



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION



April 2-8, 2021 | Advertising Feature to *Columbus Business First*

# OUR FUTURE ENVISIONED

MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION | 2021 STATE OF THE REGION



# OUR FUTURE ENVISIONED

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's envisioned future for the 15 urban and rural counties in Central Ohio is one of prosperity and growth, and we are proud to work together with you to ensure everyone who calls Central Ohio home can find success.

MORPC is Central Ohio's regional council, which has grown to 75 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 a future of economic growth, development, transportation, energy, and environmental sustainability.

All indications show Central Ohio will continue to grow. Especially during what has been a tough past year, we never stopped working together on Central Ohio's future. Despite the unprecedented challenges of the past year, thanks to the partnership with the Central Ohio Mayors & Managers Association and Franklin County Township, we were able to bring local decision-makers together to help navigate our region through health and economic crises. During the pandemic, MORPC never stopped preparing and working on the vision of the future for Central Ohio.

As we reflect on the lessons of 2020, one thing is for certain – we are resilient and more determined now than ever before to address inequities and disparities that have been exposed by the health crisis and in underserved, historically marginalized communities. MORPC remains committed to working with local governments and community members in pressing for dedicated, long-term strategies to eliminate racism.

As we plan a path forward, we are reimagining our future. We are working toward a region where housing is attainable for everyone, multi-modal mobility options exist, and there is greater connectivity for all. Our vision is clear, and we invite you to join us as we plan for our future!

Kind Regards,



**William Murdock**  
Executive Director,  
MORPC



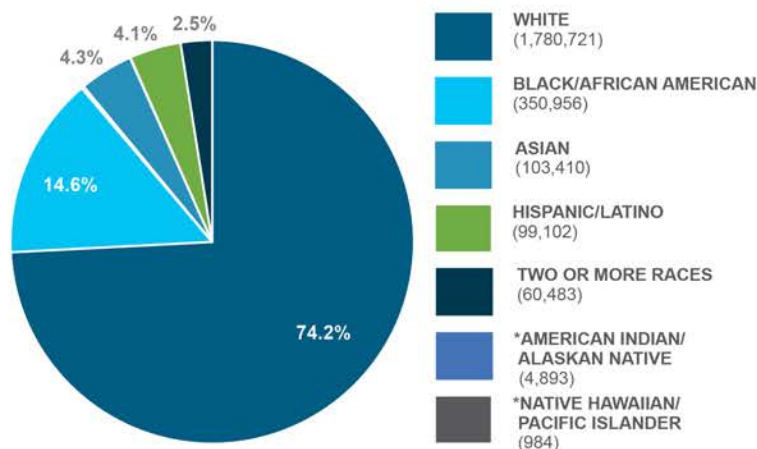
**Karen Angelou**  
City of Gahanna  
MORPC Board Chair

## CENTRAL OHIO AT A GLANCE



As Central Ohio grows in population and diversity, we all benefit from the rich, cultural tapestry and economic prosperity that comes with the changing demographics. Here's a look at where we are today:

### PERCENT & ESTIMATE OF RESIDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY FOR 15-COUNTY REGION



\* Some groups are a small percentage and therefore do not visually appear in the chart.

Source: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, 2019

Many of Central Ohio's racial and ethnic minority groups are continuing to grow.

Overall, the non-white population grew from 21 percent in 2010 to 26 percent by 2019.

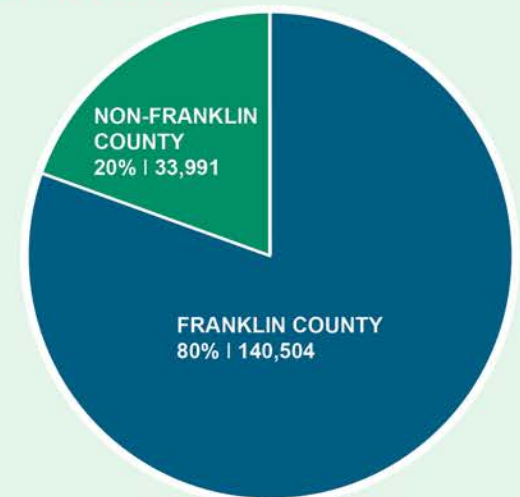
The Asian population surpassed the Hispanic/Latino population in 2017.

Black/African American is the largest non-white group, followed by Asian and Hispanic/Latino.

### OUR REGION'S FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION

Immigration is contributing to Central Ohio's growth and diversity.

The vast majority of the region's foreign-born population lives in Franklin County, while the remainder of foreign-born residents are in the region's other 14 counties.



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019

### RESIDENTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2015-2019

Do you ever wonder where the region's foreign-born residents are from?

They come from many places around the world. The table to the left shows the top 10 countries of their origin – with most of these residents being from India, Mexico, and China.



# Racial Equity Top of Mind as Central Ohio Moves Forward

Over the next three decades, the Central Ohio region is expected to experience dramatic changes in demographics and lifestyles that will affect the future success of our communities.

The changing demographics and economic prosperity are placing the region in the same league as the nation's top cultural centers.

Central Ohio is on track to grow to 3 million people by 2050, and racial and ethnic minorities are expected to account for most of our region's growth.

In light of recent injustices, demonstrations, and government actions related to racism in the past year, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission looked at its own efforts – not only at its diversity and inclusion efforts, but at how its mobility, sustainability, and housing initiatives play a role in the success of local communities and their residents.

Through allowing MORPC's leadership, staff, and local government members to reflect on where we are today, MORPC reaffirmed its commitment to do more to eliminate racism and promote equity.

The agency's statement on racism expresses support to local governments working to end racism and discrimination. It also focuses on how MORPC will continue to address disparities and inequities through its programs and initiatives – highlighting various aspects of the agency's work.

MORPC also developed a resource page for local governments with examples of how communities locally and across the nation are addressing racism. It includes examples of resolutions, statements, and other resources that could be beneficial to MORPC's local government members moving forward – including declarations of racism as a public health crisis, on which many Central Ohio governments have taken action.

Collectively, these statements and declarations represent a small portion of Central Ohio's commitment to build on our progress, acknowledge and address our shortcomings, improve and measure our impact, and advance new efforts focused on eliminating systemic racism in our work.

As the regional council of local governments, MORPC's work in diversity and inclusion is a core value for the agency and its members. To continue building an inclusive region, MORPC has partnered with the YWCA Columbus to offer diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) trainings to its employees, members, and partners. The YWCA is committed to educating and empowering individuals to build a more inclusive community.

"Our DEI trainings help organizations and individuals better understand and combat racial injustice, so we can build a Columbus community with peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all," YWCA Columbus President & CEO Christie Angel said. "MORPC is taking an important step to start the conversation and lay the foundation for the community. We all have a responsibility to continue to remain active participants in the fight for equity."

The partnership is allowing new support and access to expertise for MORPC's local government members by providing more opportunities for trainings and services on antiracism and racial equity.

"A strengthened focus on equity is driving conversations, plans, and investments in communities across Central Ohio," MORPC Executive Director William Murdock said. "Partnering with YWCA Columbus brings us all new tools and focus as we reaffirm our commitment to build a more prosperous region for everyone."

Meanwhile, MORPC has incorporated its aspirations for racial and social justice and equity into its public policy, data, and sustainability agendas, which guide a large portion of the agency's work. While MORPC has already strengthened many of its efforts, its members and staff acknowledge there is more to do, and they are committed to the work it takes.

## WAYS WE ARE ADDRESSING RACISM

**TRANSPORTATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES**  
Work to ensure everyone has equal access to education, jobs, healthcare, and other community resources



**RESIDENTIAL SERVICES**  
Provide free services to populations historically underserved and overburdened with energy and housing costs



**REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY**  
Identify gaps in affordable and sufficient housing to meet market demands



**PLANNING & SUSTAINABILITY**  
Work to improve air quality conditions that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations



**DATA & MAPPING**  
Identify trends and disparities to improve opportunities for resources for everyone



# Ongoing Work at MORPC Emphasizes Building Connections for All

For decades, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission has partnered with federal, state, and local agencies to improve our region's transportation system and the development around it.

"Where people live, work, and play matters a lot to us," MORPC Transportation & Infrastructure Development Director Thea Ewing said. "As our region grows and becomes more diverse, it increases the urgency to plan for and invest in more housing and mobility options to connect people with one another."

What has become clear is that not everything should be done in the way it has been done in the past.

Through initiatives like insight2050, MORPC knows that people want to live near the places and amenities they most want to go – whether it be a restaurant, dry cleaner, grocery store, park or somewhere else. Residents also desire many options in how they get there – driving, walking, bicycling, transit, or even by waterway.

A complete mobility system, more housing options, and affordable digital access can help residents be connected to family, friends, and the places they need and want to go. This connectivity helps to make our communities more equitable and helps residents enjoy a better, higher quality of life and more prosperity.

With this focus in mind, MORPC is working on a strategic framework to tie together the ongoing community planning efforts in transportation, sustainability, and data and mapping resources. Along with a focus on topics such as broadband, housing, and resources for local governments, MORPC can carry out its work to better equip communities to serve their residents – *all* of their residents.

The Regional Housing Strategy, which was completed last year in partnership with nearly two dozen communities and partners from around the region, provides great examples of how to move forward.

The strategy was developed to leverage housing as a platform for equitable growth and recovery, and to address the increasing number of residents struggling to find and afford housing in neighborhoods of their choice. Through it, both the public and private sectors have more than a hundred action items and a host of resources they can use to build better, more inclusive communities.

Our region's diversity is worth celebrating. But too many Central Ohioans, instead, experience discrimination based on their race, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, or other qualities. This discrimination gets in the way of the future communities we envision for our region. By being intentional, we can endeavor together to overcome it.

MORPC is currently working on a variety of initiatives and plans that will help foster a more equitable region:

## LINKUS MOBILITY INITIATIVE

MORPC has partnered with the City of Columbus, Central Ohio Transit Authority, and others on this initiative to create a complete and connected mobility system along key regional corridors – a system that includes high capacity and advanced rapid transit, technology solutions, and a robust bike and pedestrian network.

These mobility improvements, along with strategies for infill and new land development, will guide Central Ohio toward fulfilling a regional vision that includes better access to amenities, more variety of housing choices, a wider range of businesses, and nearby locations for medical providers, human services, and educational institutions.

## REGIONAL MOBILITY PLAN

On behalf of the Ohio Department of Transportation, MORPC is working with nine Central Ohio counties to develop a coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan.

The Regional Mobility Plan will identify local transportation needs of people with disabilities, older adults, and those with low incomes. The plan will help to provide strategies and approaches for meeting unmet needs, as well as prioritize services and projects for funding and implementation.

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

By updating the region's Active Transportation Plan, MORPC is renewing its focus on how residents and visitors can safely and comfortably travel by foot, bike, and other similar modes.

MORPC strongly advocates for people to be able to walk, ride a bike, and ride transit safely and easily throughout Central Ohio. This plan will serve as the region's guide to implement and maintain an equitable network of active transportation infrastructure that ensures the regional transportation system supports and accommodates mobility for all users.

## RAPID 5

The "Rapid 5" initiative is a collaboration of MORPC, the Urban Land Institute of Columbus, Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks, and many public and private partners throughout Central Ohio. It has the goal of connecting our region's major waterways and trails into one interconnected, greenspace system.

Those waterways include Big Walnut, Alum, Olentangy, Scioto, and Big Darby. If Rapid 5 were to be implemented, more residents would have access to both transportation and recreational opportunities, such as long-distance kayaking, mountain biking, or running trails.

GET MORE  
INFORMATION



**insight**  
2050

[getinsight2050.org](http://getinsight2050.org)

**PARTNERS:** MORPC, Urban Land Institute of Columbus, One Columbus, and others

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**REGIONAL**  
HOUSING STRATEGY

[morpc.org/rhs](http://morpc.org/rhs)

**PARTNERS:** MORPC, Franklin County, City of Columbus, and others

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**Link us**  
Moving our region. Together.

[linkuscolumbus.com](http://linkuscolumbus.com)

**PARTNERS:** City of Columbus, Central Ohio Transit Authority, and MORPC

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**REGIONAL**  
MOBILITY  
PLAN

CENTRAL OHIO 2022-2025

[morpc.org/mobilityplan](http://morpc.org/mobilityplan)

**PARTNERS:** Ohio Department of Transportation, MORPC, and mobility and human service representatives in nine counties

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**ACTIVE**  
TRANSPORTATION  
PLAN

[morpc.org/atp](http://morpc.org/atp)

**PARTNERS:** MORPC and others

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**5**  
**RAPID**  
PROJECT

[therapidproject.org](http://therapidproject.org)

**PARTNERS:** Urban Land Institute of Columbus, MORPC, Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks, and others

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PLANNING COMMISSION

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# MORPC Stays Focused with New Policy Goal, Major Legislation Advancing

**A**s legislation moves quickly through the Ohio General Assembly and Congress – with a push from the DeWine and Biden administrations, respectively – the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission has already been very active advocating on the agency’s public policy priorities.






Laws and regulations have a significant impact on the ability of local governments to serve their residents, which is why MORPC has continued to build relationships with members of the region’s congressional delegation, the Ohio Senate, and the Ohio House of Representatives.

Along with testimony provided to legislative committees, the visits with legislators – taking place virtually as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic – have offered the opportunity for MORPC to discuss the priorities approved as part of its 2021-2022 Public Policy Agenda.

“The policy agenda reflects the diverse needs and interests of the region’s cities, townships, counties, villages, and regional partners,” said Joseph Garrity, MORPC director of government affairs and strategic initiatives. “The agenda is our compass as we assertively advocate on behalf of the region on a broad range of issues – from addressing the digital divide, to COVID-19 relief funding and so much more.”

The agenda was developed by a working group composed of a cross-section of professionals from local government, the transportation sector, non-profits, and others. It includes five, broad goals on which MORPC can focus its efforts: regionalism; transportation; sustainability; data and digital infrastructure; and racial and social justice.



|   |  |
|---|--|
|    | <b>GOAL 1: REGIONALISM</b><br>Promote regionalism at the local, state, and federal levels of government fostering economic growth, prosperity, efficient use of resources, and a high quality of life for Central Ohio residents |
|   | <b>GOAL 2: TRANSPORTATION</b><br>Achieve an advanced, inclusive, and exceptional transportation system that connects Central Ohio’s people and products to the world   |
|  | <b>GOAL 3: SUSTAINABILITY</b><br>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        |
|  | <b>GOAL 4: DATA &amp; DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE</b><br>Promote effective data policies and the equitable deployment of digital infrastructure that benefit Central Ohio communities   |
|  | <b>GOAL 5: RACIAL &amp; SOCIAL JUSTICE</b><br>Raise awareness of racial and social justice issues and work to continually improve communities within our growing region  |

The goal of raising awareness of racial and social justice issues and working to continually improve communities within our growing region is new to the agenda this year, highlighting the agency’s renewed emphasis on addressing racism and the disparities that exist in the region.

“Local governments will have a large role to play in the years to come in how we address the COVID-19 pandemic,

the economic recovery, and how communities can work together to combat racism and make our region more equitable,” said the Roosevelt Institute’s and Kirwan Institute’s Kyle Strickland, who served on the policy agenda working group. “This new goal will assist MORPC in working to make our communities a better place for all of our residents.”

The agenda also highlights areas on which MORPC can collaborate with like-minded organizations, such as economic development, sustainable growth, and federal funding.

More information related to MORPC’s government affairs work, including the 2021-2022 Public Policy Agenda, can be viewed at [morpc.org/govaffairs](http://morpc.org/govaffairs).



**BUILDING A MORE INCLUSIVE COLUMBUS**

eliminating racism  
empowering women  
**ywca**  
columbus ohio

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**YWCACOLUMBUS.ORG/DEITRAINING**



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**SWACO**  
FROM WASTE TO RESOURCES

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# MORPC Works to Expand Opportunities for Residents Through Broadband

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted many of the gaps and inequities that already existed among Central Ohio residents. The disparities in access to reliable and affordable internet connections became especially evident as people across Central Ohio's 15 counties began searching for employment and students began the 2020-2021 school year in remote or hybrid models.

The current health crisis makes clear the urgency for the whole community to gain broadband access for work, school, and to stay connected with one another.

"Without an affordable internet connection and a device to access the internet, remote learning is impossible and causes more students to fall behind, because they cannot participate in virtual learning," said Aaron Schill, director of data & mapping at the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission.

Broadband access and affordability is a pervasive issue for rural and urban communities alike. According to 2019

data from the American Community Survey, of the 817,086 households in the Columbus metropolitan statistical area:

- More than 206,000 households (25%) did not have a wired high-speed home internet subscription
- Nearly 80,000 households (10%) had no access to broadband of any type (e.g., cellular data, "hotspot" device)

## CENTRAL OHIO BROADBAND ACCESS PILOT PROGRAM

To further address the inequities that exist from community to community, MORPC began working with the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio and PCs for People, a national nonprofit focused on digital inclusion, to develop a strategy to address student broadband access on a community-wide scale.

The City of Columbus and Franklin County combined to commit \$2 million to the collaborative effort through CARES Act funding, and several private funders also stepped forward.

## "RESPONDING TO SUCH A MASSIVE, COMMUNITY-WIDE PROBLEM REQUIRES TRUE COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND A WIDE ARRAY OF STAKEHOLDERS."

— BRYAN MAUK, PCS FOR PEOPLE

This partnership, the Central Ohio Broadband Access Pilot Program, is a program to address immediate digital device and access needs of low-income, K-12 students in Central Ohio for the 2020-2021 school year by delivering refurbished personal computers and hotspot devices with 12 months of unlimited broadband access.

The program includes partnering with school districts across Central Ohio, as well as working directly with internet service providers to procure hotspot devices and internet service at discounted monthly rates to meet the needs of local school districts and the families within them. It has been met with great success.

"Responding to such a massive, community-wide problem requires true community collaboration and a wide array of stakeholders," said Bryan Mauk, PCs for People executive director, Cleveland. "PCs for People is honored to partner with the many organizations and corporations that have come together to systematically address the digital divide and the needs of the community that have been spotlighted by COVID-19."

## ADDITIONAL EFFORTS AND LEGISLATION

One of the best ways to get Ohioans connected – and ensure communities are not left behind – is by continuing to make broadband expansion a priority at all levels of government. With new partnerships and increased collaboration in Central Ohio and across the state, more communities will be on a path toward economic opportunity and efficient delivery of government services.

To meet the existing and growing digital equity needs in Central Ohio, several MORPC departments and committees have prioritized broadband and digital infrastructure. Promoting digital equity and broadband infrastructure are specifically identified as goals in both MORPC's Public Policy Agenda and Regional Data Agenda.

Within Franklin County, several partner organizations have joined together to launch the Franklin County Digital Equity Coalition. The coalition includes more than 40 participants representing more than 20 organizations. It incorporates several working groups covering key digital equity needs, as well as a nine-member steering committee of which MORPC is part.

Last year, the Columbus Foundation set up a new \$500,000 fund to address the gaps in broadband access across the city, focusing on lower-income neighborhoods and families that lack access to the internet, devices, or both.

Legislation to expand broadband continues to move forward at the state level. Governor Mike DeWine recommended that the Legislature spend \$290 million toward broadband expansion – the largest state investment in internet infrastructure – in the next two-year state budget.

The investment will establish a one-time, \$250 million initiative, the Ohio Residential Broadband Grant Program, to expand access across the state in 2022 and 2023.

The original legislation on the program is sponsored by State Representative Rick Carfagna, from Genoa Township. It would create Ohio's first ever Residential Broadband Expansion Program through providing grants to offset construction cost hurdles and help facilitate the expansion of high-speed internet and all broadband services to unserved households across Ohio.

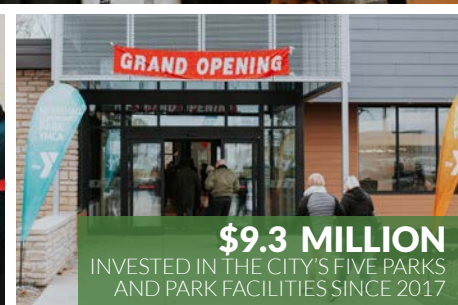
MORPC will continue to assertively advocate for this legislation, as well as other digital infrastructure legislation, to further connect residents to human services, as well as educational and employment opportunities.



**2,300 NEW JOBS**  
CREATED OR ADDED SINCE 2012



**\$118 MILLION**  
IN PUBLIC/PRIVATE INVESTMENT  
PER SQUARE MILE SINCE 2010



**\$9.3 MILLION**  
INVESTED IN THE CITY'S FIVE PARKS  
AND PARK FACILITIES SINCE 2017

## CELEBRATING A DECADE OF OPPORTUNITY



The City of Whitehall thanks MORPC for their continued partnership and congratulates Mayor Kim Maggard, recipient of the 2021 William H. Anderson Award

Find your next opportunity at [whitehallmeansbusiness.com](http://whitehallmeansbusiness.com)



# Weatherization Services Make a Difference for Local Residents

**W**eatherization services from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission provide a welcome and needed service for many income-eligible families in Franklin County.

Through the services, these families can save more than \$400 per year on their energy bills with measures such as proper insulation, repaired or replaced furnaces, replacement of hot water tanks, and weather stripping.

MORPC's services also provide homes with health and safety measures – and overall increased comfort in their weatherized homes.

"The money saved from our services is important to the homeowners and renters who benefit from them," said Robert Williams, MORPC director of residential services. "It's also important to note that most of the families who receive the services are below poverty guidelines levels, and our services are contributing to sustainable, affordable housing in the region."

Central Ohio has an alarming shortage of affordable housing units, and this number will continue to increase as the population of the region increases. While building more affordable housing units is part of the solution, maintaining affordable housing units that already exist cannot be

overlooked as part of the solution, as well.

Often when families do not have the financial ability or stability to pay for weatherization on their homes, it can begin a downward spiral that leads to housing instability.

Energy costs may be too high for families to afford. In certain instances, a household may have heating costs – particularly in the winter months – that may be higher than their rent or mortgages because of poorly insulated homes.

Poor insulation, non-working furnaces, and other health and safety measures that can be remedied by weatherization services often prematurely force families to move away from their affordable housing unit – and they feel forced to find another. These factors compound the problem of limited, affordable housing options.

Alternatively, keeping existing, affordable housing units in use stabilizes low-income and at-risk families in safe and

decent housing, all while maintaining reasonable housing expenses.

As more Central Ohio residents who are eligible for MORPC's weatherization services take advantage of them, they are not only helping themselves find safety and comfort while saving money; they are helping the region as a whole by contributing toward affordable, sustainable housing from which residents will benefit for many years to come.

## MORPC CAN HELP IMPROVE THE SAFETY AND COMFORT OF YOUR HOME

**MORPC's experienced professionals perform home energy inspections and safety checks. Based on eligibility, customers may receive the following services at no cost:**

- Repair or replacement of natural gas furnaces and water heaters
- Attic and sidewall insulation
- Air sealing
- A full home energy inspection
- Safety checks on natural gas appliances

**Call 614.621.1171 or email [weatherization@morpc.org](mailto:weatherization@morpc.org) to apply!**



## 2020 SUCCESSES

- Funded rental assistance for over 100,000 families which was over 250,000 individuals
- Invested over \$200 Million in affordable & mixed-income housing
- Received an A+ from the S&P Global Ratings
- Surpassed over 4,200 owned units

CMHA is committed to embracing our responsibility to support diverse communities and build neighborhoods of choice that are healthy and vibrant.



**COLUMBUS METROPOLITAN  
HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
COMMUNITY. COMMITMENT. COLLABORATION.





# Air Quality, Other Sustainability Initiatives Contribute toward Health and Safety

**S**ustainability initiatives continue to be a key aspect of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's work to improve public health and quality of life. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted this in new ways.

For instance, MORPC has long been in the business of providing air pollution forecasts – like a weather forecast, but providing information on the expected amount of pollution in the air – and issuing Air Quality Alerts for Central Ohio communities when pollution levels are expected to be high enough to result in negative health symptoms.

The pandemic – especially with fewer people driving to work – has brought air pollution exposure to the fore of the public mind and highlighted the relationship between environmental sustainability and health. As city streets grew quiet, the air pollution cleared out along with the cars and trucks.

“The past year was an opportunity to measure the impact of less vehicle emissions on our air in a very real way,” said Kerstin Carr, MORPC director of planning & sustainability. “With more data points on air quality and other aspects of the environment, we can further advance important programs and initiatives related to sustainability.”

Breathing in air pollution can lead to

many heart and lung issues that put people at high risk for complications related to COVID-19, including respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, as well as diabetes.

Not everyone is impacted equally. The greatest impact can be felt by the most vulnerable community members because of greater exposure and lack of access to resources, such as health insurance. The health effects of air pollution often burden racial and ethnic minority populations the most.

Fortunately – and thanks to the efforts of many – the number of days with high ozone has generally declined in Central Ohio over the past 28 years, driven mostly by reduced vehicle emissions.

**Sign up for free Air Quality Alerts at [morpc.org/AirQuality](https://morpc.org/AirQuality).**

Developing a transportation network that includes efficient, wide-spread mass transit and an expansive trail system can help address inequities while producing less air pollution. Local mobility programs – such as MORPC's Gohio Commute program, Downtown C-pass, and Smart Columbus – aim toward providing more healthy and active transportation options to residents by encouraging ridesharing, biking, walking, riding transit, and driving electric vehicles.

Reduced air pollution is just one of many actions being taken throughout the region to promote health and safety through sustainability.

The Regional Sustainability Agenda sets in motion MORPC's sustainability-focused programming and provides the framework for communities and regional partners to work toward common goals in such areas as air quality and energy, natural resources, economic opportunity, and sustainable neighborhoods.

MORPC is currently in the process of updating the Regional Sustainability Agenda to help position Central Ohio and its local communities as national leaders in sustainability. Each goal and objective will be data driven and guided by underlying principles related to resiliency, equity and diversity, public health and well-being, and collaboration, ensuring sustainable impacts reach all communities within our region.

Communities throughout the region are working toward the goals found in the agenda through actions that enable them to be recognized for their efforts with the Sustainable2050 program. This program provides resources and learning of best practices to its local government program participants, including notifications about recent legislation

## REGIONAL SUSTAINABILITY DASHBOARD



Track the status of Central Ohio's collective sustainability efforts.  
[rsd.morpc.org](https://rsd.morpc.org)

or sharing grant and other funding opportunities.

With many sustainability efforts taking place throughout the Central Ohio region, Sustainable2050 also directs members to online content and virtual programs that could help to support their sustainability-related functions.

Anyone can now track the progress the region is making on sustainability. Last year, MORPC and The Ohio State University Center for Urban and Regional Analysis worked in partnership to create the new Regional Sustainability Dashboard.

The dashboard serves as the official sustainability status report for Central Ohio. It was created out of the need for greater access to data and information to shed light on the impacts of collective sustainability efforts across the region.

The Regional Sustainability Dashboard can be accessed at [rsd.morpc.org](https://rsd.morpc.org), and information on all of MORPC's sustainability programs and initiatives is available at [morpc.org](https://morpc.org).

## TELEWORK GUIDE

MORPC's Gohio Commute program offers employers free consulting to address the commuting needs of your workplace, including the development of sustainable commute policies like working from home.

Learn more about Gohio's employer and commuter resources at [morpc.gohio.com](https://morpc.gohio.com).



CENTRAL OHIO

**EMPLOYER  
TELEWORK  
POLICY GUIDE//**



# Amid Pandemic, Region's Local Governments Work Together

**S**ince March 2020, the region's local communities have come together to strengthen their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to deliver critical services to their residents and businesses, and to support their neighbors.

From public health officials and emergency managers to transit operators and first responders, the work of many public servants carried on, proving that during an intense time, residents can depend on the services provided by local governments to improve their lives and hold the community together.

The outbreak added great pressure on local leaders to make serious decisions under tight time constraints and with limited resources.

To further assist Central Ohio's communities throughout the pandemic, MORPC continues to facilitate a regular series of discussions with local government officials to coordinate with health department officials, reduce the impact of COVID-19 on government operations, as well as to discuss concerns and best practices.

"In partnership, MORPC and the Franklin County Township Association recognized the needs that local governments would have early on in the pandemic," said Perry Township Trustee Chet Chaney, who serves as president of the association.

**"WE CAN ALL BE ESPECIALLY PROUD OF OUR OWN CITY, VILLAGE, TOWNSHIP, AND COUNTY LEADERS. THESE DEDICATED PUBLIC OFFICIALS KEPT THEIR COMMUNITIES CONNECTED AND WORKED QUICKLY – AND SOMETIMES THANKLESSLY – TO RESPOND TO COVID-19, THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, PROTESTS, AND MORE."**

– WILLIAM MURDOCK, MORPC

## NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC

**MORPC—in partnership with the Central Ohio Mayors & Managers Association and Franklin County Township Association—held nearly 50 discussions with civic and non-profit leaders, public servants, and health professionals over the past year to help local governments navigate through the crisis and lessen the pandemic's impact on the community.**

**Here are some ways local governments served their residents and employees through COVID-19 relief funding:**

- Grants to restaurants and other small businesses
- Grants to non-profits for food, personal protective equipment, shelter and supplies
- Emergency assistance for rent and utilities
- Providing personal protective equipment to first responders, health professionals, and other staff
- Equipping employees to work remotely
- Broadband access programs and devices for schools and qualifying families
- Safety enhancements to public buildings, such the installation of plastic dividers and HVAC upgrades
- Additional outdoor seating and recreation
- Re-purposing employees to perform new or changed job duties, and covering the payroll of those whose work was substantially affected by the public health emergency

"By collaborating with one another, townships and counties across the region have been able to provide and receive critical updates over the past year."

MORPC also collaborated with the Central Ohio Mayors & Managers

Association, which includes the leadership of many cities and villages in the region.

Discussion topics among the leaders have included health and emergency updates, how to safely carry out community services and recreation,

providing for open meetings, supporting local businesses and non-profits, as well as the process for taking advantage of COVID-19 relief funding, such as the federal CARES Act.

MORPC also made a wealth of relevant information available to local government officials through an online resource hub.

"From the first, critical days of the pandemic up through this month, the leaders of our communities have had a consistent way to receive important updates and discuss how to move forward," said Worthington City Council President Bonnie Michael, who chairs the Central Ohio Mayors & Managers Association. "MORPC put in a lot of behind-the-scenes work to help our region's cities and villages get through this."

MORPC prides itself on bringing communities of all sizes and interests together to collaborate on best practices and plan for the future of the region. Although the pandemic meant changing course in 2020, the agency's most basic function – to support Central Ohio local governments – remained the same.

"We can all be especially proud of our own city, village, township, and county leaders," MORPC Executive Director William Murdock said. "These dedicated public officials kept their communities connected and worked quickly – and sometimes thanklessly – to respond to COVID-19, the economic crisis, protests, and more."

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Longest Serving Gahanna Councilwoman



# Health Professionals Among Those Honored During 2021 State of the Region

Central Ohio's top political, business, and civic leaders gathered virtually this year to plan for the future and highlight community accomplishments during the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's 2021 State of the Region event.

Hundreds attended the March 31 event, during which MORPC highlighted the theme, "Our Future Envisioned."



Jonathan Rose

Keynote speaker and author Jonathan Rose provided an inspiring talk that demonstrated his passion for business, public policy, writing and not-for-profit work that focuses on creating

more environmentally, socially, and economically resilient communities. He is founder of Jonathan Rose Companies LLC, a multi-disciplinary real estate development, planning, project

management, and investment firm, to address the challenges of the 21st century.

In addition to hearing from Jonathan Rose, selected speakers from Central Ohio presented on supplementary topics of interest to regional leaders. The event included the opportunity to present MORPC's annual awards to those who have made significant contributions to the region.

The **William C. Habig Collaborative Achievement Award** honors individuals or organizations that have achieved an effective effort or innovative collaborative project in Central Ohio. Following a unique and challenging year in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 award honored Central Ohio's public health departments.

The region's many local health professionals – public health nurses, physicians, and epidemiologists as well as registered sanitarians, health educators, administrators and more –

are continuing to work together to help residents navigate through the pandemic.

The challenges of the past year have demonstrated the importance of having these individuals to be there when we most need them, to develop good health policy, and to safely guide the region as we turn the corner and adjust to what is ahead. For these reasons and more, we thank them.

The **Regional Leadership Award**, which honors extraordinary efforts to ensure the future viability of the region's communities, was presented to Trudy Bartley, associate vice president of local government and community relations at the Ohio State University.

Throughout her career – including in development roles for the State of Ohio and the City of Columbus, and on many boards and commissions – Bartley has used her strength in negotiating to create partnerships and engage action to improve outcomes.

As an advocate for a more inclusive community, Bartley has especially made a difference with the redevelopment of the Near East Side neighborhood, where she grew up. Through her professional work, voluntary service, and mentorship, she sets an example for how Central Ohio can bring about transformational change.

The **William H. Anderson Excellence in Public Service Award** recognizes a MORPC board member who exemplifies outstanding leadership. This year, the award was presented to Kim Maggard, mayor of the City of Whitehall.

Mayor Maggard takes a lead role in guiding the direction of MORPC as a member of its Executive Committee. As a former chair of MORPC's public policy committee, she set herself apart as an inclusive collaborator to guide the advocacy efforts of MORPC and its member communities.

In Whitehall, Maggard has spearheaded sweeping and impactful redevelopment – adding modern amenities to the community. Furthermore, her initiatives have led to increased home ownership, improved aesthetics, and recovery programs to help those who are addicted to drugs.

## CONGRATULATIONS! 2021 STATE OF THE REGION AWARD RECIPIENTS

### WILLIAM C. HABIG COLLABORATIVE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: CENTRAL OHIO'S HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

Columbus Public Health  
Delaware Public Health District  
Fairfield Department of Health  
Fayette County Public Health  
Franklin County Public Health  
Galion City Health Department  
Hocking County Health Department  
Knox Public Health  
Licking County Health Department  
Logan County Health District  
Madison County Public Health  
Marion Public Health  
Morrow County Health District  
Perry County Health Department  
Pickaway County General Health District  
Ross County Health District  
Union County Health Department

### WILLIAM H. ANDERSON EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD



KIM MAGGARD  
Mayor  
City of Whitehall

### REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD



TRUDY BARTLEY  
Associate Vice President,  
Local Government and Community Relations  
The Ohio State University



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MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

## MORPC MEMBERSHIP

### CITIES

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Bellefontaine     | Hilliard        |
| Bexley            | Lancaster       |
| Canal Winchester  | Marysville      |
| Chillicothe       | New Albany      |
| Circleville       | Pataskala       |
| Columbus          | Pickerington    |
| Delaware          | Powell          |
| Dublin            | Reynoldsburg    |
| Gahanna           | Upper Arlington |
| Grandview Heights | Westerville     |
| Grove City        | Worthington     |
| Groveport         | Whitehall       |

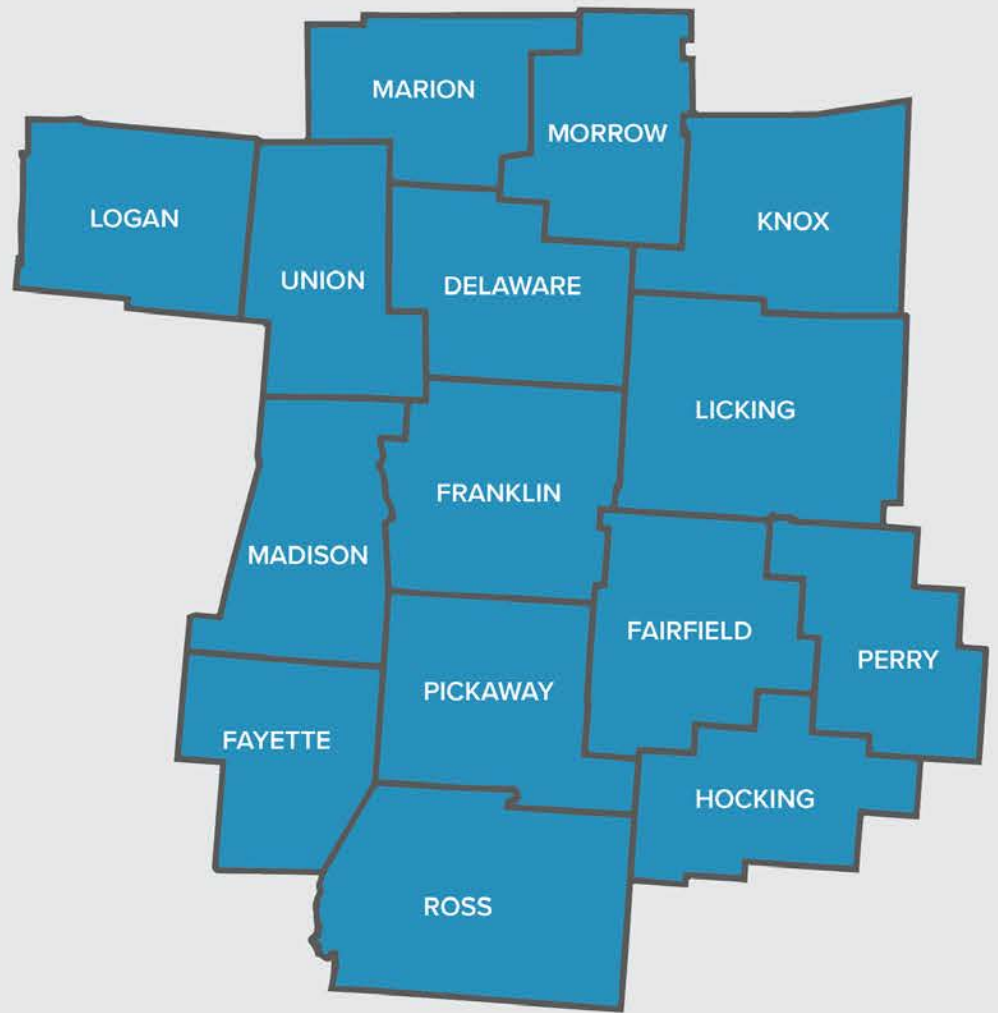
### VILLAGES

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| Ashville     | Minerva Park  |
| Galena       | Obetz         |
| Gambier      | Plain City    |
| Granville    | Riverlea      |
| Hebron       | Shawnee Hills |
| Johnstown    | Somerset      |
| Lithopolis   | Sunbury       |
| Lockbourne   | Urbancrest    |
| Marble Cliff |               |

### COUNTIES

|           |        |
|-----------|--------|
| Delaware  | Logan  |
| Fairfield | Morrow |
| Franklin  | Perry  |
| Hocking   | Union  |
| Knox      |        |

## MORPC'S SERVICE AREA



## TOWNSHIPS

|                           |                             |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Blendon (Franklin County) | Franklin (Franklin County)  | Liberty (Delaware County) | Plain (Franklin County)      |
| Bloom (Fairfield County)  | Granville (Licking County)  | Madison (Franklin County) | Prairie (Franklin County)    |
| Clinton (Franklin County) | Jefferson (Franklin County) | Mifflin (Franklin County) | Truro (Franklin County)      |
| Etna (Licking County)     | Jerome (Union County)       | Perry (Franklin County)   | Violet (Fairfield County)    |
|                           |                             |                           | Washington (Franklin County) |

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks  
Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority  
Columbus Metropolitan Library  
Educational Service Center of Central Ohio

Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District  
Licking County Soil & Water Conservation District  
META Solutions  
Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio