



Contact: Bernice Cage
Tel.: 614-233-4157
Cell Phone: 614-626-1117
Email: bcage@morpc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MORPC State of the Region Event Honors Community Leaders

(Columbus – May 6, 2016) Community leaders who made extraordinary efforts in contributing to the welfare of Central Ohioans were honored by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) at the State of the Region Luncheon held May 6 at the Hilton Columbus Downtown.

The Sustaining Scioto Plan was the recipient of the William C. Habig Collaborative Achievement award. The William C. Habig Collaborative Achievement award is annually presented to an individual or individuals who have achieved an effective effort or innovative collaborative in Central Ohio. The City of Columbus, USGS, Del-Co Water and Brown & Caldwell were the major agencies that participated in the project.

The Sustaining Scioto project identified risks and adaptive management strategies to the Columbus, Ohio region's water resources due to climate change. This proactive, science-based study was completed to ensure that Central Ohio has clean and secure water resources for current residents and businesses, and to sustain needs from future growth. The Plan provides utilities, developers, agriculture, and industry in the region with an understanding of the potential risks imposed by climate change and also serve as a guide for future investment and planning for water resource management within the region.

Grove City Mayor Richard "Ike" Stage was recognized with the William H. Anderson Excellence in Public Service Award. The William H. Anderson Award recognizes a current or past board member who exemplifies outstanding leadership, a vision for the community and the region, and commitment to MORPC. William H. Anderson, a longtime MORPC board member, was the epitome of a civic volunteer who is remembered for his zeal with which he championed MORPC's mission and goals. Mayor Stage has been a member of MORPC's board since 1999. He has served on MORPC's Administrative Committee from 2002-2008 and as Chair and Vice chair of the Board.

Marilee Chinnici-Zuercher, former Mayor and Dublin City Council Member, is the recipient of the Regional Leadership Award. First introduced in 1997, the Regional Leadership Award recognizes individuals in a 15-county region (Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Hocking, Knox, Licking, Logan, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Perry, Pickaway, Ross and Union counties) who make extraordinary efforts to ensure the future viability of the region's communities. The Regional Leadership Award is derived from the Commission's continuing dedication to addressing issues that transcend community boundaries and to stimulating visionary thinking.

Working to Build a Better Region

**111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, Ohio 43215-5222
Phone (614) 228-2663 Fax (614) 621-2401
www.morpc.org**

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Marilee Chinnici-Zuercher began serving as the City of Dublin's representative to the MORPC Board in 2002 and continued through the end of 2015. As a Dublin City Council Member, Chinnici-Zuercher not only advocated on behalf of the City of Dublin, but also for neighboring communities and the region as a whole.

As chair of the MORPC Regional Policy Roundtable, Chinnici-Zuercher led the development of forward-thinking, innovative public policy agendas that captured the priorities and opportunities of our region at the regional, state and federal levels. She facilitated difficult conversations to find regional consensus on pressing legislative issues such as House Bill 5/Municipal Income Tax Reform; Waters of the United States – US EPA's water rules and regulations; long-term transportation funding; state budget bills; and changes to the state's renewable energy policy.

Chinnici-Zuercher epitomizes the criteria for the MORPC Regional Leadership Award through her extraordinary efforts to ensure the future viability of our region and its communities. Her public service career has been dedicated to addressing issues that transcend community boundaries and to stimulating visionary thinking.

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MORPC is a voluntary association of local governments in Central Ohio serving the region through planning, direct service, public policy information and innovative programming and intergovernmental coordinating services in the areas of transportation, land use, energy conservation, the environment and housing.