

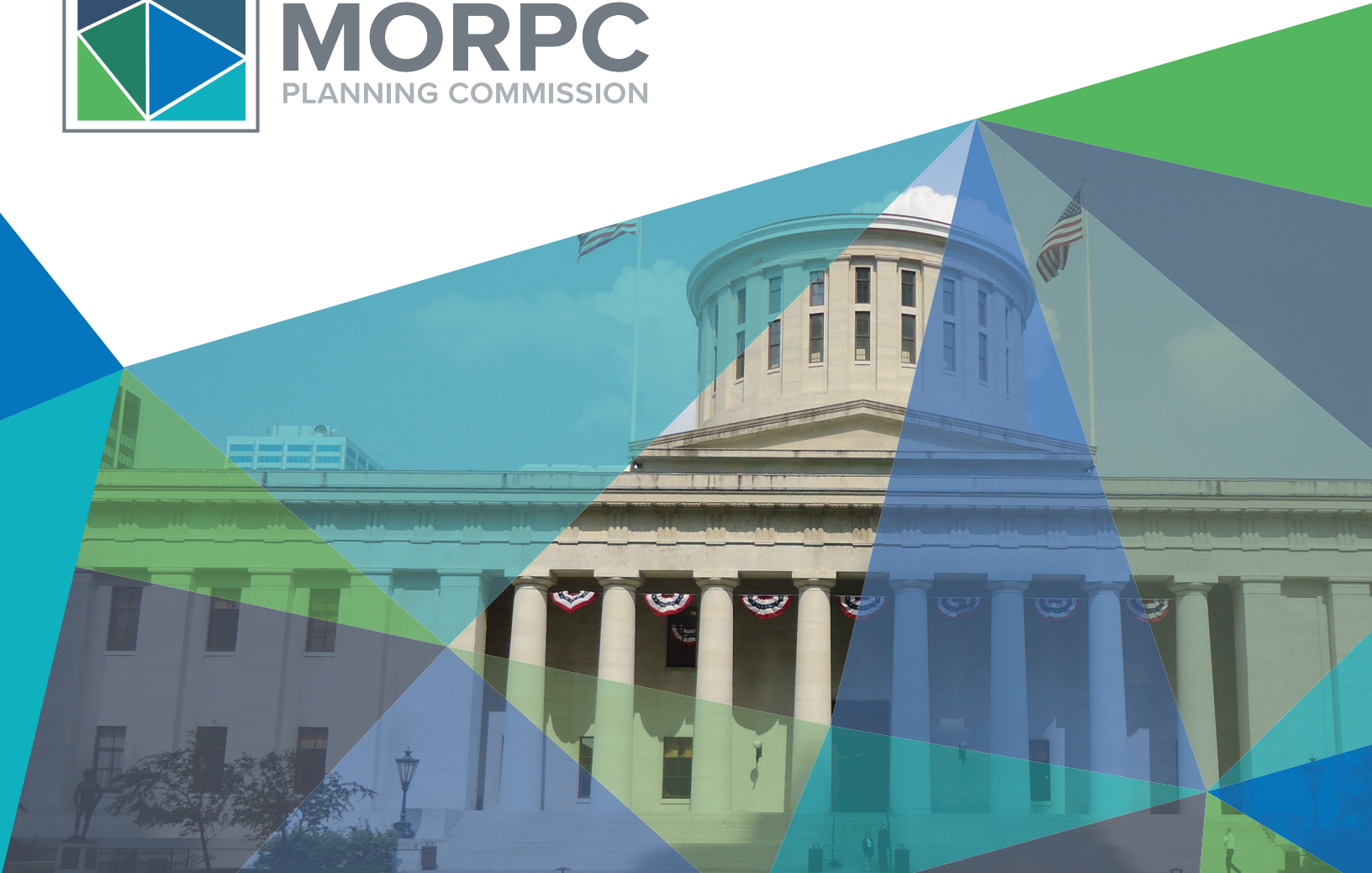
# PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

## 2021–2022

REGIONAL ADVOCACY FOR CENTRAL OHIO AT THE STATE AND FEDERAL LEVELS



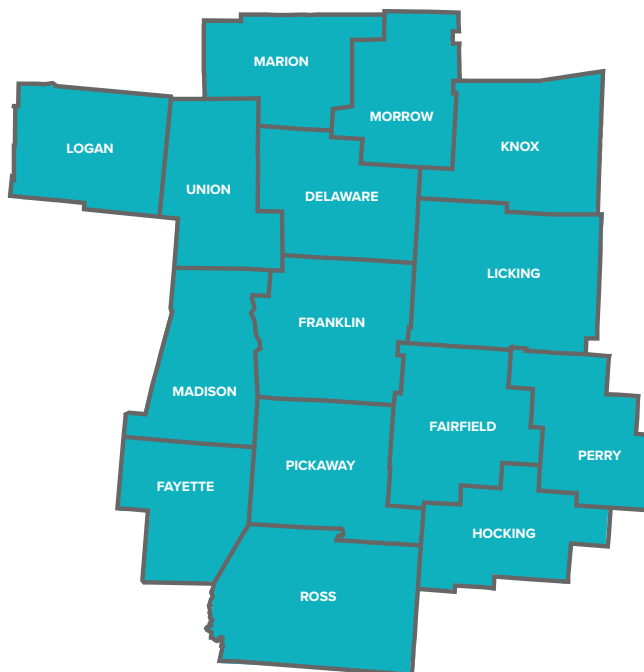
MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION



# WHO WE ARE:

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is Central Ohio's regional council for 75 members including counties, cities, villages, township, and regional organizations. We serve as a resource for local officials as they make decisions about economic growth, development, transportation, energy, and environmental sustainability—ensuring our region remains thriving and competitive while improving social, racial, and economic mobility.

## MORPC'S SERVICE AREA



# WHAT WE DO:

- Serve as Central Ohio's leadership forum for shared regional challenges and best practices.
- Convene local governments to plan, prioritize, and advance strategic transportation and infrastructure projects and investments.
- Assist as a regional information hub with demographics, maps, tools, and data to inform decisions.
- Provide technical assistance to communities with sustainability programs, growth planning, residential services, and shared solutions.
- Work alongside community leaders, residents, and partner organizations to effectively represent the collective voice of our region on public policy.

# OUR AGENDA:

MORPC and its local government members seek to inform and impact state and federal legislation and policies to improve Central Ohio's future prosperity. The 2021-2022 Public Policy Agenda reflects the diverse needs and interests of the region's cities, townships, counties, villages, and regional organizations. The agenda was developed by a working group composed of an assortment of professionals from local government, the business community, non-profits, and other regional partners. It included members of MORPC's Regional Policy Roundtable, which directs the public policy and advocacy work of the agency, and was chaired by Lancaster Mayor David Scheffler. This collaborative agenda details policy that make Central Ohio a better place for all of its residents and actions that address racism and eliminate disparities.

We encourage leaders in Washington and Columbus to work together and to use this agenda and MORPC's government affairs team as resources.

To stay up to date on MORPC's government affairs efforts, visit [morpc.org/GovAffairs](https://morpc.org/GovAffairs).

# LEAD

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC POLICY LEADERSHIP

### GOAL 1: REGIONALISM

*Promote regionalism at the local, state, and federal levels of government fostering economic growth, equity, efficient use of resources, and a shared prosperity for all Central Ohio residents.*

- Advocate for policies and legislation that enhance local government efficiency and collaboration.
- Promote insight2050 and advocate for policies and legislation that will provide Central Ohio with the needed tools to plan for growth.
- Promote and advance local government authority to improve the quality of life, environment, and economy.
- Support federal and state tax and budget policies that balance the promotion of inclusive economic growth and equity, while also ensuring the ability to provide vital local government services.
- Work with our regional partners to identify significant projects and grant opportunities to benefit all Central Ohio residents.
- Promote policies, programs, and funding to ensure our region's transportation, broadband, water, housing, sewer, and material management infrastructure are well maintained, equitable, affordable, accessible to all, vital, and resilient.
- Encourage legislation that provides all local governments the ability to hold public meetings virtually and in perpetuity and to use new forms of technology for communications, official notices, contracts, and outreach.
- Support robust relief and intergovernmental collaboration to assist local governments as they face unprecedented issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Oppose legislation that withholds local government funds from any local government.

### GOAL 2: TRANSPORTATION

*Achieve an advanced, inclusive, safe, and exceptional transportation system that connects Central Ohio's people and products to the world.*

- Seek additional revenue mechanisms for transportation at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Promote state and federal support and recognition of metropolitan and rural planning organizations and their regional approach to transportation planning and funding.
- Advance the importance of the logistics industry to Central Ohio and support investments and innovation in the North American International Freight Center, including intermodal, rail, air, and other freight facilities.
- Support funding and policies that measurably improve transportation safety and equity, and advance Vision Zero efforts at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Support the use of Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) in Central Ohio that promote intergovernmental and public-private cooperation to advance transportation projects and leverage state and federal funding.
- Advocate for an advanced and more equitable, multi-modal transportation system that improves interregional access to more effective and efficient public and private transportation choices to connect to regional, national, and international markets.
- Pursue policies and funding to improve quality of life through expanded transportation options connecting marginalized communities in rural, suburban, and urban areas.
- Pursue policies and funding to advance the Central Ohio Greenways strategy for developing a more interconnected regional trail network for all.
- Support efforts that leverage Smart Columbus, MORPC's Smart Region Task Force, and the 33 Smart Mobility Corridor, and advocate for regional policies that prepare Central Ohio communities for additional smart-infrastructure and innovative technology investment.
- Advocate for policies and funding that support the study and deployment of rapid speed transportation, passenger rail, and hyperloop technology in Ohio, and encourage the continued collaboration among Midwest Connect partners along the Chicago-Columbus-Pittsburgh corridor.
- Support a robust infrastructure package that addresses urgent obligations and our region's future mobility needs.

## GOAL 3: SUSTAINABILITY



*Pursue sustainability solutions that protect and conserve our natural resources and promote a diverse supply of clean, affordable, and reliable sources of energy for our growing region.*

- Advance and expand the integration of energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy for a healthier, more resilient, and cost-effective energy portfolio.
- Advocate for innovative strategies and funding for public and private partners to achieve and maintain attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, while decreasing air pollution exposure for Central Ohio residents.
- Advocate for policies, innovative strategies, and funding to enhance and protect the quality and quantity of our water resources, balancing public- and private-sector interests, and existing and emerging economic activities in our growing region.
- Advance locally sourced energy aggregation policies, funding, and innovative financing that foster economic growth, equity, resiliency, and higher quality of life.
- Support and advocate for policies and funding for a timely cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields and/or vacant, blighted, or abandoned land, and historic buildings in order to revitalize communities.
- Assist in the rapid development of an advanced transportation network, inclusive of electric and alternative fuel vehicles and their infrastructure, to provide connectivity throughout the region's rural and urban communities.
- Pursue funding and policies to help protect existing and secure new parkland, wetlands, trails, prime agricultural land, and green space.

## GOAL 4: DATA & DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE



*Promote a well-planned, comprehensive, and interconnected digital infrastructure network that improves access to underserved areas, enables connected and autonomous vehicles, and supports the sustainability and resiliency of the region.*

- Promote a well planned, comprehensive, and interconnected digital infrastructure network that improves access to underserved areas, enables connected and autonomous vehicles, and supports the sustainability and resiliency of the region.
- Pursue funding and initiatives that keep Central Ohio at the forefront of data and technology innovation.
- Encourage the adoption of data governance policies at the federal, state, and local levels that promote open data and standardization, while protecting the security of private, personal, and otherwise sensitive information.
- Support the ability of local governments to fund, manage, and maintain digital assets and infrastructure.
- Support planning and development for secure, reliable, and affordable broadband in every home, business, school, and service provider within the region.
- Encourage implementation of data sharing and analytics that result in data-driven decisions and collaboration with local governments, regional partners, and federal and state agencies.

## GOAL 5: RACIAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE



*Raise awareness of racial and social justice issues and work to continually improve communities within our growing region.*

- Advocate for policies that declare racism as a public health crisis.
- Support public health and safety systems that protect residents of all backgrounds.
- Support equitable development and affordable housing in our growing region.
- Improve access to job opportunities, broadband, resources, affordable housing, health systems, and connected green space for marginalized communities.
- Support policies that work to eliminate racial and social disparities in our growing region.
- Encourage the development of universal design policies and walkable communities that support lifelong and inclusive age-friendly communities.

# COLLABORATE

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORPC TO FORM COALITIONS WITH LIKE-MINDED ORGANIZATIONS

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



- Promote a robust and inclusive regional economy and actively collaborate with economic development and business organizations, non-profits, universities, and local governments to pursue an economic development district, improved national and state policies, and new funding to advance economic development.
- Promote projects and policies that advance local food systems and farmland preservation to achieve food security.
- Support One Columbus' vision in making Central Ohio the most prosperous region in the country.
- Advance job-attraction incentives, new tools, and strategies to encourage new jobs and investment that benefit the region.
- Collaborate with partners in achieving a diverse and vibrant workforce throughout the region.

### SUSTAINABLE GROWTH



- Promote efficient and effective use and management of waste streams through reuse and recycling programs.
- Advocate for innovative land-use regulations and planning tools as a way to: promote sustainable development; maintain and reuse existing housing and commercial buildings; conserve environmentally sensitive areas; encourage farmland preservation; reduce energy consumption; provide transportation alternatives; and promote effective material management.
- Advocate for policies and funding that support a broad spectrum of housing options—in alignment with the Regional Housing Strategy and LinkUS Columbus—to meet the region's growing residential and workforce needs.
- Support policies and incentives that leverage existing infrastructure and encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in Central Ohio's neighborhoods and commercial districts.

### FEDERAL FUNDS



- Support federal funding for defense installations, research, and other initiatives that benefit Central Ohio.
- Participate in coalitions and partnerships for MORPC local government members to understand, engage, and better position themselves for federal funding through appropriations, authorizations, bills, grants, and other opportunities.





# MID-OHIO REGIONAL **MORPC** PLANNING COMMISSION

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William Murdock, AICP  
*MORPC*

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*Plain Township*

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