



MID-OHIO REGIONAL **MORPC** PLANNING COMMISSION

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CENTRAL OHIO BLUEWAYS ADVISORY PANEL **MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

HYBRID MEETING

March 8, 2023, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

AGENDA

Welcome & Purpose

Jonathan Miller opened the meeting by welcoming Members and outlining the purpose: to reassess the direction of the Blueways program in light of recent feedback. The goal was to revisit foundational questions – what the program is, why it exists, who is involved, and when actions are expected. The meeting aimed to clarify the advisory Panel's role and ensure inclusive, informed decision-making.

Advisory Panel Purpose / Structure

Jonathan explained that the Advisory Panel was formed to draft partnership agreements and recommend a permanent structure for the Central Ohio Blueways program. The Panel includes jurisdictions and interest groups without direct land-use control, offering guidance and inclusivity, especially for environmental advocacy groups. Member concerns were raised about whether drafting agreements implies endorsement of water trail designation, especially when local jurisdictions have not explicitly requested it. Clarification was provided that the Panel's role is advisory and that local jurisdictions retain decision-making authority.

Addressing Environmental Considerations

Environmental concerns dominated the discussion. Jonathan emphasized the need for specificity in environmental feedback to make it actionable. Three proposed methods for incorporating environmental considerations into the agreements were:

1. A dedicated section in the agreement.
2. A supplemental appendix.
3. An addendum with guidance and resources.

Members and staff discussed that while paddling itself may not be highly detrimental, increased usage could indirectly lead to development pressures. Member Gable suggested a conservation-focused vision, especially for sensitive rivers like the Big Darby and Olentangy. Several Members supported the idea of differentiated treatment for rivers based on ecological sensitivity, with some advocating for delaying designation on more sensitive waterways.

Revised Timeline

Jonathan presented a revised timeline extending the Panel's work through August, with partnership groups beginning their review afterward. Final drafts would return to the Advisory

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director

Erik J. Janas
Chair

Chris Amorose Groomes
Vice Chair

Michelle Crandall
Secretary

Panel for review. This timeline allows for iterative feedback and customization of agreements per waterway. Members discussed forming working groups by river corridor to tailor recommendations more effectively.

Review Existing Outline

The existing outline of the draft agreement includes ten sections and four appendices. Members discussed where to incorporate environmental considerations and whether the structure should vary by river. There was consensus that while a boilerplate template is useful, customization is essential for sensitive areas. Member Davis suggested prioritizing less sensitive rivers for initial designation to allow more time for deliberation on others.

Next Steps

Next steps include:

- Continuing to draft high-level agreements through August.
- Forming partnership groups by river corridor to customize agreements.
- Returning customized drafts to the advisory panel for final review.
- Considering a cover letter or supplemental guidance for sensitive rivers.
- Exploring the inclusion of additional stakeholders (e.g., EMS, ODOT) through indirect consultation rather than expanding the panel.

Adjourn

Please notify Lynn Kaufman at 614-233-4189 or LKaufman@morpc.org to confirm your attendance for this meeting or if you require special assistance.

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Hybrid Meeting

Central Ohio Blueways Advisory Panel Meeting

March 8, 2023

Members Present

- Mark Allen, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Aryeh Alex, City of Columbus
- Shelly Beiting, RAPID 5
- Julia Cumming, Madison Soil & Water Conservation District
- Tom Davis, Pickaway County Park District
- Heather Doherty Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Bob Gable, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Linda Granger, Village of Plain City
- Denton Kitts, Village of Plain City
- Dick Lorenz, Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries
- Carolyn Mestemaker, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- Tina Mohn, City of Columbus
- Anthony Sasson, Darby Creek Association

Public Present

- Jim Allen

Staff Present

- Ralonda Hampton
- Lynn Kaufman
- Jonathan Miller
- Jennifer Noll
- Edwina Teye

CENTRAL OHIO BLUEWAYS

ADVISORY PANEL

MARCH 8, 2023



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
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MARCH 8, 2023 AGENDA

- I. Welcome & Purpose
- II. Advisory Panel Purpose / Structure
- III. Addressing Environmental Considerations
- IV. Revised Timeline
- V. Review Existing Outline
- VI. Next Steps
- VII. Adjourn



WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION

“The goal of ODNR’s water trail program is to promote the awareness of public paddling access while increasing safety by partnering with local communities to develop designated water trails on Ohio’s waterways.”

WHAT’S INCLUDED?

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

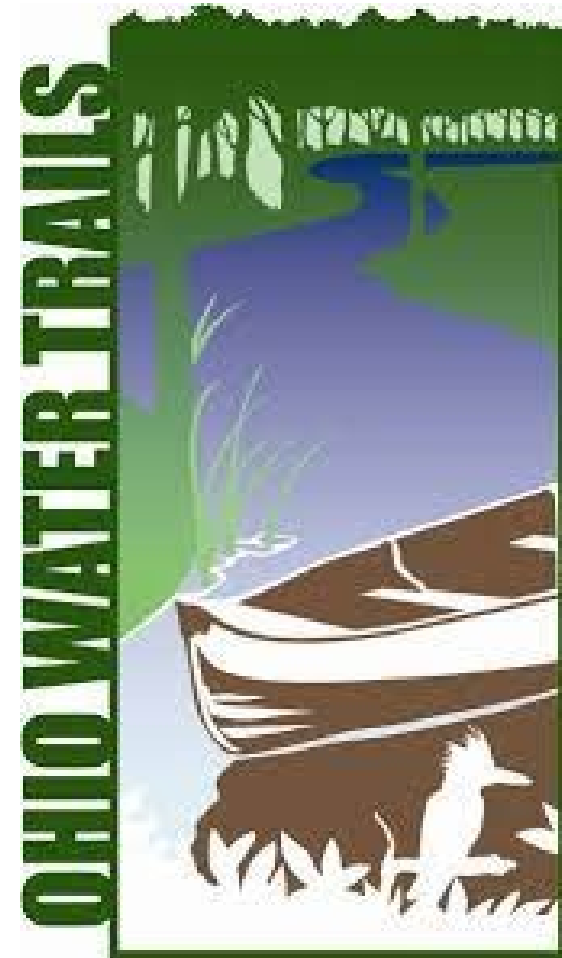
- Owners of Access Points

UPDATED MAPPING

- Additional Information to Provide to the Public



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ADVISORY PANEL

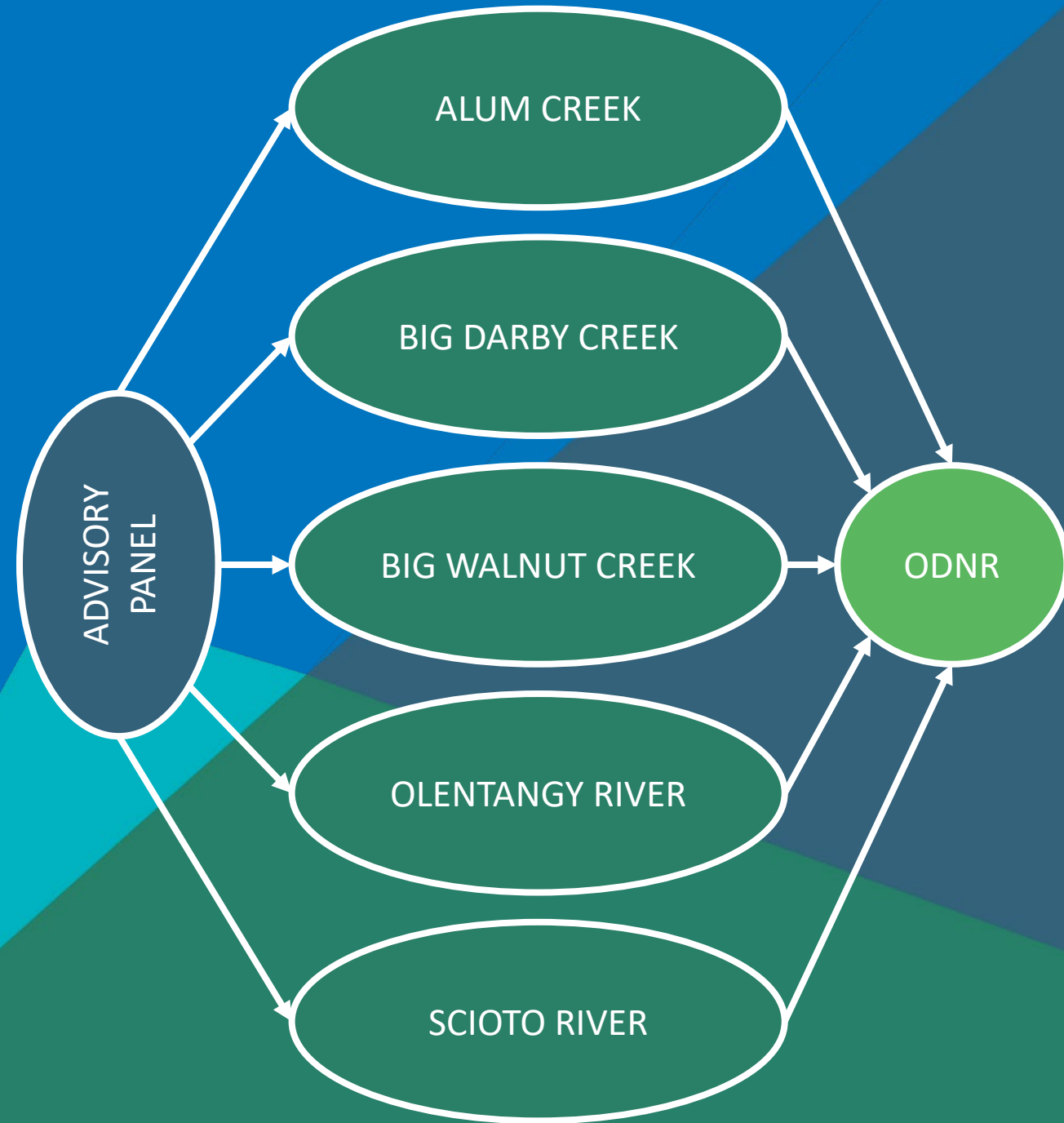
PURPOSE

CREATE DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

- Guide Partnership Groups
- Content is Recommended Inclusions

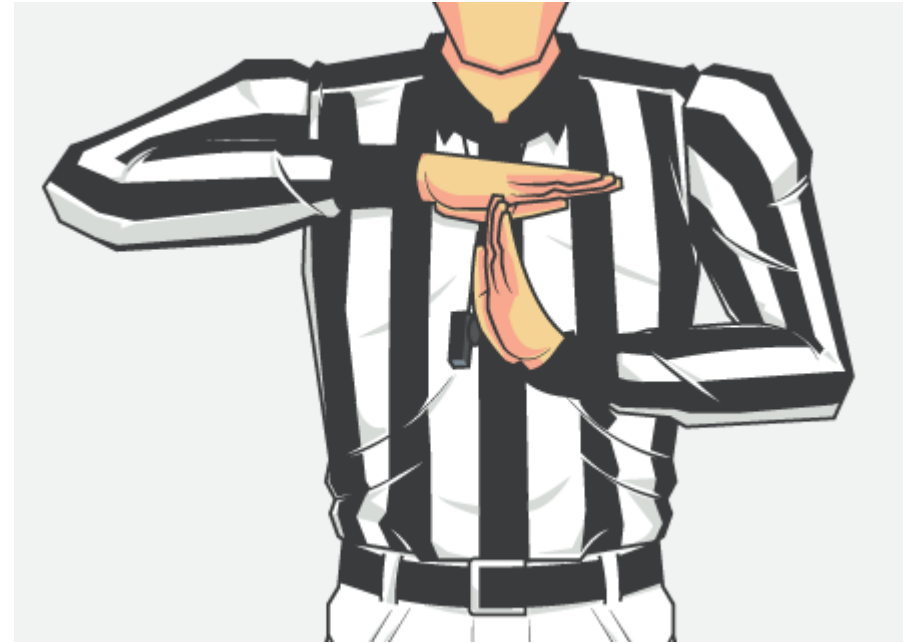
RECOMMEND A PERMANENT CENTRAL OHIO BLUEWAY PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- How Can Central Ohio Blueways Best Create Public Value



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OPEN DISCUSSION



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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

SHOULD BE EXPRESSED WITH SPECIFICITY

- Specific concerns can create solutions

MAINTAIN A 'BIG PICTURE' VIEW

- Don't get lost in micro details
- Impact is impact, do the exact numbers matter?

FOCUS ON WAYS THAT A BLUEWAYS PROGRAM CAN BE USED FOR THE POSITIVE

- If issues already exist, how can Blueways help
- How can a structured Program help these issues

1

Additional Section in Draft Agreements

2

Supplemental Appendix

3

Addendum to Provide Some Guidance and Direction

4

Others?

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

IMPACTS FROM DIRECT HUMAN USAGE

- Biggest threat?
- Lack of knowledge is an issue

HOW TO COMMUNICATE IMPACTS, STEWARDSHIP & BEST PRACTICES OF PADDLING?

- Signs
- Information on Website
- Brochures

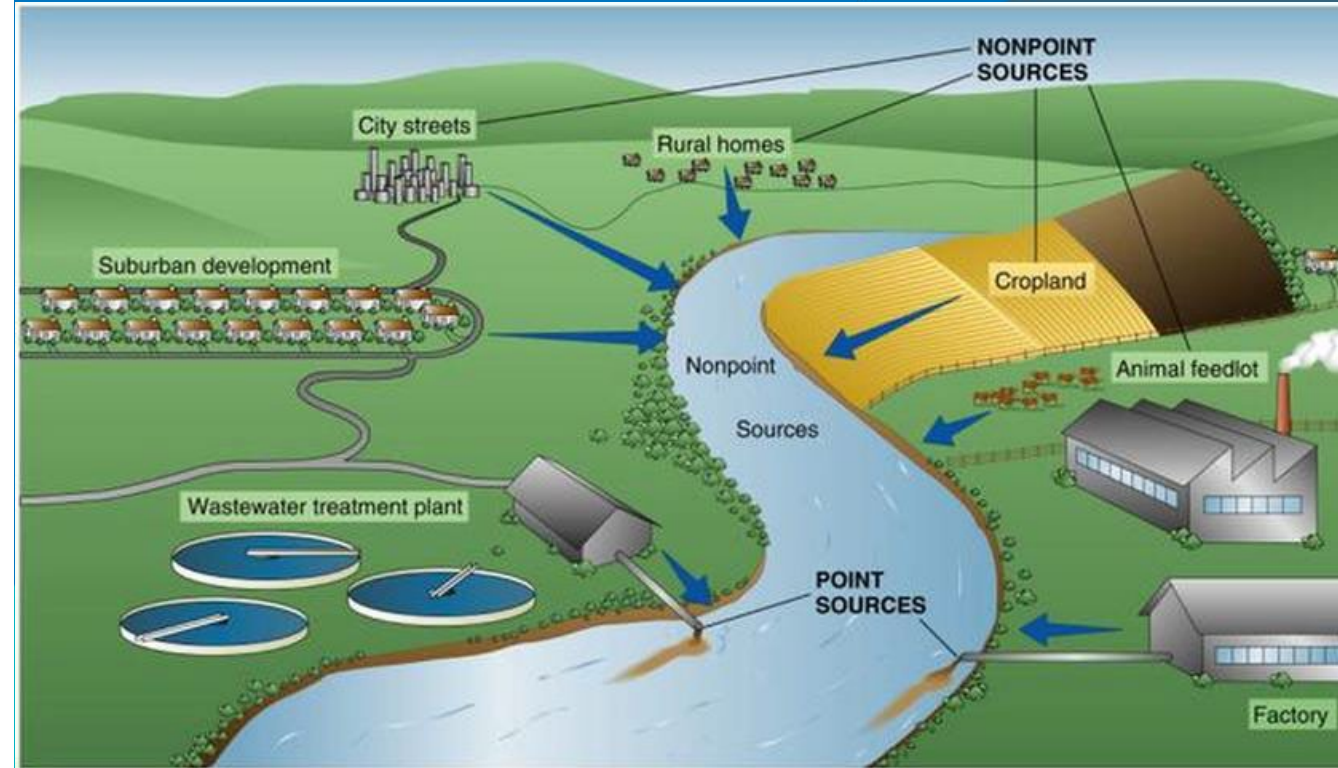
REQUIRES FUNDING

- Assistance from ODNR if Designated

***NO PROGRAM, NO DESIGNATION, NO FUNDING, NO INFORMATION**



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ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

“As more people took to the waterways in the region, agencies that regulate water quality standards noticed. “Officials did a use-attainability analysis of the Chicago River system and decided to work to raise higher water quality standards,”

Barghusen says. “One of the things that really helped with the decision was the fact that so many people were canoeing and kayaking in it. That really contributed to the decision to disinfect wastewater before it was released into the river.”

-Natural Awakenings Chicago on Water Trail Designation



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ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

“Unlike motor boats, paddle boats use no fuel and therefore cause no pollution.

There’s also no wash so they don’t contribute to river bank erosion, and they’re silent so there’s no noise pollution either. As with any outdoor activity, canoeing encourages people of all ages to learn about nature by engaging with and experiencing it first-hand. **This in turn fosters respect for the environment and a heightened sense of appreciation of the natural world; and people who love nature are more inclined to value and protect it.”**

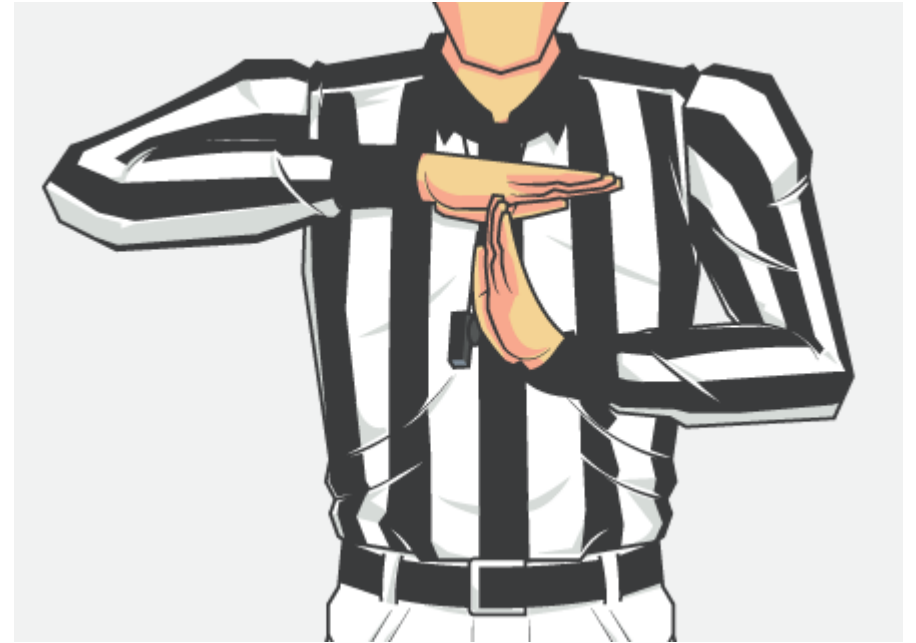
-lowimpact.org



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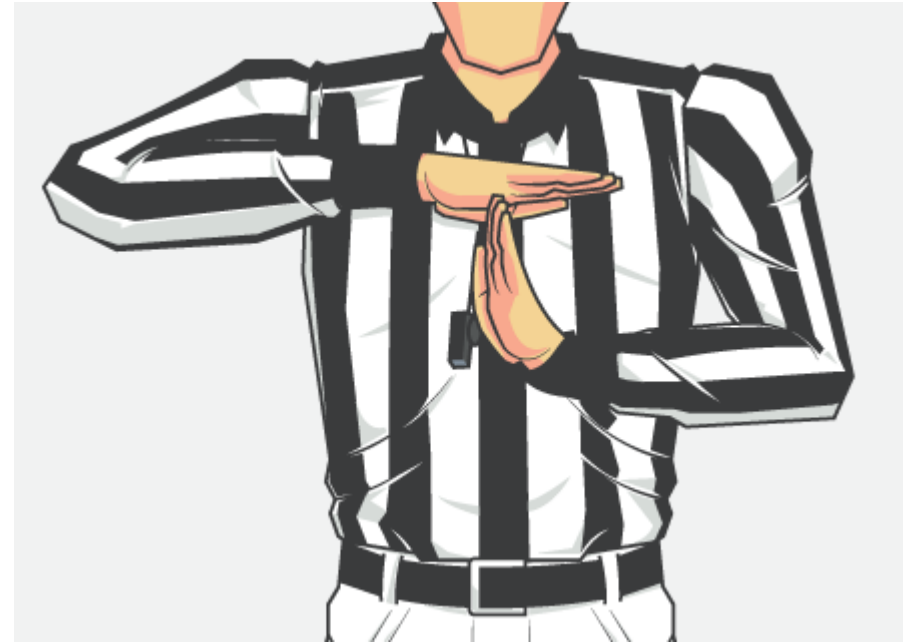
OPEN DISCUSSION



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GOAL	2023										2024			
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Advisory Panel														
Draft Partnership Agreements	X													
Develop Confirm Outline / Sections	X													
Review Sections 1 through 4 (Participating Entities, Purpose, Geographic Scope, Signage and Branding)		X												
Review Sections 5 through 7 (Accessibility, Responsibilities of MORPC / COB, Responsibilities of Participating Entities)			X											
Review Sections 8 through 10 (Terms of Agreement, Termination, Authorizing Signature and Dates)				X										
Review Template/Framework for Appendices (A through D)					X									
Finalize and Send Draft Agreements to Partnership Groups					X									
Make Recommendation for Permanent Program Structure							X							
Discuss Options (Standalone, Working Group, Board, Steering Committee, Working Group, etc.)							X							
Develop Written Guidance / Recommendation on Structure									X					
Review Customized Partnerhsip Agreements for Final Comments / Recommendations											X			
Partnership Groups														
Review and Customize Draft Agreements						X								
Develop Confirm Outline / Sections						X								
Review Sections 1 through 4 (Participating Entities, Purpose, Geographic Scope, Signage and Branding)							X							
Review Sections 5 through 7 (Accessibility, Responsibilities of MORPC / COB, Responsibilities of Participating Entities)								X						
Review Sections 8 through 10 (Terms of Agreement, Termination, Authorizing Signature and Dates)									X					
Review Appendices (A through D)										X				
Finalize and Send Customized Agreements to Advisory Panel										X				
Review Advisory Panel Comments												X		
Confirm Final Agreement and Timelines for Community Signatures													X	

OPEN DISCUSSION



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EXISTING OUTLINE

TEN SECTIONS & FOUR APPENDICES

1. Participating Entities
 2. Purpose
 3. Geographic Scope
 4. Signage and Branding
 5. Accessibility
 6. Responsibilities of MORPC / COB
 7. Responsibilities of Participating Entities
 8. Terms of Agreement
 9. Termination
 10. Authorizing Signatures and Dates
- APPENDIX A: Blueways Map
- APPENDIX B: Definitions & Acronyms
- APPENDIX C: Signage and Wayfinding Plans
- APPENDIX D: Maintenance Plans



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1

Where to Add Environmental Considerations?

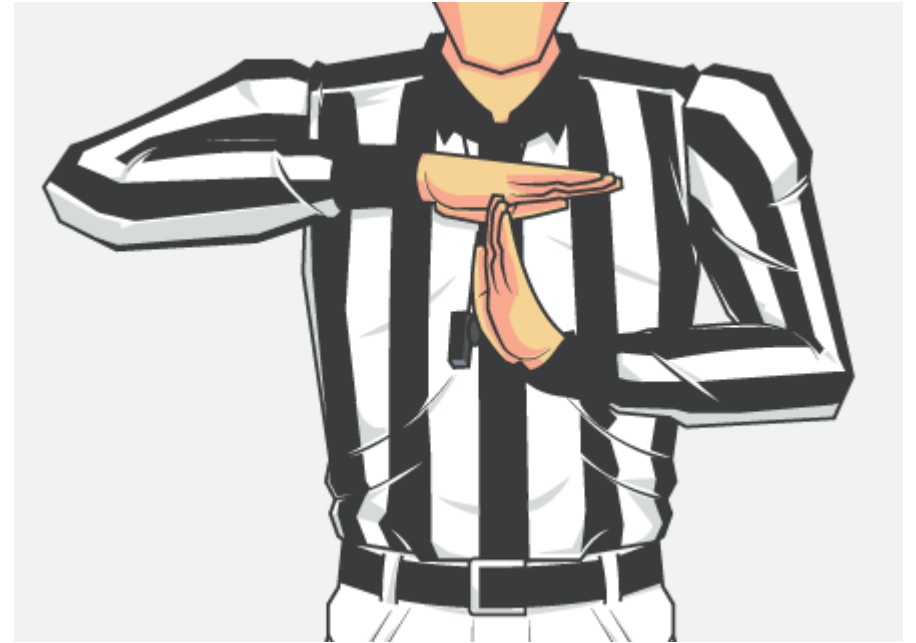
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Additional Sections?

3

Different Breakdown / Groups for Review?

OPEN DISCUSSION



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WHAT'S NEXT

GOAL	2023					
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
			Advisory Panel			
Draft Partnership Agreements			X			
<i>Develop Confirm Outline / Sections</i>	X					
<i>Review Sections 1 through 4 (Participating Entities, Purpose, Geographic Scope, Signage and Branding)</i>		X				
<i>Review Sections 5 through 7 (Accessibility, Responsibilities of MORPC / COB, Responsibilities of Participating Entities)</i>			X			
<i>Review Sections 8 through 10 (Terms of Agreement, Termination, Authorizing Signature and Dates)</i>				X		
<i>Review Template/Framework for Appendices (A through D)</i>					X	
Finalize and Send Draft Agreements to Partnership Groups					X	



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THANK YOU

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