



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

111 Liberty St., Suite 111  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
www.morpc.org

**NOTICE OF A MEETING  
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
111 Liberty St., #100, Columbus, OH 43215  
March 20, 2024, 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.**

**AGENDA**

- 2:30 p.m.**      **Welcome and Introductions** – *Ben Kessler, Chair*
- 2:40 p.m.**      **MORPC Updates** – *William Murdock, Executive Director*
- State of the Region
  - RAPID 5
  - Staff Update
- 2:50 p.m.**      **Policy Update** – *Joe Garrity, Sr. Director of Government Affairs & Community Relations*
- 3:00 p.m.**      **Regional Sustainability Programs & Priorities** – *Brandi Whetstone, Associate Director, Sustainability*
- 3:25 p.m.**      **Board and Working Group Reports**
- Sustaining Scioto Board – Glenn Marzluf
  - Energy & Air Quality Working Group – Matt Stephens-Rich
  - Central Ohio Greenways Board – Mike Andrako
  - Sustainable2050 – Laurie Jadwin, Vice Chair
- 3:40 p.m.**      **New Business and Member Updates** – *Ben Kessler, Chair*
- Matthew Starr, Mayor, City of Mount Vernon
  - Next meeting
- 4:00 p.m.**      **Meeting Adjourned**

**Please notify Brandi Whetstone at 614-233-4174 or [bwhetstone@morpc.org](mailto:bwhetstone@morpc.org) to confirm your attendance at this meeting or if you require special assistance.**

**The next Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting will be on June 5, 2024, at 2:30 p.m.**

**William Murdock, AICP**  
*Executive Director*

**Chris Amorose Groomes**  
*Chair*

**Michelle Crandall**  
*Vice Chair*

**Ben Kessler**  
*Secretary*

**MORPC Sustainability Advisory Committee  
Board & Working Group Report  
March 20, 2024**



**Central Ohio Greenways Board (Chair: Mike Andrako, P.E.)**

*Next meeting: March 27, 2024*

The COG Board met on January 24, 2024, to welcome new Board Members and review and approve updates to the Regional Trail Vision. Also on the agenda were MORPC program and COG Working Group Updates.

In 2024, the COG Trail Towns Working Group will support the implementation of the COG Trail Town Framework. The group will meet every other month and is co-chaired by Kari Kaufman, Experience Columbus and Laura Ball, Westerville Parks & Recreation.

The Trail Development Working Group is chaired by Kelly Scocco, City of Columbus, and will also meet every other month. The group will primarily focus on advancing the Regional Trail Vision. Goals for the year include expanding the vision to MORPC's full 15 county area, expanding trail plans to accommodate anticipated growth in the Intel area, and encouraging collaborative funding applications.

The Outdoor Trails Pass partnership with Experience Columbus was originally launched in 2020 and has been upgraded annually with new features every spring. In 2023, we saw a significant increase in the number of people interacting with and using the pass primarily due to the inclusion of curated trail experience itineraries. This Spring the curated experiences will be enhanced through a partnership with local tourism groups. These new curated experiences will be highlighted in the 2024 Outdoor Trails Pass, launching on Celebrate Trails Day, April 27, 2024.

MORPC will convene the COG Trail Closure and Detours Steering Committee in the Spring to develop guidelines for managing and communicating trail closures and detours. The committee will meet monthly for 6 months. Participation interest should be submitted to Melinda Vonstein ([mvonstein@morpc.org](mailto:mvonstein@morpc.org)) by the end of March 2024.

The Designing Local consultant team is under contract to complete the COG Wayfinding Strategy. The team has met with stakeholders and has drafted a recommended signage strategy. They have also integrated Trail Towns, Public Art, and Placemaking concepts into the wayfinding strategy. The project is expected to conclude in the Spring of 2024.

MORPC will convene the COG Mapping Natural Assets Steering Committee this Spring. The group will advise the Mapping Natural Assets project funded by The Columbus Foundation to provide data to support holistic decision-making around how development impacts the sustainability of our region's watersheds.

MORPC will host a COG Forum on March 20<sup>th</sup> to share regional trail projects that go beyond infrastructure and focus on the trail user experience with enhanced amenities and placemaking. MORPC and COG recently requested \$1.5 million through the federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program for a trail planning and trail town project called Trail Towns in the Nation's Heartland.



## **Energy & Air Quality Working Group (Chair: Matt Stephens-Rich)**

*Next meeting: May 22, 2024*

The Energy and Air Quality Working Group (EAQWG) met on February 29 and will continue to meet on a quarterly basis. The agenda included updates on funding opportunities and MORPC programming, with continued discussions on which topics to focus on for 2024. The EAQWG continues to recruit candidates interested in serving as either Chair or Vice-Chair. Please email recommendations to Brian Filiatraut, [bfiliatraut@morpc.org](mailto:bfiliatraut@morpc.org), MORPC's Energy and Sustainability Program Manager. The next meeting will take place on May 22, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

*Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG):* The MORPC team is continuing its work with City of Columbus and the rest of the core project team to lead regional planning and pollution mitigation actions. The regional efforts are informed by the CPRG Strategy Subcommittee (CSS), which met in February. The first deliverable of the planning grant was the Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) which was submitted by the March 1 deadline. The Columbus and MORPC teams are putting forward a proposal for the phase 2 implementation grant that integrates key elements of the LinkUS W. Broad St. Mobility Corridor with the Regional Community Energy Strategy (ReCES), which will provide solar installations on publicly owned buildings throughout the 10-county Columbus MSA.

Air Quality: MORPC released the 2022-2023 End of Season Air Quality Report on March 4, which can be found [online](#). Air quality was worse in the 2022-2022 season compared to the previous year, primarily due to the influence of external wildfire smoke. While there is some variation year to year due to weather and external factors, overall, air quality continues to improve, and the region is in attainment with federal standards.

The team continues to move forward the US EPA funded air monitoring project working in partnership with Franklin County Public Health. The team is collocating 40 PurpleAir sensors with Ohio EPA monitors to test and validate their performance before placing them in the community. MORPC hosted the Project Advisory Committee meeting on March 15.



## **Sustainable2050**

*Next meeting: May 9, 2024*

The first quarterly Sustainable2050 meeting of 2024 occurred on February 15 at MORPC. The agenda included MORPC program updates, discussion of the Sustainability Leaders Listen survey results, and priority topics for 2024. Members suggested a focus on communication and storytelling at the next meeting to elevate the work of our Sustainable2050 members across the region. Sustainable2050 membership and tier status certification is open to MORPC members. Current Sustainable2050 members interested in earning their tier status certification should contact Brandi Whetstone at [bwhetstone@morpc.org](mailto:bwhetstone@morpc.org). A certification workbook will be provided, and a kick-off meeting is encouraged to review the process. The deadline for completed workbooks is May 3 for consideration at the June Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting. The next Sustainable2050 meeting will take place on May 9 at 9:30 a.m. at MORPC.



## **Sustaining Scioto Board (Chair: Glenn Marzluf)**

*Next Meeting: April 24, 2024*

The Sustaining Scioto Board met on February 28. Board members were updated on the Farming for Clean Water project in the Upper Scioto watershed. The project focuses on developing a communication plan targeted at the agricultural and rural communities and aimed at increasing awareness of climate change impacts on water as well as increasing awareness and support for farmer and landowner adoption of water quality practices and public and private sector investments.

The MORPC team also provided updates on the Regional Water Study. The Ohio Water Development Authority is funding this 15-county study, with Ohio EPA taking the lead and working in partnership with MORPC. Among other objectives, the study will explore current and future water supply and demand to identify gaps. The study will also include recommendations such as strategic locations for growth, potential regionalization of utility services, and innovative practices for water reuse and stormwater management. Hazen and Sawyer will be leading a consultant team to develop this study which is expected to conclude at the end of 2024. MORPC and Ohio EPA will be providing monthly virtual updates for members and stakeholders to stay engaged in the process.

The Board will meet again on April 24, and the Agricultural & Rural Communities Outreach Team will meet on March 21, 2024.