



**Mid-Ohio Regional
Planning Commission**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2016-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
Available for Public Review and Comment
Open House Scheduled March 15th**

(Columbus – March 15, 2016) The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) announces the availability of the draft 2016-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for public review and comment through April 15, 2016. A public open house/meeting on the MTP is scheduled from **4 to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15** at MORPC offices, **111 Liberty Street, Suite 100, Columbus**. MORPC staff will give a presentation at 6 p.m. on the plan and will be available during the open house to discuss and answer questions about the MTP and its various elements: highways, transit including projects of the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA) and Delaware Area Transit Agency (DATA), bikeways, freight, funding, land use forecasting and Intelligent Transportation Systems.

The 2016-2040 MTP identifies population and land use changes, transportation goals and needs, long- and short-range targets, strategies, and actions for an integrated, multi-modal transportation system in the MORPC transportation planning area (Delaware and Franklin counties, Jerome Township in Union County, Bloom and Violet townships in Fairfield County, New Albany, Pataskala and Etna Township in Licking County). The MTP also identifies highway, bikeway, pedestrian, safety, security, freight and public transportation components including improvements identified by COTA and DATABus. The 2016-2040 MTP considers effects upon low-income and minority residents and includes an air quality conformity analysis. Specifically, the draft plan discusses:

Population and land use by 2040

Nearly 330,000 new residents are expected in central Ohio by 2040.

Roadway Projects

As a result of the increase in population and change in land use, 319 specific projects totaling \$6 billion are included to expand the roadway system to ease congestion and improve safety. The MTP also includes \$6.7 billion to maintain the existing system.

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Working to Build a Better Region

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Freight

With I-70, I-71, the Rickenbacker Airport and Intermodal Yard and other facilities, central Ohio is a major hub in the freight industry. The roadway system improvements and targeted intermodal improvements will enable goods to move through the area efficiently and effectively using rail, roads and air.

Bikeway and Pedestrian facilities

An increased interest and need has been identified in making our communities more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The plan identifies strategies and includes 157 bike and pedestrian projects totaling approximately \$435 million. The projects are focused primarily along 12 regional corridors identified in MORPC's Active Transportation Plan and on proposed Central Ohio Greenways. In addition, the majority of the roadway projects will include pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Safety

Various strategies to improve safety are discussed in this plan. These include roadway, pedestrian, and bicycle projects as well as reducing travel demand and changing traveler behavior contributing to crashes.

Public Transit

The need for more and improved public transit in Franklin, Delaware, Licking and Fairfield counties including short- and long-term strategies is included in the plan. The recommendations of COTA's long-range transit plan and DATA Bus are included.

Security

Security discusses transportation, homeland security and emergency preparedness.

Financial

A discussion on how identified improvements can be funded is included in the MTP. Even with \$19.5 billion forecasted to be available in the region to maintain and expand the transportation system, the identified need for funds far outweighs the funding available. The Central Ohio region will need to research and develop more innovative ways to fund transportation improvement projects.

The draft 2016-2040 MTP is available for review at MORPC, 111 Liberty Street, Suite 100, all Columbus Metropolitan library branches and main libraries in Delaware, Licking, Fairfield and Franklin counties and on MORPC's web site at www.morpc.org/MTP2040.

Any written comments should be submitted to Thea Walsh, Director of Transportation Systems and Funding, 111 Liberty Street, Suite 100, Columbus, OH 43215 or by email to mtp@morpc.org. Written comments must be received by 5 p.m. on April 15, 2016. A resolution adopting the 2016-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan will be submitted to the MORPC Policy Committee on May 12. MORPC's Community Advisory Committee will take action on this resolution at 5:30 p.m. on May 2, 2016. For further information, please contact Bernice Cage at 614-233-4157.