



## MORPC Monthly Metropolitan Transportation Organization Summary

March 2020

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# Transportation & Infrastructure Development

Thea Walsh, Director - [twalsh@morpc.org](mailto:twalsh@morpc.org)

### **Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

- The draft strategies and project list were completed. In total approximately \$30 billion is forecast to be invested into the transportation system through 2050. An interactive web map is available at [www.morpc.org/mtp2050](http://www.morpc.org/mtp2050) to view the projects. Presentations to local communities continued throughout the last month.
- The open house was held on February 26. Over 60 people attended the open house.
- The full draft document will be completed in early March with the comment period continuing through April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The MTP will be adopted during the May committee meeting cycle.

### **Transit, Mobility & Human Services**

#### **5310 Designated Recipient**

- MORPC reviewed 17 FTA Section 5310 applications requesting over \$2.9 million in funding for enhancing transportation for older adults and people with disabilities. Staff identified 14 administrative, operating and capital projects for funding utilization the \$2.2 million available. These projects will be added to the quarterly TIP Update in March for ODOT and FTA STIP/TIP approval.
- MORPC is developing Mobility Management with COTA, DCT and ODOT to implement strategies to meet the goals and needs of the Coordinated Plan.

#### **Gohio**

- Team members met with Pivot resources to discuss the technical aspects of member management for the C-pass program and to determine if there is a way for the Pivot application to use existing technologies for its integration efforts.
- Staff shared Ohio Loves Transit social media posts to share support for the campaign that highlights the importance of public transit in Ohio. Staff also attended COTA's information session on the bus pass program for rehabilitation and pre-natal services that non-profit and health organizations can apply for.
- Gohio staff met with State of Ohio and Scott's Miracle Grow to discuss commuting options for employees. Staff also participated in the Green Spot Transportation and Cleaning Green meeting to educate about the business opportunities to utilize the Gohio Commute platform.
- One new Vanpool was added traveling from Jackson, Ohio to Chillicothe, Ohio.

## **Transportation Planning Studies**

### **Rapid Speed Transportation Initiative (RSTI)**

- MORPC is working with the Transportation Research Center and other partners to coordinate the next phase of Ohio's bid to be the home to the United States' first hyperloop certification center and test track. MORPC is coordinating the submission for the Phase 2 Hyperloop Certification Center (HCC) and test track as spearheaded by Virgin Hyperloop One. The HCC would involve research facilities and a six-mile test track with the intent of carving a path towards certification for hyperloop technology deployment.

### **OARC 2020 Conference on Freight**

- This year's conference is taking place in Columbus at the Downtown Hilton from July 9-10. MORPC is in charge of organizing this event, including creating the day-and-a-half program of breakout sessions and plenary speakers. MORPC is working with ODOT, JobsOhio, OSU, the Mid-America Freight Coalition, Columbus State Community College and the Columbus Region Logistics Council to create a compelling program that will attract freight transportation, economic development, and logistics professionals from various disciplines.

## **Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization (CORPO)**

### **CORPO Update**

- CORPO staff scheduled the next round county level subcommittee meetings which are all scheduled for April.
- The most recent CORPO Newsletter went live on the CORPO website in mid-February.
- CORPO staff is currently coordinating with Madison on the development of an Access Management Plan and a Thoroughfare Plan. CORPO staff will primarily assist with the Thoroughfare Plan once development begins.
- CORPO staff shared a draft copy of the FY2021 Planning Work Program (PWP) for CORPO. Staff has asked that comments be returned to them by March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- CORPO staff has been Coordinating with ODOT's Office of Transit on the development of a Peer Review Workshop that will take place on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at ODOT.
- CORPO staff is currently working on the draft of the first ever CORPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Staff will send the draft out for review and comment prior to submitting the draft to ODOT on March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

## **Infrastructure Funding**

### **Transportation Improvement Program**

- The draft SFY 21-24 was submitted to ODOT on February 7. It is also posted on MORPC's website. Work continues review and update project information from local jurisdictions and to update ODOT. The final draft is due to ODOT on March 27<sup>th</sup>. ODOT's STIP public involvement period runs from March 20 to April 10. An open house for the TIP will be held on March 31 at MORPC.

### **Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)**

- The Public Works Integrating Committee (PWIC) for OPWC District 3, comprising Franklin County, will meet on March 6 for a working session to review the policies and

criteria for Round 35 of the State Capital Improvements Program and the Local Transportation Improvement Program.

## **Natural Resources Assistance Council (NRAC)**

- Final applications for the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund are due by March 20. Approximately \$3.8 million is available for the current round.

## **INFRA & BUILD**

- Applications for the FY 2020 round of the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program were due on February 25. The following applications were submitted in Central Ohio:
  - I-70/I-71 downtown Innerbelt
  - I-71 and SR 36/US 37 Interchange in Delaware County
- In the February 25th Federal Register the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to apply for \$1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 discretionary grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program. These competitive grants are awarded on a competitive basis to projects that improve roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports, and intermodal transportation facilities. The maximum grant award is \$25 million. MORPC will begin discussion with ODOT and other partners on possible projects for submission. Applications are due by May 18<sup>th</sup>.

## **Franklin County Transportation Improvement District (FCTID)**

- The FCTID added two additional projects to the FCTID Program of Projects at their January board meeting. These projects included the Franklin County Parking Facilities Improvement Project and the Borror Road Improvement Project.

## **Competitive Advantage Projects**

- Staff are working with Ice Miller to conclude the CAP Innovative Funding Strategies Development Activity. This initiative will conclude with production of a final report including a variety of funding strategies which can be used to advance projects around the region.

# **Data & Mapping**

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## **Regional Data Advisory Committee (RDAC) and Working Groups**

The Regional Data Advisory Committee, including new Chair Brad Ebersole and new member Jonathan Miller, will meet on March 3 to discuss ongoing census efforts, public policy, and status of the work of the four working groups.

- Data Policy Needs Survey & Toolkit Working Group members have been working on their own to prepare the Data Policy Needs Survey. Working Group leadership intends to have the Survey ready for distribution to local governments in Quarter 1 2020. The Working Group will meet again on February 28.
- The Regional Information & Data Group (RIDG) Working Group hosted the kickoff meeting of the Regional Information & Data Group. 32 local data professionals attended, and the consensus of the attendees was that the meeting was a resounding success. The next meeting of the user group will be on April 1. The Working Group will meet again on March 11.

- The Regional Municipal Fiber Strategy Working Group will meet again on February 28 to discuss the progress of the subgroup (Fiber Network Working Group) and the progress of fiber mapping.
- The Sustainability Dashboard Working Group met on February 11 to discuss the outcome of the beta testing, to review problematic metrics, and to plan for more testing of the Dashboard. The Working Group will meet again on March 10.
- The Central Ohio GIS User Group met on February 12 to discuss ESRI's ArcGIS and other GIS topics. The next meeting will be May 20.

### **Smart Region Task Force**

- The Smart Region Task Force will meet in March to review the Task Force's final deliverable, the Smart Region Resource Guide.
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### **Transportation**

- GIS Manager Cheri Mansperger continues work on the ODOT LBRS (Location Based Response System) Steering Committee.
- Data and Mapping staff continues assisting Transportation with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

### **Census**

- The Columbus/Franklin County Complete Count Committee Local Government Subcommittee met on February 10 to discuss talking points for local government leaders and the Franklin County Census mini-grants. The subcommittee will meet again on March 4.
- Data and Mapping Director Aaron Schill continues his work with Ohio Census Advocacy Coalition (OCAC) on outreach to encourage full participation in the 2020 Census, with a focus on historically "hard-to-count" populations.

### **Data and Mapping Outreach and Collaboration**

- The Data and Mapping Team continues to take a lead role in data collection and analysis for the Regional Housing Study.
- Data and Mapping Director Aaron Schill continues his work with the Leadership Columbus Committee for Digital Inclusion.

# Planning & Sustainability

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## **Active Transportation Planning**

- **Complete Streets**: The next meeting for the Complete Streets Steering Committee will be on March 26. The Committee will review the next round of updates to the policy and provide their input on the changes.
- **Active Transportation Working Group (ATWG)**: The ATWG will meet quarterly in 2020 to accommodate additional meetings for ongoing active transportation projects, such as the Complete Streets Policy Update and update to the Active Transportation Plan. The next meeting has not yet been scheduled.
- **Outreach**: Team members hosted the monthly Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) webinar, "Street Typologies: An organizing framework for more walkable, bikeable streets," on February 19.

## **insight2050**

- **Technical Assistance Program (TAP)**: Team members have begun work on Jefferson Township, Hilliard, and Franklin County TAP projects. Team members continue to refine anticipated deliverables, activities, and timelines for Columbus and Westerville TAP projects.
- **Academy**: Application for the April Academy on Affordable Housing begins March 4, about a month before the three-session Academy co-sponsored with the OSU Knowlton School Alumni Society. It is aimed at design professionals in architecture and planning and will include team projects designed in the second session.

## **Regional Housing Strategy**

- A joint meeting of the Regional Housing Strategy Project Sponsors & Advisory Board on February 7 helped establish guiding principles, prioritize areas of focus, and move toward solutions/regional levers for change.

## **Transportation Safety**

- **Meeting Coordination**: Team members coordinated with NOACA to host the Q1 Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC) Transportation Safety working group meeting on February 11, 2020. MORPC and NOACA will be representing OARC on the update to the Ohio Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) that will be completed by November of 2020.
- **Regional Safety Plan**: Team members attended the SAFE Delaware County Coalition meeting on February 13, 2020 and presented the Central Ohio Transportation Safety Plan to the group.
- **Safety Projects**: Team members initiated a regional trail access and crossings safety project that will be developed in collaboration with COG partners. Team members assisted the City of Columbus and ODOT with an update to the traffic safety section portion of the INFRA application for the Columbus Crossroads project.
- **External Meetings**: Team members attended the Franklin County Traffic Fatality Review meeting on January 30, 2020. Challenges identified included: impaired driving and speeding.
- Team members attended the SHSP Steering Committee meeting on January 29, 2020. Discussion at the meeting focused around the plan update that must be completed by November 2020. Additional highlights included updates on statewide crash trends: there were 89 additional fatalities statewide in 2019 compared to 2018 (an 8% increase).

## **Sustainable2050**

- **Member Engagement:** City of Bexley, City of Delaware, and MORPC were recognized at Commission for earning the Platinum tier status designation. Planning is underway for the quarterly Sustainable2050 member meeting coming up in March, with a focus on natural resources. A monthly member update included information about MORPC's upcoming Energy Academy kicking off on March 11.

## **Greenways & Water Resources Program**

- **Central Ohio Greenways (COG) Board:** The Central Ohio Greenways Board will meet March 18<sup>th</sup>. The Trail Development Working Group will recommend the adoption of updated COG Trail Definition. These definition updates clarify the types of Regional and Community Trails that COG supports. Additionally, the Trail Development Working Group will recommend an updated *Regional Trail Vision Map*. Recommended changes include a trail through the City of Dublin to connect Bridge Park to Glacier Ridge Metro Park and various other minor route changes. Additional agenda items will include updates to ongoing COG Projects including: The COG Operations & Access Working Group's AEP solar micro-grid project opportunity on the Camp Chase Trail, The COG Marketing & Communication Working Group's *Taste of the Trails* Event Toolkit, The COG Partnership Working Group's *Rapid 5* scope development, and the Trail Development Working Group's Trail Prioritization Project.
- **Sustaining Scioto Board:** Efforts are underway to continue confirming members of this newly formed board. A chair has been secured and next steps are to coordinate with the chair and the funders to plan for the first Board meeting expected in April.
- **Central Ohio Water Resources Planning:** Ohio EPA would like MORPC to expand the 208 planning work into two additional counties in 2020. Staff is updating documents and concentrating on preliminary work in preparation for the upcoming projects.

## **Energy & Air Quality**

- **Air Quality Marketing and Outreach:** Plans are underway for ozone season kick off on March 1.
- **Energy & Air Quality Working Group:** The Energy and Air Quality Working Group met on January 28. Michael Forrester, Energy Manager of the City of Cincinnati, presented on Cincinnati's American Cities Climate Challenge and renewable energy programming. There are two sub-groups moving forward with special projects. Development of the Solar Toolkit is progressing and the next sub-group meeting is scheduled for the end of February. The Air Quality Sensor sub-group also met, with the first meeting focused on the central motivation or 'Why?' for creating an air quality sensor network program in Central Ohio.
- **Local Government Energy Partnership:** Energy Academy was announced, and is scheduled for March 11, June 10, September 9, and December 9. Topics include the national and state energy landscapes, community resilience, onsite generation and benchmarking, and future planning.

## **Sustainability Advisory Committee**

- The Sustainability Advisory Committee met on February 19<sup>th</sup> and welcomed the newly appointed members. The MORPC team gave an update on Sustainable2050 planning for 2020, and presented on resilience as a component of sustainability work. Justin Milam agreed to chair a sub-committee to update the Regional Sustainability Agenda which expires at the end of 2020. The next meeting be on April 15.
- **Regional Sustainability Dashboard:** The Sustainability Dashboard Working Group completed the initial beta testing and provided input. More testing is planned and will be opened up to a broader stakeholder audience in late March. MORPC staff continues to identify and gather data sources for the Dashboard and will be creating a plan for the

launch. Completion of the project scheduled for mid-May. The next Working Group meeting will be on March 10.

# Communications & Engagement

Niel Jurist, Director – [njurist@morpc.org](mailto:njurist@morpc.org)

## **Presentations & Outreach**

- Staff continued the scheduling of community presentations for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, as well as attending/presenting at the meetings.
- MTP Open House invitations were mailed to 2600 locations on MORPC's public involvement list, including churches, community groups, and businesses.
- Staff highlighted the MTP comment period and distributed MTP Open House invitations at the Franklin County Treasurer's Black History Month event.
- Staff assisted in updating Gohio Commute outreach materials.
- Staff completed ODOT's Title VI Questionnaire.

## **News Releases**

- MORPC Amends 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program to Reflect COTA Changes
- Public Invited to Review Proposed Transportation Projects (MTP)
- MORPC to Host Public Open House to Discuss 2020-2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

## **MORPC in the News**

- C-pass helps boost COTA ridership – Columbus Dispatch
- COTA ridership up in 2019; highest in 31 years - WBNS 10 TV
- Central Ohio considered for hyperloop test track – Columbus Dispatch
- Why are so many pedestrians getting struck on Columbus streets? – Columbus Dispatch
- Efforts underway to reduce pedestrian-vehicle crashes in central Ohio - ABC 6 / FOX 28
- Self-Driving Mass Transit Arrives on American Streets – Bloomberg
- MORPC asks for feedback on metropolitan-transportation plan – This Week News
- MORPC urges public participation on transportation plan – Columbus Messenger

## **Digital Content**

- Social media and web/e-newsletter content included the MTP and its open house, Ohio Loves Transit Week/Day, hyperloop, the Rickenbacker Area Study, MORPC 5307 TIP Changes, insight2050 Corridor Concepts, Gohio Commute, COTA/C-pass, and distracted driving legislation