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Background

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) was created in 1969 as a successor to the Franklin County Regional Planning Commission under authority granted by Ohio Revised Code Section 713.21. As Central Ohio's regional council for local governments, MORPC provides tools and resources to its members comprised of counties, cities, villages and townships. Since its inception, MORPC has grown to over 80 members comprised of regional agencies representing rural, suburban, and urban communities across Central Ohio.

Recognizing the changing landscape in our region, MORPC previously formed the Diversity & Inclusion Committee in 2009 to investigate the agency's approach to diversity. The committee membership included MORPC's Board Chair and team members representing all departments and various positions. The committee inventoried each department's policies in serving diverse populations. The committee also hired a consultant, Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence (MACC), to help MORPC determine and enhance its diversity efforts.

The 2014 Diversity & Inclusion Work Plan was built on the achievements and challenges of the 2013 Plan. As a response to the performance indicators from the 2013 Plan, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee placed greater emphasis on capturing data specifically in the areas of Diversity Spend and Service to Diverse Populations.

The 2015 Diversity & Inclusion Work Plan showed improvement in the reporting of the data that provided a more accurate depiction of the diversity spend. While the total diversity spend for MORPC was more than 25 percent, the data revealed a continuing challenge to improve spending in the areas of Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE). Service to diverse populations also showed little change, or in some cases a decline specifically to Hispanics, one of our largest minority populations in Central Ohio.

A review of the performance indicators of the six areas of focus in the 2016-2017 Diversity & Inclusion Work Plan allowed MORPC to identify accomplishments, to determine whether goals were met through the strategies selected, and areas to prioritize targeted efforts for 2018. The results continued to show challenges in diversity spend particularly with Minority Business Enterprises. A review of the MORPC Board of Commission and staff continued to show a need for more diversity when compared to the demographics of the MORPC region.

In 2018 and in response to the 2016-2017 performance indicators, MORPC embarked on new actions to address the challenges. The specific and actionable priority items included:

- Better performance on priority diversity and inclusion goals
- Implement a new internal structure to improve capacity, results, and priorities
- Create a new internal diversity and inclusion structure
- Create responsibility by Directors for participation and performance
- Assertively review and improve diversity spend
- Assertively review and improve diverse hiring
- Provide focused data and technical assistance
- Increase Executive Committee reporting to two times per year
- Develop a focused external facing effort to improve diverse voices on MORPC's Board, committees and working groups

The 2019-2020 Diversity Work Plan incorporated the recommendations of the external facing Diversity in Local Government work group, and the specific actionable items designed to enhance and improve upon the Workforce and Leadership area of focus.

MORPC's Diversity Statement:

"Diversity refers to the differences that make us unique. MORPC recognizes, values, embraces, and celebrates diversity by respecting and utilizing all of our differences to enhance our lives and our society."

As the regional council of local governments, MORPC's work in diversity, equity & inclusion is a core value for the agency and its members. MORPC continues to align with the values and premises of diversity, equity & inclusion and aspires to meet the goals of the plan.

Why MORPC Supports Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

Diversity is known as, "The state of being diverse; and the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientation, etc."

Equity is referred to as the, "Quality of being fair and impartial."

Inclusion is the, "Action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure."

MORPC is committed and dedicated to building a culture of inclusion for our agency, one in which a diverse workforce and region has equitable opportunities to prosper, succeed and grow.

Over the next three decades, the Central Ohio region is expected to experience dramatic changes in demographics and lifestyles that will affect the future success of our communities. The changing demographics and economic prosperity are placing the region in the same league as the nation's top cultural centers. As evidenced in *MORPC's 2016 insight2050* report, the results demonstrate the importance of a strategic focus on diversity, equity and inclusion:

- Current projections now reveal that our region will grow to three million people by 2050
- The number of seniors aged 65 or older is expected to more than double by 2050
- Racial and ethnic minorities are expected to account for most of our region's growth by 2050

Increasing evidence suggests that a region's ability to compete economically will depend more upon its ability to attract and retain young talent. To remain vital, competitive, and relevant in the global marketplace, MORPC must engage, partner, and collaborate with diverse populations. The inclusion of diverse populations (racial/ethnic, age, gender, sexual orientation, social background, religion, etc.) in MORPC's bodies of work provides a spectrum of thought, voices and perspectives. The intrinsic value of inclusion is to produce better products, plans, and services designed to improve the quality of life for the Central Ohio region.

The overarching goal of this work plan is to cultivate a work environment that is welcoming and inclusive; provides services and programs to the Central Ohio region creating a vibrant place to live, work, and raise a family; and contribute to local business growth and success. This work plan assists MORPC in its planning and decision-making, establishing priorities, providing relevancy to the region, building capacity, maintaining accountability, allocating resources, and improving services to the Central Ohio community.

Overview of the Current Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Work Plan

In March of 2020, MORPC hired a new Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement Officer. Still apart of the Communications & Engagement Team, the Officer was responsible for the agency's diversity, equity & inclusion programs and initiatives. Also, MORPC's outreach, engagement, and communication strategies to ensure compliance with branding.

The plan was revamped to include an equity lens and renamed the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Work Plan. It will continue to analyze and assess the six focus areas identified in the previous plans with recommended changes to the goals as needed. The plan guides the diversity work of the MORPC Board and staff.

The matrices, sorted by focus areas, are a snapshot of goals, infrastructure and strategies that will help determine performance in each area. Each matrix identifies the infrastructure that will be used to achieve the stated goal; accompanying strategies best suited for that infrastructure that will help achieve the goals; and the MORPC team member(s) responsible. The matrix also provides an area for results which will be reported twice per year. A glossary of terms is included at the end for acronyms used throughout this document.

Following each matrix, a more detailed rationale is provided to lend insight into the specific infrastructure and strategy that were selected and why.



Work Plan Focus Areas

Six Areas of Focus and Goals:

Workforce & Leadership

Goal 1. Improve diverse representation and voices in MORPC's work, committees, members and staff.

Goal 2. Commit to a culturally competent MORPC workforce and Board.



Improve accessibility and ensure accommodations for all while at MORPC, including spaces used for meetings.



Maintain agency diversity spend at 15 percent or more; increase MBE spend to 5 percent or more; maintain WBE spend at 5 percent or more and SBE/EDGE spend at 5 percent or more. In RFPs, 10 percent or more to be the recommended goal, knowing some will end at zero percent.



Increase and accommodate service to diverse Populations.

Diversity Requirements

Continue to meet the federal requirements for monitoring and reporting DBE, Section 3 HUD, Title VI, and Limited English Proficiency.

Diversity in Communications

Goal 1. Improve understanding and support of increasing MORPC's diversity.

Goal 2. Increase the promotion of MORPC's services, plans, meetings, events, and programs to diverse audiences, and increase the awareness of MORPC's diversity, equity & inclusion efforts.















Focus Area: Workforce & Leadership

Goal 1: Improve diverse voices on MORPC's Commission, committees and in MORPC's work

Goal 2: Commit to the preparation of a culturally competent workforce and Commission

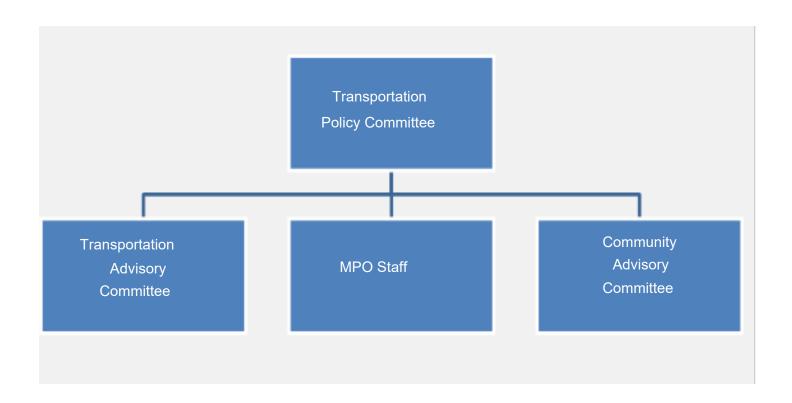
Infrastructure	Strategy	Staff
		E.D.
		Chief Operating
		Officer
		C&E Senior
	It has been discussed to modify the Commission structure to add up to	Director
	seven at-large two-year term seats to the Board as regional representatives	Bylaws
	deven at large the year term seate to the Beard as regional representatives	Committee
Executive	Also, to potentially add a regional representative to the Executive	Membership
Committee	Committee	Officer
	Help members understand the value of diversity, equity and inclusion	
	through community presentations, panel discussions and special events for the Board	
		C&E Senior
	Encourage and actively assist member communities in populating MORPC	Director
	committees and working groups with more diverse membership	Membership
Board		Officer
Doaru	Identify training opportunities and resources for Board development	Diversity Officer
	Pipeline - Engage young adults (18-36) to help communicate agency goals	
	and activities, to obtain meaningful feedback on regional issues, and to	00 = 0 = = = =
	develop a pipeline of young leaders for MORPC and local government boards	C&E Senior Director
	boards	Membership
	Engage a diverse, regional group of high school students in meaningful	Officer
Board	learning and feedback on regional issues	Diversity Officer
20010	Create a plan to add more diversity to MORPC committees and working	C&E Senior
	groups	Director
Committees	3.5465	Diversity Officer
	Identify and provide diversity trainings twice per year for staff to attend	,
	Identify additional opportunities to post job recruitment notices to amplify	Diversity Officer
Staff	MORPC careers amongst diverse talent	H.R.

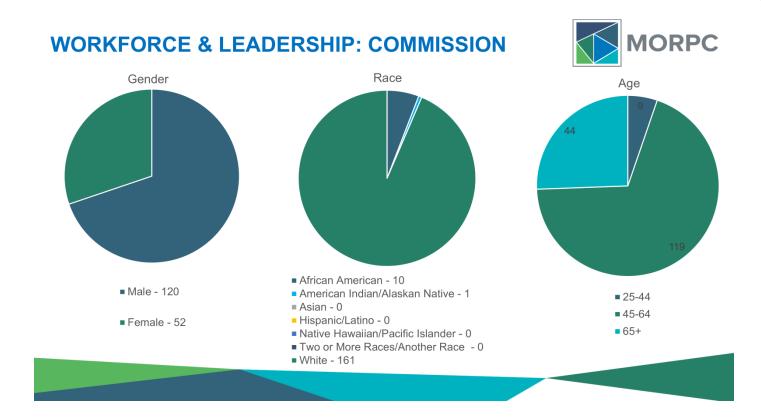
Many of the governance and structural recommendations in this area were the result of a five-month external facing effort in 2018 with the Diversity in Local Government Working Group, whose focus centered on three main goals:

- 1. Discuss and review regionally focused diversity initiatives and communication strategies
- 2. Seek approaches to improve diverse representation and voices in MORPC's work, committees and members
- 3. Develop specific action items based upon best practices to be funded in the 2019 MORPC Budget

The working group was comprised of 18 representatives from local governments, diverse non-profit organizations and organizations who primary focus is to serve diverse populations. Speakers from Atlanta, GA, City of Kettering, OH and Brevard County, FL shared their efforts to include diverse voices in their engagement efforts, communications and governance.

Community Advisory Committee As stipulated in the Public Involvement Plan for the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), the CAC is a committee of citizens and special interest groups that advise the Transportation Policy Committee, a standing committee of the Commission. CAC is comprised of volunteers representing a broad segment of the population including, but not limited to, low-income and minority households and those traditionally underserved by transportation. The Chair of the CAC serves on the Transportation Policy Committee. The CAC members represent specific geographical areas and demographic representation of the transportation planning area. The transportation planning area for the MPO includes Delaware and Franklin counties, Bloom and Violet townships in Fairfield County, New Albany, Pataskala and Etna Township in Licking County, and Jerome Township in Union County. The committee meets once a month, eight times a year, in the evening where transportation related projects, studies and plans are reviewed, discussed and acted upon.



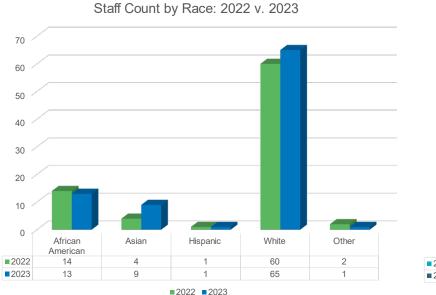


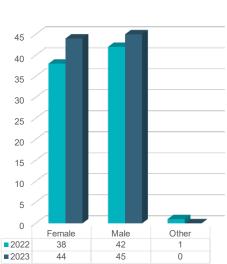
Board Diversity – MORPC's Board of Commissioners determines the strategic direction of the agency. The local government members appoint elected officials and staff to serve as their representatives to the commission.

To understand and effectively serve the needs of a diverse population, an organization's board should include the perspective of diverse voices at the table.

As of February 2024, 172 individuals (120 males and 52 females), served on the MORPC Board of Commissioners. The Diversity Officer has worked diligently with the Membership Officer to also recommend additional diverse individuals to serve. Above, is the Commission's diversity composition.

WORKFORCE & LEADERSHIP: STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS





■2022 ■2023

Staff Count by Gender: 2022 v. 2023

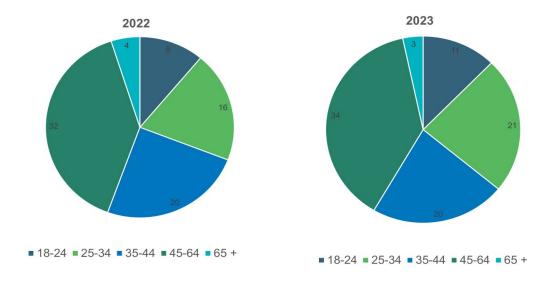
Staff Diversity- As of December 2023, the makeup of MORPC staff consisted of 89 employees. This graph depicts the diversity of MORPC staff within a one-year comparison. To represent the communities in which we serve, the demographics of staff should reflect the population. MORPC has made a concerted effort to attract more diverse talent by partnering with local professional organizations who specialize in this effort.

Regarding age, the pie chart to the left represents 2022, and to the right is 2023. As of 2023, MORPC had 11 individuals employed between the ages of 18-24, 21 people between the ages of 25-34, 20 people between the ages of 35-44, 34 people between 45 - 64 and 3 people age 65 and up.

At the time, majority of employees were a combination of Generation X and Baby Boomers. According to JobsOhio, our region's workforce is ever-changing, it's becoming more diverse, and the average age of employed Ohioans is between 20-30 years old. That is a combination of Millennials and Generation Z.

WORKFORCE & LEADERSHIP: STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Staff Count by Age: 2022 v. 2023



New Staff and Board Orientations – Information on MORPC's Diversity Program is presented to new employees and Board members during orientations. New employees are given a copy of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Work Plan and are required to view a workplace diversity awareness video. Board members are introduced to MORPC's diversity efforts during a new member orientation.

Diversity Training - In 2009, MACC recommended that MORPC provide training to staff in cultural competency and diversity. It was noted that although there was a strong awareness of and tolerance for diversity and cultural differences, that awareness and tolerance did not seem to translate to the inclusion of those differences into how "business is done" at MORPC. The goal of the proposed training is to help shift the organizational culture from one where the focus is on tolerance to one where diversity is respected, embraced, celebrated and incorporated into how day-to-day activities are conducted.

MORPC goal is to schedule between one to two mandatory diversity trainings for all staff on an annual basis. In addition to the trainings, MORPC partners with professional organizations to offer webinars, workshops, informative panel discussions and other educational opportunities. Below is a list of diversity trainings held since 2011.

2011

Cultural Competency

2012

- COSI's Race Exhibit
- Cultural Diversity Begins with You

2013

The Cost of Poverty Simulation

2014

Learning the Language

2016

Building Cross-Cultural Competence in Global Business Environments (Leadership team)

2017

- Global Fluency (Managers)
- · Building Cross Cultural Competency
- Free to Ride: A Kirwan Institute Documentary Film (Board Members)

<u>2018</u>

Global Fluency

2019

· Implicit Bias

2020

· Bridging Differences Through Dialogue: LGTBQIA+ Cultural Humility

2021

- Racial Equity Foundations and Applications
- The Making of Metropolitan Inequality: The Formation of Metropolitan Space

2022

- Beyond Inclusion: Building a Community of Belonging
- My Pronouns, My Identity

<u> 2023</u>

"Undesign the Redline" (all staff) 2023

2024

- Empowerment through Self-Leadership: The Ultimate Game Changer
- · Racial Equity Foundations and Applications

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee – The internal Diversity & Inclusion Committee was renamed the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) Committee, in 2022. Since it was last restructured the committee now consists of 11 staffers, including at least one employee from each department. In 2021, the committee created a new mission statement, membership duties & responsibilities, and goals & objectives. The committee will convene and engage MORPC employees while promoting the agency's diversity initiatives.

Individuals work alongside the Diversity, Inclusion & Engagement Officer in achieving MORPC's strategic goals within the Diversity Work Plan. Members will also guide the diversity efforts of the MORPC Board and staff.

The DE&I Committee meets every other month, and employees determine how to institutionalize diversity, equity and inclusion efforts into the agency. This means making sure diversity is an intentional part of every recruiting decision, every team assembled for a project, every educational opportunity, every promotion, and every

compensation decision. To be successful, research shows that this process must be driven from the top, with real buy-in at every level of management.

Previously, in 2018, the internal D&I Committee was also restructured to better perform on priority diversity and inclusion goals and to implement new internal structures to improve capacity, results and priority. The committee consisted of representation from the areas of the agency directly involved in monitoring, adjusting, and improving priority goals: Executive Director, Data & Mapping, Finance, Human Resources, and Board Membership with established specific goals:

- Improve the diversity of the applicant pool and in hiring
- Revise goals and assertively improve achievement in diversity spend
- Launch an effort to increase diverse voices and representation on the commission and its committees and in program planning
- Increase direct performance reporting to the Executive Director
- Create accountability by directors for participation and performance
- Establish new goal-specific staff contacts to advance the plan
- Provide focused data, context and technical assistance to the plan

The re-organization has encouraged a greater emphasis on the outcomes that we were striving for in the various focus areas. The committee continues to grow, implement events/activities and add new members, as needed.

Focus Area: Workplace

Goal: Continue to provide accessibility and assurance of accommodations for, people with physical disabilities, LEP and all while at MORPC and/or utilizing meeting spaces for MORPC meetings.

Infrastructure	Strategy	Staff
	Ongoing Assessment:	
	Conference rooms & halls	
	Equipment	
	Employee Lounge	
Facility	Restrooms	Operations
	Accommodate public whose English is their second language (LEP) and	
Foyer	people with disabilities	C&E
Foyer &		
Lounge	Review language and location of Title VI notices to ensure compliance	C&E

In early 2015, improvements were made to the building which eliminated the full-time receptionist position. Security doors were installed preventing access to the rest of the building. In the event of a meeting, a staff member is assigned to meet, greet and assist guests. At other times, individuals entering the building have access to a directory and instructions on how to contact staff.

Provisions were made to assist people with physical disabilities. A handicap button was installed for the largest door in the foyer. MORPC also replaced rugs in public places with tapered edges and added three additional handicap parking spaces for a total of six spaces. We also learned that people in wheelchairs found it difficult to use the phone and the directory due to its location on the bar-height desk. Therefore, this was remedied by removing it completely.

In 2020, the agency began a complete renovation on its existing building. The remodel included a single-user restroom which will provide users with individual privacy, as needed.

MORPC installed interior signage early in 2022 (room numbers and room names for conference rooms and common spaces). We also updated the last few remaining interior signs in December of 2023 and added exterior wayfinding signage.

Lastly, MORPC expanded the employee café to create a larger eating and/or sitting area, along with lowering the workstations to allow for a more inclusive space. In the Town hall MORPC added additional monitors to give individuals a better glimpse of presentations and information.

Public Notices – Notices in English and Spanish notifying the public of their Rights under Title VI are prominently located in MORPC's lobby and in the employee café. With changes in MORPC's organizational structure, minor edits were made to the notices announcing the Senior Director of Communications & Engagement as the point of contact.

Focus Area: Supplier Diversity & Procurement

Goal: Maintain agency diversity spending at 15 percent or more. Increase utilization of MBEs to 5 percent or more, WBE to 5 percent or more and SBE/EDGE to 5 percent or more.

Infrastructure	Strategy	Staff
Supplier	Monitor & report quarterly to MORPC Senior Leadership	Diversity Officer
Diversity	Continue development & implementation of the work plan to increase	
	minority spend	Diversity Officer
	Review the diversity spend report and distribute it to the departments	Diversity Officer
		Department
	Require departments to maintain annual identified utilization rates	Directors
		Finance
	Improve categorization of vendors in reports from Finance	Department
	Improve employee access to diverse suppliers	
	Provide training to staff on vendor database	Diversity Officer
	Monitor employee procurement of diverse vendors	Diversity Officer
	Compile & review responses and selection summary forms for all RFPs	
	& RFQs	Diversity Officer
Vendor	Assess & monitor diverse vendor list	Diversity Officer
Database	Annually update diverse vendor database	Data & Mapping

Diverse Vendor Procurement - A concerted effort has been undertaken to identify and capture diverse vendors in reporting. This included researching vendors MORPC has used in the past to determine if they are diverse vendors. (*The 2012 and 2013 data presented below was not adjusted because of this process). In 2015, the percentage of total diversity spend increased while the dollar amount spent on diverse vendors decreased. This was due to a reduction of the total agency expenditures by approximately \$1.3 million. Even though total dollars for eligible diversity spend increased in 2018, the total percentage of diverse procurement decreased from 18 to 15 percent. In 2020 and 2021 MORPC spent a larger dollar amount in total diversity spending, which resulted in an increase from the prior year.

	Diversity Spend Percentage of Total Eligible Expenditures	Total Diversity Spend (\$)	Change in Diversity Spend from prior year (\$ and %) *	Total Eligible Expenditures
2012	4.13%	\$395,741		
2013	9.22%	\$473,248	\$77,507 (19.6% increase)	\$5,132,931
2014	23.05%	\$1,491,916	\$682,066 (60% increase)	\$6,473,592
2015	25.15%	\$1,285,044	\$206,872 (14% decrease)	\$5,109,006
2016	23.63%	\$1,126,276	\$158,768 (12% decrease)	\$4,766,575
2017	18.11%	\$1,046,484	\$79,792 (7% decrease)	\$5,777,569
2018	15.01%	\$1,063,362	\$16,878 (1.6% increase)	\$7,080,168
2019	15.57%	\$919,887	\$142,475 (15% decrease)	\$5,907,008
2020	18.83%	\$970,624	\$50,737 (5 % increase)	\$5,154,730
2021	19.02%	\$1,003,248	\$32,624 (3 % increase)	\$5,273,744
2022	18.98%	\$1,195,434	\$192,186 (13 % increase)	\$6,298,995
2023	19.53%	\$1,156,822	\$38,612 (3 % decrease)	\$5,924,494

Diverse Vendor Type – The chart below shows the percentage of diverse vendor type of eligible spending for WBEs, SBEs, and MBEs. The results depict the total percentage for the specific year. The data shows beginning in 2018, the percentage of MBEs have slightly increased.

% Diversity Spend			
Year	WBE	SBE/EDGE	MBE
2013	8.82%	.10%	.29%
2014	7.32%	14.69%	1.04%
2015	12.15%	11.66%	.59%
2016	8.89%	12.48%	1.0%
2017	6.11%	11.59%	.32%
2018	5.74%	5.78%	.64%
2019	4.93%	6.81%	.98%
2020	11.08%	5.25%	1.13%
2021	10.79%	4.49%	1.10%
2022	6.17%	9.87%	0.69%
2023	4.59%	12.52%	1.08%

To assist with utilizing more diverse vendors, new language has been added to non-DBE RFPs that states a MBE goal of ten (10) percent.

A ten (10) percent minority business enterprise (MBE) goal has been established for this contract consistent with MORPC's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan. Respondents are strongly encouraged to meet or exceed this goal, and this section should include a description of how the contractor will do so. It is preferred that MBE firms are certified as a minority business enterprise by the State of Ohio, the City of Columbus, or other similar certifying entity. MORPC will expect the selected proposer to meet the MBE percentage included in their contract and will require ongoing reporting of this percentage during the contract life. MORPC will also include MBE prompt payment requirements in all contracts.

MBE Strategy:

To continue efforts with increasing minority spend, in August of 2022, we created a MBE strategy to have a well-defined approach on an intentional procurement process regarding targeting minority suppliers. We wanted to develop a strategy to give us a competitive advantage and to meet our overall agency goal of 5% utilization. The four focus areas of concentration include;



- 1. Recognize Supplier Diversity Needs Ensure agency needs are communicated throughout each department and our commitment to DE&I is an agency-wide priority.
- 2. Diversify Diversifying spend is a great opportunity to seek out minorities who intend to support the operational and administrative need(s). This includes minority-owned partners uncovering existing opportunities to increase diversity spend through subcontract and their vendor relationships. The Diversity Officer will discover where vendor gaps exist and diversify with MBEs.
- Sustain Maintaining and updating a diverse supply base is essential to generate opportunities for agency development. Increased diversity in the supply chain will allow MORPC to expand more easily into markets with different demographics. The Diversity Officer will continue to monitor the vendor database and include new businesses.
- 4. Partner Working directly with local and national organizations focused on advancing minority businesses can increase the success of an agency due to accessing key resources. Although, MORPC doesn't require businesses to be certified, utilizing certification agencies will assist with bridging the gaps.

Establishing and maintaining strong partnerships will also allow MORPC to procure supplies, while encouraging friendly competition between vendors for not only the best price, but also the best service. The C&E Senior Director and Diversity Officer will seek out potential partnerships in an effort to strengthen relationships.

Focus Area: Service to Diverse Populations

Goal: Increase and accommodate service to diverse populations.

Infrastructure	Strategy	Staff
	Increase marketing, outreach, and engagement amongst diverse populations. Diversify marketing to be more inclusive of targeted populations. Engage marginalized and underrepresented individuals also living in low	D 01 %
	income and/or rural areas.	Program Staff
Applications Clients	Report annually on the location, frequency and number of the distribution of translated outreach material.	Diversity Officer
		Intake Staff
	Monitor quarterly and report to DE&I Committee to determine performance.	Diversity Officer
	Improve the capturing of diverse applicants' demographics. Start tracking older adult participation.	Data & Mapping Program Staff
	Assess and implement needed improvements to accommodate limited English proficiency and people with disabilities.	
Walk-ins	Monitor quarterly	Diversity Officer
Call-ins	Assess and implement when possible needed improvements to accommodate people who call in. Monitor quarterly	Diversity Officer Program Staff
LEPP	Report annually on the frequency of encounters seeking interpreters or translation services.	Program Staff Diversity Officer
Point of Service	Allocate appropriate resources to accommodate communications with targeted populations. Monitor quarterly	Diversity Officer Program Staff

Applications – In 2013, MORPC began monitoring applications to determine if diverse populations were utilizing its various services and programs: Residential Services also known as Weatherization and Housing Rehabilitation (Rehab); and RideSolutions. In 2017, MORPC changed the name of RideSolutions to Gohio Commute and implemented a state-wide application process.

Residential Services

MORPC works to help low- and moderate-income homeowners maintain and improve their homes through several home repair programs.

The Franklin County Home Repair program provides health and safety related home repairs for homeowners living within Franklin County but outside the limits of the City of Columbus. This program helps homeowners improve the functionality of their homes so they can live in a safe and comfortable environment.

Qualified homeowners can receive a grant for repair projects such as:

- Furnace/heating systems
- Leaking or failing roofs
- Faulty plumbing or electrical systems
- Structural issues
- Handicap accessibility modifications

- Upgrading sewage disposal and private water systems
- Other health and safety related issues

Franklin County Urgent Needs				
African American	23	Veteran	6	
American Indian	2	Disabled	77	
Asian	1	Female Head of Household	103	
Hispanic	1	Male Head of Household	44	
Multi-Racial	5	Head of Household Over 60	93	
White	113	Head of Household Under 60	54	

Since 2017, Residential Services has serviced 3,311 homes. All jobs were completed from 1/1/2017 – 10/22/24. From 2017-2021 the homes were 150% at or below the Federal Poverty Level. This was raised in 2022 to 175% at or below the Federal Poverty Level and again in 2023 at 200% at or below the Federal Poverty Level.

Housing Rehab Programs - MORPC will continue to market to vulnerable populations to increase utilization of the Weatherization Programs and Housing Rehab Programs. The Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan developed in 2018 and the DE&I Committee should help in these efforts.

Gohio Commute - In 2018, the Rideshare program was replaced by a new state-wide system, Gohio Commute. Under this new system, we were not able to monitor or track the diversity of Gohio applications. Currently the demographics of applicants are not measurable. Efforts are underway to devise a way to track and monitor the diversity of Gohio Commute applications. For example, implementing surveys have been discussed to determine demographic information such as race/ethnicity, age and income.

Air Quality Alerts – MORPC offers Air Quality Forecasts and Alerts. The public can sign up to receive alerts via email, text or by calling the toll-free number (1.888.666.1009). We currently have no way of measuring the demographics of those receiving Air Quality Alerts by email or over the phone. For more information and to sign up for the Air Quality Alerts, visit <u>Air Quality – MORPC.org</u>.

Linguistically Competent (Accommodate call-ins/walk-ins/Point of Service) – MORPC provides interpretation and translation services, including services to the deaf, through partnerships with bi-lingual organizations, such as CRIS. For example, if a person contacts MORPC offices and/or approaches them at a specific site or location. MORPC offers marketing materials in various languages, which can be left with the customer. In accordance to the LEP Plan, outreach materials that are designed for the public are also to be

translated into other languages. The translation of collateral materials will incur an additional cost. Please contact the Diversity Officer to inquire about translation services and/or marketing materials.

Focus Area: Diversity Requirements

Goal: Continue to meet the federal requirements for monitoring and reporting DBE, Section 3 HUD, Title VI, and Limited English Proficiency.

Infrastructure	Strategy	Staff
DBE	Monitor & Report	Programming Development
Section 3	Monitor & Report	Residential Services
Title VI	Monitor & Report	All
LEPP	Review for Compliance	Communications & Engagement

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) monitoring and participation are federal requirements for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) such as MORPC. The DBE program applies only to federal transportation funds and is established per the rules, requirements, and guidelines of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) and Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

U.S. DOT is recognized as a leader (among federal agencies) in operating a DBE program and requiring the same of its funding recipients. ODOT's Highway DBE goal for FFY 2020-2022 is 15.6 percent. This includes both construction and professional services. ODOT's Transit DBE goal for FFY 2020-2022 is 7.87 percent.

To be eligible for DBE participation:

- A business must be certified as a "disadvantaged" business by a U.S. DOT-authorized certification
 agency in order to qualify as a "DBE" (in Ohio, the certification entity is the Ohio DBE *Unified*Certification Program, who maintain a website listing certified contractors)
- Must be a small business per the Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Must be determined to be part of one of following groups: Black, Hispanic, Native American, Eskimo, Aleut, Native Hawaiian, Asian Pacific American, Subcontinent Asian American, Women, or other socially and economically "disadvantaged" (determined on a case-by-case basis)

A review of the process initially discovered that our accounting system was unable to capture DBE vendors because payments are made to the primary contractors and DBEs are traditionally subcontractors. Finance was able to create a way to track diverse subcontractor cost within a consultant's invoice. With this new process, we can get a full report of all dollars spent broken out by various diverse and non-diverse vendors by department.

Section 3 – Under Section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968, wherever HUD financial assistance is expended for housing or community development, to the greatest extent feasible, economic opportunities will be given to Section 3 residents and businesses in that area. A Section 3 business is a business that is 51 percent or more owned by Section 3 residents or employs Section 3 residents for at least 30 percent of its full-time, permanent staff; or provides evidence of a commitment to subcontract to Section 3 business concerns with 25 percent or more of the dollar amount of the awarded contract.

The only department within MORPC that utilizes HUD financial assistance is Residential Services, specifically the Housing programs.

Title VI— MORPC has responsibilities regarding the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 included eleven titles. Title VI, the primary focus of this program because of its applicability to the MPO and MORPC, address discrimination in federally funded programs and activities. A widely used passage related to Title VI sums up what the title is about:

No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (42 USC 2000 Section 601).

Current Title VI law requires non-discrimination in all programs and activities, whether federally funded or not, of those who receive federal funds. Notices in English and Spanish notifying the public of their Rights under Title VI can be found in MORPC's lobby and employee café.

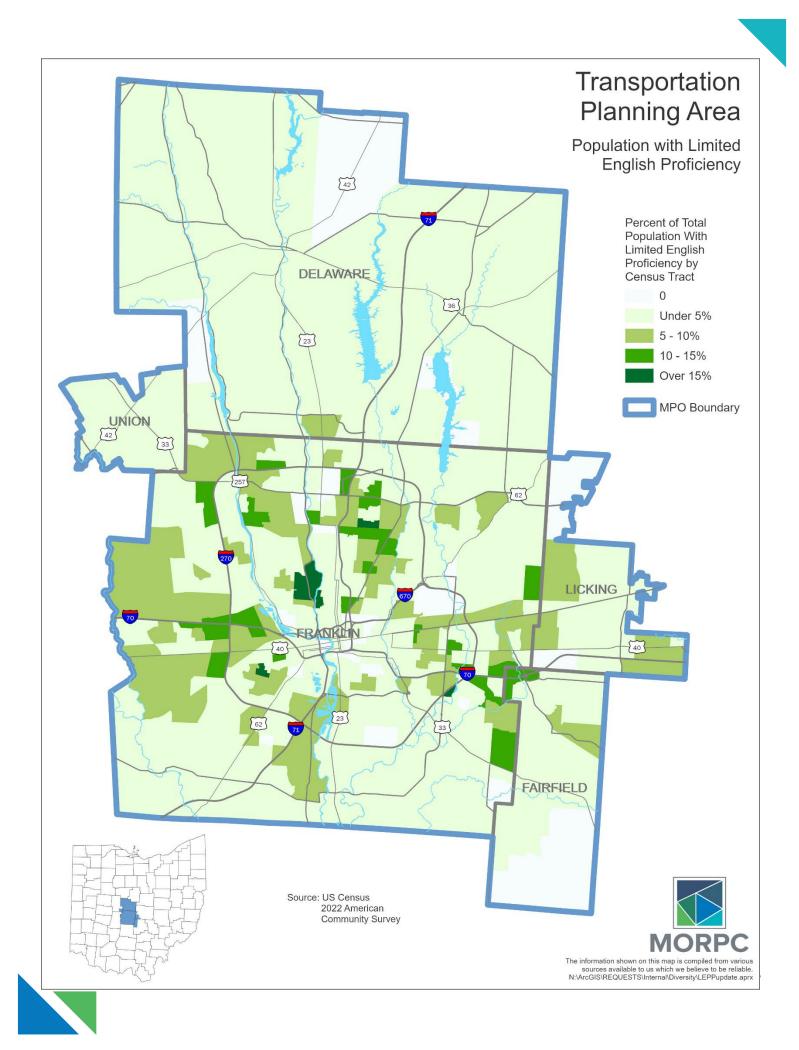
Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEPP)— Compliance with Title VI includes Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that the failure to ensure a meaningful opportunity for national origin minorities with limited-English proficiency to participate in a federally funded program violates Title VI regulations. Additionally, requirements outlined in Executive Order 13166: Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, ensures accessibility to programs and services to eligible persons who have limited proficiency in the English language.

MORPC developed a LEP Plan, which considers the following four factors:

- 1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in the service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a MORPC program, activity or service.
- 2. The frequency with which LEP persons encounter MORPC programs, activities or services.
- 3. The nature and importance of programs, activities or services provided by MORPC to the LEP population.
- 4. The resources available to MORPC and overall cost to provide LEP assistance.

Below, is a map that shows the percentage of total population in our region, with limited-English proficiency. The map features the 2022 American Community Survey data and this information reflects the 5-year dataset from the census years, 2017 – 2022.

More information on MORPC's LEPP can be found at www.morpc.org under Title VI.





Focus Area: Diversity in Communications

Goal 1: Improve understanding and support of increasing MORPC's diversity efforts.

Goal 2: Increase the promotion of MORPC's services, plans, meetings, events, and programs to diverse audiences, and increase the awareness of MORPC's Diversity, Equity Inclusion efforts.

Infrastructure	Strategy	Staff
Define diversity, equity and inclusion clearly and explicitly. Improve understanding and support of increasing MORPC's diversity. Create business case for diversity, equity and inclusion Articulate in core documents and other communications (process) ESG -		C&F
	Present MORPC's diversity efforts to new employees, committee and Board members	Diversity Officer Membership
Media	Advertising & Press Releases	Diversity Officer Program Staff
	Prepare and/or consider diverse audiences in messages, core documents and other communications on the website and in social media (process)	
Websites and Social Media	Update MORPC's diversity page and keep it relevant Create information to post on social media to recognize national diversity observances	C&E Diversity Officer Diversity Officer
Collateral Materials	Create a check list on information to include and/or show in outreach material on: Graphics Language Photographs	C&E Program Staff
Translation Services	Meet with departments to determine which marketing materials to translate into different languages	Diversity Officer

	Coordinate with Data and Mapping to gain insight on the most common languages in our region	
Sponsorships	Select sponsorships and determine which organizations to fund and support that promote DEI	Diversity Officer C&E Senior Director
Meetings	Schedule meetings with community leaders representing diverse audiences to strengthen our network and to have representation of the communities that we serve	Diversity Officer C&E Senior Director

Messaging— One component that top companies share in diversity, equity and inclusion is that they promote their diversity efforts to the public. Diversity is evident in their outreach, their website and in notices to the media. The populations they serve are stated consistently and emphatically. MORPC promotes that it values DEI through its advertising and sponsorships. MORPC often creates ads that target diverse audiences and are used with sponsorship opportunities.

Websites and social media - MORPC utilizes several opportunities to promote diversity, equity and inclusion through the website, social media and its collateral materials. For example, MORPC also recognizes national diverse observances.

Sponsorships - In 2022, MORPC sponsored the Columbus International Festival, the Cultural Fusion Festival (Liberians in Columbus), the Diversity in Business Awards (Business First), the COMTO Scholarship Luncheon, the National African American Male Wellness Walk, and the YWCA Columbus Activists and Agitators. In 2021, MORPC also sponsored the Central Ohio Honors, supported by the Tribute to African Americans Committee, Inc. MORPC will continue to review sponsorship requests and opportunities to determine how best to serve diverse populations.

Memberships - MORPC is currently a member of the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) local chapter, and the Central Ohio Diversity Consortium (CODC). MORPC is also active in the National Association of Regional Councils, DE&I Working Group.

Budget

The 2023 budget was \$45,300 and is allocated toward staff wages, training, interpreters/translation fees, membership, sponsorship and other related costs. The budget for 2024 was increased by \$4,530 to \$49,830.

Conclusion

Annually, a report on the outcomes and achievements of the current plan is presented to the Executive Committee and the Board. This work plan documents the scope of services of what MORPC will do to promote, advocate, and support the diversity of the region. A quarterly diverse spending report is provided to the Executive Director and Department Directors, which includes information on departmental diverse spending. Lastly, a diversity summary is also provided to the Executive Director, Department Directors and Officers to provide a brief overview of DEI efforts.

Glossary of Terms

Culture – shared set of values, beliefs, customs, and celebrations, practices of a racial, ethnic or self-identified group.

Cultural competence – integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes, and used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services, thereby producing better outcomes.

DE&I – Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

DBE – Disadvantaged Business Enterprise – applies to federal transportation funds and is established per the rules of the United States Department of Transportation.

EDGE - Encouraging Diversity, Growth and Equity

EPP – Electric Partnership Program

ERG - Employee Resource Groups - employee networks that support everything from recruiting and retention efforts to marketing products and services.

ESL – English as a Second Language is the use or study of <u>English</u> by speakers with different <u>native</u> languages.

HWAP – Home Weatherization Assistance Program

LGBTQ+ –Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning individuals/identities and communities. The + designate the many various identities beyond those listed in the first five letters of the acronym.

LEP – Limited English Proficiency - persons who are unable to communicate effectively in English because their primary language is not English, and they have not developed fluency in the English language.

LEPP – Limited English Proficiency Plan

MACC - Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence

MBE – Minority Business Enterprise is for-profit enterprise which is owned, operated and controlled daily by minority group members.

MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization

ODOT – Ohio Department of Transportation

REE – Resident Energy Efficiency Program – a weatherization program that improves home energy efficiency for qualified homeowners in Franklin County.

SBE – Small Business Enterprise is owned and operated by a qualifying person, who is under- represented in an industry and meets the definition of "small business" according to the SBA's standards. The term "person" used throughout the regulations includes an individual, entity, or business concern. § 121.103(c)(1).

Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 - Wherever HUD financial assistance is expended for housing or community development, to the greatest extent feasible, economic opportunities will be given to Section 3 residents and businesses in that area.

TBD – To be determined.

U.S. DOT – United States Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration)

WBE – Women Business Enterprise is an independent business concern that is at least 51 percent owned and controlled by one or more women who are U.S. citizens or Legal Resident Aliens, and whose management and daily operation are controlled by one or more of the female owners.