

CENTRAL OHIO STATE OF SAFETY 2015-2019 REPORT



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

MORPC STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CENTRAL OHIO STATE OF SAFETY REPORT 2015-2019:

William Murdock, *Executive Director*

Kerstin Carr, *Director, Planning & Sustainability*

Stephen Patchan, *Assistant Director, Planning & Sustainability*

Jennifer Noll, *Principal Planner, Planning & Sustainability*

Lauren Cardoni, *Senior Planner, Planning & Sustainability*

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

COTSP: *Central Ohio Transportation Safety Plan*

HSIP: *Highway Safety Improvement Program*

LPA: *Local Public Agency*

MORPC: *Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission*

MPO: *Metropolitan Planning Organization*

MTP: *Metropolitan Transportation Plan*

MVMT: *Million Vehicle Miles Traveled*

OACP: *Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police*

ODOT: *Ohio Department of Transportation*

ODPS: *Ohio Department of Public Safety*

OPWC: *Ohio Public Works Commission*

SHSP: *Strategic Highway Safety Plan*

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY IN CENTRAL OHIO

INTRODUCTION

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is the principal public agency conducting regional transportation studies for the Central Ohio area because it serves as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Columbus Urbanized Area. It covers Franklin County, Delaware County and portions of Licking, Fairfield and Union counties.

As an MPO, MORPC must seek to increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. MPOs must also coordinate with state departments of transportation to develop performance measures that aim to realize a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

Since 2005, MORPC has analyzed regional crash data for the MPO area, or Transportation Planning Area (shown in the map on the following page), in order to better understand regional crash trends. The majority of crash data analyzed and represented within this document is received from standardized police reports that are generated each time a traffic crash occurs and law enforcement responds. This data includes crash type, crash severity, recorded contributing factors, road condition, driver behaviors, and other relevant information about the crash and people involved.

The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is responsible for compiling, analyzing, and publishing crash data and statistics in the State of Ohio. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) works closely with ODPS to disseminate this information to various safety partners within the state for the purposes of identifying transportation safety issues and determining which strategies seem most appropriate to address them.

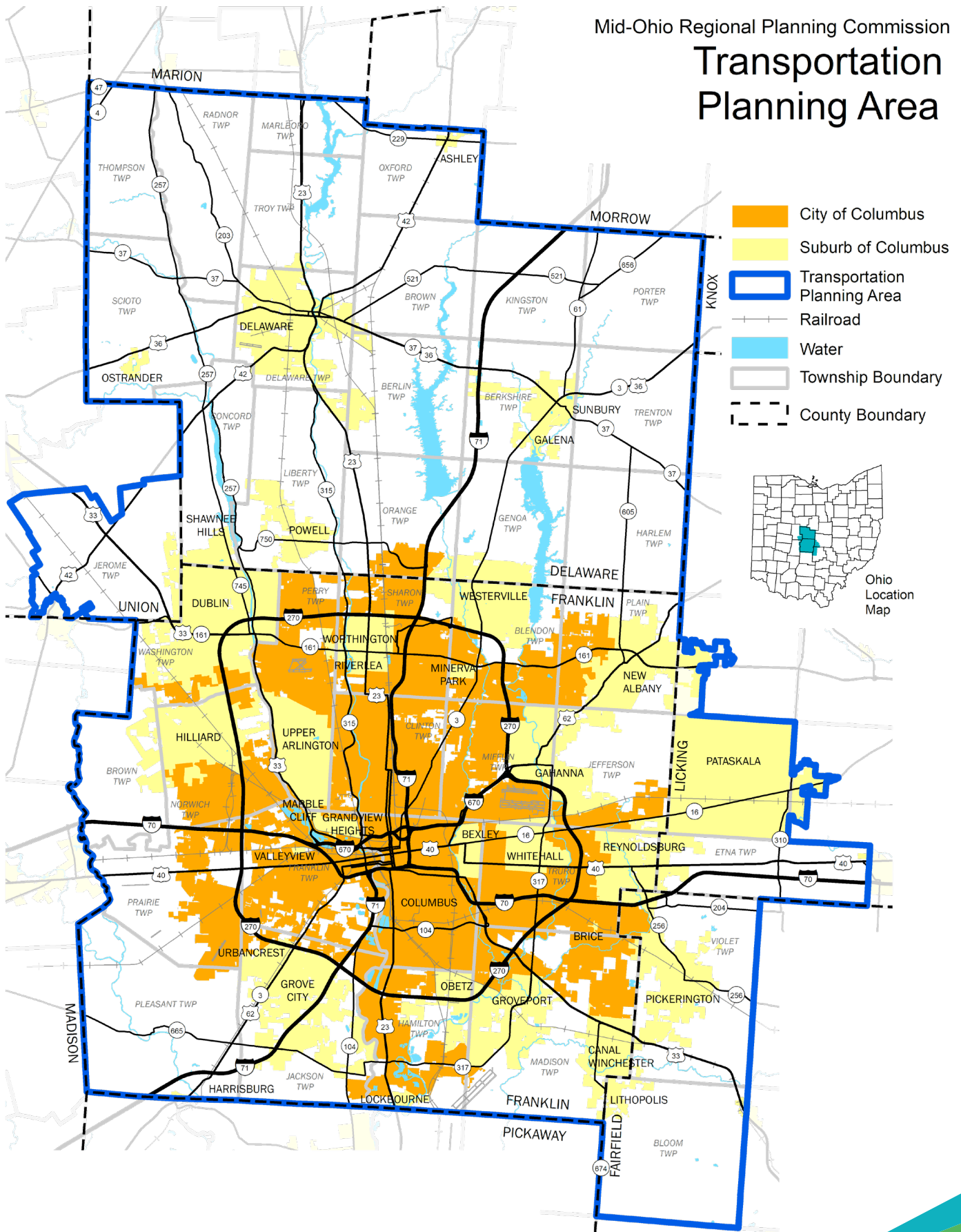
STATE OF SAFETY REPORT

The information that follows in this report is meant to provide a brief summary of the current state of transportation safety within the Central Ohio region. This report is produced on an annual basis to track the region's progress toward established goals and targets related to transportation safety that have been adopted in the region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and reiterated in the Central Ohio Transportation Safety Plan (COTSP). Additionally, this report will provide an update on implementation of the COTSP Action Plan.

For a more detailed look at crash trends in our region, please review the COTSP available on MORPC's website. The COTSP is a comprehensive safety plan for the Central Ohio region that identifies the most significant causes of serious injuries and fatalities on the local roadway system. The plan establishes a series of goals and benchmarks for safety improvements, identifies existing trends and critical safety priorities, and sets up a framework for how collaboration can improve safety throughout the region. The COTSP follows the framework set by the State of Ohio's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), and will be updated every five years.

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

Transportation Planning Area



TRENDS IN REGIONAL SAFETY

CURRENT FIVE-YEAR TRENDS

Between 2015 and 2019, more than 200,000 crashes were reported within MORPC's MPO area. More than half a million people were involved in these crashes, of which 587 were fatally injured and 4,260 suffered serious, life-changing injuries. The chart in Figure 1 includes an overview of the crash trends by year for the 2015-2019 time period.

While enhancements in vehicle safety, roadway design, emergency response times, traffic laws, and enforcement over time have all contributed to a safer transportation system, Central Ohio has been experiencing a dramatic increase in roadway fatalities.

- » Traffic fatalities increased by 19.3 percent.
- » On average, more than 100 lives were lost in crashes each year.
- » Serious injuries decreased by 10 percent.

On average, nearly 300 people were involved in a crash each day over the 2015-2019 time period.



Figure 1. Crash Trends in Central Ohio by Year (2015-2019)

YEAR	CRASH STATISTICS				OCCUPANT STATISTICS					SAFETY METRICS		
	Fatal Crashes	Injury Crashes	Property Damage Crashes	Total Crashes	Fatalities	Serious Injuries	Minor Injuries	No Injuries	Total People Involved	Injury Rate	EPDO	Fatalities and Serious Injuries / 100,000 Population
2015	97	10,493	30,621	41,211	109	923	14,179	89,077	104,288	25.7%	2.95	72.25
2016	117	10,865	30,695	41,677	126	872	14,641	89,600	105,239	26.4%	2.95	65.52
2017	106	10,995	30,641	41,742	112	845	14,714	89,529	105,200	26.6%	2.92	62.32
2018	102	10,567	28,940	39,609	110	789	14,176	83,563	98,638	26.9%	2.92	59.56
2019	121	10,668	29,312	40,101	130	831	14,564	85,824	101,349	26.9%	3.00	61.24
5-Year Total	543	53,588	150,209	204,240	587	4,260	72,274	437,593	514,714			
Annual Average	109	10,718	30,042	40,868	117	852	14,455	87,519	102,943	26.5%	2.95	64.18
Percent Change 2015-2019	+24.7%	+1.7%	-4.3%	-2.7%	+19.3%	-10.0%	+2.7%	-3.7%	-2.8%	+4.7%	+1.8%	-15.2%

Note: The data shown in the chart above represent the raw data reported during this time period. Cells highlighted in orange represent the year with the highest statistic for that category.

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE

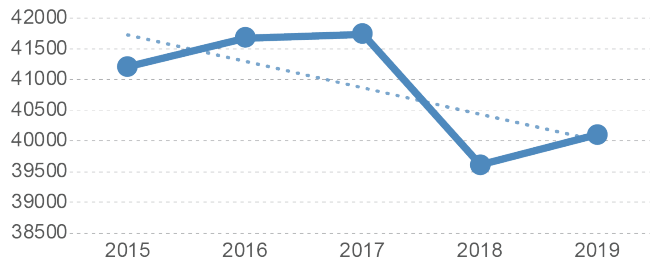
The chart in Figure 2 indicates the current trends in relation to the targets established in the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the goals set by the COTSP. The data in this chart represents 5-year rolling averages for the 2015-2019 time period, which helps to illustrate the overall trend by averaging out any significant peaks or declines that occur on a year-by-year basis. The overall trends for each target indicate that our region is only meeting one out of the five established targets: a declining number of serious injuries. For the remaining targets, the region is trending in the wrong direction. The graphs in Figure 3 illustrate how the trends in total crashes and serious injuries have been decreasing, while fatalities have been rising.

Figure 2. Annual Performance Toward Targets

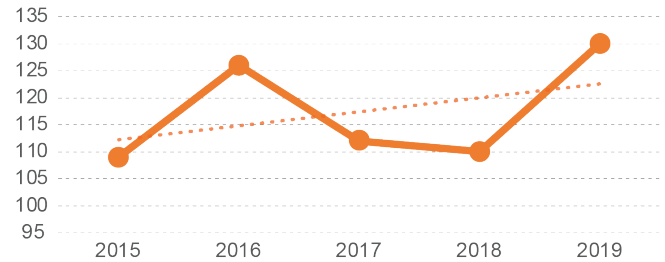
PERFORMANCE MEASURE	2020* Benchmark	2025		2050	GRADE
		TARGET	TRACK	TARGET	
Number of Fatalities	106	-8% (97)	+10.4% (117)	-27% (77)	✗
Number of Serious Injuries	868	-8% (798)	-2.0% (851)	-27% (634)	✓
Non-Motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries	145	-8% (133)	+4.8% (152)	106	✗
Rate of Fatalities / 100 MVMT	0.74	0.69	0.97*	0.54	✗
Rate of Serious Injuries / 100 MVMT	6.11	5.64	6.21*	4.43	✗

Figure 3. Trend Graphs (2015-2019)

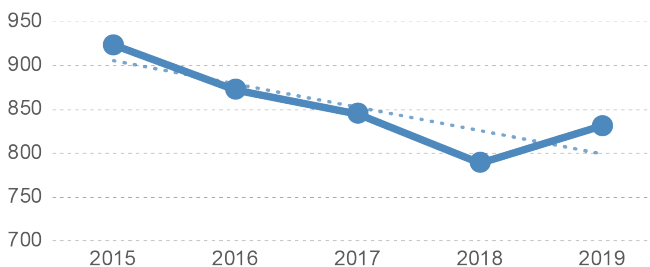
Total Crashes



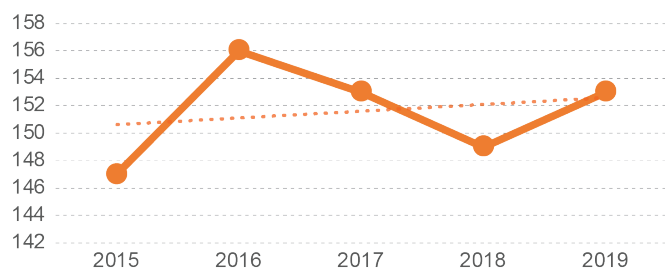
Fatalities



Serious Injuries



Non-motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries



ANNUAL REPORTING

Each year, in alignment with the Regional Safety Forum held in September, MORPC will produce an updated State of Safety report that tracks the region's progress toward meeting the goals established in the COTSP as well as the action items identified in the action plan. This annual reporting process will help to determine whether progress is being achieved toward each action item and if any output measures may need adjustment.

PLAN MAINTENANCE & UPDATING

As the COTSP is implemented and progress toward the goals is evaluated, there will be a need to revise and update the plan. The following are key elements of this update process:

- » Identifying any barriers to implementation
- » Modifying action items as issues or new opportunities arise
- » Providing updates and additional guidance on specific programs, activities, etc.

The COTSP document will be updated on a five-year cycle, while the State of Safety report will provide annual updates on key highlights in overall regional crash trends.

COTSP ACTION PLAN PROGRESS

Since the release of the COTSP in September of 2019, the region has made great strides toward implementing the Action Plan. Even through the shutdowns and limitations associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, MORPC and local partners have been continuing to work on critical transportation safety efforts. The chart in Figure 4 lists the action items that have been initiated since the launch of the plan.

Please refer to the full COTSP Action Plan document at www.morpc.org/safety for more detail.

Figure 4. Action Plan Progress

Action Item	Action Leads	Description	Progress
Driving Safety Concerns #1.5	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT, Safe Communities	Schedule social media posts to share safe driving habits, increasing frequency during holiday seasons and during major events.	MORPC has prioritized sharing safe driving tips provided by ODOT through the Your Move Ohio Campaign. These messages are posted every month and around key holidays to promote safe driving.
Driving Safety Concerns #2.2	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT, Safe Communities	Implement free/low cost circulator shuttle systems for first/last mile connectivity to encourage alternative transportation use.	COTA launched the COTA//Plus on-demand transit service in 2019 to provide under-served areas with better access to the larger transit system.
Driving Safety Concerns #3.1	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Work with local governments to adopt strong local primary legislation on distracted driving.	MORPC has shared sample language from the City of Bexley for Hands-Free ordinances that local agencies can adopt. This language is available at www.morpc.org/safety .
Driving Safety Concerns #3.2	MORPC, ODOT, ODPS	Work with the state legislature on a primary distracted driving law.	Legislation on distracted driving was introduced at the State level in 2020; MORPC and ODOT have provided testimony in support of this legislation and will continue to do so until it is adopted.
Driving Safety Concerns #3.4	MORPC, ODOT, ODPS, OACP	Work with state legislature to update language in the Ohio Revised Code requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians and bicyclists at crosswalks.	Legislation was introduced in 2020 to amend the Ohio Revised Code to alter the law regarding yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks.
Driving Safety Concerns #4.2	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Participate on ODOT's Speed Management action team to develop a regional plan for setting speed limits and deploying research-based speed management techniques.	MORPC, City of Columbus, and City of Hilliard are participating in the ODOT Speed Management Committee that was formed in late 2020 after the update to the SHSP was adopted.
Serious Crash Types #1.2	MORPC, ODOT	Routinely conduct Road Safety Audits (RSAs) and safety studies at priority safety locations to identify best engineering solutions at each site.	MORPC assisted the City of Grove City with an application to ODOT's Local Safety Assistance Program (LSAP) in late 2020 for a safety study along the US 62 corridor, which is on the regional High Injury Network. The application was successful and a safety study is currently underway with consultant assistance provided by ODOT.
Serious Crash Types #2.2	MORPC, ODOT	Educate local governments on available project funding and opportunities.	MORPC hosted the first Regional Safety Forum in September 2020 and invited ODOT to speak about the funding programs and technical assistance available for transportation safety.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #1.3	LPAs, MORPC	Work with communities to complete a preliminary study for a low-stress / connected network that supports all user ability types with facilities such as protected bicycle lanes and bicycle boulevards.	MORPC launched an update to the Regional Active Transportation Plan in 2020 and is developing a Level of Traffic Stress map that will aid local agencies in implementing low-stress bicycle facilities throughout the region.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #1.4	LPAs, MORPC	Work with communities to adopt/update and implement Complete Streets policies.	The MORPC insight2050 Technical Assistance Program continues to assist local agencies in developing complete streets policies and programs.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #3.3	LPAs, MORPC, ODPS	Identify issues and challenges regarding crash report coding and degree of report completeness/accuracy.	The Columbus Police Department is working to improve their crash reporting process to ensure reports are completed properly.
Vulnerable Roadway Users #4.3	LPAs, MORPC, ODOT	Work with ODOT to implement programs that encourage local governments to install low cost safety treatments that reduce pedestrian, bicycle, and scooter crashes.	ODOT launched a Pedestrian Safety Improvement Program to implement \$10 million in low-cost pedestrian safety improvements throughout the state, including \$2.5 million within Columbus. Implementation is expected to begin in Summer 2021.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & FUNDING

MEMBER ASSISTANCE

MORPC provides technical assistance related to transportation safety work to local agencies within the MPO area. The High Injury Network (HIN) identified for the 2013-2017 time period will be used to prioritize locations for technical assistance. MORPC will coordinate with local agencies to study the corridors and locations along the HIN in more detail and identify funding opportunities for improvements. MORPC will work with each local agency to determine the appropriate strategy for the locations within their jurisdiction. This assistance could include any of the following:

Road Safety Audits

Road Safety Audits (RSAs) address locations that have received significant attention around roadway issues. RSAs are performed by a team of specialists – engineers, safety professionals, agency representatives, etc. – that formally audit the location and provide an official report with recommendations to improve it. Recommendations often involve medium- to low-cost spot safety treatments. MORPC can assist local governments with RSAs and provide support for an application for safety funds to implement the recommended countermeasures. For more information on conducting RSAs, see the Regional RSA Implementation Guide on MORPC's website at morpc.org/tool-resource/local-safety-initiative.

Safety Studies

Safety studies provide in-depth evaluation of a location that is used to develop high- to medium-cost spot safety treatments. These locations generally show a high frequency of severe to fatal crashes and often require significant improvements to address them. Safety studies utilize both internal (MORPC) and external resources to complete, and can then be used to apply for safety funds to implement the recommended countermeasures.

Systemic Safety Improvements

Systemic safety improvements (SSIs) are different from traditional safety projects that address specific types of crashes at a specific location. SSIs look at crash data more holistically across a region or throughout a jurisdiction to identify trends or common threads. These improvements usually involve low-cost, risk-based treatments that can be implemented across a series of locations.

SSIs are conducted in a more systematic manner compared to the in-depth and focused site analysis required of an RSA or safety study. The intent is to address widespread safety concerns at multiple locations by analyzing potential risk based on similar characteristics present throughout the region, then implement system-wide safety improvements. For more information on SSIs, see the Guide to Implementing Regionally-Based Systemic Safety Improvements on MORPC's website at morpc.org/tool-resource/local-safety-initiative.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the action items identified in the action plan will require a source of funding in order to complete their implementation. MORPC will work with local partners to identify relevant sources of funds to implement the strategies of the action plan.

There are many financial resources available for the programs, projects, and services that make our region successful. Information about funding and grant opportunities that are available to local communities and organizations can be at www.morpc.org/funding. Some highlights of key funding programs are listed below.

Potential Funding Available for Safety Projects:

- » **MORPC-Attributable Funds:** Attributable funds are federal transportation funds that are allocated at MORPC's discretion, following an application and selection process. These funds can be used for roads and bridges, public transit, bikeways, sidewalks, and a variety of other activities. More information about MORPC-Attributable Funds can be found on the MORPC website at www.morpc.org/tool-resource/funding-grants.
- » **Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC)**
 - **State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP):** Counties, cities, villages, and townships can apply for SCIP funding that is provided through grants, loans, and loan assistance or local debt support. Grants are available for up to 90 percent of the total project costs for repair/replacement and up to 50 percent for new/expansion. Loans can be provided for up to 100 percent of the project costs. Grant/loan combinations are also available.
 - **Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP):** Counties, cities, villages, and townships can apply for LTIP funding that is provided through grants and may cover up to 100 percent of project costs.
- More information about the SCIP and LTIP funding process can be found on MORPC's website at www.morpc.org/tool-resource/franklin-county-scip-ltip or general program information can be found on the OPWC website at www.pwc.ohio.gov/Programs/All-OPWC-Funding-Programs.
- » **Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP):** HSIP funding can be used by local governments to make improvements on any public roadway. Funding is available for all stages of development and typically requires a 10 percent local match. Safety improvements, such as upgrading signs, signals, pavement markings and guardrail are eligible for 100 percent funding. More information on HSIP funding can be found on ODOT's website at www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/ProgramManagement/HighwaySafety/HSIP.

