

CENTRAL OHIO STATE OF SAFETY 2018-2022 REPORT



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MORPC STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CENTRAL OHIO STATE OF SAFETY REPORT 2018-2022:

William Murdock, *Executive Director*

Nick Gill, *Transportation Study Director*

Maria Schaper, *Associate Director of Transportation*

Lauren Cardoni, *Active Transportation and Safety Program Manager*

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

COTSP: *Central Ohio Transportation Safety Plan*

HSIP: *Highway Safety Improvement Program*

LPA: *Local Public Agency*

MORPC: *Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission*

MPO: *Metropolitan Planning Organization*

MTP: *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*

MVMT: *Million Vehicle Miles Traveled*

OACP: *Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police*

ODOT: *Ohio Department of Transportation*

ODPS: *Ohio Department of Public Safety*

OPWC: *Ohio Public Works Commission*

SHSP: *Strategic Highway Safety Plan*

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY IN CENTRAL OHIO

INTRODUCTION

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is the principal public agency conducting regional transportation studies for the Central Ohio area. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Columbus Urbanized Area, much of this work focuses primarily on the MPO area, or the Transportation Planning Area (shown in the map on the following page). This includes Franklin County, Delaware County, and portions of Licking, Fairfield, and Union counties.

As an MPO, MORPC must seek to increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. MPOs must also coordinate with state departments of transportation to develop performance measures that aim to realize a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

Since 2005, MORPC has analyzed regional crash data for the MPO area in order to better understand regional crash trends. The majority of crash data analyzed and represented within this document is received from standardized police reports that are generated each time a traffic crash occurs and law enforcement responds. This data includes crash type, crash severity, recorded contributing factors, road condition, driver behaviors, and other relevant information about the crash and people involved.

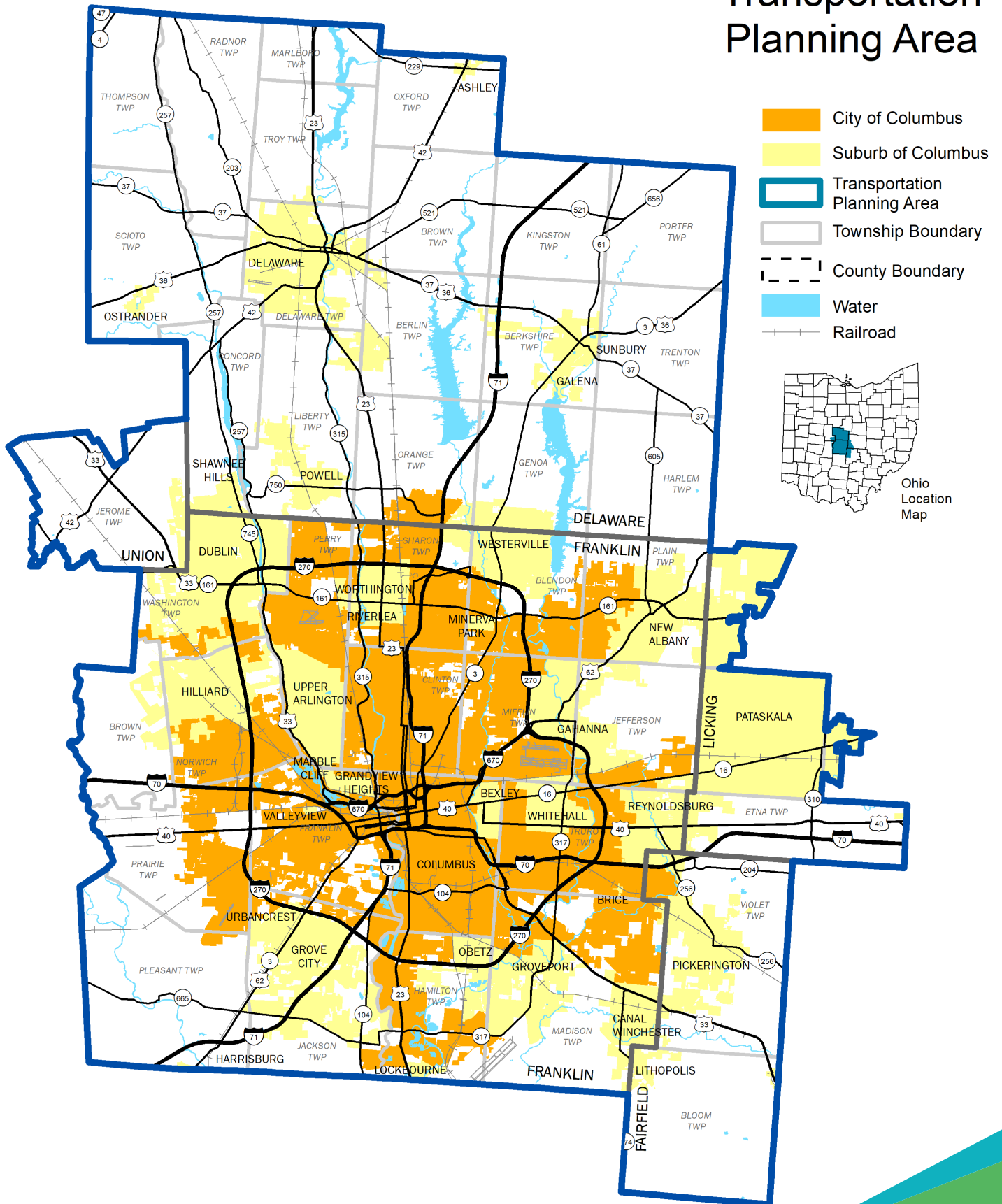
The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is responsible for compiling, analyzing, and publishing crash data and statistics in the State of Ohio. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) works closely with ODPS to disseminate this information to various safety partners within the state for the purposes of identifying transportation safety issues and determining which strategies are most appropriate to address them.

STATE OF SAFETY REPORT

The information that follows in this report is meant to provide a brief summary of the current state of transportation safety within the Central Ohio region. This information is produced on an annual basis to track the region's progress toward established regional goals and targets. These are goals and targets specifically focused on improving transportation safety that have been adopted in the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and included in the Central Ohio Transportation Safety Plan (COTSP). Additionally, this report will provide an update on implementation of the COTSP Action Plan.

For a more detailed look at crash trends in our region, please review the COTSP available on MORPC's website. The COTSP is a comprehensive safety plan for the Central Ohio region that identifies the most significant causes of serious injuries and fatalities on the local roadway system. The plan establishes a series of goals and benchmarks for safety improvements, identifies existing trends and critical safety priorities, and sets up a framework for how collaboration can improve safety throughout the region. The COTSP follows the framework set by the State of Ohio's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and will be updated every five years.

Transportation Planning Area



TRENDS IN REGIONAL SAFETY

CURRENT FIVE-YEAR TRENDS

Over the last decade, the state of Ohio has seen an unsettling rise in traffic fatalities. While 2013 was the safest year on record for the state, 2021 was the deadliest with more than 1,300 lives lost. A similar trend has been occurring in Central Ohio – specifically, within MORPC's MPO boundary, or Transportation Planning Area. Fewer than 100 lives were lost on Central Ohio Roadways in 2013, but that number has increased steadily over time to a record 152 lives lost in 2021. That trend held in 2022, with 150 lives lost on our roadways.

Between 2018 and 2022, 691 people lost their lives in traffic crashes in Central Ohio. In 2021, we saw a continuing record high of fatalities, but a significant drop back from the record high of serious injuries that occurred in 2021. The chart in Figure 1 includes an overview of the crash trends by year for the 2018-2022 time period.

Key Highlights from 2018 to 2022:

- » Total crashes **decreased** by 29.2 percent.
- » *Fatal* crashes **increased** by 40.2 percent.
- » The injury rate **increased** by 30.5 percent.

Central Ohio continues to see record high numbers of fatal crashes -- 143 in 2022.



Figure 1. Crash Trends in Central Ohio by Year (2018-2022)

YEAR	CRASH STATISTICS				OCCUPANT STATISTICS					SAFETY METRICS		
	Fatal Crashes	Injury Crashes	Property Damage Crashes	Total Crashes	Fatalities	Serious Injuries	Minor Injuries	No Injuries	Total People Involved	Injury Rate	EPDO	Fatalities and Serious Injuries / 100,000 Population
2018	102	10570	28949	39621	110	791	14183	83582	98666	26.7%	2.96	59.69
2019	121	10663	29293	40077	130	832	14563	85776	101301	26.6%	3.04	61.30
2020	140	8764	17602	26506	149	825	11886	50995	63855	33.1%	3.80	58.83
2021	140	9628	18366	28134	152	961	12825	55233	69171	34.2%	3.94	67.02
2022	143	8852	19051	28046	150	814	11872	56473	69309	31.6%	3.66	57.83
5-Year Total	646	48477	113261	162384	653	4223	65329	332059	402032			
Annual Average	129	9695	22652	32477	131	845	13066	66412	80460	30.4%	3.48	60.93
Percent Change 2018-2022	40.2%	-16.3%	-34.2%	-29.2%	36.4%	2.9%	-16.3%	-32.4%	-29.8%	18.4%	23.6%	-3.1%

Note: The data shown in the chart above represent the raw data reported during this time period. Cells highlighted in orange represent the year with the highest statistic for that category.

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE

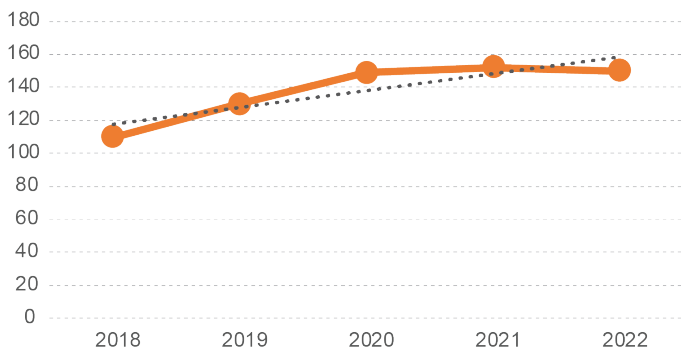
The chart in Figure 2 indicates the current trends in relation to the targets established in the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the goals set by the COTSP. *The data in this chart represents 5-year rolling averages for the 2018-2022 time period*, which helps to illustrate the overall trend by averaging out any significant peaks or declines that occur on a year-by-year basis. The overall trends for each target indicate that **our region is not currently meeting any of the five established targets**. The graphs in Figure 3 illustrate the trends in the raw crash data for fatalities and serious injuries overall, and fatalities and serious injuries to non-motorized users.

Figure 2. Annual Performance Toward Targets

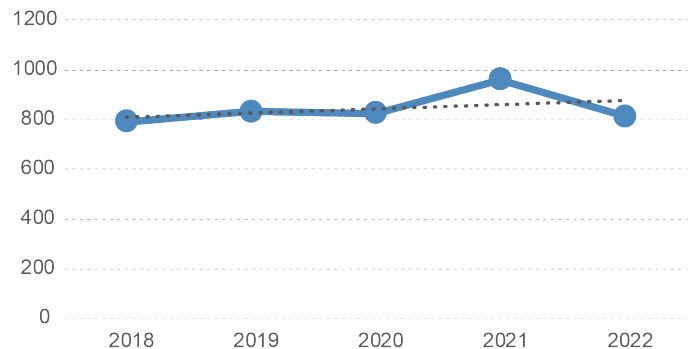
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	2020 Benchmark	2022 DATA	2025 TARGET	2050 TARGET	GRADE
Number of Fatalities	106	138	-8% (97)	-27% (77)	X
Number of Serious Injuries	868	845	-8% (798)	-27% (634)	X
Non-Motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries	145	156	-8% (133)	106	X
Rate of Fatalities / 100 MVMT	0.74	1.09	0.69	0.54	X
Rate of Serious Injuries / 100 MVMT	6.11	6.63	5.64	4.43	X

Figure 3. Trend Graphs (2018-2022)

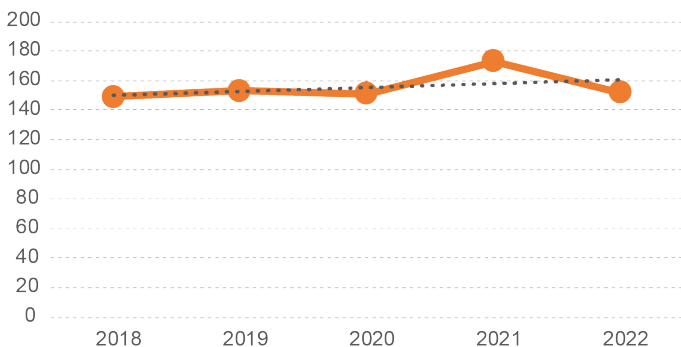
Fatalities



Serious Injuries



Non-motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries



ANNUAL REPORTING

Each year, MORPC will produce an updated State of Safety report that tracks the region's progress toward meeting the goals established in the COTSP, as well as the action items identified in the action plan. This annual reporting process will help to determine whether progress is being achieved toward each goal, strategy, and action item and if any output measures may need adjustment.

PLAN MAINTENANCE & UPDATING

As the COTSP is implemented and progress toward the goals is evaluated, there will be a need to revise and update the plan. The following are key elements of this update process:

- » Identify barriers to implementation
- » Modify action items as issues or new opportunities arise
- » Provide updates and additional guidance on specific programs, activities, etc.

The COTSP document will be updated on a five-year cycle, while the State of Safety report will provide annual updates on key highlights in overall regional crash trends.

COTSP ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

Since the release of the COTSP in September of 2019, the region has made significant progress toward implementing the Action Plan. MORPC has been collaborating with existing and new local, state, and federal partners to work on critical transportation safety efforts in Central Ohio and beyond. The chart in Figure 4 highlights some of the action items that have been initiated, continued, or completed in the last year.

Please refer to the full COTSP Action Plan document at www.morpc.org/safety for more detail.

Figure 4. Action Plan - Recent Progress Highlights

Action Item	Action Leads	Description	Progress
Driving Safety Concerns #2.2	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT, Safe Communities	Implement free/low cost circulator shuttle systems for first/last mile connectivity to encourage alternative transportation use.	COTA//Plus now provides on-demand transit service that offers point-to-point shared rides within Grove City, Westerville, and the Columbus South Side.
Driving Safety Concerns #3.1	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Work with local governments to adopt strong local primary legislation on distracted driving.	The City of Reynoldsburg introduced an ordinance to amend Section 331.42 of the City Code for the purpose of updating and increasing restrictions on distracted driving.
Driving Safety Concerns #3.3	MORPC, ODOT, ODPS	Work with the state legislature on a primary seatbelt law.	The Ohio Traffic Safety Council launched a Safety Belt Task Force to identify recommendations related to a primary seatbelt law and other methods to increase seat belt use.
Driving Safety Concerns #4.6	LPAs, ODOT	Integrate speed mitigating design concepts such as roundabouts, lane striping, and road diets into current and future infrastructure projects.	ODOT has recently awarded Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to various local agencies for construction of multiple roundabouts throughout Central Ohio.
Emerging Technologies #3.5	MORPC, ODOT	Advocate for/support statewide policy that creates consistency across jurisdictional boundaries for how and where autonomous vehicles/ scooters/e-bikes/bike-share will be permitted to operate and stage.	An ORIL study was recently initiated to summarize existing micromobility ordinances in Ohio and present information on how municipalities can enact their own ordinances, through a safe and equitable framework, using regulatory practices.
Serious Crash Types #1.5	LPAs, MORPC	Increase awareness of regional safety issues and appropriate countermeasures to address them.	MORPC hosted the 2023 Central Ohio Transportation Safety Forum on September 21, 2023. The Forum included discussions on the psychology behind driver behavior, the basics of vehicle safety, and why the Safe System Approach is so critical to reducing fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways.
Serious Crash Types #2.3	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Advocate at the state and federal levels for more funding resources.	MORPC provided testimony to the Ohio House of Representatives and Ohio Senate regarding the State Transportation Budget, which strongly emphasized the need for further investment in safety in Central Ohio (and throughout the state). MORPC was successful in advocating for increased funding for Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (e.g. CORPO) and rail safety funding to eliminate at-grade railroad crossings.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #1.4	LPAs, MORPC	Work with communities to adopt/update and implement Complete Streets policies.	The City of Reynoldsburg and the City of Powell adopted Complete Streets Policies in 2023.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #1.6	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Work with communities to adopt/update active transportation plans.	MORPC participated in the development of an active transportation plan for Orange Township, which was funded by ODOT.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #2.4	COG, LPAs, ODOT	Prioritize construction projects that bridge gaps in existing trail network. A gap is a missing connection between two existing COG trail facilities.	\$54 million in MORPC-Attributable Funding was awarded to various local agencies to construct 16+ miles of stand-alone trail connections by 2030.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #4.2	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Conduct walk and bicycle safety audits on high-priority corridors.	MORPC worked with Franklin County Public Health and Delaware Public Health District to host walk audits in the City of Delaware and Franklin Township.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #8.3	MORPC	Encourage reward based employer commuting programs, such as Gohio Commute, to promote alternative modes of travel to work.	MORPC launched the "Commute Action Fund" as a tool for Central Ohio Companies to fund new incentives and/or commute projects that motivate employees to drive less and use sustainable modes of transportation to work.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & FUNDING

MEMBER ASSISTANCE

MORPC provides technical assistance related to transportation safety work to local agencies within the MPO area. The High Injury Network (HIN) identified for the 2013-2017 time period will be used to prioritize locations for technical assistance. MORPC will coordinate with local agencies to study the corridors and locations along the HIN in more detail and identify funding opportunities for improvements. MORPC will work with each local agency to determine the appropriate strategy for the locations within their jurisdiction. This assistance could include any of the following:

Road Safety Audits

Road Safety Audits (RSAs) address locations that have received significant attention around roadway issues. RSAs are performed by a team of specialists – engineers, safety professionals, agency representatives, etc. – that formally audit the location and provide an official report with recommendations to improve it. Recommendations often involve medium- to low-cost spot safety treatments. MORPC can assist local governments with RSAs and provide support for an application for safety funds to implement the recommended countermeasures. For more information on conducting RSAs, see the Regional RSA Implementation Guide on MORPC's website at morpc.org/tool-resource/local-safety-initiative.

Safety Studies

Safety studies provide in-depth evaluation of a location that is used to develop high- to medium-cost spot safety treatments. These locations generally show a high frequency of severe to fatal crashes and often require significant improvements to address them. Safety studies utilize both internal (MORPC) and external resources to complete, and can then be used to apply for safety funds to implement the recommended countermeasures.

Systemic Safety Improvements

Systemic safety improvements (SSIs) are different from traditional safety projects that address specific types of crashes at a specific location. SSIs look at crash data more holistically across a region or throughout a jurisdiction to identify trends or common threads. These improvements usually involve low-cost, risk-based treatments that can be implemented across a series of locations.

SSIs are conducted in a more systematic manner compared to the in-depth and focused site analysis required of an RSA or safety study. The intent is to address widespread safety concerns at multiple locations by analyzing potential risk based on similar characteristics present throughout the region, then implement system-wide safety improvements. For more information on SSIs, see the Guide to Implementing Regionally-Based Systemic Safety Improvements on MORPC's website at morpc.org/tool-resource/local-safety-initiative.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

There are many financial resources available for implementing the action items identified in the COTSP. Information about funding and grant opportunities that are available to local communities and organizations can be at www.morpc.org/funding. Some highlights of key funding resources and programs are listed on the following pages.

MORPC Drive Investment Portal

The Drive Investment Portal (DIP) is a search platform that allows MORPC to connect members with available funding opportunities, including grant and loan programs from federal, state, and local organizations. The portal contains information on funding programs for housing projects, transportation infrastructure, and many other project categories. Information on funding opportunities is regularly updated by MORPC staff. The DIP provides MORPC members with a tool to stay informed on active funding programs, project requirements, and federal dollars available.

More information about the DIP can be found at www.morpc.org/drive-investment.

Safe Streets and Roads for All

The Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant program is a new federal discretionary grant program that will provide \$5 billion in funding over the five-year time period between 2022 to 2026. The primary focus of this grant is addressing roadway safety through the reduction and/or elimination of roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

Each year, approximately \$1 billion in potential funding will be available for local agencies. There are two types of funds available within the program:

- » Approximately 40% of available funding will be designated for developing comprehensive safety action plans, or supplemental planning efforts.
- » Approximately 60% of available funding will be designated for implementation of projects and/or activities identified in an existing action plan.

In order to be eligible for the implementation funds, the applicant must have a qualifying action plan already in place. The Central Ohio Transportation Safety Plan (COTSP) released by MORPC in 2019 is considered a qualifying action plan and could potentially be used to identify appropriate applications for Implementation Grants within the MORPC MPO area.

MORPC staff are available to brainstorm potential applications and assist with the application process. More information about SS4A can be found at www.transportation.gov/SS4A.

MORPC-Attributable Funding

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Columbus Metropolitan Area, MORPC is responsible for allocating federal funding to transportation projects throughout the MPO area. This federal funding includes funds authorized through the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program, the Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), and the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and the new Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). These funds are what comprise the MORPC-Attributable Funds. In past years, the funding available annually to the MORPC MPO area has been around \$37 million.

However, additional funding became available with the adoption of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), or the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). **Around \$48 million is now available annually in MORPC-Attributable Funding.**

There is a competitive application and evaluation process for local agencies interested in receiving these funds for transportation projects. **The funding cycle operates on a biennial process, with the next application window opening in summer 2024.** Local agencies can apply for funding for a variety of project types, including system preservation projects, roadway capacity/operational changes, and stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian facility projects. In order to be eligible for this funding, a project must already be identified in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), as either a specific mapped project or a general line item. General line item funding includes allocations for stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian facility projects that are not specifically identified in the plan. Additionally, all projects that receive MORPC-Attributable Funding are required to comply with MORPC's Complete Streets Policy.

Because MORPC-Attributable Funds are federal dollars, there are certain requirements and restrictions that can make the use of the funds more complicated than using local funding sources. For this reason, it is typically recommended that a local agency only apply for MORPC-Attributable Funds for large-scale transportation projects (e.g., a minimum cost of around \$1 million), or find a way to bundle smaller projects to create a larger project.

Additionally, these funds require a 20% local match. It is also important to note that this funding will not be immediately awarded to a local agency. **The 2024 Attributable Funding Cycle will be allocating funds that will likely not be awarded until the state fiscal year (SFY) 2029 or later.**

More information about MORPC-Attributable Funding, eligibility, and how to apply can be found on MORPC's website at: www.morpc.org/program-service/morpc-attributable-funding-for-transportation.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) operates a statewide Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) that provides more than \$180 million in funding each year to improve roadway safety. The funding is available to both ODOT and local agencies throughout the state through a competitive application process. The funds can be used to implement spot safety improvements or systemic safety treatments. **Local governments must coordinate with the District Safety Staff at least six (6) weeks in advance of the deadlines established for the different applications.** Following is a summary of the program and options for applying for this funding:

Abbreviated Applications

Spot safety improvements that are relatively simple projects with an estimated cost lower than \$500,000 are eligible for the Abbreviated Safety Application process. Abbreviated applications can be submitted for review four times each year, with the following quarterly deadlines:

- » December 31st
- » March 31st
- » June 30th
- » September 30th

Priority is given to locations with a higher severity of crashes or those that include pedestrian safety improvements. Locations included in the application must have a minimum of three crashes per year and should address priorities identified within a state, county, or regional priority list or plan. Funding is available for construction only and projects must be completed within two years.

Eligible projects include relatively low-cost safety treatments such as: Proven Safety Countermeasures, safety signage, roadside fixed object treatments/removals, crosswalk improvements (PHB, RRFB, High Visibility Striping), and other pedestrian crossing equipment.

Formal Applications

Spot safety improvements that are more complex and have estimated costs greater than \$500,000 must submit a Formal Safety Application. Projects submitted through the Formal Application process should have a history of fatal and/or injury crashes and have demonstrated that lower cost safety improvements are not able to address the identified safety issues. Formal applications can only be submitted twice per year, with deadlines of:

- » March 31st
- » August 31st

Requirements for Formal Safety Applications include: a minimum of three crashes per year and at least 30% of crashes having resulted in injury; a formal safety study that identifies the safety issues and most appropriate strategies to mitigate those issues; and detailed analysis linking the identified crash patterns with the proposed safety improvement(s).

Systemic Applications

The HSIP Systemic Safety funding is dedicated to projects that proactively address common safety issues throughout the entire roadway system, whether or not a particular location has a history of crashes. Currently, the program is focused on addressing pedestrian-involved crashes and roadway departure crashes. In 2023, applicants were able to request up to \$2 million for pedestrian safety improvements and up to \$5 million for roadway departure safety improvements.

Specific eligibility criteria were established for the Systemic Safety applications, including the types of roadways and roadway characteristics where pedestrian safety and roadway departure safety treatments are most needed. Additionally, a list of Proven Safety Countermeasures for both pedestrian safety and roadway departure safety was developed to assist applicants in selecting the most appropriate funding eligible treatments. Applicants are asked to submit a list of prioritized locations, proposed countermeasures for each location, as well as estimated costs for those improvements.

The application deadline for Systemic Safety Applications is January 31st each year.

More information on HSIP funding can be found on ODOT's website at www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/ProgramManagement/HighwaySafety/HSIP.

ODOT Safe Routes to School

The ODOT Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program provides funding on a competitive basis to assist with planning for and implementation of projects that encourage and enable students to walk and bike to school. This funding was previously only available to K-8 schools, but the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) established new guidelines that allow SRTS funding to now be used for K-12 schools.

The annual budget for the SRTS program was also recently increased from \$4 million to \$5 million. As a result of the increase in funding for this program, the caps for individual award amounts have also increased:

- » **Infrastructure projects** can receive up to \$500,000 in funding and often include repair and/or construction of new sidewalks, pedestrian crossing improvements, traffic calming, etc. The project must be within a 2-mile radius of a school and the applicant community must already have a School Travel Plan in place. *ODOT will reimburse up to 100% of eligible costs for all projects phases, including preliminary engineering, detailed design, right-of-way, construction, and construction engineering.*
- » **Non-infrastructure activities** can receive up to \$60,000 and often include materials for education and encouragement, or programming within the school to encourage walking to school.

The application window for SRTS funding is January through March of each year. More information about the ODOT SRTS program can be found at www.transportation.ohio.gov/programs/safe-routes-srts.

Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)

The Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) provides local infrastructure funding through the State Capital Improvements Program (SCIP) and the Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP). Local subdivisions, such as counties, municipal corporations, townships, sanitary districts or regional water and sewer districts, are eligible to apply.

- » **State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP):** Counties, cities, villages, and townships can apply for SCIP funding that is provided through grants, loans, and loan assistance or local debt support. Grants are available for up to 90 percent of the total project costs for repair/replacement and up to 50 percent for new/expansion. Loans can be provided for up to 100 percent of the project costs. Grant/loan combinations are also available.
- » **Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP):** Counties, cities, villages, and townships can apply for LTIP funding that is provided through grants and may cover up to 100 percent of project costs.

More information about the SCIP and LTIP funding process can be found on MORPC's website at www.morpc.org/tool-resource/franklin-county-scip-ltip or general program information can be found on the OPWC website at www.pwc.ohio.gov/Programs/All-OPWC-Funding-Programs.

