for an application which can centralize requests for litter cleanups, and guidance on best practices for access point designs to minimize impact to the waterways.

- The meeting also included rotating breakout groups on issues related to Maintenance & Operations, Usage & Experience, and Environment & Water Quality. The breakout groups confirmed the findings of the one-on-one meetings and helped cement a foundation for moving forward with these issues in mind.
- It was suggested that Central Ohio Blueways pause Water Trail Designation efforts on the Big Darby and the section of the Olentangy River north of I-270 due to their current classifications as Scenic Rivers, and subsequent sensitivity to external influences. Procedurally, the Advisory Panel indicated a preference to move forward by focusing designation efforts on waterways consecutively rather than concurrently. Big Walnut Creek was highlighted as a particularly attractive option for a starting place.
- The next Central Ohio Blueways Advisory Panel meeting to elaborate on the findings of the one-on-one meetings and breakout groups, is scheduled for June 7, 2023. This meeting will be hybrid.

## insight2050:

### *LinkUS Mobility Initiative*

- Currently engaged in ongoing Committee and Working Group meetings for the LinkUS initiative.

### *RAPID 5*

- MORPC is engaging with RAPID 5 on its Central Ohio Greenways and Blueways programming. Team members continue to provide transitional support to RAPID 5, which includes assisting with processing speaker requests and presentation needs. MORPC team members are also assisting with developing a resource library of data, resources, insights, and information about pertinent topics, including land use, multi-modal transportation systems, sustainability, economic development, etc. Stay up to date with RAPID 5 news and events at [rapid5.org](http://rapid5.org). MORPC's main contact for the RAPID 5 initiative is Chief Regional Strategy Officer, Kerstin Carr, who can be reached at [KCarr@morpc.org](mailto:KCarr@morpc.org).

## Regional Housing Strategy (RHS):

### *Outreach*

- Team members were invited to discuss regional housing and growth trends with various audiences in meetings and events hosted by several MORPC member communities and partner organizations.
- Regional Housing Coalition task force leaders, including MORPC, met in late April to debrief outcomes and recommendations. Draft recommendations have been shared with the Coalition convening partners, who will meet in late May to review. MORPC and other task force leads expect to receive guidance on next steps by early summer.

### *Implementation Assistance*

- For those interested in a housing/growth workshop for your community's elected officials, staff, or community leaders, MORPC is accepting requests for presentations and workshops. Our team will work with you to design the agenda, including recommended speakers and learning objectives. Contact Jennifer Noll at [JNoll@morpc.org](mailto:JNoll@morpc.org) for more information.



## Sustainability

### Sustainability Advisory Committee:

- The Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) met at the City of Westerville Electric Division on April 19, 2023. The Westerville Green Team provided updates on their sustainability initiatives which support greenspace, waste reduction, electric vehicle charging, and energy programming for residents and businesses. The MORPC team provided updates on federal funding opportunities, policy, and ongoing programs. The SAC will meet again on June 21, 2023 at MORPC.

### Sustainable2050:

- Contacted Sustainable2050 Members about federal funding opportunities. The City of Columbus and MORPC are co-leading an application to secure formula funding through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant; 14 Members have submitted letters of support.
- Member Earth Day events and activities were highlighted on MORPC's website and social media pages.
- Membership and tier status certification is open to MORPC members. Please contact MORPC's Sustainability Officer, Brandi Whetstone, for more information at [bwhetstone@morpc.org](mailto:bwhetstone@morpc.org). The next Sustainable2050 meeting will be June 22, 2023.

### Water Resources Program:

#### *Sustaining Scioto Board*

- Members of the Sustaining Scioto Board participated in an Agricultural Field Trip on April 26, 2023. The group learned about conservation practices being undertaken at Coyote Run, a 230 acre preserve in Northern Fairfield County containing mature forest with several vernal pools. The owners of Coyote Run are committed to maintaining the greenspace and restoring it to its pre-settlement status as much as possible.
- At the second stop, Members learned about conservation practices aimed at improving soil health including no till and cover crops. The group also learned about water quality monitoring being undertaken by the farm owner – Mr. Brandt - in collaboration with OSU Extension. The next Board meeting is scheduled for June 14, 2023.
- The Agricultural and Rural Communities Outreach Team will meet on May 18, 2023 to discuss priority areas of establishing relationships and deepening partnerships between utilities and the agricultural and rural communities. The Team will meet again on July 20, 2023.

#### *Ohio EPA Water Resources Planning*

- MORPC staff continues to verify, and update where necessary, facility planning area boundaries and water quality management plans in the ten-county area. The data that has been collected will inform the development of an interactive map.

## Energy & Air Quality:

### *Energy & Air Quality Working Group*

- The Energy and Air Quality Working Group met remotely on March 28, 2023. Members heard from Ohio EPA on PM2.5 proposed revisions, as well as updates on air quality and energy programming and grant opportunities. The Working Group will meet again on July 25, 2023.
- The Subcommittee on Power Siting Issues held its fourth meeting on April 18, 2023. The meeting focused on the PILOT provisions granted to utility-scale solar projects in Ohio, in which the developer makes annual service payments to local and county tax districts.

### *Energy Planning*

- The second round of the Columbus Area Residential Solar Co-op kicked off on April 19, 2023. The Co-op is a collaborative effort among the City of Columbus, Solar United Neighbors (SUN), MORPC, and IMPACT Community Action. Residents who are interested in solar and live in Columbus, Franklin County, and surrounding areas can join with other residents in the region to secure better pricing.
- Residents for a Sustainable Central Ohio's (RSCO) met in the evening of April 26, 2023. Each represented community discussed the highlights of current sustainability programming and their priorities for 2023. The date and time of the next meeting for this group is still to be determined.
- Federal Funding opportunities are a priority as the Team continues to coordinate across departments and with regional partners to identify opportunities for clean energy, EV charging, and sustainability. MORPC is co-leading on applications for both the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG), which was due May 31, 2023, and the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant, which is due on June 12, 2023 after a deadline extension. MORPC is seeking letters of support for both the CPRG and the CFI grants and can provide a template. For more information, please contact Brian Filiatraut, MORPC's Energy & Sustainability Program Manager, at [bfiliatraut@morpc.org](mailto:bfiliatraut@morpc.org).

### *Air Quality Planning*

- There have been no Air Quality Alerts issued since June 2022.
- The data collection for the current Neighborhood Air Monitoring project was completed at the end of April and a final report will be released this summer. The Team is preparing to kick off the U.S. EPA Air Monitoring grant in June and is focused on developing the required Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for data management and processes.

### *Education and Outreach*

- The 2022 World Air Quality Report by IQAir has generated a lot of questions and interest around Central Ohio's air quality. Over the past months, MORPC's Sustainability Officer has participated in five media interviews, including one most recently with Channel 10 in Columbus. The interviews highlighted that the study is not consistent with data available from the Ohio EPA, which indicates continued improvement and attainment with federal standards. Ohio EPA and MORPC staff recently met with IQAir to discuss the study and methodology.
- National Air Quality Awareness Week: Air Quality Awareness Week was May 1-5<sup>th</sup> 2023. The theme for 2023 was "Working Together for Clean Air". MORPC's daily social media

posts highlighted information and resources that increase air quality awareness and encourage people to take action.

### *Clean Ohio Conservation Fund:*

- Three applications in Franklin County were approved and recommended for funding in Round 17 of the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund. Preliminary Screeners for Fiscal Year 2024 are due on June 2, 2023. Applicants will be invited to a project presentation on June 26, 2023 during which the NRAC will provide feedback and eligibility comments on proposed project applications. Preliminary screeners are strongly encouraged. Final Applications for funding are due September 1, 2023. For more information, please contact Edwina Teye at [eteye@morpc.org](mailto:eteye@morpc.org). Our website also contains more information: <https://www.morpc.org/program-service/clean-ohio-conservation-fund/>.

## **Data, Mapping & Modeling**

### **Regional Data Advisory Committee (RDAC):**

- The Committee met on May 9, 2023 to review and provide input on the draft Regional Data Agenda. The agenda was well received, with a few areas for improvement identified. The Committee will vote on the new Agenda at their next meeting on June 6, 2023.

### *Working Groups and User Groups*

- The Regional Data Agenda Update Working Group met on May 16, 2023 to incorporate feedback from the May 9, 2023 RDAC meeting into the draft Agenda. Final edits are being made in advance of the next RDAC meeting.
- Capacity Building & Partnerships Working Group: New members added considerable contributions to the conversation about developing a resource for social sector non-profits. Potential ideas have included formats similar to Slack, MORPC's Grant Finder, Reddit, NNIP, and a ticketing system. The group meets again on May 24, 2023 to discuss evaluation criteria and merits of each option.
- The Local Government Resources Working Group continues to add content to and refine the new Data Policy Resource Library tool. Next steps include determining the best path forward to scale and support the library as a Regional Data Objective. The group meets the last Tuesday of each month at 3:00 pm.
- Regional Information & Data Group (RIDG) Steering Committee: A RIDG Steering Committee meeting was held on May 16, 2023. Members discussed content for the June 28, 2023 general RIDG meeting and for other future meetings. The Steering Committee will meet again on August 22, 2023.
- The quarterly Regional Information & Data Group (RIDG) meeting was held on March 22, 2023. The next meeting will be held in-person on June 28, 2023 at the MORPC office, with a happy hour to follow. The June RIDG meeting will focus on AI and its uses, problems, and functions in the workplace.
- Central Ohio GIS User Group (COGUG) members met at a hybrid meeting on May 17, 2023. An ad hoc selection of group members are informally exploring the potential utility of WAZE for local municipalities as well as assessing the costs and benefits of utilizing ESRI cloud storage. The group is also exploring the potential for a persistent chat tool which would be easily accessible to most members, in the aim of enhancing learning and

information sharing between meetings. The third quarter COGUG meeting will be on August 23, 2023. This meeting will be hybrid.

## Data Management:

- Continued to explore ways to standardize data tools and workflows and to improve data and workflow version control and documentation. Staff has completed project documentation and technical documentation for several recurring core projects that were previously undocumented. Staff is also exploring the use of dimensional data techniques and online analytical processing techniques to provide more flexible use of existing data assets.
- The team continues to work with other departments to evaluate the usability of and extract insights from existing bike/ped counter data and to help plan for deployment of future counters and monitoring and analysis of their data. Staff has participated in the installation of several types of trail counters to better understand their physical characteristics.

## Data Outreach

- Continued to participate in digital inclusion efforts, specifically the Franklin County Digital Equity Coalition and the Regional Digital Inclusion Alliance for the Central Ohio region in support of a statewide digital inclusion initiative.

## Data Analytics, Mapping, and Research:

- Remained focused on preparing inputs for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. The results of the land use model are expected to be released for community review in the coming days. The team is preparing inputs required for the travel demand model.

## Data & Research Activities

- Continued to manage the organization's air quality sensors and develop quality assurance processes and documentation to support the recently awarded EPA air quality monitoring grant.
- Began preparing inputs for the 2023 sub-county population estimates.
- Planning to develop county-level forecasts of households by type and housing by type for the primary purpose of predicting future housing needs. This would be an extension to our existing county forecasts for households and housing generally. Household types may include people living alone, two or more working-age adults with no kids, families with kids, and adults of retirement age. Housing types may include attached housing, single-family small lot, and single-family large lot.
- After consultation with key stakeholders at MORPC and the State of Ohio, the COVID-19 Resource Hub, released in 2020, has been decommissioned.
- Program, Data, and C&E team members are collaborating on an "Actionable Insights" report, based upon the findings of the "Leaders Listen" American Population Panel (APP) public opinion poll. The poll, which concluded on March 17, 2023, addressed the region's transportation needs and experiences. The report will provide more depth than the well-received initial insights shared with approximately 1,000 local leaders and stakeholders during MORPC's March 31, 2023 State of the Region. As part of this burgeoning partnership, MORPC is working with its partners at the Center for Human Resource Research (aka CHRR) and The Columbus Dispatch to expand the survey series into additional topical domains and sustain these activities into the future.

### *Mapping Activities*

- The team worked on various projects including the final draft of Household and Employment forecasts out to 2050 for the ten-county area. This data, which is part of the MTP process, will be available for community review via a web map by the end of May.
- Working with a consultant to create a process and methodology for a bike and ped network, which will allow us to analyze various active transportation scenarios.

### *Modeling Activities*

- The Modeling team is working on various projects, including the Columbus Downtown Multi-Modal project, the land use model, maintaining the traffic count program, and responding to several traffic growth and modeling requests.
- The team began reviewing the land use model forecasts and expanding the travel demand model to the ten-county area to include CORPO counties.

# COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Niel M. Jurist, Sr. Director of Communications & Engagement – [njurist@morpc.org](mailto:njurist@morpc.org)

## News Releases:

- [MORPC joins Planning 2050 to develop transformative tools for planners](#) (4/27/2023)
- [\\$3.2 million in funding available to preserve land and streams in Franklin County](#) (5/15/2023)

## MORPC in the News:

- [A study ranked Columbus as the ‘most polluted major city’ in the U.S., but regional planners are questioning that](#) (4/13/2023)
- TV segment: [\(21\) A study ranked Columbus as the ‘most polluted major city’ in the U.S., but regional planners are que - YouTube](#) (4/13/2023)
- [Economic speaker series focuses on housing and development](#) (4/26/2023)
- [Report: Columbus air quality improves despite being named most polluted city](#) (4/26/2023)
- [Not just 3C: Columbus-to-Chicago Amtrak route also up for federal funding](#) (4/27/2023)
- [Work still needed to improve Ohio’s air quality](#) (5/1/2023)
- [Maybe Columbus’ air quality isn’t so bad, after all](#) (5/2/2023)
- [Westland Mall owner shares demolition plans, sees housing, retail, other uses ahead](#) (5/3/2023)
- [As Columbus booms, its suburbs limit affordable housing options](#) (5/4/2023)
- [Columbus suburbs embrace affordable housing: “It’s the right thing to do.”](#) (5/4/2023)
- [Dublin study exemplifies ‘exclusionary’ housing concerns across Columbus suburbs](#) (5/5/2023)
- [Berlin Township updates residents on utilities, new hire](#) (5/6/2023)
- [Protected bike lane pilot project planned for downtown](#) (5/9/2023)
- [Amy Acton to leave leading role at Central Ohio’s Rapid 5 nonprofit](#) (5/9/2023)
- [Amy Acton out as CEO of Rapid 5: Board will run nonprofit, reallocate resources](#) (5/9/2023)
- [Amy Acton out as leader of parks and greenways organization](#) (5/10/2023)
- [Plain City a boom town, village sees housing explosion and a distillery, but growing pains](#) (5/11/2023)
- [The Punch List: With Amy Acton gone, what could be next for nonprofit Rapid 5?](#) (5/16/2023)
- [How Columbus community planners see Columbus changing in 10 years](#) (5/16/2023)
- [How MORPC sees Columbus, Central Ohio changing in ten years](#) (5/17/2023)
- [Agudas Achim Speaker Series, Pursuing Equitable Housing Development in Columbus](#) (5/16/2023)



## Digital Content:

- *Social Media: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn:*
  - Air Quality Alerts, Careers/Jobs, Trails Pass, Columbus Vision Zero, eSource, Gohio Commute, Mid-Ohio Open Data Site, Weatherization, RFPs/RFQs, Sustainability, Earth Day, MBK College Career & Community Fair, National County Government Month Open House, PLANNING2050, Columbus Zoning, Small Business Week, Intern Orientation, MORPC Messaging Survey, Summit on Sustainability Award Nominations, Mental Health Month, Bike to Work Day, Waterways, Bike Month, Jewish American Heritage Month, Asian American and Pacific Islander Month, Public Service Recognition Week, Infrastructure Week, Mother's Day, Riverfest, Air Quality Awareness Week, Bike Safety Week, Weatherization Day, Solar United Neighbors, CMC Forum, Clean Ohio Conservation Fund, and MORPC In The News
- *Reach:*
  - [Facebook & Instagram](#)
  - [YouTube](#)
- *Top Posts:*
  - [Instagram](#)
  - [Facebook](#)
  - [Twitter](#)
  - [LinkedIn](#)
  - [Reels](#)

## Diversity & Inclusion:

- MORPC hosted a third *Undesign the Redline* DEI training for staff. This workshop was facilitated by the Columbus YWCA and focuses on the history of redlining and how it has affected and shaped our community not only in the past, but also in the current day.
- Commemorated Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage month with an employee Lunch and Learn, featuring guest speaker Dr. Yung-Chen Lu. Dr. Lu is the founder of the Asian Festival and a former mathematics professor at The Ohio State University.

## Public Involvement & Engagement:

- MORPC promoted the following requests for public input through social media and on our website:
  - \$3.2 Million In Funding Available to Preserve Land and Streams in Franklin County- [5/15](#)
  - Zone In Columbus- [5/15](#), [5/9](#), [5/2](#)
  - What Do Our Waterways Mean to You? Survey - [5/12](#)
  - MORPC Messaging Survey- [5/17](#), [5/11](#), [5/10](#), [5/4](#)
  - Summit On Sustainability Award Nominations- [5/10](#)

- Electric Vehicle Charging Siting Study and Sustainable Energy Support RFP- [5/10](#), [5/8](#), [5/2](#)
- MORPC promoted the following events and opportunities through social media:
  - CMC Forum: Regional Mayors Prepare for Intel- [5/15](#)
  - Bike to Work Day- [5/17](#), [5/12](#), [5/6](#)
  - Weatherization Day- [5/16](#), [5/11](#), [5/7](#), [5/3](#)
  - Riverfest- [5/16](#), [5/9](#)
- Attended The Ohio State University's National Conference on Diversity, Race and Learning, held on May 1, 2023 and May 2, 2023. The purpose of this annual conference is to strengthen and make new strides toward the goal of meaningful change by helping attendees learn about how to bridge the economic, political, and socio-educational divides that continue to be pertinent in the American social landscape and beyond. This year's theme was "Leading the Charge: Creating Meaningful and Sustainable DEIB Change Now".
- MORPC received the "Lotus Sponsor Award," at the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Asian Festival Gala on May 17, 2023 in recognition of its sponsorship of the 2023 Asian Festival sponsor.

### Marketing Campaigns:

- The Gohio Commute program is running a marketing campaign on social media that focuses on vanpooling and carpooling with the goal of increasing awareness of the program. The Gohio Commute program was also promoted by sending a direct mail advertisement to human resource departments of businesses located in MORPC's 15-county region.

### Events:

- *Upcoming Events*
  - June 9-11, 2023 – [Riverfest, Columbus Arts Festival](#)
  - August 1, 2023 – [MORPC Social Media Summit](#)
  - September 21, 2023 – [Regional Transportation Safety Forum](#)
  - October 26, 2023 – [Summit on Sustainability](#)
  - March 15, 2024 – [State of the Region](#)

# MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Eileen Leuby, Member Services Officer – [eleuby@morpc.org](mailto:eleuby@morpc.org)

## Events:

### *Money Mondays*

- On Mondays from 1:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., MORPC is hosting virtual presentations "Money Mondays" with our Regional Investment Officer, Dr. Todd Bradley. These sessions will be an opportunity for members to ask questions and learn more about key funding opportunities.

### *MORPC Night at the Clippers*

- On Wednesday, June 7, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Come out and cheer on MORPC's Board Secretary and City Manager for Hilliard Michelle Crandall as she throws the first pitch. Tansky Area tickets can be purchased by calling 614-462-2757. The price is \$10, plus postage if mailed or free if emailed. Tickets for Seniors 60 and above can be purchased for &8.00.

### *Library Benefits That Enhance Your Community*

- This event is being held on Thursday, June 15, 2023, 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. at the Gahanna Branch, 310 Granville St., Gahanna, Ohio 43230. Register for the event [here](#).

### *Rural Housing Forum*

- This forum is being held on Wednesday, June 21, 2023, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and includes lunch. Reach out to Eileen Leuby, Member Services Officer at [eleuby@morpc.org](mailto:eleuby@morpc.org) for more information.