



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

111 Liberty St., Suite 100  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
[www.morpc.org](http://www.morpc.org)

**Energy and Air Quality Working Group  
Hybrid Meeting  
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
111 Liberty St., #100, Columbus, OH 43215  
Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 1:00 – 2:30 PM  
AGENDA**

**1. Welcome & Introductions – Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair**

**2. MORPC Updates**

- **Legislative Update**  
Kyle Probert discussed changes in the State House leadership and implications for legislative priorities, and highlighted MORPC's efforts to secure funding for passenger rail expansions. Kyle also noted ongoing adjustments in state budget affecting energy programs. Kyle reviewed new legislative measures aimed at revamping energy policies, including the repeal of subsidies and security plans.
- **Sustainability**  
Brandi Whetstone updated Members on the progress of the Regional Sustainability Agenda (RSA) revisions. She reviewed the goals and measurable objectives focusing on improving air quality and reducing climate impacts, and outlined the process for the current RSA update, which is incorporating feedback from regional partners.
- **Energy Programs**  
Brian Filiatraut shared updates on local solar initiatives and the growth of SolSmart designations in the region.

**SolSmart Designations**

Brian provided an overview of the SolSmart program, highlighting its role in promoting solar energy adoption by streamlining permitting processes and increasing transparency, making it easier for local governments to encourage solar installations. He announced the recent achievements in the region, including several local communities receiving SolSmart designations:

- The City of Bexley and the City of Columbus achieved Gold designation, recognizing their significant advancements in making solar energy systems more accessible to residents and businesses.
- The City of Dublin received a Silver designation for its improvements in solar permitting processes and solar market development.
- The City of Delaware and Franklin County achieved Bronze designation, indicating foundational steps towards supporting solar energy.

Brian discussed the impact of these designations on local economies, noting that such recognitions help attract clean tech industries and foster job creation in the solar energy sector.

**William Murdock, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Chris Amorose Groomes**  
Chair

**Michelle Crandall**  
Vice Chair

**Ben Kessler**  
Secretary

### Local Solar Initiatives

Brian highlighted ongoing efforts to expand solar initiatives, including upcoming workshops designed to educate local government officials and community leaders on the benefits and implementation strategies of solar energy solutions. He also mentioned the planned introduction of new programs aimed at further reducing the soft costs of solar adoption and enhancing the technical capacity of local governments to support community-wide solar energy initiatives.

### Workshops and Forums

There will be a new series of informational workshops and forums designed to engage local government officials, community leaders, and stakeholders in the energy sector. The objective is to enhance understanding and decision-making related to energy planning and policy development in Central Ohio.

The "Securing Our Energy Future" forum series, will feature a blend of webinars and in-person workshops. These events are intended to provide participants with insights into the regulatory, economic, and technological aspects of energy planning.

Proposed schedule and themes for these sessions:

- *Session One: Landscape of Energy Planning* – Scheduled for May, this session will focus on the big-picture challenges and opportunities in energy planning in Central Ohio, discussing the regulatory and economic landscape.
- *Session Two: Permitting, Zoning, and Economic Development* – Set for June, this workshop will delve into how communities can set the stage for energy projects through effective zoning and permitting processes.
- *Session Three: Funding and Resource Opportunities* – In July, participants will explore potential funding sources and resources available for energy projects, with a focus on building a robust local energy infrastructure.
- *Session Four: Emerging Energy Technologies and Future-Proofing the Region* – Planned for August, this session will examine upcoming technologies in the energy sector and strategies for integrating these innovations to enhance regional energy resilience.

Brian emphasized the importance of these educational initiatives in fostering a well-informed community that can effectively respond to the changing energy landscape and leverage opportunities for sustainable growth and development.

- **Air Quality Programs**

Karina Peggau Reported on the deployment of new air quality sensors and community engagement efforts, and detailed upcoming public education events and ongoing maintenance of air quality infrastructure.

### 3. **Financing Clean Energy Projects in Central Ohio – Zach McGuire, Columbus Region Green Fund**

Zach introduced the Columbus Region Green Fund as a non-profit critical organization aimed at catalyzing the adoption of clean energy solutions across Central Ohio, particularly focusing on underserved and low-income communities. The Green Fund that operates under the model of a green bank – it uses capital provided by various sources to finance clean energy projects at favorable terms. The Fund's mission to ensure that all residents of the Columbus region can benefit from the transition to a green economy. The Green Fund has specific goals: lowering energy costs, job creation, carbon emission reduction, and community investment. The Green Fund's strategic approach includes evaluating projects not only for their environmental impact but also for their ability to provide social and economic benefits to the community, ensuring that the funded projects support broader regional goals of sustainability and equity..

#### Successful Projects

- *Bridgeway Academy Solar Project*: a significant project at Bridgeway Academy, where the installation of solar panels helps the school for children with developmental disabilities significantly reduce their energy costs. This project not only supports environmental goals but also allows the academy to allocate more resources towards enhancing educational services.
- *Corban Commons Senior Housing Solar Installation*: installation of solar panels at Corban Commons, a senior affordable housing complex. This project has reduced utility bills for residents, thereby lowering the cost of living and providing enhanced energy security for a vulnerable segment of the population.

#### Successful Partnerships

- *Local Government Collaboration*: strong collaborations with city and county governments have provided initial funding and ongoing support, ensuring that projects align with local sustainability and energy policies.
- *Non-Profit and Community-Based Organizations*: Outlined partnerships with non-profit organizations that serve as critical conduits to the communities most in need of energy cost reductions and sustainability improvements.
- *Educational and Public Sector Engagements*: collaborations with educational institutions like schools and colleges promote clean energy projects that also serve educational purposes by providing real-life learning platforms for students.

### 4. **Other Business & Announcements – Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair**

### 5. **Adjourn**

Please notify Brian Filiatraut at (614) 233-4137 or [bfiliatraut@morpc.org](mailto:bfiliatraut@morpc.org) to confirm your attendance.

The next Energy and Air Quality Working Group meeting is:  
Wednesday, May 28, 2025 from 1 – 2:30 PM

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
Remote Meeting  
Energy & Air Quality Working Group Meeting

February 26, 2025

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Members Present

- Layla Abraham, Franklin County
- Katrina Aceves, Momentum
- Vice-Chair Dale Arnold, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation
- Christine Boucher, Columbus Chamber of Commerce
- Dave Celebrezze, City of Westerville
- Eric Cellar, South Central Power
- Andrew Cocina, Wendel
- Geddy Davis, OSU
- Cassidy Jenney, State of Ohio
- Ryan Foshee, Clintonville Green Team
- Geoff Greenfield, Third Sun Solar
- Paul Kennedy, John Glenn Columbus International Airport
- Andrew Kistler Columbus Metropolitan Library
- Jon Kochis, Fairfield County
- Herb Koehler, Village of Granville
- Jake Kuss, MeLink Solar
- Terry Long, Ohio Chamber of Commerce
- Mallory Maupin, Momentum
- Zach McGuire, Columbus Region Green Fund
- Dennis Payne, Madison County
- Eric Phillips, Union County Chamber of Commerce
- Jeff Phillips, PICCA
- David Poole, CTP Sinto America
- Brandon Standley, Jerome Township (Union County)
- Chair Matt Stephens-Rich, Electrification Coalition
- Manasa Vanaparthi, COTA
- Mryia Williams, Solar United Neighbors
- Neil Wittberg, GoSustainable Energy

Staff Present

- Brian Filiatraut
- Lynn Kaufman
- Jessica Kuenzli
- Karina Peggau
- Kyle Probert
- Brandi Whetstone

# ENERGY & AIR QUALITY WORKING GROUP (EAQWG) MEETING

Q1 Meeting  
February 26, 2025



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
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# AGENDA



- 1. Welcome & Introductions, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 1:00 PM**
- 2. MORPC Updates, *MORPC Staff* | 1:10 PM**
  - a. Legislative Update, *Kyle Probert***
  - b. Sustainability, *Brandi Whetstone / Karina Peggau***
  - c. Energy Programs, *Brian Filiatraut***
  - d. Air Quality Programs, *Karina Peggau***
- 3. Financing Clean Energy Projects in Central Ohio, *Zach McGuire, Columbus Region Green Fund* | 1:30 PM**
- 4. Other Business & Announcements, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 2:15 PM**
- 5. Adjourn, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 2:30 PM**

# 2025 EAQWG MEETINGS



**Q1: February 26**

**Q3: August 27**

**Q2: May 28**

**Q4: November 19**

*\*All meetings will run from 1:00 – 2:30 PM*

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MORPC

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# MORPC STAFF UPDATES



MORPC

## **Legislation & Policy**

Kyle Probert

## **Sustainability Program**

Brandi Whetstone & Karina Peggau

## **Energy Program**

Brian Filiatraut

## **Air Quality Program**

Karina Peggau

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Kyle Probert – Public Policy Coordinator



MORPC

## Statehouse

- **New Leadership**
  - Speaker Matt Huffman
  - President Rob McColley
- **State Transportation Budget (HB 54)**
  - MORPC testimony on passenger rail
  - MORPC membership language
- **State Operating Budget (HB 96)**
  - Moves energy efficiency & assistance programs from DEV to JFS



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Kyle Probert – Public Policy Coordinator



MORPC

## Statehouse

- **Senate Bill 2 & House Bill 15**
  - Ends coal & solar subsidies from HB 6
  - Repeals Electric Security Plan (ESP); requires all standard service offers (SSOs) to be market-rate (MROs)
  - Prohibits EDUs from ownership of generation
  - Transfers local personal property tax liability from generators to transmission & distribution



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Kyle Probert – Public Policy Coordinator



MORPC

## Congress

- **New faces**
  - Two new Senators (Moreno, Husted)
  - New Congressman (Taylor)
- **Budget, Continuing Resolution, Reconciliation**
- **Expirations**
  - IIJA
  - Tax Cuts & Jobs Act of 2017





## KYLE PROBERT, MPA

*Public Policy Coordinator*

**Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission**

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MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
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# REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA UPDATE

February 26, 2024

Brandi Whetstone, Director of Sustainability



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# REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA (RSA)



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- The guiding document for MORPC's sustainability-focused programming and committees, and framework for members and regional partners to align around common goals.
- Contains goals, measurable objectives, and strategies that make Central Ohio a better place for its residents.
- Updated every 4 years. The time horizon for the next agenda is 2025-2028.

## REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA 2021–2024



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
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### WHO WE ARE

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is Central Ohio's regional council for more than 70 members comprised of counties, cities, villages, townships, and regional organizations. We take pride in bringing communities of all sizes and interests together to collaborate on best practices and plan for the future of our growing region.

### SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) is a top-level committee of MORPC's board and serves as the voice of sustainability. The SAC weighs in on important sustainability-focused programs and policies that have an impact on air quality, water resources, trails, energy, growth, and planning.

MORPC'S SERVICE AREA







# CONSIDERATIONS



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Considerations for  
shaping the RSA

Consider existing goals, plans, or surveys such as MTP, Regional Trail Vision, Central Ohio Climate Action Plan, Leaders Listen Surveys.

Inclusive of broader 15-county region to promote participation from local governments of all sizes and capabilities.

Consider other frameworks that set the standard for sustainability.



# DRAFT GOALS & OBJECTIVES UNDER REVIEW



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Aspirations  
that  
unify the  
objectives

**Goal 1: Improve air quality and  
reduce climate change impacts.**

## Objectives

- 1.1** Reduce per capita vehicle miles traveled.
- 1.2** Increase alternative fuel vehicles and infrastructure.
- 1.3** Reduce energy consumption across all sectors.
- 1.4** Increase local clean energy generating capacity.
- 1.5** Reduce regional greenhouse gas pollution.
- 1.6** Increase the number of days that meet federal standards for ozone and fine particulate matter pollution.

Specific  
Measurable  
Attainable  
Relevant  
Time Bound

# CURRENT PROGRESS



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## CHECKLIST

- ✓ Reviewed goals.
- ✓ Added goal centered on climate resilience.
- ✓ Reviewed objectives.
- ✓ Reviewed **strategies** for Goal 1, Goal 2, and Goal 3.
  
- ☐ Review **strategies** for Goals 4-5.
- ☐ Create a mission statement.
- ☐ Clean, finalize, and present to SAC and Commission for adoption.

## WHAT ARE STRATEGIES?

Strategies are the “menu” of items that MORPC members can choose from when pursuing sustainable2050 certification. Each objective contains several strategies that help move our region closer to achieving the overarching goal.

Each strategy is reviewed closely to ensure it:

1. Addresses the goals and objectives.
2. Fills any gaps in the RSA.
3. Has ties to sustainability.
4. Is something local governments can implement.
5. Avoids repetition with other objectives or strategies.

# RSA PROPOSED TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES



MORPC

- **March 2025:** Subcommittee meeting 6, Goal 4-5 Strategies, SAC meeting March 19.
- **April 2025:** Introduce draft RSA for input, host information sessions.
- **May 2025:** Subcommittee meeting 7, synthesize and incorporate input.
- **June 2025:** Present final draft for approval to SAC (June 18).
- **July/August 2025:** Present to MORPC Commission for adoption.

# Thank you!

**Brandi Whetstone, LEED Green Associate**

*Director of Sustainability*

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

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**Karina Peggau**

*Sr. Planner*

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

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# ENERGY PROGRAM UPDATE

Brian Filiatraut  
Senior Program Manager, Energy and Sustainability



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# Energy Ready

NATIONALLY DISTINGUISHED. LOCALLY POWERED.



**For more info:  
Energy-Ready.org.**





# SOLSMART IN MORPC COMMUNITIES



MORPC

*A national, no-cost technical assistance & designation program designed to recognize local governments for spurring solar market growth by increasing transparency and access.*



For more info, visit the [solsmart.org/](https://solsmart.org/).

Community	Designation
City of Bexley	Gold
City of Columbus	Gold
City of Delaware	Bronze
City of Dublin	Silver
City of Hilliard	Bronze
City of Lancaster	Gold
City of Upper Arlington	Gold
Franklin County	Bronze
MORPC	Silver
Village of Somerset	Bronze

# CHARGING SMART

*Charging Smart provides free technical assistance and national recognition to local governments to facilitate the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) and EV charging for their community.*



For more info, visit the [energy-ready.org/charging-smart](https://energy-ready.org/charging-smart).



## 6 Action Categories

Planning

Government  
Operations

Regulation

Education and  
Incentives

Utility  
Engagement

Shared Mobility



# MORPC'S APPLICATION

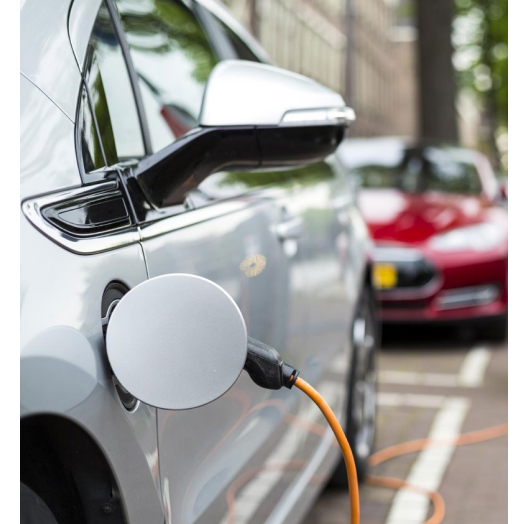
## Charging Smart Regional Engagement Partner



MORPC is applying to lead a **cohort of local governments** through the Charging Smart designation program.

### Key Cohort Highlights *(tentative)*

- Will run from ~ May 2025 – February 2026
- Hold meetings and webinars going through Charging Smart criteria
- One-on-one calls / meetings to collect needed documentation
- Additional support from Charging Smart team and partners



### Timelines + Next Steps

- March 7, 12 – 1 PM: "Office Hours" Meeting → Overview, Q&A
- March 14: Letters of Commitment Deadline
- March 21: Application Deadline



# SECURING OUR ENERGY FUTURE

## Informational & Workshop Forum Series



MORPC is in the beginning stages of developing a series of informational webinars and workshops featuring energy, regulatory, and economic development experts in Central Ohio for local government and community leaders to understand and best equip themselves to plan for a more secure, resilient, and affordable energy future.

### Tentative Timeline + Topics

**MAY**

**Session One: Landscape of Energy Planning**

Focus: Big Picture and Challenges & Opportunities in Central Ohio

**JUNE**

**Session Two: Permitting, Zoning, and Economic Development**

Focus: How to Set the Table & Open Your Community for Energy

**JULY**

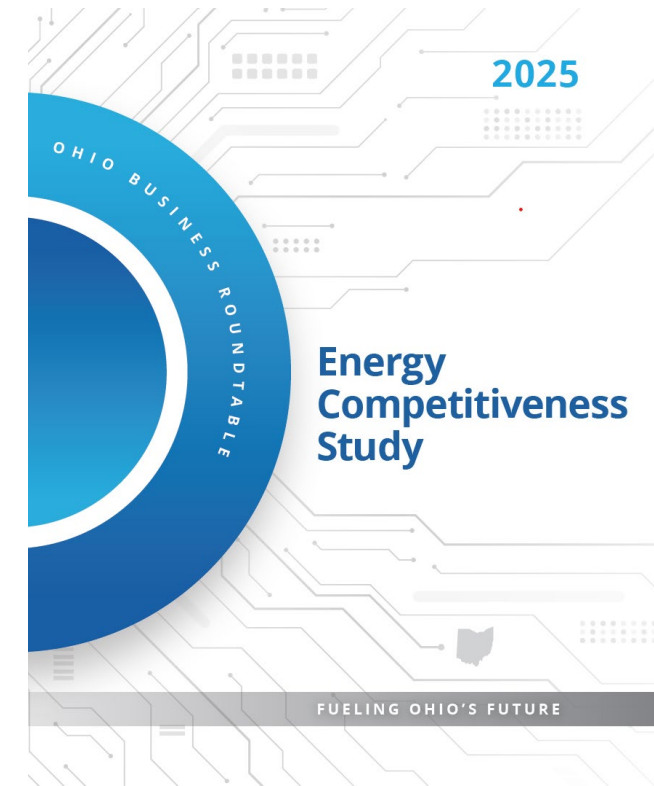
**Session Three: Funding and Resource Opportunities**

Focus: Building Your Energy Stack

**AUGUST**

**Session Four: Emerging Energy Technologies and Future Proofing the Region**

Focus: What's on the Energy Horizon?



# BRIAN FILIATRAUT

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# Air Quality Program Updates



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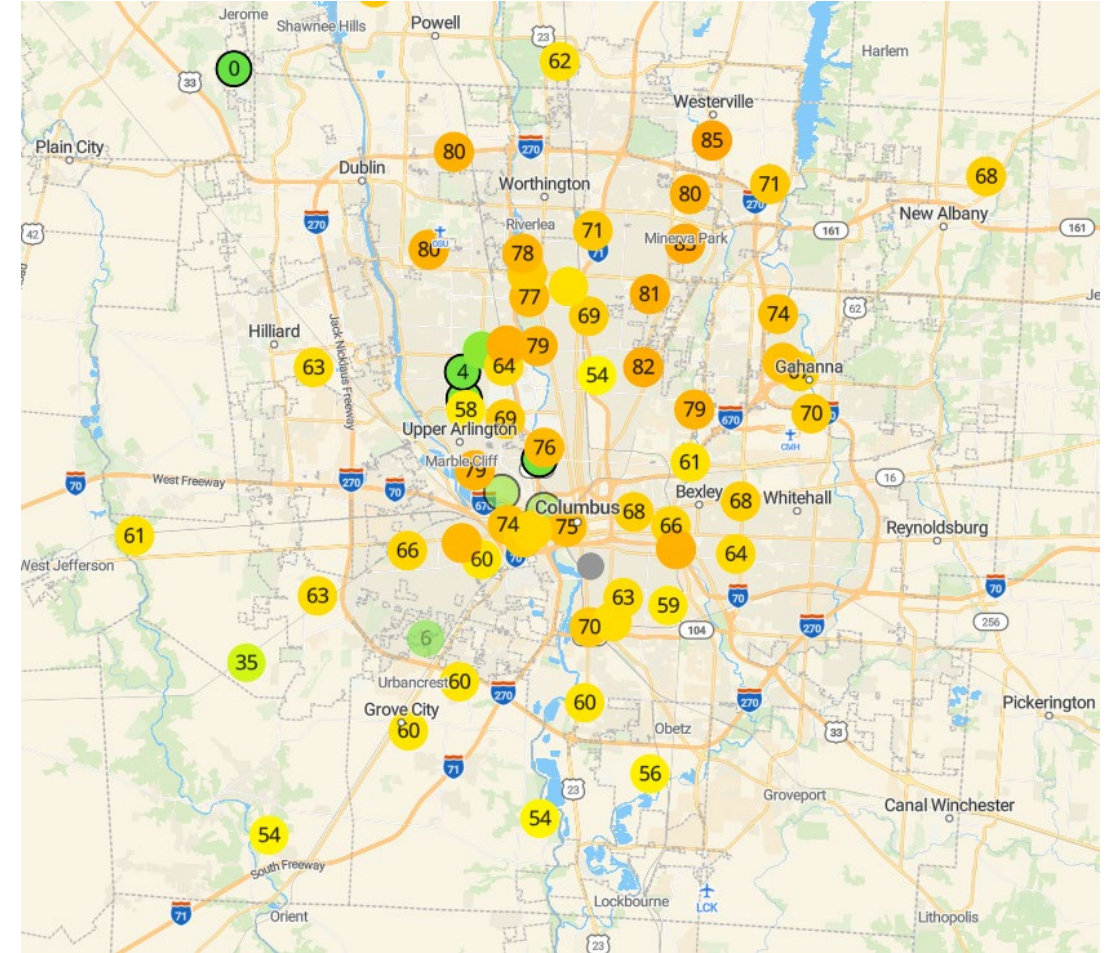


# CLEAN PROJECT UPDATES (COMMUNITY LED ENHANCED AIR QUALITY NETWORK)



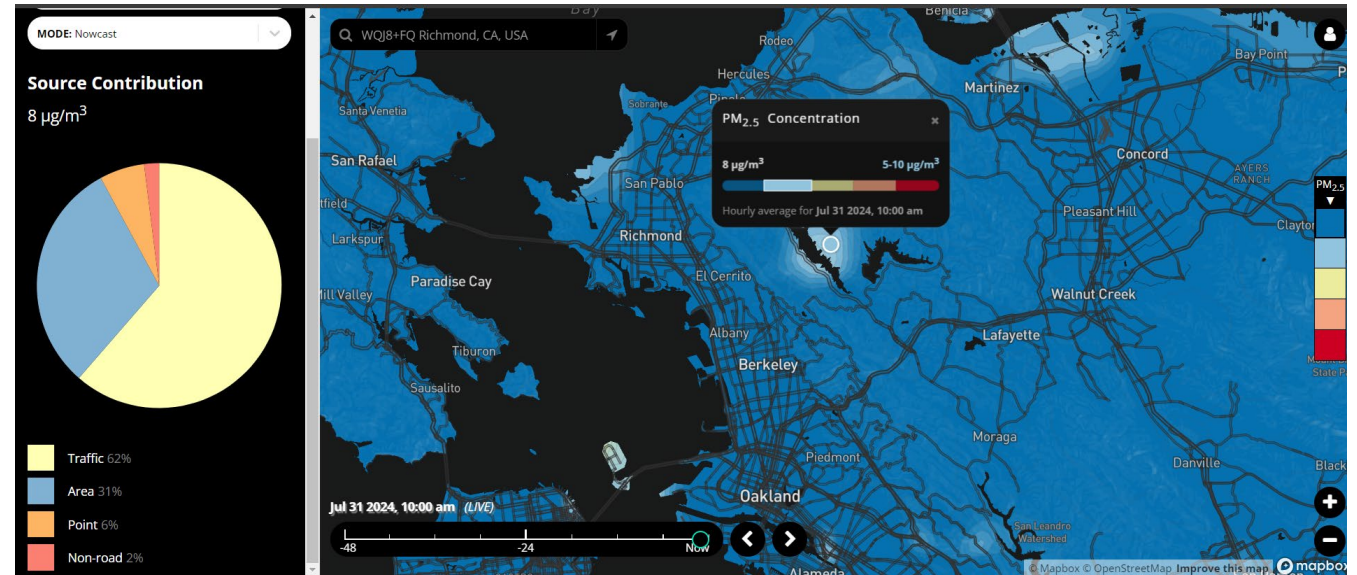
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- Sensors are officially deployed!
  - 36 new sensors in the community (green dots)
  - Lots of interest from community for future sensor placement (yellow dots)
- View live readings: [map.purpleair.com](http://map.purpleair.com)



# NEXT STEPS

- Community education events
- Digital AQ displays at public locations
- Ongoing maintenance
- Source apportionment modeling by consultant Ramboll Americas Engineering Solutions, Inc.



# JR DIAZ-HERNANDEZ, MPH

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GREEN  
FUND

For a More Prosperous Region



**“Ensure every Columbus resident benefits from the transition to a green economy.”**

# SUMMARY

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## About The Columbus Region Green Fund

the Columbus Region Green Fund (CRGF) was formed to address challenges from climate change in the Columbus Region. As an independent 501c3, the CRGF's mission is to catalyze the equitable adoption of clean energy solutions in the Columbus Region.

The Green Fund does this by offering accessible and low-interest debt to clients, prioritizing nonprofits, affordable housing, and low-to-moderate income businesses. The ancillary benefits are massive, including:

- Lowering electricity costs for residents and organizations that need it most
- Creating 1,800 new clean energy jobs
- Reducing carbon emissions in the region
- Creating an equitable ESG community investment vehicle

# COMMUNITY DEMAND

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There is a need and an opportunity to develop a financial vehicle to accelerate clean energy deployments.

- Governmental Climate goals
  - City of Columbus
    - Climate Action Plan goal of 600 MW of commercial solar and 50MW of residential solar by 2030
  - Franklin County
    - New clean energy jobs, reduce energy burden (Poverty Blueprint)
- Private Sector
  - Looking for a local community ESG investment platform
  - Provides a clear pathway to achieve community-wide ESG goals

# THE GAP

Along with community demand, there is also a need to provide clean energy access to the broader community. Partners and members have created valuable clean energy solutions. However, there is a gap in clean energy access among large segments of the community, including:

- Nonprofits
- Affordable Housing
- LIDC and minority-owned businesses

“The Gap”

Segment	Retail Clean Energy	CCA	Market Rate Solar	PACE	Green Fund
Corporate	✓		✓	✓	
Residents		✓	✓		✓
Nonprofits					✓
Affordable Housing					✓
LIDC businesses		✓			✓
SMB		✓	✓	✓	✓

# THE SOLUTION

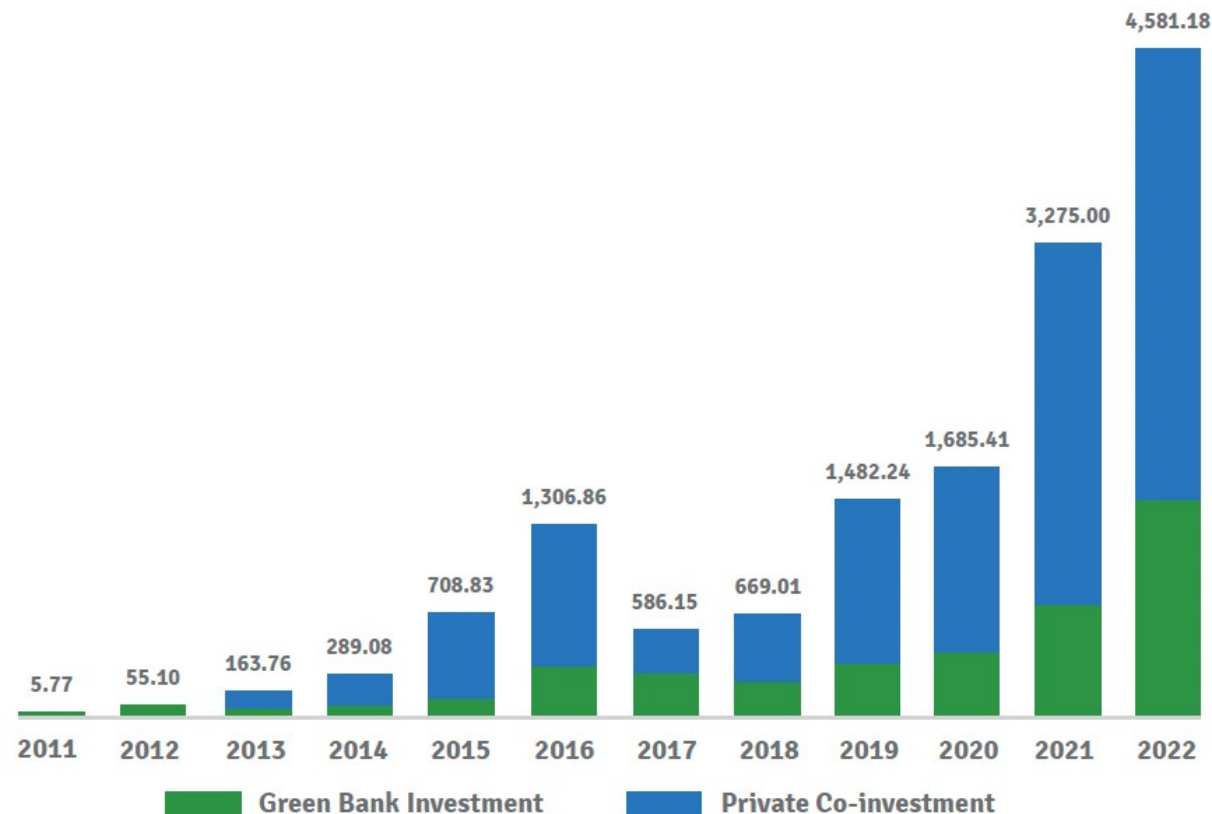
Cumulative Green Bank Impact through December 31, 2022

Total Investment Caused	\$14.8 b
Total Green Bank Investment	\$4.20 b
Total Private Co-investment	\$10.66 b
Mobilization Ratio (Overall Project Investment/Green Bank Investment)	3.54

Green banks leverage their capital to pull in private capital that normally would not participate in LIDC projects. Over the past 11 years, every \$1 invested by Green Banks has created another \$3.54 investment from the private sector.

This represents the catalytic nature of green banks and their ability to accelerate deployment of clean energy.

American Green Bank Consortium Investment by Year  
(\$, in millions)





# Community Impact of the Impact Solar Initiative



719,785 metric tons  
Reduction of carbon emissions



600  
New local jobs



\$117,000,000  
Local economic impact



\$129 Million in Lifetime energy  
savings for Non-Profits





# LOCAL IMPACT BY 2026



## Economic Development Impact

Delivering energy savings to nonprofits while investing in a local workforce. The Green Fund could create:

- ➡ 600  
New Local Jobs
- ➡ \$116,000,000  
Local economic impact



## Environmental Impact

By financing 40MW of solar has the potential to remove 600,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> over 20 years.  
Equivalent to:

- ➡ Reducing over \$15,000,000 in public health costs
- ➡ Adding 10,000,000 10 – year old trees



## Community Impact

Advancing equity and enhancing the health and resiliency of communities.

- ➡ Reduce electricity costs for those in need
- ➡ Create new career opportunities for people of color
- ➡ Improve resiliency in historically disadvantaged communities



# HOW IT WORKS

The Green Fund utilizes its funds in two ways to deliver an equity-driven solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) as its first financial product:

## 1. Direct Investment

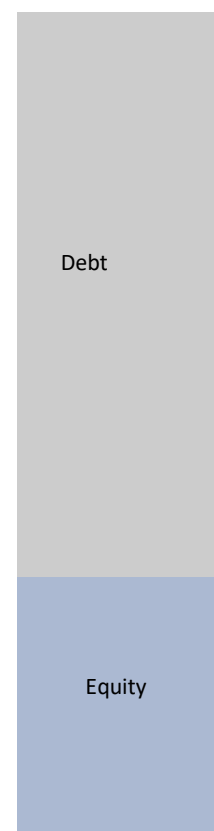
The Green Fund will invest with low interest debt into the project, reducing the cost of capital to make the PPA price attractive for the customer.

## 2. Credit Enhancement

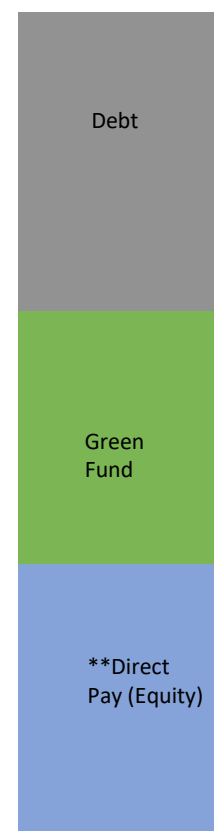
A portion of the fund will be used as a loan loss reserve (LLR) to enhance the credit of projects, making private capital more comfortable investing in projects.

**\*\* DIRECT PAY INCENTIVE FROM IRA IS KEY**

Traditional Project Finance



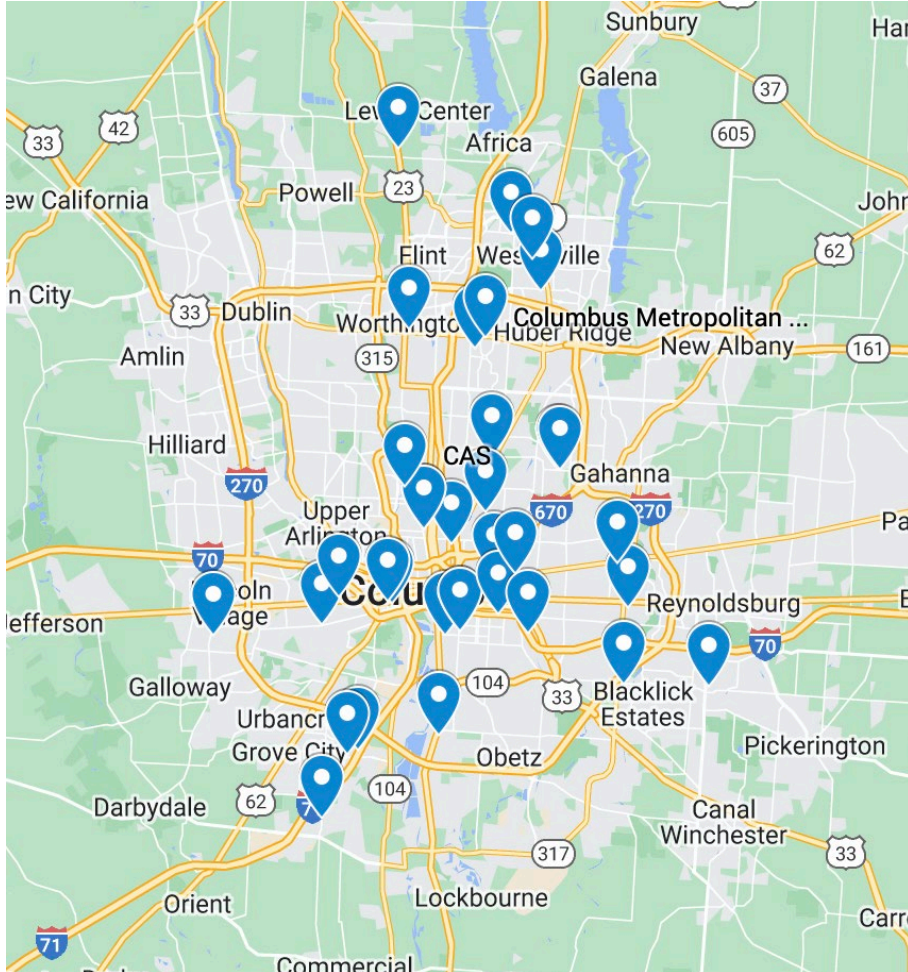
Green Fund Model



Smaller project debt from lender translates to reduced project risk, and lowers interest rate.

Lower interest rate on GB debt reduces the price of the PPA.

# ESTABLISHED PIPELINE



- Sourcing qualified projects has been a challenge for new green banks
- The CRGF has an established pipeline of solar projects the CRGF will invest in immediately
- CRGF has over 45 nonprofits and multi-family housing owners engaged with about 240 unique projects.
- This work has been done through direct engagement and with channel partners

# PROJECT EXAMPLES

By the Numbers Impact Solar at Bridgeway Academy	
System Size	600 KW
Target Lifetime Savings	\$ 1,698,466
% of Annual Electricity Met (Year 1)	775,000 kwh
Carbon Footprint Reduction Over System Lifetime	Equivalent of 21,175 US tons of CO2



Bridgeway Academy and Therapy Center is a nonprofit education center serving children with autism and developmental disabilities.



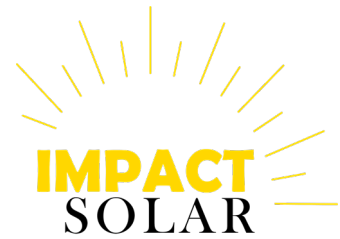


# PROJECT EXAMPLES

By the Numbers   Impact Solar at Corban Commons	
Estimated System Size	480 KW
Estimated Annual Year 1 Production	576,000 KWH
Carbon Offset over lifetime of system	15,750 US tons of CO2



Corban Commons is an affordable senior housing community in northeast Columbus



# OTHER PROGRAMS

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Other financing programs are available in Central Ohio for clean energy development:

- C-PACE – Commercial Property Accessed Clean Energy
- USDA Programs
  - RESP – Rural Energy Savings Program
  - REAP – Rural Energy for America Program
  - IRP – Intermediary Relending Program
- OAQDA – Clean Air Improvement Program (CAIP)

# THE GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION FUND



Administered by the EPA, the overarching objectives of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) are to:

1. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants;
2. Deliver benefits to low-income and disadvantaged communities; and
3. Mobilize financing and private capital to deploy GHG reducing projects.

The GGRF will be implemented via three programs totaling \$27 billion. The money will need to be completely spent by September 2024. The programs are:

- National Clean Investment Fund - \$14 billion
- Clean Communities Accelerator - \$6 billion
- Solar for All - \$7 billion



GREEN  
FUND

For a More Prosperous Region

Zach McGuire

[zm@crgreenfund.org](mailto:zm@crgreenfund.org)

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5. Adjourn, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 2:30 PM





MORPC

**Next EAQWG Meeting:**  
**May 28 from 1 – 2:30 PM**

# AGENDA



MORPC

1. Welcome & Introductions, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 1:00 PM
2. MORPC Updates, *MORPC Staff* | 1:10 PM
  - a. Legislative Update, *Kyle Probert*
  - b. Sustainability, *Brandi Whetstone / Karina Peggau*
  - c. Energy Programs, *Brian Filiatraut*
  - d. Air Quality Programs, *Karina Peggau*
3. Financing Clean Energy Projects in Central Ohio, *Zach McGuire, Columbus Region Green Fund* | 1:30 PM
4. Other Business & Announcements, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 2:15 PM
5. Adjourn, *Matt Stephens-Rich, Chair* | 2:30 PM