



MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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NOTICE OF A MEETING

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

Monday, July 29, 2024
5:30 p.m.

Microsoft Teams meeting

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 234 753 765 028

Passcode: MYLA63

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Phone Conference ID: 292 968 536#

AGENDA

- 5:30 p.m. Welcome & Introductions – Helen Rollins, Chair**
- 5:32 p.m. Approval of June 2024 Meeting Minutes**
- 5:33 p.m. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Report – Nick Gill, MORPC, Dave Dixon, MORPC**
- Transit Agency Reports
 - Delaware County Transit – Andy Volenik, DCT
 - COTA Update – Kenny Ganter, COTA
- 5:50 p.m. ODOT District 6 Update – Michele Risko and Thom Slack, ODOT District 6**
- 6:10 p.m. Informational Items**
- Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) Applications & MPO Prioritization Process – Shelby Oldroyd, MORPC
 - Technical Assistance Program Update – Jordan Petrov, MORPC
 - Wayfinding Study Update – Melinda Vonstein, MORPC

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director

Chris Amorose Groomes
Chair

Michelle Crandall
Vice Chair

Ben Kessler
Secretary

6:30 p.m. Round Table Discussion

6:55 p.m. Other Business

- Upcoming Meeting Topics – Nick Gill, MORPC

7:00 p.m. Adjourn

PLEASE NOTIFY APRIL BUMGARDNER AT 614.233.4167 OR EMAIL abumgardner@morpc.org TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE FOR THIS MEETING OR IF YOU REQUIRE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE.

**The next CAC meeting is
WEDNESDAY, September 4, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.**

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Community Advisory Committee Meeting



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: **Monday, June 3, 2024**
Time: **5:30 p.m.**
Location: **MORPC**

Members Present

Ayres, Jasmine
Barton, Tiarra (online)
Beltran, Hugo (online)
Bohnert, Eli (online)
Girves, Catharine

Howard, Quincy
Ilmi, Naima
May, Eric
McNish, Timothy
Needleman, William

Rist, John
Roehm, Bob
Rollins, Helen
Watson, Lonnie
Weiss, Ira (online)

Guests

Ganter, Kenny

Martin, Tyrone

MORPC Staff

Agrawal, Parag
Bumgardner, April
Cardoni, Lauren
Dixon, Dave
Gill, Nick

Graham, Thomas
Hauter, Aubrey
Jurist, Niel
Lewis, Elliott
Oldroyd, Shelby

Peggau, Karina (online)
Roy-Dixon, Padmini (online)
Schaper, Maria

I. Welcome & Introductions

- Chair Rollins called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. There was a quorum present.

II. Approval of May 2024 Meeting Minutes

- Chair Rollins asked for a motion to approve the May 2024 Community Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes. Mr. Howard moved; Mr. Rist seconded; and the motion passed.

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

- Mr. Gill noted that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) was no longer on the agenda, as it has been for the last couple years. In May the 2024-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan was adopted at the May 2024 Transportation Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Gill thanked the committee for their work in helping to make this happen.
- Mr. Gill then moved on to discuss that moving forward, many of the items that would be discussed in today's meeting would continue the work of implementing the MTP – the TRAC information, the Technical Assistance Program, and LinkUs.
- Mr. Gill then announced that MORPC had received another Safe Streets and Roads for All Award. MORPC was the applicant, and the award is \$2.1 million for a crash analytics and injury research initiative. This is a pilot project developed by a team of researchers at the Injury Biomechanics Research Center at the Ohio State University. The project will play a role in addressing current gaps in preventing fatal and severe injury crashes

by gathering valuable insights into the causes, patterns, and contributing factors that lead to these types of crashes. Also working with MORPC & OSU on this will be the City of Columbus Public Service Department, Franklin County Engineer's Office, Honda, and others. The study will start out focused in Franklin County and then expand to five counties over a three-year study period.

- Mr. Gill then let the committee know that prior to the next Commission Meeting on June 13th, there will be a pre-Commission Luncheon with an update from Intel.
- Mr. Gill let the committee know about a meeting about the next phase of ODOT's NEVI activities on Tuesday, June 18th, that DriveOhio will be hosting. The meeting will provide a public update on the deployment plan.
- Mr. Dixon provided an update for the Planning Department. Mr. Dixon started by letting the committee know that the Wayfinding Strategy has been completed. This is the strategy for the Central Ohio Greenways. It is now available on centralohiogreenways.com. Melinda Vonstein will present a summary of the strategy at the next committee meeting.
- Mr. Dixon continued by providing an update on the Charging Fueling Infrastructure grant application or CFI. MORPC did not get the funding, but important things were learned in the process. There were 535 applicants, but only 47 were selected, with a total of \$623 million in funds awarded. MORPC's proposal which was titled, MORE EVs, received the highly recommended rating from all reviewers on all criteria. It is very rare to receive those ratings and not receive funding. MORPC has been strongly encouraged to apply again. The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) was released last week and the MORPC team is working with partners at the City of Columbus, SMART Columbus, the Electrification Coalition, and others on next steps.
- Mr. Gill then gave an update on Delaware County Transit (DCT.) DCT provided a record-breaking 12,239 trips for the month of April. They are gearing up for an expansion of the FLEX service starting July 1st. The service hours will now be from 5 am to 9 pm M-F and 8 am to 4 pm on Saturdays, compared to the previous hours of 6 am to 6 pm Monday to Friday. DCT also anticipates delivery of the 8 new transit vans (to replace existing vehicles) in mid-July.
- Mr. Ganter then provided an update to the committee from COTA. Mr. Ganter gave a brief LinkUS Grants Overview. He then spoke about the Equitable Transit-Oriented Development (ETOD) Action Plan. This plan helps guide development so that people of all incomes experience the benefits of new development near transit. Mr. Ganter finished up his updated by discussing potential service improvements.
- Ms. Ayers had a question about the timeline for the changes to COTA. Mr. Ganter explained that there would be public meetings through August and changes would go into effect in September. These changes are made multiple times a year and public meetings are regularly held to review.
- Mr. Needleman asked about the possibility of COTA offering free rides at some point. Mr. Ganter explained that that would only be possible with increased external funding sources and that he wasn't sure that was something that was in near future plans.
- Mr. May asked if, when plans are being made, does COTA and the LinkUS initiative look at other countries for initiative and guidance. Mr. Ganter commented that they do look at other plans, and that Chicago's plan and procedures had been studied a great deal.
- Mr. Roehm asked if Mr. Ganter would update the committee when the Board of Elections ballot language agrees with the language COTA has proposed, as sometimes there is back and forth on a ballot initiative. Mr. Ganter assured the committee he would keep them up-to-date.

- Mr. Roehm then asked how the line up works with the new routes at night. Mr. Ganter explained that currently the busses line up near the downtown terminals, just south of Spring Street.
- Mr. Rist then asked if there would be some point when the level of effort to get private funding for the BRT lines would increase. Mr. Ganter explained that part of what came of out of the ETOD working group, was that part of the action plan and the housing subcommittee created policies that will garner and foster more affordable housing for mixed income and population. Mr. Ganter continued that conversations were being had and, that the action plan is a living document that will continue revolving. Mr. Rist noted that the airport project had some private sector funding, and wondered if an organization like the Downtown Hotel Association would be interested in helping to get these projects moving.
- Ms. Girves added that she knows the committee is often looking for speakers both at COTA and for the CAC, it might make sense to put on the list as we're looking in the future Equiticity, who was one of the organizations in Chicago that did the research around mobility justice and really helped with the initiatives that happened there. The other person who would be a great speaker would be Charles T. Brown, CEO and Founder of Equitable Cities in Philadelphia.
- Mr. Howard asked what positions and/or departments make up the steering committee of the ETOD. Mr. Ganter replied that Lark Mallory of the Affordable Housing Trust and President Steiner of Steiner and Associates are Co-Chairs of the committee. The rest of the committee is made up of 43 other members and it keeps growing. Members range from developers, legal experts, affordable housing advocates, disability and banking experts, private equity companies, and more.

IV. Resolutions

- **Resolution T-8-24: Amending the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program**
 - Mr. Graham explained that the proposed resolution will add or modify twelve projects to the 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In addition, two projects will be removed from the TIP. Mr. Graham showed the committee a map of the projects that are reflected in the amendment. Many of the projects have already been presented and are reflective of the prior Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) commitments that Mr. Lewis had presented to the committee previously. With these changes, there will be over \$90 million in additional funds that will be coming into the region as a result of this amendment. Just over \$56 million is in TRAC funding and then a little over \$31 million is in Connect 4 Ohio funding. The Connect 4 Ohio program is a one-time \$500 million investment in transportation infrastructure primarily in rural areas, that was targeted at filling funding gaps – specifically TRAC projects.
 - Mr. Graham continued that while there are COTA projects, some additional funding has been added to both the East Main and West Broad high-capacity transit corridors. Beyond that, there was also a recent award of \$2.6 million in diesel emission reduction grant funds being added to the TIP amendment.
 - The two removals are both primarily focused on ODOT accounting measures. Project ID 112119 is being removed from the TIP at this time, though it should not reflect a change to what COTA is doing in the region. Moreover, you will see the very last project listed in the resolution memo is an ODOT Jobs & Commerce project that is being removed from the TIP. This project was tied to a development and the developer has chosen to no longer move into the region.

- Mr. Graham completed his presentation by explaining that the remaining projects are primarily TRAC projects, which the committee had already seen.
- Mr. Quincy had a question about the changes that were for COTA Operating Expansions. Mr. Graham explained that the project was primarily for county connections funding. This was part of an initiative that was looking at connections to other counties and potential transit connections. The activity is still ongoing, though they are restructuring how they are funding this, specifically how it is programmed with ODOT. It is anticipated that those activities will continue, but this specific project – 112119 – needs to be removed as the funds will no longer stay in that project.
- Mr. Gill read a comment from the Teams chat that Mr. Weiss sent in – Mr. Weiss expressed concern about two of the projects: Alum Creek Drive from 317 to Groveport Road, the major widening from four to six lanes; and the major rehabilitation at I-70 and State Route 256 and Taylor Road. Mr. Weiss wanted to know what accommodations were being made for bicycle and pedestrian over or under I-70 on Taylor and on 256. These accommodations had been extensively discussed during the Violet Township Technical Assistance Active Transportation plan that was done with ODOT last summer. Mr. Gill answered that with regard to the Alum Creek Drive project, a big point of that project is not only the additional lanes for congestion issues, but to provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities that go along the entire length of Alum Creek from the 270 area connecting with existing paths that go down to the end of State Route 317. These would connect into the existing paths. For the interchange at 70 and 256, those plans are still in the design phase. There is no construction funding yet, and this portion of the funding in the resolution will be used to work on design.
- Mr. Rist had a question on project 311. He asked if it was all state routes or if there were local roads involved – either city or county. Mr. Graham answered that it was all main line 161 – State Route 161. Mr. Rist continued his question, that it would be all state funds for the project, with no local funds. Mr. Graham confirmed that there were Federal funds being matched with State funds for that project, but at this time there were no local funds.
- Mr. May asked to confirm that the purpose of this resolution was to approve the addition of these projects to the TIP. Mr. Graham answered that yes, in most cases with the resolution today, the projects were already on the TIP and additional phases were being added or the existing funding was being modified. Mr. May continued that he wondered what would happen if the funding is declined the projects. Mr. Graham answered that if the MPO were to not approve the amendment to the TIP at the policy level, the federal funds in the project would not be eligible to be expended.
- Mr. Needleman asked if Mr. Graham could go through the projects and identify which ones would be started and finished in the next few years. Mr. Graham answered that for this particular amendment, there were not a lot of projects that would be doing that. The project I-71 at Sunbury Parkway; and the Sunbury Parkway from 36 to 3B's & K, both of those projects would be moving ahead. Beyond these, the rest of the projects will take a substantial amount of time, as they are still in preliminary engineering, environmental review, or detailed design phase. Mr. Graham continued that the majority of the projects would go to construction phase in the next TIP, 2026 to 2029. Mr. Needleman then asked how often a project starts the engineering phase and then it is decided that it

won't be proceeding into construction. Mr. Graham answered that was very rare for that to occur.

- As there were no further questions or comments, Chair Rollins asked for a motion to approve Resolution T-8-24. Mr. Watson moved; Mr. May seconded; and the motion passed.

V. Informational Items

- LinkUS Update
 - Mr. Lewis began the update by reiterating what Mr. Ganter had mentioned – the LinkUS initiative would be on the ballot in November, which will provide a funding stream for new transit and connections, to reinvent the Central Ohio mobility network, outside of just the roadways. Thus, this project is looking at the mobility network, but also looking at the community level. Questions being asked include: how we bring people closer together to each other, destinations, and housing in a more multimodal way. Also, how this can be done in a more inclusive way. Looking at the plan, it is a half a percent sales tax increase to a permanent 1% transit sales tax within the COTA service area, which is mostly Franklin County, but extends slightly into portions into Delaware, Licking, Union, and Fairfield Counties. This will generate around \$190 million a year to be used to fund the projects and to also leverage federal funding. This will be nearly \$1 billion in federal funding to bring into the region to transform mobility in the region. The changes will include bikeways, sidewalks, buses (both in the corridor or just for the regular bus network), new routes, extended frequencies, and longer schedules as well. Mr. Lewis continued that the COTA service area includes all the cities, villages, townships, and everyone who lives and works in the region. The plan will have a lot of different components to it. Mr. Lewis showed a map that highlighted the different corridors that are in development right now, are targeted for the future, or planned for future study. The West Broad Corridor is the furthest along in the design phase at this time. It is at about 60% design, targeting to be at 90% by the end of the year.
 - Looking at the East Main project, which is a little behind the West Broad, it is maybe a year or so behind. The Northwest Corridor is behind the West Broad and East Main corridors. Mr. Lewis noted that ODOT has initiated a workforce transit study within Central Ohio to look at how to get people who live in the northern part of Franklin County and Southern part of Delaware County to the growing job centers in Licking County. While this is not necessarily part of LinkUS, it is aligned both in time and mission.
 - Mr. Lewis continued that bus rapid transit has dedicated traffic lanes for buses. It will also have signals timed for when the bus pulls up and for when it is ready to go. It will ensure that buses go before any other traffic to ensure that service is frequent, fast, and reliable. The buses will also be higher quality, where passengers can just walk or roll on, and you don't need to wait for the bus to kneel. Moving on, Mr. Lewis mentioned that \$4 billion of the funds would go to the corridors, and over a billion will go to increase existing fixed route transit services. Some lines would be targeted for 24-hour service and running buses more frequently. This will amount to around 45% more transit service through the lifetime, through 2050. There will also be an increase in COTA Plus service. COTA Plus is an on-demand service that riders can order a ride and take it where they want to go. In addition, MORPC has been working to administer the Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) program. These include paths, greenways, bikeways, sidewalks, and administering a program that works with every local jurisdiction to identify projects that align with the mission of the program

- and can be funded and delivered within the first five years of the program. Just over 25% of the new sales tax would be dedicated solely to these types of projects.
- Mr. Lewis briefly discussed how the planning is being aligned to give all of the communities access to resources, the equitable transit oriented development strategy and others to make sure that growth is captured in a way that won't price people out of where they currently live. This will give residents opportunities for different options with a focus on affordable housing in the future.
 - Ms. Ayers asked if values were being assigned to the Desired Outcomes that were noted on a slide. She asked what the outcome goal was – for poverty to come down, median household income to increase, etc. Ms. Ayers asked how real, measurable numbers were being assigned to this project. Mr. Lewis answered that it would depend on what facet of LinkUs was being examined. Many components will depend on specific criteria, depending on grant opportunities. For bus rapid transit, it will look at who can actually ride the bus, what neighborhoods it is going through, the types of jobs that would be accessible etc. Ms. Ayers asked if it would be possible to get a list of these specific criteria. Commented that she would like to be able to provide that information to the community on how this is going to help them – how many miles of sidewalks, etc. Ms. Schaper let the group know that the partners had established a baseline of where things are currently and are looking at what the targets will be. Ms. Schaper continued that they could definitely share the kind of data that is currently available and what can actually be measured. Ms. Schaper also added that if anyone has ideas of metrics and/or what should be measured or data that needs to be identified, the working group would be happy to add to their list.
 - Mr. Howard asked to look at the BRT map routes, and what the near-term time frame means. Mr. Lewis explained that, looking at the map, the lines in dark blue are in design phase right now. Those are actually going through the engineering process. The plan will go through the design phase, and then ask for a request from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to see if the plan is sufficient and can receive the construction funds. Assuming that all of that goes through on the planned schedule, the West Broad and East Main Street corridors would be under construction by the end of this decade. The first phase of the Northwest corridor would be around the end of the decade and the other two – Northeast and Southeast, still to be determined, but not too far behind that.
 - Mr. Howard then asked how the suburbs, specifically Reynoldsburg, would look in comparison to the renderings that are often seen for downtown Columbus. Mr. Lewis answered that Reynoldsburg would look very similar. What is planned as of right now, especially through downtown Reynoldsburg, would be mixed traffic flow. Instead of seeing the center running dedicated lanes in the center bus stops, it would be in the existing travel lanes and side running bus stops through the historic heart of Reynoldsburg. However, where possible and code allows, work is being done with local partners to identify, to the maximum extent possible, putting dedicated lanes in, as they are what drive the frequency and the speed of bus rapid transit. Mr. Howard then asked if, according to what Mr. Lewis was saying, the BRT would be taking up two lanes, from the four lanes. Ms. Schaper answered that that portion is in design right now and that it is at about 60% completed. The thought is to have dedicated lanes as much as possible throughout the whole corridor. Thus, where it makes sense, and depending on what the existing right of way is and the existing property lines are, that will dictate what the cross section will end up looking like.
 - Mr. Watson commented that, according to an article in the Dispatch there are around 1400 miles of streets with no sidewalks. He then asked if, according to the plan as it

- mentioned 700 miles of new sidewalk, would that be replacing existing sidewalk or adding on to existing sidewalks. And, if it is replacing some existing sidewalks, can you track what's being replaced and what's new so we know how much of the 1400 miles is still left to be addressed. Mr. Lewis answered that the target is to fill the gaps where sidewalks don't exist at all now. It would be extending and filling in the existing network, not replacing, unless there is a barrier to accessibility if you need to actually widen it to ADA standards or if there are big parts missing. However, by and large, it would be expansion, not replacement.
- Mr. Needleman asked how street parking was being factored into the plans. He noted that there is a lot of street parking and this it is already hard to find a place to park. He also commented, that according to recent articles quoting MORPC's Executive Director Murdock, passenger rail will be coming to downtown, adding two rails. Mr. Lewis started that for the parking issue, very early in the design, COTA will perform a parking study to understand and examine the current resources. Those studies would look at price, availability, and what would happen if the parking was removed or shifted. For passenger rail, nothing is currently set with passenger rail, though partners are currently working toward that. However, it would likely be on existing rail networks versus building a whole new network.
 - Mr. May asked about the timelines for these projects. He commented that during the presentations today, multiple decades were mentioned: 2030, 2040, 2050. Mr. May asked why these projects can't be done quicker. He also asked how we compare to other cities around the world. He asked if it is typical for in, say Amsterdam, it takes 3 to 15 years to implement a single bus rapid transit lane. He wondered what the impediments were to getting projects done faster. Mr. Lewis answered that there were a myriad of reasons why things can't move as quickly as we'd want them to. Anything from utility relocation that takes a long time to design and move. In addition, before some things can be moved to accommodate the changes, looking toward 2050 the actual increase in sales tax receipts has to be aligned with the work. It won't be that the levy is passed and the full \$8 billion is available in 2025. There are also resource constraints when building these things as well, just in terms of who can build them, and construction resources. Mr. May then asked if there was a mile by mile comparison with other counties and internally within the US. Mr. Lewis mentioned that these are things that COTA/LinkUS does need to look at for the FTA. Mr. May also asked what the economic value was in adding an extra lane to a highway. He asked what the economic impact would be if some of these were rejected, and how traffic would be impacted.
 - Ms. Rollins interceded that the committee was going to move on at this point, and that the agenda was being adjusted, in the interest of timing. Ms. Rollins encouraged the group to email Mr. Lewis directly with any question and to check out the LinkUS website.

VI. Other Business

- Mr. Watson shared that on his recent trip to Florida, he had the opportunity to ride on the new Brightline high speed rail. The train is very comfortable, and it is not like a typical passenger train ride. There are two classes of service passengers can purchase. One is premium and the other is called smart class, not value. Wi-Fi is available and the service is great for commuters. The terminals are built more like supermarkets where there are facilities to purchase things and they are designed to be inviting and encourage you to relax and enjoy yourself versus just get passengers in and out. Customer service is very high level and friendly. The cost of

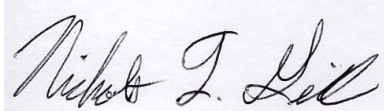
the build was very comparable to what Amtrak high speed trains are being billed at. Brightline also just announced that they will be building a line from LA to Las Vegas that they anticipate being built in four years. This is in very direct opposition to the projects Amtrak has been working on in California which has been in construction for 10 years for a line from San Diego to Sacramento. The Brightline projects are privately run, so they don't face the same hurdles that Amtrak does with federally controlled railways.

- Mr. Watson continued that he believes this type of private railway system might be a good option to look at as the Central Ohio region prepares to bring back passenger rail. Mr. Agrawal added that the MORPC team, along with area stakeholders, also had the opportunity to experience Bright Line in February. The group also experienced a high level of service and were impressed by their work. Ms. Girves added that she agreed that travel with dignity is something that needs to be built into all modes of the transportation system – not just cars and luxury transit.
- Chair Rollins then turned then asked Mr. Rist to share an email he had sent to her about the Committee. Mr. Rist shared that he had witnessed that during the committee meetings, when the time came for the round table discussion, the meeting was often short on time. Mr. Rist went onto say that many of the members probably have issues they would like to bring up, but there is not time to discuss them. He mentioned that he proposed moving the round table portion of the meeting to the front of the agenda, after the previous meeting minutes were approved. Chair Rollins thanked Mr. Rist for his observations and for bringing the idea forward. Chair Rollins went on to mention that she had met with Mr. Gill and Ms. Schaper prior to this meeting to discuss what can be done. It was decided that the committee can look at gathering topics from members prior to the meeting. Topics and member names could be collected and then time could be governed. Mr. Agrawal agreed that it is important for the Committee and members to have time to give their input. He reiterated that staff would be happy to accommodate moving items around on the agenda and working with the Committee Chair. Mr. Watson asked if there could be a time limit on discussions to limit it to 10 or 15 minutes. Anything that goes over that time could be tabled for the next meeting. Chair Rollins agreed and had made that suggestion as well. Ms. Ayers commented that it would seem to make sense for committee members to have their items to Chair Rollins and staff the day prior to the meeting. Chair Rollins answered that they didn't need to send all their questions, but that if there were several questions on a certain topic, then Mr. Gill could let presenters know. Chair Rollins also mentioned that it might be best to have a few weeks to get these items. With the meeting packet and other information, it is a lot for committee members to read through and prep for the meeting. Mr. Gill reiterated that knowing what might come up in the round table would be very helpful and that at times, when there are a lot of action items to get through in an agenda, there are time frames when those things must be completed.
- Mr. Rist asked if it was possible to get COTA and ODOT staff at the meetings. Mr. Gill said the staff could try to work to do that.
- Mr. Gill presented topics that would be coming in the upcoming meetings. There is no meeting in July; then in August there will be an update on the Wayfinding Study and hopefully an update from ODOT District 6. In the future staff are working to get an update from Intel as members of the committee have previously requested.
- Mr. Gill then let the committee know he had one additional item for the meeting. Mr. Gill announced that he would be retiring from his position effective August 31, 2024. Mr. Agrawal then announced that Ms. Schaper will be taking over the position of

Transportation Study Director, effective July 29, 2024 so that there was overlap before Mr. Gill left.

VII. Adjourn

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nick I. Gill", is displayed on a light gray rectangular background.

Nick Gill, Secretary
Community Advisory Committee Full Name



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION REPORT

June & July 2024

PROGRAMMING

Parag Agrawal, Chief Mobility and Infrastructure Officer and Senior Director of Programming – pagrawal@morpc.org

Transportation

Nick Gill, Transportation Study Director – ngill@morpc.org

Metropolitan Transportation Plan:

- MORPC received notification in July of approval of the 2024-2050 MTP's air quality conformity determination.
- MORPC's webpage that hosts the MTP documentation was updated to reflect the final documents. [Link](#)

Adjusted Urban Area Boundaries

- MORPC recommended adjustments to the Adjusted Urban Area boundaries for the Columbus Urbanized Area on June 30, 2024 to ODOT for review. This process included consulting with county and city engineers in jurisdictions along the urban area's boundary to develop proposed changes.

Transit, Mobility & Human Services:

Mobility Management

- The yearly update to the Regional Mobility Plan was completed and approved by the Regional Mobility Plan Steering Committee on June 7, 2024.
- MORPC participated in several transportation work groups and advisory committees including the City of Dublin Transportation Work Group and the Pickaway County Transportation Advisory Committee.
- The Franklin County Mobility Advisory Committee met in June and participated in a COTA Plus travel training led by COTA.
- The Mobility Manager continued to promote accessible mobility options at tabling events and a presentation with the Gerlach Center at Ohio Health.

Gohio Commute

- MORPC finalized a new contract with Commute with Enterprise to provide vanpool services through December 2027.
- Presentations have been done at various chambers of commerce around the region to educate about the Gohio Commute TDM services for their members.

- A digital marketing packet was sent to several Central Ohio businesses to promote the upcoming Statewide Ohio Commuter challenge. This turnkey digital packet provides businesses with all essential documentation and outlines important dates to share with employees.
- The Gohio Commute 'Make Your Miles Matter' Spring Challenge ended. There were 1,431 commuters who logged information; saved \$6,370 dollars; reduced 9,151 LBS of CO2; and commuted 15,475 miles. A new challenge has begun and MORPC looks forward to seeing what our commuters accomplish in the 'Make Your Miles Matter' Summer Challenge. This challenge will run through September.

Transportation Planning Activities:

LinkUS Mobility Initiative

- MORPC hosted the LinkUS Transit Supportive Infrastructure (TSI) Technical Coordinating Committee in June and the TSI Leadership Committee in July. During these meetings a draft 2026-2030 TSI Capital Improvements Program was approved for public review and comment. A comment period will run for 30 days from July 25 to August 23, 2024. During this period the public will be invited to review the information via an interactive story map and submit comments electronically. The story map will be available starting July 25, 2024 and can be accessed via MORPC's LinkUs Page. [Link](#) Two in-person and two virtual events are also being planned.
- Regional engagement continues as LinkUS partners make presentations to numerous community, neighborhood, and business groups.
- New communication tools are also being developed including new videos and community-based one-pagers to highlight proposed projects in specific communities.

Passenger Rail

- The Regional Passenger Rail Committee is convening its first meeting on July 23, 2024.
- Representatives from Amtrak visited Central Ohio and met with MORPC staff members to discuss activity and progress on the two potential Ohio corridors being studied as part of the Corridor ID program.
- MORPC continues to provide technical support to member communities interested in integrating potential passenger rail service with their local plans and development priorities.

Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO):

- CORPO staff coordinated with the MPO area, seven counties, and several local jurisdictions to propose revisions to the Adjusted Urban Area boundaries and submit to the ODOT Functional Classification Coordinator for review.
- Continued to develop interactive web tools for stakeholders to utilize the CORPO Safety Action Plan.

Active Transportation Planning:

- The third quarter Active Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 28, 2024, at 10 AM. This will be a hybrid meeting.
- MORPC continues to host virtual group viewings of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) monthly Professional Development webinars. These webinars are eligible for 1.0 hour of American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certification Maintenance credit. Contact Jordan Petrov (JPetrov@morpc.org) if you are interested in attending any of the MORPC group viewings. The next webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, August 21, 2024, at 3:00 PM on the topic of, "*Bike Comfort: Expanding our Understanding Through Data and Empathy.*"

- MORPC participated in stakeholder meetings for the development of Active Transportation Plans with the City of Gahanna and the City of Grove City. The City of Gahanna is in the process of finalizing their plan, while the City of Grove City is just kicking off the planning process.
- MORPC will be presenting at a City of Columbus Council hearing on July 26, 2024, to talk about Complete Streets.

Transportation Safety:

- Save the date for the 2024 Safe Streets Central Ohio conference! MORPC will be hosting the Regional Safety Forum on Thursday, September 26, 2024, at the Wigwam Event Center in Pickerington, Ohio. Registration details and more information will be available soon at: www.morpc.org/event/ssco.
- The final deadline for the FY24 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) federal discretionary grant program is Thursday, August 29, 2024, by 5 p.m. (EDT). This deadline is for Planning and Demonstration grants only. If your agency is interested in applying for an SS4A grant this year, please let the MORPC team know.
- MORPC is participating in an initiative led by ODOT Central Office to develop a statewide context classification model that could potentially inform various roadway design decision-making procedures. The two working groups are in the process of developing a model and identifying current policies and programs that could benefit or be impacted by the use of such a model. This work should conclude by the end of 2024 and will be reviewed by the ODOT Executive Management team for implementation.
- Multiple MORPC team members participated in new safety trainings provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) through the Ohio LTAP center:
 - Slow Streets, Safe Links: Fixing Urban and Suburban Arterials on June 11, 2024.
 - Advancing Implementation of the Safe System Approach on June 13, 2024.
- MORPC participated in the following recurring safety committee meetings and events:
 - Franklin County Safe Communities Coalition meeting on June 5, 2024.
 - Franklin County Traffic Fatality Review meeting on June 6, 2024.
 - OARC Transportation Safety Subcommittee meeting on June 18, 2024.
 - Ohio Technical Records Coordination Committee Technical Council meeting on June 20, 2024.
 - Franklin County Traffic Fatality Review meeting on July 11, 2024.
 - Central Ohio Alliance for Safe Transportation meeting on July 18, 2024

Technical Assistance Program:

- An application window for the next cycle of the MORPC Technical Assistance Program (TA Program) will launch in September this year. If your agency is interested in the TA Program and you have ideas or questions about potential services, please review the program website [here](#), or contact Jordan Petrov at jpetrov@morpc.org.
- The City of Delaware formally adopted *Travel Safe Delaware: An Action Plan for Safe Streets* on June 24, 2024, by Council resolution. This comprehensive Safety Action Plan was developed through the MORPC Technical Assistance Program in collaboration with City of Delaware staff and key stakeholders. Delaware City Council committed to a target of reducing traffic related fatalities and serious injuries by 5% each year, with a long-term vision to reach zero fatalities and serious injuries.
- A second community workshop was held on May 20, 2024 with Jefferson Township leadership, staff, residents, and agency partners to share the public survey and geospatial analysis results; and refine the Township's active transportation project priorities. Moving forward, a close-out meeting will be hosted virtually with agency partners on August 8, 2024 to share updated project priorities and discuss

potential opportunities for cross-jurisdictional coordination on project funding and implementation. The study and its Implemented Plan will be completed in mid-September, when MORPC will also present the plan to the Township's Board of Trustees.

- A walk audit was conducted with Franklin Township staff and agency partners at Franklin County and the City of Columbus. The audit focused on the area around Eureka Avenue and Briggs Road. The audit sought to identify opportunities for enhanced pedestrian infrastructure, traffic calming, and other slow streets interventions. A walk audit assessment report will summarize the audit. A final Implementation Plan will recommend next steps toward funding and implementing safer pedestrian environments in the Township where there are currently no sidewalks available.

Infrastructure Funding:

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- The June TIP Amendment was incorporated into ODOT's July S/TIP Amendment.

MORPC-Attributable Funding

- Commitment Updates were received on July 12, 2024 for 31 outstanding funding commitments.
- Screening Applications for new funding commitments were received on July 19, 2024.
- A summary of all updates and screening applications will be presented to the AFC on July 31, 2024.

Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)

- Applications for SFY 2026 SCIP/LTIP funding are now open for District 3 (Franklin County) through August 30, 2024.

Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC)

- The MORPC region submitted five applications to TRAC for funding this cycle, totaling over \$260 million in requests. MORPC is reviewing each application and evaluating the projects with respect to the MTP goals to aid in the development of a priority ranking of applications. Concurrently, a public comment period is open until August 16, 2024.
- A regional public hearing for Central Ohio will be scheduled for September or October 2024. Final funding decisions are expected to be made in December 2024 or January 2025.

Federal Competitive Programs

- United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced awards to the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. Five applications were submitted to this program from Central Ohio. Although none the Central Ohio's RAISE applications were awarded, three were identified as Projects of Merit. These projects are Columbus's Linden Greenline Project, Lancaster's Eastside Industrial Connector Feasibility Study, and MORPC's Trail Towns in the Nation's Heartland Planning Project.
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced awards for the Pathways to Removing Obstacles (PRO) to Housing program. MORPC and the City of Columbus applied separately to this program, neither application was selected for an award. MORPC staff scheduled meetings with Councils of Governments throughout the County who obtained a PRO Housing award to prepare for the next round of funding.
- The Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) program from USDOT concluded on July 12. Two applications were submitted in the Central Ohio Region to plan and prototype various transportation technologies. These applications were submitted by the Northwest US-33 Council of Governments and the City of Dublin.
- The Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) applied to USDOT's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Planning Pilot Program. This application requested \$1 million to complete capacity, economic, and

market analysis for each transit stop on the East Main Street Bus Rapid Transit corridor. MORPC provided a Letter of Support for this application.

- COTA submitted the Project Rating Request Package for their Capital Investment Grant (CIG) from USDOT. This funding for the East Main Street Bus Rapid Transit corridor was obtained in October of 2021, the Project Rating Request Package opens further funding within this program. MORPC provided a Letter of Support for this Project Request Package.
- The City of Columbus applied to USDOT's Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP). MORPC has been identified as a partner on this application. This application requests funds to plan increased connectivity to existing trails in Columbus and for funds to create resources to assist Central Ohio communities in leveraging a Trail Town framework.

Money Mondays

- The following Money Mondays sessions were held:
 - June 3: Government Accountability Office (GAO)
 - June 10: Small Nation and Affordable Housing
 - June 17: Broadband Funding
 - July 8: Affordable Housing and Rural Housing Efforts in Lancaster
 - July 15: Working with the Ohio Chamber of Commerce

Economic Development

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy/ Economic Development District:

- The Commission established the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee as an ad hoc committee that will advise the Economic Development District (EDD) Board and appointed Daryl Hennessy as the committee's chair. The committee membership includes leaders representing a broad range of economic interests for the region. Invitations have been sent. In addition to advising the EDD board, the CEDS Committee is also responsible for implementing and updating the CEDS for the designated Central Ohio region.
- Bylaws for the EDD Board and CEDS Committee are ready for review by the Commission's Bylaw Review Committee.
- MORPC's Economic Development Team hosted Ohio's Economic Development Representative, Lee Shirey, on June 18, 2024 for a series of presentations provided by stakeholders and partners from the 11-county EDD. The focus of this forum was for the EDA to learn more about ongoing regional projects, as well as barriers to development where resources from the EDA might be useful.
- The US Economic Development Administration has awarded MORPC's application to the Partnership Planning Assistance Program. This was MORPC's first application since achieving the Economic Development District (EDD) designation. The grant will establish the economic development framework and fund the implementation of the, previously approved, Central Ohio Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Competitive Advantage Projects (CAP)

- At the June 18, 2024 Economic Development Forum, attendees were given an interactive CAP handout to garner feedback on current or prospective projects. The handout was for either the county they represent or regional CAPs and will help inform updates to the CAPs.

Freight Coordination

- The Economic Development team applied for a U.S. EDA Planning and Local Technical Assistance grant. If awarded, MORPC will work with a consultant to develop a region-wide freight plan. Over an 18-month period, the study will analyze the region's freight network and economic profile; identify

funding opportunities to improve freight movement; and create a process for integrating freight considerations into future transportation, economic development, and land-use plans.

Drive Investment Portal:

- The Drive Investment Portal continues to be a member resource with vital information on existing and future funding opportunities to help finance projects. For any questions on funding opportunities, please contact Preston Frick at pfrick@morpc.org
- Improvements to the portal are currently underway to help users filter funding opportunities. The following changes are proposed:
 - Modify the number of records displayed on each page
 - Display total number of funding opportunities with implemented filters
 - Filter opportunities based on the application deadline
 - Filter opportunities with rolling deadlines
 - Filter opportunities from “Private Foundations”
 - Funding Agency name now visible on the funding opportunity cards

PLANNING

Dave Dixon, Director of Data Analytics & Strategy – ddixon@morpc.org

Brandi Whetstone, Associate Director of Sustainability - bwhetstone@morpc.org

Community Development

Central Ohio Greenways (COG)

- The COG Board met on July 17, 2024 to hear project updates, Working Group progress, and advise on summer COG intern research projects.
- The COG Trail Towns Working Group met on July 15, 2024 to advise on COG Intern Katy McMahon’s research on social isolation, to discuss COG forum agenda items, and next steps for Trail Town Implementation. The group is seeking approximately \$10,000 for a COG Trail Town Branding project.
- The Outdoor Trails Pass partnership with Experience Columbus continues to be a popular program with hundreds of new sign-ups and check-ins monthly.
- The COG Trail Closure and Detours Steering Committee has met twice to discuss recommendations for designing and marketing trail detours. They will meet once more to finalize the recommendations.
- The COG Mapping Natural Assets Steering Committee kicked-off their project on April 25, 2024. The technical working groups are meeting throughout July and August to guide the data indexing process. The project is on track to be completed this fall.
- COG staff are available to share the results of the COG Wayfinding Strategy to MORPC members and other implementation partners.
- COG will host a Trail Forum followed by a kayaking adventure on August 27, 2024. If you are interested in attending, please register here - [LINK](#).
- MORPC partnered with the City of Columbus on an Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) application to advance trail town program work. The application was submitted on July 17, 2024.
- COG has sponsored the Buckeye Trail Association's Buckeye Trails Fest in September and will be tabling the event on September 12, 13, and 14, 2024.
- COG will be supporting Green Columbus’s ArborFest at Whetstone Park this fall.

- The Greenways Planning Studio (GPS) launched in July 2024 in partnership with RAPID5. GPS will support RAPID5 in technical assistance, strategic planning, and regional collaboration. GPS is interested in collaborations with local government partners to expand greenway planning beyond trails - conservation, public access, and connectivity of all greenspaces.
- The COG Wayfinding Strategy will be a featured topic at the upcoming Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) conference in Detroit and the Ohio Transportation Engineering Conference (OTEC) in Columbus.

Central Ohio Blueways

- The Central Ohio Blueways Steering Committee Working Groups have begun meeting to set goals for the remainder of 2024 and 2025. Led by MORPC, the working groups will develop a set of S.M.A.R.T. goals to help guide their work. Potential projects include water trail designation, the onion bag project, a signage study, and a hazard removal consortium. The Central Ohio Blueways Steering Committee will meet again in the beginning of August to discuss potential projects.
- Central Ohio Blueways is continuing to work with regional partners on a large-scale river clean-up effort. The event is tentatively scheduled for October 13, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and will focus on eight total locations: two locations on each of the Scioto River, Olentangy River, Alum Creek, and Big Walnut Creek. Planning for this event is ongoing. Partners for the clean-up effort include Keep Columbus Beautiful, Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks, the City of Columbus, FLOW, FACT, Franklin County Soil & Water Conservation District, and RAPID5.

Regional Housing Strategy (RHS)

Outreach

- Conversations around housing issues continue with MORPC member communities. The Community Development Team is continuing to promote the identification of barriers and solutions related to housing for members through connections with MORPC's Community Assistance Programs and by giving presentations to councils and other organizations. The MORPC team is working on identifying ways to expand upon the previous work of the Regional Housing Strategy.
- The Community Development Team also continues to work with the National Association of Regional Councils' Housing Working Group on discussions surrounding the housing crisis, to learn how peer organizations are approaching housing issues.

Implementation Assistance

- Are you interested in a housing/growth workshop for your community's elected officials, staff, or community leaders? MORPC is taking requests for presentations and workshops. Our team will work with you to design the agenda, including recommended speakers and learning objectives. Contact Jonathan Miller for more information JMiller@morpc.org.

Community-Based Planning Assistance (CBPA)

- The Community-Based Planning Assistance Program (CBPA) continues to be available for community assistance requests. Members may learn more about – or request assistance from – CBPA by visiting <https://www.morpc.org/community-based-planning-assistance>. Please contact Jonathan Miller jmiller@morpc.org with any questions or to discuss potential ways that MORPC may assist.
- The Community Development Team is also soliciting feedback on any specific topic or program area to include in a Planning Resources Library. If there is a specific topic or area of planning that you think should be included in the Planning Resources Library, please contact Jonathan Miller.

Consultant Services Program

- Starting in August, as part of the Consultant Services Program, the Community Development Team will begin hosting all RFP's from MORPC Member communities, regardless of the particular program area. MORPC will host hyperlinks to any RFP through the Consultant Services Program webpage to generate additional visibility for community projects and bids. If your community would like MORPC to host a link to any available RFPs or RFQs, contact Jonathan Miller at jmiller@morpc.org.

Planner Pool Program

- Members are invited to submit applications for assistance from the Planner Pool Program. The Community Development Team is accepting projects related to planning, zoning, and sustainability.
- Current projects in discussion – or recently completed – with MORPC member communities include parking assessments, community character studies, apartment studies, neighborhood visioning plans, supplemental design guidebooks, and a community sustainability plan.
- If you are interested in more information on the consultant services program, additional staffing assistance, filling staff vacancies during staff vacations or periods of leave, assistance with gaps in staffing, or other planning or pre-planning activities (such as guidance with best practices,) contact Jonathan Miller jmiller@morpc.org to schedule a time to discuss your community's potential needs and ways that MORPC may be able to help.

Sustainability

Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC)

- The SAC met on June 5, 2024 at MORPC. Special guests from OSU presented a new study abroad program developed for students to participate in the annual UN Climate Change Conference, or COP 28. They provided an overview of COP 28, held in Dubai in 2023, and would like feedback from the Committee Members on topics to explore at next year's conference. The meeting also included discussion of MORPC's Summit on Sustainability, scheduled October 29, 2024 and reports from the Boards and Working Groups. The next SAC meeting will take place on September 18, 2024 at NBBJ, featuring a presentation about sustainable development projects.

Regional Sustainability Agenda (RSA) Sub-committee

- A sub-committee of the SAC will kick off in August to begin updating the Regional Sustainability Agenda (RSA). The RSA includes goals and measurable objectives to align members and regional stakeholders around common sustainability goals, as well as to provide the framework for Sustainable2050 membership and tier status certification. For more information, please contact Brandi Whetstone, bwhetstone@morpc.org.

Sustainable2050

- The next Sustainable2050 meeting takes place on August 15, 2024 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. at Del-Co Water, featuring a tour of Ohio's first floating solar installation. Sustainable2050 membership is open to all MORPC members, and current Sustainable2050 members interested in earning their tier status certification should contact Brandi Whetstone at bwhetstone@morpc.org. A certification workbook will be provided, and a kick-off meeting is encouraged to review the process. Once a completed workbook has been submitted and reviewed by the MORPC team, the next step is to present the proposed certification to the SAC for approval at their quarterly meetings. The next deadline for workbook submissions is August 21, 2024.

Water Resources Program

Sustaining Scioto Board

- The Board met on June 26, 2024 and heard a presentation from Adam Porr, MORPC's Data and Research Officer, on forecasting products and how they are developed. Notable among them are the County Controls - a set of county-level forecasts covering the 15-county MORPC region, and the Traffic Analysis Zone forecasts - used for transportation planning covering the ten-county region. These forecasts are driven by the Metropolitan Transportation Plan cycle which is updated every 4 years. MORPC's latest forecast can be accessed [here](#). The various datasets in the forecasting products can inform project proposals beneficial to the region.
- The Board also heard about the newly formed Scioto Watershed Action Group (SWAG) from Henry Stahl with Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District. SWAG will partner with existing watershed groups to address environmental issues within the major waterways in the region. Henry Stahl talked about funding constraints and made a recruitment call for new members. The next Board meeting is on August 26, 2024.

Agricultural & Rural Communities Outreach Team

- The Outreach Team met on July 18, 2024. Chair Brian Brandt discussed with the team a potential grant award from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to American Farmland Trust on the STEP tool used to evaluate environmental practices on agricultural lands that impact water quality. The team brainstormed potential matching funds sources.
- The team is also planning two outreach events focused on highlighting the work of the Sustaining Scioto Board along with ongoing regional water priorities including the 15-County Regional Water Study. The working team will focus on informing farmers and elected officials within the MORPC service area. Members continue to identify programming areas based on the recommendations of the recently completed Communication Plan. The next meeting is on September 19, 2024.

Clean Ohio Conservation Fund

- The Natural Resources Assistance Council (NRAC) received six preliminary screener applications with a total project cost of approximately \$6 million. Project applicants presented their respective projects located in Franklin County on June 24, 2024 during the Applicant Presentations & Updates Meeting. NRAC members will visit the project sites after final application submissions, due on August 30, 2024.
- For more information about Clean Ohio funding for Franklin County, please contact Edwina Teye at eteye@morpc.org or visit our website at <https://www.morpc.org/program-service/clean-ohio-conservation-fund/>.

Regional Water Study

- MORPC and Ohio EPA will host the second Regional Water Study webinar on August 28, 2024 at 3:15 p.m. Tiffani Kavalec, Policy Director with Ohio EPA, will provide the overall status of the project including topics such as data collection and mapping, regionalization, and cost analysis. Please send requests for webinar invites, comprehensive planning updates and questions to the appropriate email address below.
- Local Planning Updates - dataandmaps@morpc.org
- Webinar invitations - eteye@morpc.org
- Project Manager - Tiffani Kavalec, Policy Director, Ohio EPA

208 Planning and Areawide Designation Process

- MORPC has formed an ad hoc committee that will review and make recommendations on the agency's proposed approach to managing modifications to Facility Planning Area boundaries and dispute resolution related to sewer service. This approach aims to offer clear guidance and a structured framework for fostering dialogue among local authorities to achieve mutually agreed upon solutions.

The outcomes of this committee’s deliberations will enhance MORPC’s eligibility for designation as an Areawide Planning Agency by Ohio EPA.

Energy Planning

Energy and Air Quality Working Group

- The next EAQWG meeting is August 28, 2024 from 1 – 2:30 PM. The EAQWG is still looking for candidates to serve as the Chair and Vice-Chair. If interested in leading the EAQWG, please email Brian Filiatraut, Energy and Sustainability Program Manager, at bfiliatraut@morpc.org.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure

- As part of the USDOT- FHWA’s Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Round 2 grant program, there are two distinct tranches of funds: \$521M for a unique resubmission opportunity for unawarded Round 1 grant applications that received “recommended” or “highly recommended,” as well as \$800M for newly submitted applications per the new Round 2 NOFO. Since MORPC’s grant proposal for Central Ohio—MORE EVS—received “highly recommended” across all scoring criteria, MORPC resubmitted Central Ohio’s MORE EVS proposal, which requested \$15M with an additional \$6.9M in regional investment.
- MORPC will soon issue an RFP looking for EV vendors to repair and or replace broken or non-operational EV charging ports throughout the 15-county region as part of MORPC’s \$2M award from the USDOT-FHWA’s Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator (EVC-RAA) Program. Please reach out to Brian Filiatraut, Energy and Sustainability Program Manager, at bfiliatraut@morpc.org for more information.

US EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program

- The CPRG Strategy Subcommittee (CSS) met on July 16, 2024 as Sustainable Columbus, MORPC, and other stakeholders develop the next deliverable - the Central Ohio Climate Action Plan (COCAP). The COCAP aims to create a unified approach to regional planning and pollution mitigation actions. We highly encourage all residents who reside within the 10-county Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)—Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Hocking, Licking, Madison, Morrow, Perry, Pickaway, and Union counties—to complete [the COCAP Community Priorities Survey](#). It is open for responses through August and September. And for more information on the COCAP, please visit the [COCAP website](#).

Residential Solar

- This year’s Columbus Area Residential Solar Co-op is open until August 26, 2024 for interested homeowners who are thinking about going solar. The Co-op is a collaborative effort led by the City of Columbus and Solar United Neighbors with MORPC, IMPACT Community Action, and Green Columbus for support. Residents who are interested in solar and live in Franklin County and the surrounding areas can join with other residents in the region to secure better pricing. To learn more about the program and register for it, please visit the [Solar United Neighbors](#) website.

Air Quality Planning

Air Quality Alerts

- Two Air Quality Alerts were issued for the Columbus region, on June 16 and 20, 2024. Ground-level ozone was the primary pollutant of concern on both days, and levels reached the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups on the national Air Quality Index (AQI) scale. MORPC’s Air Quality & Sustainability Program Coordinator was interviewed by 10TV about the first Alert of the season.

US EPA funded Neighborhood Air Monitoring Project (CLEAN)

- The team continues to move forward with the U.S. EPA funded air monitoring project, working in partnership with Franklin County Public Health. The team has begun deploying the PurpleAir sensors into the community. The team finalized their selection for the air quality modeling consultant, Ramboll, and they are expected to start in early August 2024.

Outreach

- The Air Quality program has begun outreach to various community groups and organizations and tabled at events such as Bike the Cbus on June 1, 2024; Riverfest on June 8 and 9, 2024; and made presentations to the office of Columbus City Councilmember Chris Wyche on June 28, 2024 and the Driving Park Civic Association July 17, 2024.

Data, Mapping & Modeling

Regional Data Advisory Committee (RDAC):

- The RDAC met on July 9, 2024 at MORPC. RDAC's focus in 2024 will be on the areas of Workforce & Job Quality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Cyber Security, and Regional Data Coaching projects and initiatives. Notably, two proposed MORPC member engagement events around cybersecurity and DEI were moved forward, tentatively planned for the Fall of 2024. The RDAC will meet again on October 1, 2024.

Data Day Working Group

- The Data Day Working Group continues planning for Data Day 2025. The Group toured - and is moving forward with having the event at - the event space at Columbus State Community College's Workforce Development Building. The space will accommodate additional attendees, provide a more conducive space for networking, and is more centrally located for MORPC member communities.
- The working group anticipates putting out an official call for proposals at the beginning of September.

Regional Information & Data Group (RIDG)

- The second quarter 2024 RIDG meeting, on May 29, 2024, focused on data forecasting and projection techniques. The topics were presented by Adam Porr, MORPC and Rob Moore, Scioto Analysis. Adam discussed MORPC's processes and methods for population projections; while Rob discussed sensitivity analysis and demonstrated the Monte Carlo Simulation. The RIDG Steering Committee is hoping for more involvement from the general attendees. One suggestion is to ask for proposals that the members might want to present themselves. The second idea put forth is to encourage the members to share an interesting (static) data visualization that they could briefly explain, then the group can analyze and discuss.
- The remaining dates tentatively set for the RIDG Steering Committee (SC) meetings and general RIDG meetings are: SC – July TBD, October 8; General – August 14, November 13. The RIDG Chair and staff lead will meet prior to each meeting with the Steering Committee to discuss planning for the next meeting. The topic for the August RIDG meeting is to be determined.

Central Ohio GIS User Group (COGUG)

- The most recent COGUG Meeting was held on May 15, 2024 with 70 attendees (30 in-person). Lightning rounds were presented by Pickaway County, the City of Dublin, MORPC and Franklin County Engineer’s Office. The user group will meet again on August 21, 2024.

Regional Data Coaching Working Group

- The Working Group, based on the feedback from RDAC, decided to set up a LISTSERV to support necessary data coaching needs. The Group is also planning to host future pop-up events at different Columbus Metropolitan Library branches for community outreach. The next Working Group Meeting is on August 1, 2024.

Workforce and Job Quality Working Group

- The Working Group last met on June 20, 2024 and reviewed a landscape survey of data related to job quality. The group will meet next on July 18, 2024 to review prior art and best practices for job quality assessment prepared by Results for America. The Working Group was accepted into the Results for America Workforce Fellowship, a free six-month program that includes monthly webinars, office hours with RfA staff, and engagement with other organizations pursuing work related to job quality.

DEI & Data Working Group

- The DEI & Data Working Group met on June 14, 2024 to further define proposed DEI event sessions, assign Working Group members to sessions and begin working on event planning for Fall 2024.

Cyber Security Working Group

- The Cybersecurity Working group met on June 14, 2024 and continued developing a local leader oriented educational event and began discussion on which cyber self-assessment(s) to leverage for post-event engagement with member community technical staff.

Data Management

- Development continues on the MORPC Insights platform. Insights will be a web application whose purpose is to provide data-derived insights on a variety of topics at the regional, county, and community levels. Each insight will be supported by data, visualizations, and expert commentary, and is eventually expected to feature content from trusted partners in addition MORPC-produced content. Current efforts are focused on development of standards (e.g. visualization types, schemas, schema definition formats, configuration file formats) to ensure that the content is reproducible, updateable, and scalable. In the next month, the team will meet with MORPC staff experts on transportation, housing, and sustainability to determine what data related to those subjects should be included in the platform and how it should be presented.
- The team also pursued several continuous improvement efforts:
 - Expanded use of Frictionless data standards for describing data files and schemas, as well as development of Python software libraries to streamline handling of data using these standards.
 - Explored the use of “RO Crates” as a means of packaging data with related artifacts such as metadata and scripts. RO Crates may also be used to document workflows.
 - Created standard function for suppression of point-level QCEW employer data in accordance with the data use agreement with ODOT.

Data Analytics, Mapping, and Research Activities:

- Data and mapping work has been completed for the 2024 MTP cycle. Work will continue on the initiative to improve the speed and quality of TAZ-level socioeconomic forecasts for the 2028 MTP cycle.

- The team is preparing data and documentation to support the Intel Area study, which will result in an expansion of the travel demand model to 10 counties.

Data & Research Activities

- Sustainability, Data, and Communications & Engagement team members collaborated to produce the Leaders Listen: Housing Survey – the third in the series. The report overviewing the housing survey results has been finalized and will be posted to the MORPC website in July.
- Team members continue to manage the organization’s air quality sensors in support of the EPA Air Quality Monitoring Grant. The team has suspended refactoring efforts related to our data processing scripts after learning that the consultant who is expected to be hired for the program plans to share their similar scripts. The team continues to process data from existing sensors and support other aspects of the project such as consultant selection and sensor siting.
- The team is developing county-level forecasts of households/housing by type, to better predict future housing needs. Work has been suspended temporarily on this project in deference to higher-priority projects.
- The team is working to improve the completeness of our residential building permit data collection, while simultaneously improving collection processes and developing relationships with local agency staff.
- The team is supporting the Central Ohio Water Study, an effort led by the State of Ohio to model water supply, wastewater, and stormwater needs through 2050. The team is producing household, population, and jobs forecasts for quarter-mile grids for the 15-county region, as well as grid-level forecasts of land cover.
- County population estimates as of Jan 1, 2024 have been produced. Historically these were used to produce sub-county population estimates but were not released as a standalone data product. However, MORPC plans to release the latest estimates on the Population Hub in August.
- Upcoming updates to standard data products:
 - Detailed migration analysis by county (suspended temporarily in favor of other priorities)
 - County-level population estimates as of Jan 1, 2024 (August)
 - Key ACS 2022 5-year estimate data for MORPC counties will be published on the Population Hub with new and improved user interface (August).

Mapping Activities

- MTP report wrap-up
- MTP project web map final changes
- Staff are working on maps for the Gohio vanpooling team
- Core data is being updated
- Member request submitted for SWACO to assist with locating additional recycling bins
- Improving project documentation
- Working with integrating the Transit Supported Infrastructure with the Active Transportation Network

Modeling Activities

- MTP project evaluation and model final wrap-up
- Changes and updates to EJ and AQ Appendix
- LinkUS E Main Corridor Certified traffic project and Northwest Corridor modeling, and other area requests are in progress
- Working on various traffic growth rate requests from local jurisdictions.
- Traffic count program provided data for various traffic growth rate requests from members this month

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Ralonda Hampton, Interim Sr. Director of Communications & Engagement – rhampton@morpc.org

News Releases:

- [Air Quality Alert Issued for Sunday, June 16 in Central Ohio](#) (6/15/2024)
- [Air Quality Alert Issued for Thursday, June 20 for Central Ohio](#) (6/19/2024)
- [MORPC Seeks Public Input on Projects Under Review By the Transportation Review Advisory Council](#) (6/28/2024)

MORPC in the News:

- [Walkable Communities: The future of Columbus transit heads to the ballot](#) (5/26/2024)
- [New fashion innovation hub, expanded public art displays among projects coming soon to Columbus](#) (5/28/2024)
- [How Ohio is preparing for Intel's facility](#) (5/29/2024)
- [MORPC says odds of landing two passenger rail lines are good](#) (5/31/2024)
- [Celebrate clean water and have a blast at Riverfest 2024](#) (6/7/2024)
- [MORPC seeks public input on projects](#) (6/9/2024)
- [\\$6bn LinkUS BRT funding on ballot in Ohio](#) (6/11/2024)
- [Council OKs annexation services](#) (6/12/2024)
- [Air Quality Alert issued for Franklin and surrounding counties for Sunday](#) (6/15/2024)
- [Air Quality Alert issued for several Central Ohio counties](#) (6/15/2024)
- [MORPC issues Air Quality Alert for part of Central Ohio on Sunday](#) (6/15/2024)
- [MORPC issues Air Quality Alert for part of Central Ohio on Sunday](#) (6/15/2024)
- [Air Quality Alert issued for June 16 in Central Ohio](#) (6/15/2024)
- [Air quality in Columbus area may worsen Sunday: What you need to know before going outside.](#) (6/16/2024)
- [Things to know for Central Ohio heatwave](#) (6/17/2024)
- [EPA, ODNR to perform comprehensive water study in Central Ohio](#) (6/17/2024)
- [State lays out vision for U.S. 23 corridor through Central Ohio](#) (6/17/2024)
- [Central Ohio leaders push for sales tax increase to fund \\$2 billion transit plan](#) (6/18/2024)
- [Heat advisory for Central Ohio extended until 8 p.m. Saturday as temperatures near records](#) (6/19/2024)
- [Central Ohio counties to go under Air Quality Alert Thursday](#) (6/19/2024)
- [Air Quality Alert issued for Thursday, June 20, in Central Ohio](#) (6/19/2024)
- [Central Ohio counties under Air Quality Alert for Thursday](#) (6/19/2024)
- [MORPC getting ready for population surge over the next 25 years](#) (6/19/2024)
- [Air Quality Alert issued for Central Ohio today](#) (6/20/2024)
- [Stay Safe: Unhealthy air quality levels expected in Columbus](#) (6/20/2024)

- [Air quality alert issued as Central Ohio is immersed in “heat dome” \(6/20/2024\)](#)
- [Fast Forward: The 7 projects and the impact they could have on Columbus \(6/24/2024\)](#)
- [MORPC seeks public input on major transportation projects in Fairfield County \(6/28/2024\)](#)
- [MORPC seeks public input on projects under review by the Transportation Review Advisory Council \(6/28/2024\)](#)
- [MORPC wants your feedback on Columbus-area road projects pitched to shorten commutes \(7/1/2024\)](#)
- [Mount Vernon gets \\$328,200 for sidewalks on Martinsburg Road \(7/2/2024\)](#)
- [Intern plans to take lessons from OU and Chillicothe back to native Ghana \(7/3/2024\)](#)
- [MORPC seeks public input on projects \(7/9/2024\)](#)
- [See what upgraded rapid bus service in Columbus could look like \(7/10/2024\)](#)

Digital Content:

- Social Media: Instagram, Facebook, X, LinkedIn, Threads:
- Air Quality; Blueways; Distracted Driving; eSource; Father’s Day; Food Truck Tuesdays; Gohio Commute; Housing; HUD House Party; July 4th; Juneteenth; LinkUS; MORPC Jobs; National River Month; Pride Month; Residential Services; RFPs/RFQs; Riverfest; Senior Community Resource Fair; Summit Award Nominations, Summit on Sustainability Save the Date; TRAC Public Comments; Trails Pass; Vision Zero; 614 Day
- Reach:
 - [Facebook & Instagram](#)
- Top Posts:
 - [Instagram](#)
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [X](#)
 - [LinkedIn](#)

Diversity & Inclusion:

- The MORPC DE&I Committee met during July. The team reviewed and discussed the fourth quarter and potential diversity trainings, along with employee activities.
- Staff attended the Central Ohio Diversity Consortium (CODC) retreat and brainstormed potential ways to partner with MORPC and members in 2025.
- Staff attended the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO), annual scholarship gala. MORPC was recognized as a valued member and a local student received a scholarship in MORPC’s honor.

Public Involvement & Engagement:

- Central Ohio Climate Action Plan- 7/16
- Columbus Area Solar & EV Charger Co-op- 7/12
- Senior Community Resource Fair- 7/11, 7/1

- Summit on Sustainability Award Nominations- 7/2, 6/24, 6/12
- 614 Day, 6/14
- TRAC Public Comments- 6/28
- Ohio EV Infrastructure Public Meeting- 6/14, 6/6
- HUD House Party- 6/11, 6/9,6/4
- Riverfest- 6/9, 6/8,6/7, 5/30

Marketing Campaigns:

- Gohio Commute is running a summer marketing campaign targeting employers via LinkedIn, and individuals through Facebook and Instagram with the goal of increasing employer adoption and ridership.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Eileen Leuby, Member Services Officer – eleuby@morpc.org

Member Services:

- MORPC hosted a Local Government Summer Intern Program – Career Planning Luncheon for all current interns on Tuesday, July 23, 2024. For more information on interns, please contact Alli Mancz at amancz@morpc.org
- MORPC produces a **monthly newsletter** which contains all event links and legislative updates to be issued August 7, 2024.
- Member Services also provides a **Drive Investment Newsletter** with grant and resource information. The next issue will be sent out on August 14, 2024.
- **Educational Partnerships:** Promotion of the educational partnerships provided by several local colleges and universities takes place throughout the year. These are updated on the MORPC website and are listed under the Member Benefits Section. [LINK](#)
- MORPC is also working toward announcing new educational partnership programs at the Thursday, August 8, 2024 Commission Meeting.
- MORPC has provided pilot memberships to the following agencies – Village of Ashley (Delaware County); Village of Alexandria (Licking County); Monroe Township (Licking County). This allows these agencies to experience the value of the membership and then decide if they would like to join in 2025.

Member Engagement:

- Member visits that occurred at the end of June:
 - June 27: City of Mount Vernon; Knox County Commissioners
 - July 18: City of Reynoldsburg
 - July 22: *Fayette County Commissioners; City of Washington Courthouse (Prospective Member Visits)*
- Member visits scheduled for July & August 2024:
 - August 15: City of Groveport; Truro Township
 - TBD: Village of Lockbourne, Madison Township

Events:

Past Events

- Rural Forum – Housing for All Generations: Flying Horse Farms in Morrow County. Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Future Events

- The Annual Social Media Summit will be held Tuesday, August 6, 2024 at MORPC. This year's theme is "Empowering Communities through AR, VR, and Storytelling." The summit will explore various topics related to social media, including combating misinformation and compelling narratives through social media. [Register](#)

- MORPC is hosting OSU President Ted Carter Jr in a special luncheon for **Commission members only** – before the Thursday, August 8, 2024 Commission meeting Noon to 1 p.m. [LINK](#) to register. Advance Registration is required
- **Zoning for the Future** – Wednesday, October 23, 2024. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Opportunity Center in New Lexington, Ohio (Perry County). Save the date. Registration will open soon.

For more information on any of these activities, please contact **Eileen Leuby, MORPC Member Services Officer**. eleuby@morpc.org or 614-381-0111



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Community Advisory Committee

FROM: Nick Gill, Transportation Director

DATE: July 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Informational Items for Community Advisory Committee

The information below provides brief introductions to the three information items that are on the July 29, 2024 CAC agenda.

Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) Applications & MPO Prioritization Process

The ODOT Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) evaluates funding applications that result in ODOT's largest transportation project investments. Projects reviewed by the TRAC have a total project cost greater than \$12 million, add capacity to the transportation system, and support economic development. These projects are eligible to receive funds through the ODOT's Major New Capacity Program.

The presentation this month will focus on the 2024 TRAC application cycle which opened on May 1st and closed on May 31st. As part of the TRAC process, TRAC requests input from metropolitan planning organizations as part of the application evaluation process. MORPC conducts evaluations of the TRAC applications that fall within the MPO transportation planning boundaries and prioritizes each application based on the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) goals and objectives. MORPC provides the region's TRAC project priorities to ODOT, which are considered during the funding selection process. Additional information on the MORPC's TRAC involvement can be found at <https://www.morpc.org/programs-services/trac/>.

Technical Assistance Program Update

The Technical Assistance Program (TA Program) provides assistance to eligible MORPC members for community-based planning services that help to advance regional goals and specific strategies identified in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The program awards technical assistance services through a competitive application process. Annually, MORPC updates the TA Program Guide and solicits applications for the program. Additional information is available at <https://www.morpc.org/programs-services/technical-assistance-program/>.

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director

Chris Amorose Groomes
Chair

Michelle Crandall
Vice Chair

Ben Kessler
Secretary

The presentation this month will briefly highlight the program purpose and history, including an overview of current services. The primary focus of the presentation is introducing the timeline for adopting a new program guide and launching the next round of applications for the program – anticipated to occur in September.

Wayfinding Study Update

MORPC received funding from the Ohio Department of Transportation in 2023 to develop a Central Ohio Greenways Wayfinding Strategy for the Central Ohio region. This strategy will also potentially serve as a model for the rest of the State of Ohio. The Strategy goes beyond maps and signage with recommendations to enhance, elevate, and increase the number of trailheads, improve access to them, and use placemaking, ambassadors, and technology to make the experience of navigating the trail system enjoyable, comfortable, and inspirational. MORPC is working with communities around the region to begin implementing the recommendations. Additional information is available at: [Central Ohio Greenways – MORPC.org](https://www.morpc.org/central-ohio-greenways)