



CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS

Trail Town Framework



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

IMPACT OF TRAILS



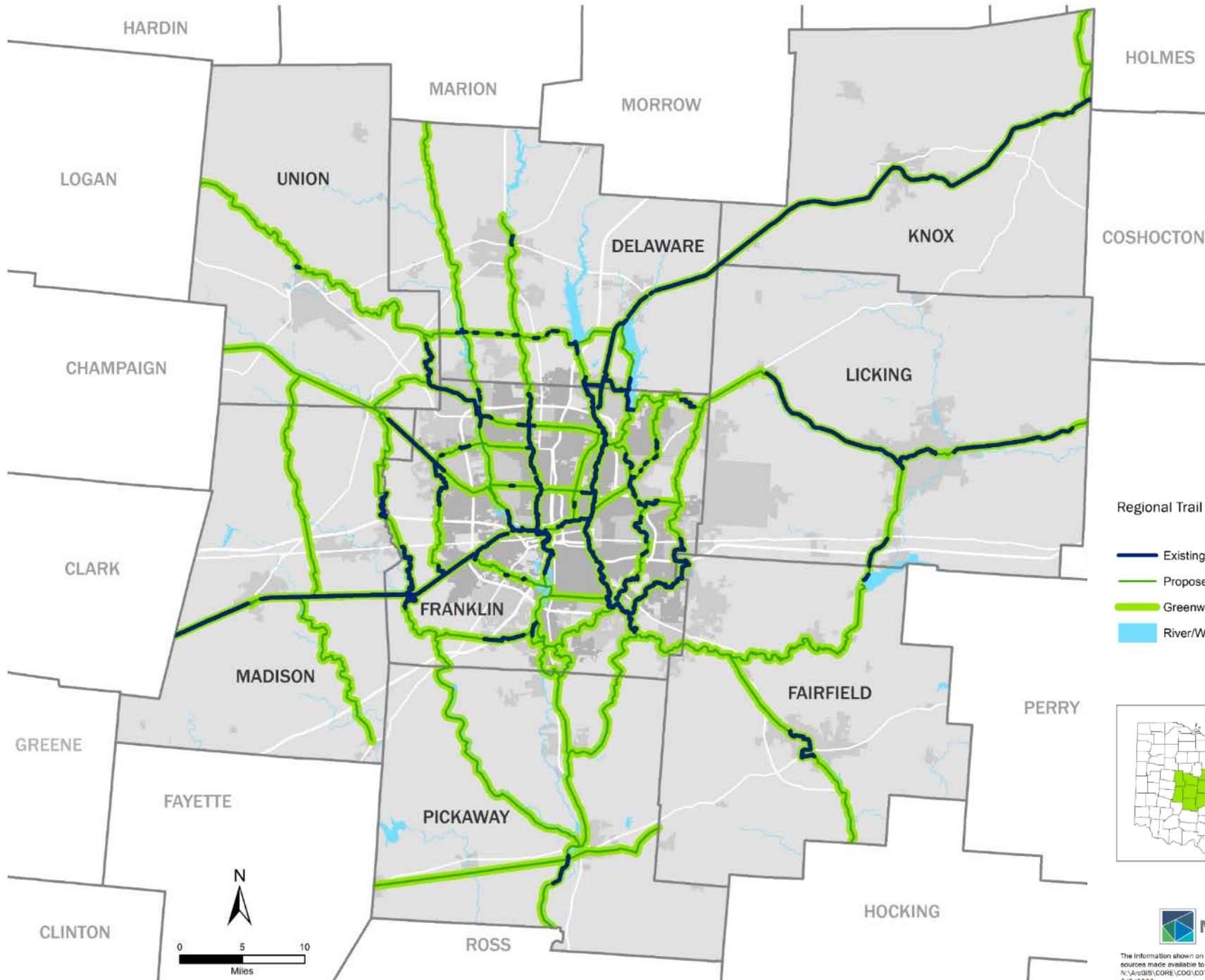
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Regional Trail Vision

500+ Proposed Trail Miles

230+ Existing Trail Miles



Regional Trail of Significance

- Existing Multi-use Path
- Proposed Multi-use Path
- Greenway Trail Corridor
- River/Water



GREAT AMERICAN RAIL TRAIL

This independent economic analysis finds that the Great American Rail-Trail® could generate annually:


256M TRIPS


\$229.4M
IN VISITOR SPENDING


2,500
NEW JOBS


\$22.8M
IN NEW TAX REVENUE


\$104M
IN LABOR INCOME

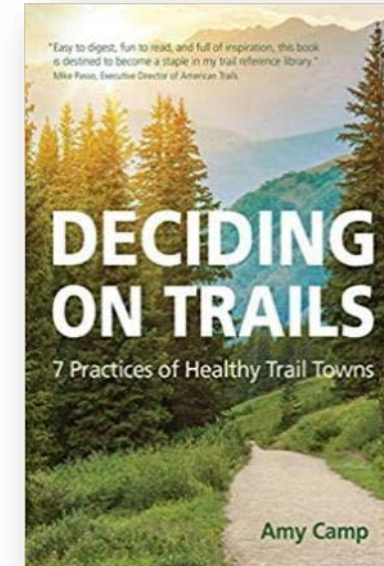

\$161M
GDP CONTRIBUTION



TRAIL TOWN FRAMEWORK



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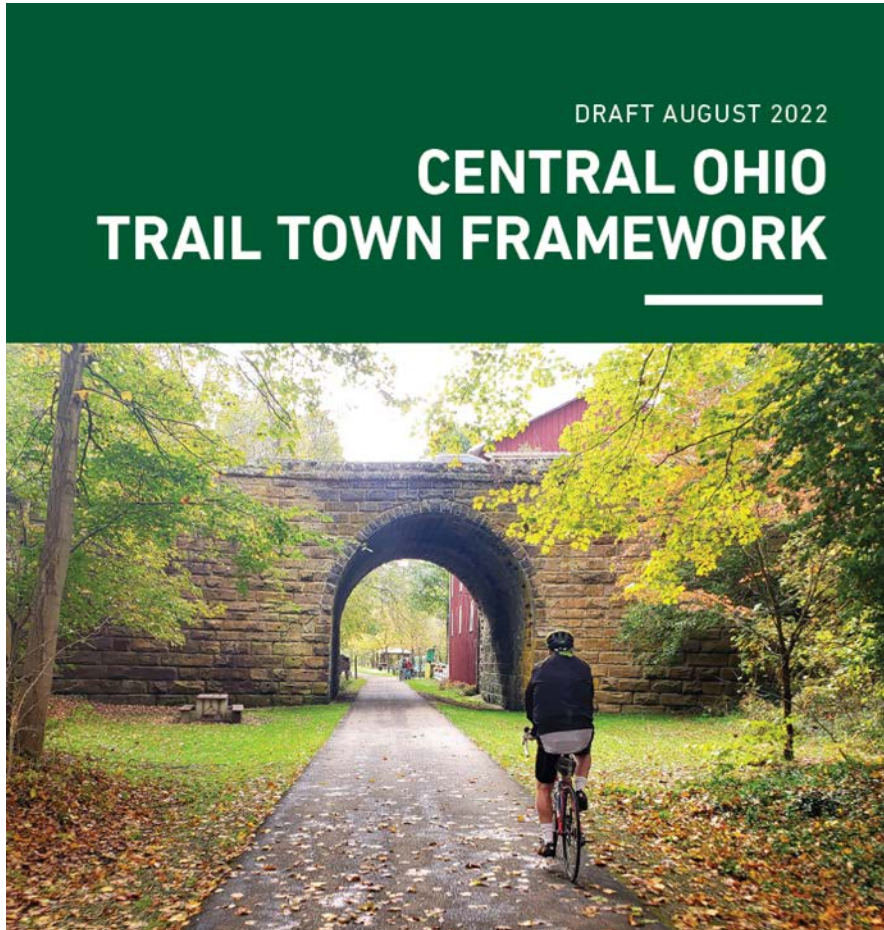


A Trail Town is a community through which a trail passes that supports trail users with services, promotes the trail to its residents, and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated.

--North Country Trail Coalition (adapted)



PROJECT PURPOSE

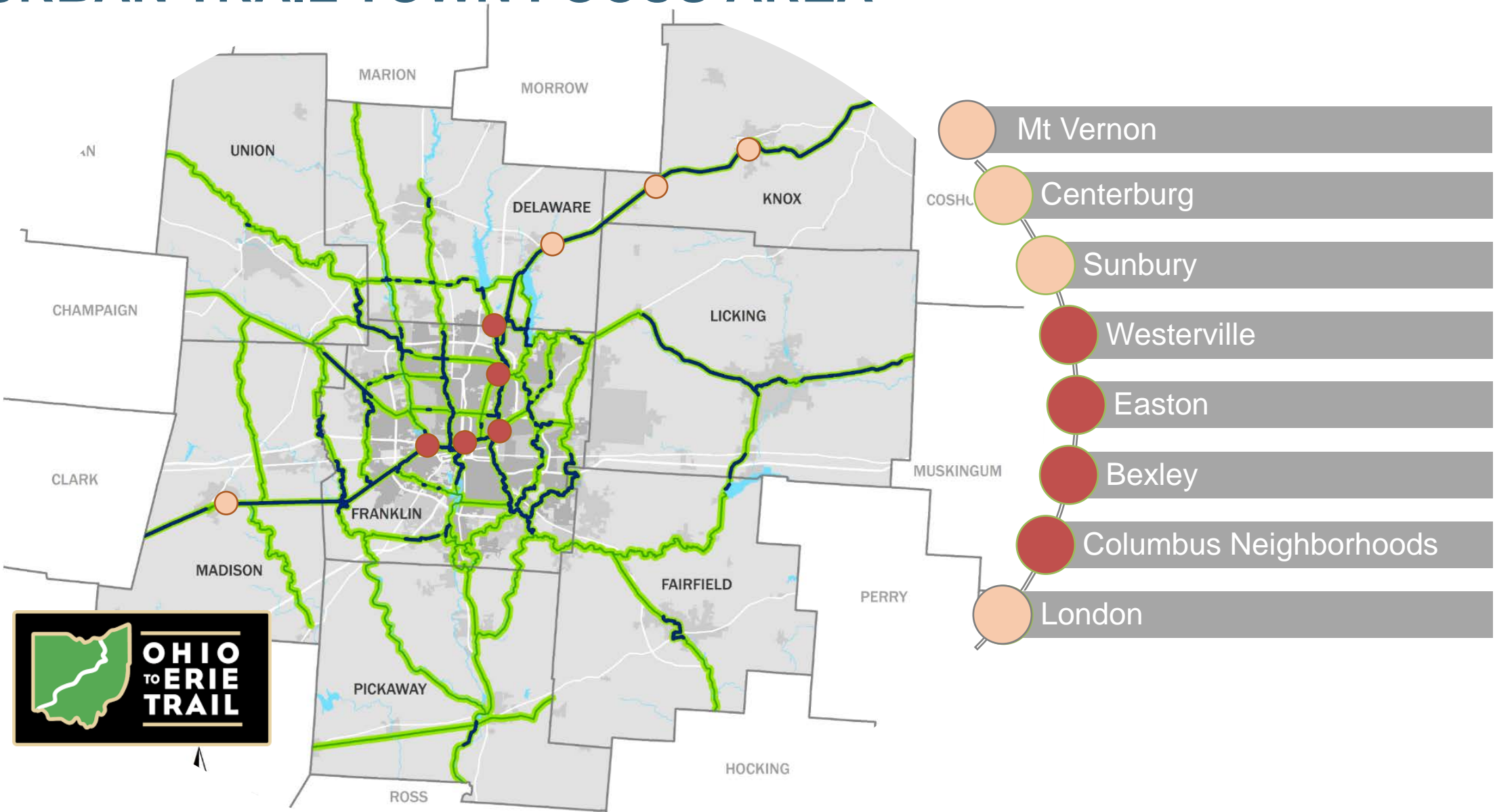


Develop a Central Ohio Trail Town Framework and regional initiative that will:

- Support local **quality of life** by addressing **active transportation** options for residents
- Make communities more walkable and bikeable to **maximize trail user visits and trail user spending**.



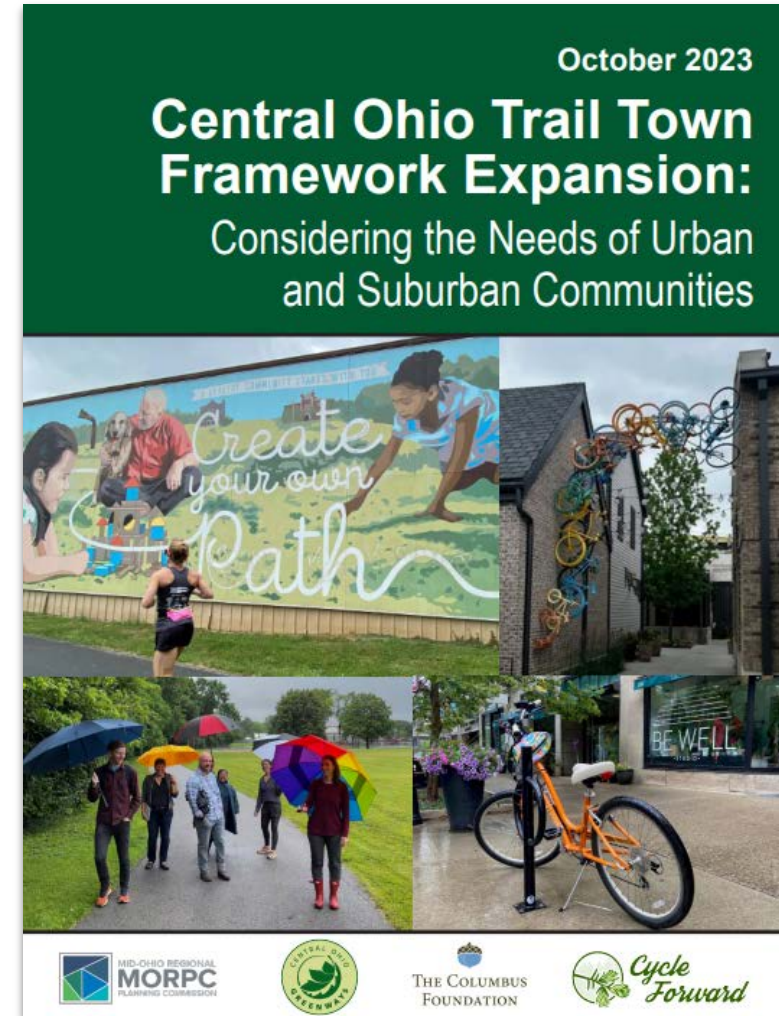
URBAN TRAIL TOWN FOCUS AREA





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2023 FRAMEWORK EXPANSION



COG TRAIL COMMUNITIES: KEY FINDINGS



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1. Addressing the Whole Community

A Trail Town initiative that is managed by MORPC, a regional planning organization, is uniquely positioned to approach trails and communities in a holistic manner.



2. Diverse Community Types Need a Flexible Program

Expanding a Trail Town initiative to include a wider spectrum of community types will result in a program that would need to operate differently than existing efforts to successfully serve participating communities and trail users.



3. A Large Regional & Metropolitan Trail Town Program is a New Frontier

The City of Columbus is significantly larger than most recognized trail communities, putting the Central Ohio Trail Communities Program in the position to demonstrate how a Trail Town initiative can be effective in a large, urbanized area



4. Urban and Suburban Communities Present Unique Opportunities and Challenges

Central Ohio's urbanized communities present both unique opportunities and challenges concerning Trail Town implementation and the trail user experience



5. Participating Community Geographies May be Harder to Define

The boundaries of urban communities may be less defined in dense areas



COG TRAIL COMMUNITIES: PROGRAM AREAS



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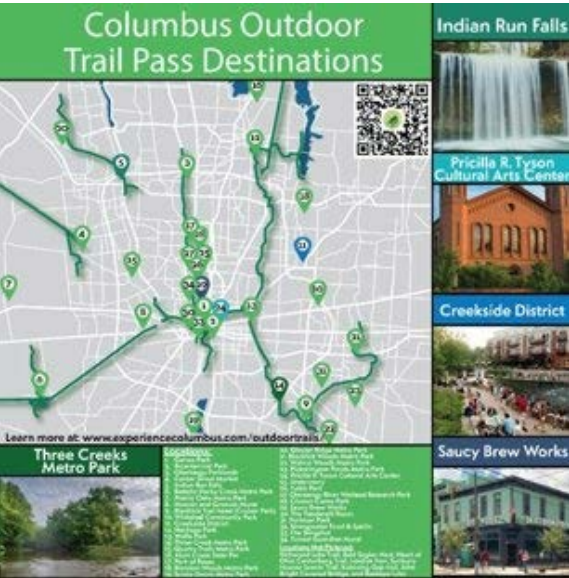
EARLY IMPLEMENTATION



- Host an annual Trail Town-focused COG forum
- Host a regional placemaking workshop and follow with local workshops (with MORPC technical assistance funds)
- Engage communities to develop a program brand identity
- Populate COG website with community information
- Seek funds to operate a fully funded program
- Form a COG Trail Communities Working Group to address outstanding questions and advance early implementation action items



NEXT STEPS: ENCOURAGE TRAIL USE



Ideal Trail User **EXPERIENCE**

3

Feeling **INSPIRED**

The trail user is delighted by a punctuating experience on or near the trail, which may pertain to the art, history, culture, performance, or other unique aspect of a place.

IDEAL

2

Feeling **EXPLORATORY**

The trail user is enticed off-trail to partake of local assets and amenities, assured of their ability to find their way back to the trail when they're done.

ENHANCED

1

Feeling **SECURE**

The trail user is oriented to where they are and where they're going, and confident they can get their basic needs met at any time.

ESSENTIAL

NEXT STEPS: COMMUNITY PLACEMAKING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Activity Description

Engage staff members, community leaders, and residents in a dynamic and immersive placemaking exercise to uncover the valuable assets and cultural elements that embrace individuals seeking to connect through trail-based experiences

Deliverables

- "Community Readiness Assessment"
- "Community Trail Profile"

Anticipated Outcomes:

- A local agency empowered to promote their community to residents and visitors as a walkable, bikeable, nature-focused, and welcoming place.
- A proactively aligned local agency ready to participate in a planned Regional Trail Town Designation Program



What are Trail Towns? A trail town approach is a way of leveraging trail tourism and active transportation opportunities to promote mode-shift, economic development, and quality of life enhancement.

NEXT STEPS: ESTABLISH A WORKING GROUP



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CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS STRATEGIC PLAN ACTION ITEM C1: establish a TRAIL COMMUNITIES WORKING GROUP

We need your support: If interested in joining the working group, email mvonstein@morpc.org

Central Ohio Greenways Strategic Plan Action Item Update - 2023

Introduction

Central Ohio Greenways (COG) is a trail network connecting Central Ohio to other parts of the state. The COG Board was created in 2015 to lead the development and implementation of the COG Strategic Plan. The COG Board's vision is to create a world-class network of trails that connects Central Ohio to other parts of the state. The COG Board's mission is to increase the number of miles of trails in Central Ohio and to improve the quality of the trail system. The COG Board's goals are to: 1) Increase the number of miles of trails in Central Ohio. 2) Improve the quality of the trail system. 3) Increase the number of people using trails in Central Ohio. 4) Increase the number of people who are aware of the COG and its programs. The COG Board's action plan is to achieve these goals by: 1) Developing and implementing a COG Strategic Plan. 2) Developing and implementing a COG Marketing Plan. 3) Developing and implementing a COG Financial Plan. 4) Developing and implementing a COG Governance Plan. The COG Board's action plan is to achieve these goals by: 1) Developing and implementing a COG Strategic Plan. 2) Developing and implementing a COG Marketing Plan. 3) Developing and implementing a COG Financial Plan. 4) Developing and implementing a COG Governance Plan.

Central Ohio Greenways Updated

New action items for the COG Strategic Action Plan have been shaped through a process that reflects the Board's dedication to continuous improvement. The COG Board's vision is to create a world-class network of trails that connects Central Ohio to other parts of the state. The COG Board's mission is to increase the number of miles of trails in Central Ohio and to improve the quality of the trail system. The COG Board's goals are to: 1) Increase the number of miles of trails in Central Ohio. 2) Improve the quality of the trail system. 3) Increase the number of people using trails in Central Ohio. 4) Increase the number of people who are aware of the COG and its programs. The COG Board's action plan is to achieve these goals by: 1) Developing and implementing a COG Strategic Plan. 2) Developing and implementing a COG Marketing Plan. 3) Developing and implementing a COG Financial Plan. 4) Developing and implementing a COG Governance Plan.

Collaboration:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
C1	Establish a Trail Towns Working Group			
C2	Establish Sub-Region Collaboration Groups			
C3	Maintain the Regional Bikeways File and COG Vision Map			
C4	Develop Active Transportation, Outdoor Recreation, and Mobility Partnerships			
C5	Advocate for Trail Funding			
C6	Engage with Statewide Organizations			
C7	Develop a Climate and Environmental Action Plan			

Messaging:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
M1	Manage the COG Website			
M2	Manage the COG Social Media			
M3	Manage the Outdoor Trails Pass			
M4	Host Trail Forums			
M5	Maintain the Trail User Map			

Central Ohio Greenways Updated Actions (cont.)

Resources & Guidelines:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
RG1	Maintain Brand Guidelines			
RG2	Establish a Partnership Messaging Toolkit			
RG3	Establish Trail Safety Protocols			
RG4	Establish and Maintain a Trail Count Monitoring Program			
RG5	Establish a Trail Design Guide			
RG6	Set Protocols for Construction, Detours, and Alerts along Trails			
RG7	Establish Trail Event Protocols			
RG8	Establish Wayfinding Guidelines			
RG9	Establish a Grants Narrative Toolkit			
RG10	Offer Technical Assistance			
RG11	Complete an Impact of Trails Report			

Program Operations:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
PO1	Establish Criteria for Expanding the COG Footprint			
PO2	Develop Local Government Sponsorship Guidelines			
PO3	Manage Standing and Project Based Working Groups			

Central Ohio Greenways Strategic Plan Action Item Update - 2023



Central Ohio Greenways (COG) is a trail network of national significance spanning 2300+ miles, connecting Central Ohio to other parts of the state and country. The COG network includes parts of the Ohio to Erie Trail and the national Great American Rail Trail that extends from Washington, D.C., to Seattle, Washington. COG trails are traveled more than 12 million miles annually by residents and tourists. The trails provide economic, quality of life, and health benefits to the community. With Central Ohio expected to be a region of over 3.1 million people by 2050 – bringing an increased demand for more walkable neighborhoods, transportation options, and outdoor recreational opportunities – trails have become even more critical to the livability of our growing region.

In 2015, MORPC's Commission approved the creation of the COG Board. The Board serves as a subcommittee to the Sustainability Advisory Committee and focuses on increasing the use and miles of the regional trail system. Its 25 members represent the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. The Board is guided by working teams that support the advancement of the Vision and Mission of COG.

Vision: A world-class network of trails accessible to every Central Ohioan.

Mission: To increase greenway trail mileage and use of trails for recreational and transportation needs.

In 2015, the newly formed COG Board hired planningNEXT to develop a strategic plan – the Board's vision, mission, and goals, memorialized in the 2016 COG Strategic Plan. In the years since the Board has made incredible progress.

500 miles of trails, was adopted as a brand, regional awareness, part of other efforts have all contributed to the transportation, and outdoor recreation.

Since 2015, the region has continued to build walkable and bikeable communities. Our desire to encourage more use of trails and recreation. Vision Zero have raised awareness of safe travel. Ohio's safest bike and pedestrian trails and recreation opportunities.

With an overwhelming commitment of Central Ohio are ready to focus and allow the region to build off the work for the future. With the momentum a retreat to assess the alignment of its concluded that it was time for a plan. Strategic Plan Action Item Update. No. The implementation will require the support of partners.

Overview of the 2023 COG Board Retreat

Overview of the 2023 COG Board Retreat

In March 2023, the COG Board convened its annual retreat. After reflecting upon the accomplishments, progress, and evolution of COG from 2015 to 2023, the Board evaluated its strategic funding, and alignment with current regional needs to guide it to discussing regional action items. The 2016 plan identifies 53 actions intended to guide it to the 2016 Strategic Action Plan. At the retreat, the Board reviewed each action item and determined its status (complete/pending/incomplete) and alignment with current regional needs. Following this assessment, the Board engaged in three facilitated workshops focused on strategic funding, and town planning.

- **Partnership Development Workshop:** In this session, Board members were asked to discuss existing COG, RAPID 5, LEJUS, and other regional initiatives can support the Central Ohio to strengthen the relationship of strategic partners and support trail collaboration among local governments.
- **Strategic Funding Workshop:** The Board members were asked to discuss existing opportunities for leveraging funding while determining what resources exist and advancement of accessing strategic funding to fill gaps and expand the trail network.
- **Trail Town Planning Workshop:** In this session, Board members were asked to discuss the importance of having a clear vision, mission, and resources necessary to advance the development of a trail network. Strategic action items are needed to support a regional Trail System.
- **Trail Planning and Implementation Workshop:** In this session, Board members were asked to identify three to five relevant trail projects that are currently in progress or planned. The workshop focused on the importance of having a clear vision, mission, and resources necessary to advance the development of a trail network. Strategic action items are needed to support a regional Trail System.

In each workshop, Board members were asked to identify issues affecting their community.

Four common themes emerged: collaboration, messaging, resources & goals. These themes, outlined below, together with the results of program operations. These themes, outlined below, together with the results of Plan assessment, resulted in the creation of 26 new or revised action items from Plan's Action Item Update. These action items include ongoing actions from modifications to previous action items. The reduction of action items from 53 to completion of previously established action items and the focused concentration among local

New action items for the COG Strategic Action Plan have been shaped through a collaborative process that reflects the Board's dedication to continuous improvement, alignment with regional goals, and supporting Central Ohioans' quality of life. While building upon the achievements of the 2018 Strategic Action Plan, the COG Board Retreat provided an invaluable opportunity for the Board to reflect on past accomplishments and unite in envisioning the future. The COG Board Retreat has generated an update to the existing Strategic Action Plan rather than a new plan. This iterative approach highlights the Board's dedication to continuous improvement by aligning the actions of the Central Ohio Greenways program with regional goals, ensuring a more robust and integrated approach. This iterative approach also allows for the capture of new ideas and plans for future trail expansion, supporting the development of healthier, more inclusive, and more sustainable communities. The COG Board's decisions of these updated action items demonstrates a commitment to advancing the Central Ohio Greenways program.

Collaboration:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPO Staff
C1	Establish a Trail Towns Working Group	●		●
C2	Establish Sub-Region Collaboration Groups	●		●
C3	Maintain the Regional Bikeways File and COG Vision Map		●	●
C4	Develop Active Transportation, Outdoor Recreation, and Mobility Partnerships	●	●	●
C5	Advocate for Trail Funding	●		●
C6	Engage with Statewide Organizations			●
C7	Develop a Climate and Environmental Action Plan			●

Messaging:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MOF Staff
M1	Manage the COG Website		●	
M2	Manage the COG Social Media		●	
M3	Manage the Outdoor Trails Pass		●	
M4	Host Trail Forums	●		
M5	Maintain the Trail User Map			

Central Ohio Greenways Updated

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	We Gro
RG1	Maintain Brand Guidelines		
RG2	Establish a Partnership Messaging Toolkit		
RG3	Establish Trail Safety Protocols		•
RG4	Establish and Maintain a Trail Count Monitoring Program		•
RG5	Establish a Trail Design Guide		
RG6	Set Protocols for Construction, Detours, and Alerts along Trails		•
RG7	Establish Trail Event Protocols		•
RG8	Establish Wayfinding Guidelines		•
RG9	Establish a Grants Narrative Toolkit		•
RG10	Offer Technical Assistance	•	•
RG11	Complete an Impact of Trails Report		•

Program Operations:

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORP Staff
PO1	Establish Criteria for Expanding the COG Footprint	•		•
PO2	Develop Local Government Sponsorship Guidelines	•		•
PO3	Manage Standing and Project Based Working Groups		•	•

Next Steps

The 2016 Strategic Action Plan directed four ongoing COG Working Groups to advance action items. These working groups supported significant progress over the last seven years; thus, it is important to strategize the best working group structure necessary to implement action items over the next 3 to 5 years. Following the adoption of this Strategic Plan Action Item Update, the COG Board and its working groups will be asked to form new ongoing and project-based working groups to effectively guide the implementation of this action update.

Working groups will be asked to support the nomination of new COG Board and Working Group members, and to continue to advance the COG Vision and Mission.

MORPC appreciates the COG Board member's ongoing commitment, passion, and support and thanks the Board for advancing the Central Ohio Greenways program!

COG Board Members

- ## COG Board Members
- Chair Michael Andrako, P.E., Franklin County Engineer's Office
 - Laura Ball, P.L.A, ASLA, City of Westerville
 - Kacey Brankamp, Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District
 - Jody Dzurandin, Ohio to Erie Trail
 - Bertie Fields, Black Girls do Bike
 - William Habig, Granville Township
 - Beth Hugh, Korda
 - Adrienne Joly, City of New Albany
 - Dan Kaderly, Metro Parks
 - Tamisha Matus, Union County Health Department
 - Angela Mitchell, Black Women in Nature
 - Alex Nouanesengsy, LCATS
 - Eric Oberg, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
 - Tobi Otulana, Toole Design
 - Andrew Overbeck, AICP, MKSK
 - J.M. Rayburn, AICP, City of Dublin
 - Wayne Roberts, Friends of Madison County Parks & Trails
 - Letty Schamp P.E., City of Hilliard
 - Kelly Socco, City of Columbus
 - Scott Urlich, Columbus Public Health Department
 - Julie Walcott, Toole Design
 - Brad Westall, City of Columbus



For more information, please visit:
www.centralohiogreenways.com



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updated 7/14/2023

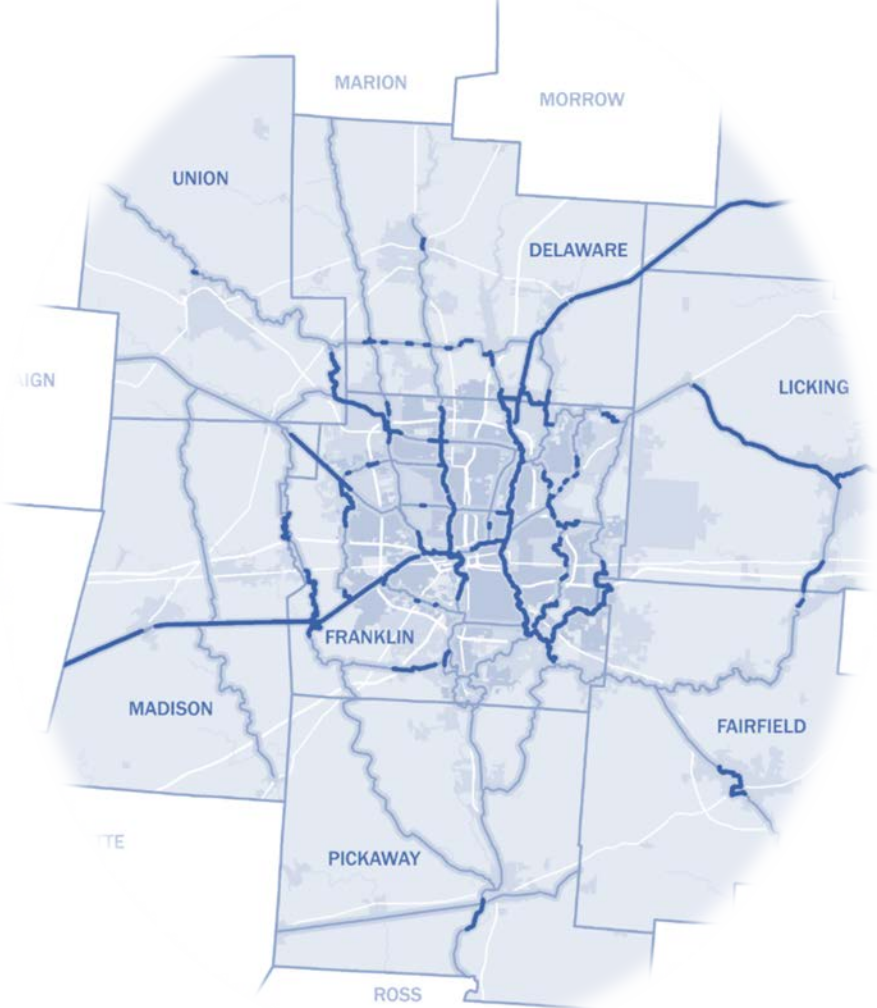


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COLLABORATION ACTION ITEMS

Facilitate partnership development among local and state governments, advocates, and other partners

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
C1	Establish a Trail Towns Working Group	●		●
C2	Establish Sub-Region Collaboration Groups	●		●
C3	Maintain the Regional Bikeways File and COG Vision Map		●	●
C4	Develop Active Transportation, Outdoor Recreation, and Mobility Partnerships	●	●	●
C5	Advocate for Trail Funding	●		●
C6	Engage with Statewide Organizations			●
C7	Develop a Climate and Environmental Action Plan			●



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MESSAGING ACTION ITEMS

Share the COG mission and vision with the public, local governments, and other partners

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
M1	Manage the COG Website		●	●
M2	Manage the COG Social Media		●	●
M3	Manage the Outdoor Trails Pass		●	●
M4	Host Trail Forums	●		●
M5	Maintain the Trail User Map			●



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RESOURCES & GUIDELINES ACTION ITEMS

Establish best practices, guidelines, and toolkits

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
RG1	Maintain Brand Guidelines			•
RG2	Establish a Partnership Messaging Toolkit		•	•
RG3	Establish Trail Safety Protocols		•	•
RG4	Establish and Maintain a Trail Count Monitoring Program			•
RG5	Establish a Trail Design Guide		•	•
RG6	Set Protocols for Constuction, Detours, and Alerts along Trails		•	•
RG7	Establish Trail Event Protocols		•	•
RG8	Establish Wayfinding Guidelines		•	•
RG9	Establish a Grants Narrative Toolkit	•	•	•
RG10	Offer Technical Assistance			•
RG11	Complete an Impact of Trails Report			•

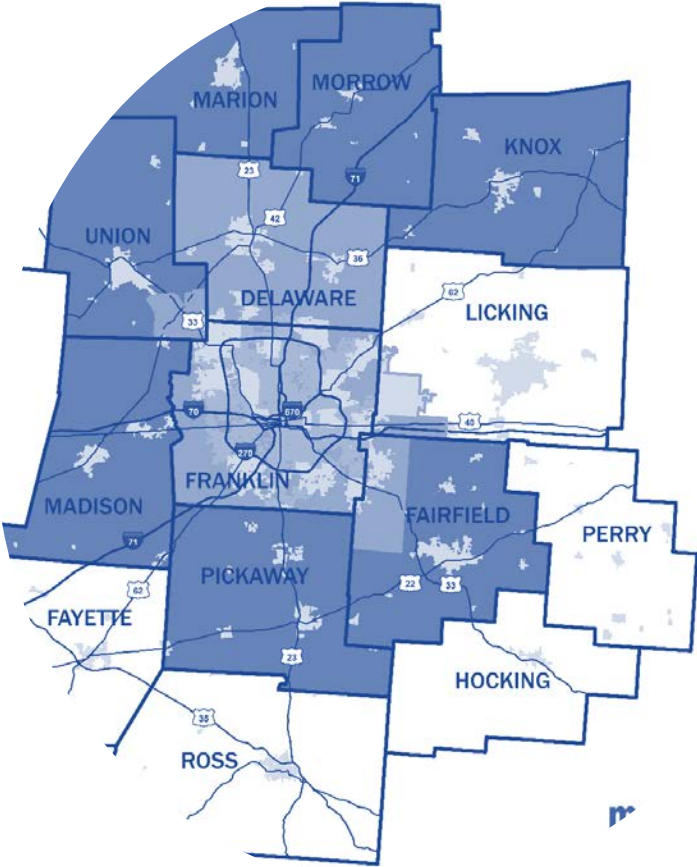


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PROGRAM OPERATIONS ACTION ITEMS

Evaluate the program budget and resources

ID	Action	COG Board Leadership	Working Groups	MORPC Staff
PO1	Establish Criteria for Expanding the COG Footprint	●		●
PO2	Develop Local Government Sponsorship Guidelines	●		●
PO3	Manage Standing and Project Based Working Groups		●	●



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PROPOSED BOARD, WORKING GROUP, AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

COG Board

COG Board

Ongoing Program Working Groups

Trail Communities (Towns) Working Group

- 1) Implement the Trail Communities Program
- 2) Maintain the Outdoor Trails Pass

Trail Development Working Group

- 1) Criteria for expanding the COG Footprint
- 2) Maintain the COG Vision
- 3) Establish Sub-region Collaboration Group Footprints

Project Steering Committees

Wayfinding Strategy– 2023

Trail Town Framework– 2023

Mapping COG Natural Assets – 2024

Construction and Detours – 2024

Trail Count Program– TBD

Trail Design Guidelines - TBD

Trail Event Protocol - TBD

Annual Collaboration Meetings

Regional Mobility and Outdoor Recreation Collaboration Meeting

State Agency Partnership Meeting*

Subregion Collaboration Meetings

Events

Forums (3x)

Summit *Optional*



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