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## MORPC Receives Exceptional Nominees for Green Region Awards

**(Columbus – August 4, 2016)** The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) received many exceptional nominees for the Green Region Awards, honoring individuals and organizations working to create a more vibrant and environmentally sustainable region. MORPC will announce the award recipients at the Summit on Sustainability on October 21 at Hilton Columbus Downtown. For more information on the Summit visit [www.morpc.org/summit](http://www.morpc.org/summit).

**The Green Leader Award** is given in recognition of an individual or organization exemplifying outstanding leadership and innovation in seeking comprehensive sustainability solutions to address key challenges facing the region. The nominees include:

Dale Arnold - an exceptional leader on energy and agriculture policy in Ohio. Since 1985, he has worked with the Ohio Farm Bureau and currently serves as the Director of Energy, Utility and Local Government Policy. He is a member of MORPC's Sustainability Advisory Committee, chairs the Energy & Air Quality working group and worked on MORPC's Sustaining Scioto project.

Dr. Jill Clark - provides statewide leadership for the Ohio Network of Food Policy Councils, national leadership as an advisory board member for the Johns Hopkins Food Policy Network and international leadership as a member of the international advisory committee for the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at Wilfrid Laurier University. Locally, she's a member of the Franklin County Local Food Council.

Jack Knapp, Accurate IT - has set up community based recycling programs at no cost to the tax payers for Dublin, Worthington, Lakewood, Hardin County, Logan County, Clark County, Athens-Hocking Recycling Centers, and Ohio University. He works with over 450 Ohio School Districts, fortune 500 clients, mom and pop operations, state, local, and federal government agencies.

Angel Arroyo Rodriguez - specializes in planning for sustainable management of food waste throughout the food system. He works in the Division of Materials and Waste Management of Ohio EPA, coordinating statewide efforts for food waste recovery. He led revisions to Ohio's composting regulations to promote sustainable agriculture and reduce food insecurity. Nationally, he collaborated with The Ohio State University in the preparation of a food systems plan for the Mississippi gulf region.

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*Working to Build a Better Region*

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Michael Hooper - has built or renovated all 46 parks, representing 600 acres in the City of Westerville, and seen to the installation of over 30 miles of paved trails, some of which double as US Bicycle Route 50 and Ohio to Erie Trail routes. He has helped the Westerville Parks and Recreation Department become one of only two park systems in the country to win the National Gold Medal three consecutive times.

Catherine Girves - has worked closely with the City of Columbus to design and implement more bike- and pedestrian-friendly streets as well as a first of its kind bike hub in downtown. Her organization's work has included an ongoing and greatly expanded free bike parking effort that has parked thousands of bikes at local events, preventing the pollution that would have accompanied the use of cars.

Honda Of America Manufacturing - in accordance with its vision "Blue Skies for our Children," is working to advance technologies that address society's environmental and energy concerns, resulting in a broad approach that addresses emissions, energy, water use, waste and other environmental impacts. Honda is also working to extend its "green factory" and "green purchasing" initiatives to its more than 650 suppliers in North America.

Council President Pro Tem Priscilla Tyson and Columbus City Council, Commissioner President John O'Grady and the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, and Local Matters for the development of the Local Food Action Plan Project.

**The Green Collaborative Achievement Award** recognizes a group of entities or individuals who have shown effectiveness in producing environmental accomplishments through a collaborative effort.

Criteria for nominations include:

- tangible results, innovation, and long-term impacts on Central Ohio
- comprehensive sustainability approaches, which include consideration for a combination of the following MORPC program areas: agricultural preservation and local food, air quality, energy, materials management, sustainable growth, trails and active transportation, and water quality

The nominees include:

PlaceMakes - coordinates, collaborates, and creates public space projects that challenge the norm. Cherry Street is a project where they commandeered a street in the heart of downtown and made it come to life with fun interactive artwork, booths, and places to relax. Parklets transformed parking spaces into places where people can stop, sit, and rest while taking in the activities of the street.

Green Columbus, City of Columbus, Green Funds of The Columbus Foundation and Keep Columbus Beautiful - organized a spectacular Earth Day event in April 2016. The theme was Branch Out and over 20,000 trees were planted during one week of volunteer opportunities across Central Ohio.

MORPC RideSolutions, COTA, car2go, and CoGo came together to encourage people to change their commuting habits for the month of June by offering prizes daily and larger prizes for the end of the month. More than 540 people registered and reduced vehicle miles traveled by 46,164 miles.

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The Columbus Downtown Development Corporation and the City of Columbus completed the Scioto Greenways project along the Scioto Mile in November 2015. Although public and private investment in the Scioto Mile had successfully transformed the riverfront by the City's 2012 Bicentennial celebration, the Scioto River itself remained a slow-moving, overly wide pool of sediment-laden water due to the presence of low head dams. The Scioto Greenways project transformed the condition and appearance of the river and its banks.

In memory of William A. "Bill" Lewis, Jr., former City of Columbus Chief Mobility Engineer, **The Green Mobility Award** recognizes an individual, either professional or student, exemplifying outstanding work towards creating a world-class multi-modal transportation system for Central Ohio. The nominees include:

John Rayburn, City of Dublin - served on a roundtable discussion with leaders at Ohio State to discuss the Smart City Challenge grant. He contributed invaluable input regarding the intersection of city planning and public transit. Through his professional, volunteer and advocacy work with Forge Columbus, the Godman Guild Emerging Leaders Program, the Columbus Green Team and Open Streets, John undoubtedly has the passion, commitment and work ethic to be a worthy recipient.

Randy Bowman, City of Columbus - worked tirelessly to assure Columbus was awarded the Smart City Challenge grant. It was his leadership and infectious enthusiasm that brought the right people together to make the right decisions for the application. Winning the Smart City Challenge assures Columbus citizens of all economic levels will be connected to jobs, to health care and to education for generations to come.

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*The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is a voluntary association of local governments and regional organizations which envisions and embraces innovative directions in economic prosperity, energy, the environment, housing, land use, and transportation. Our transformative programming, services and innovative public policy are designed to promote and support the vitality and growth in the region.*