

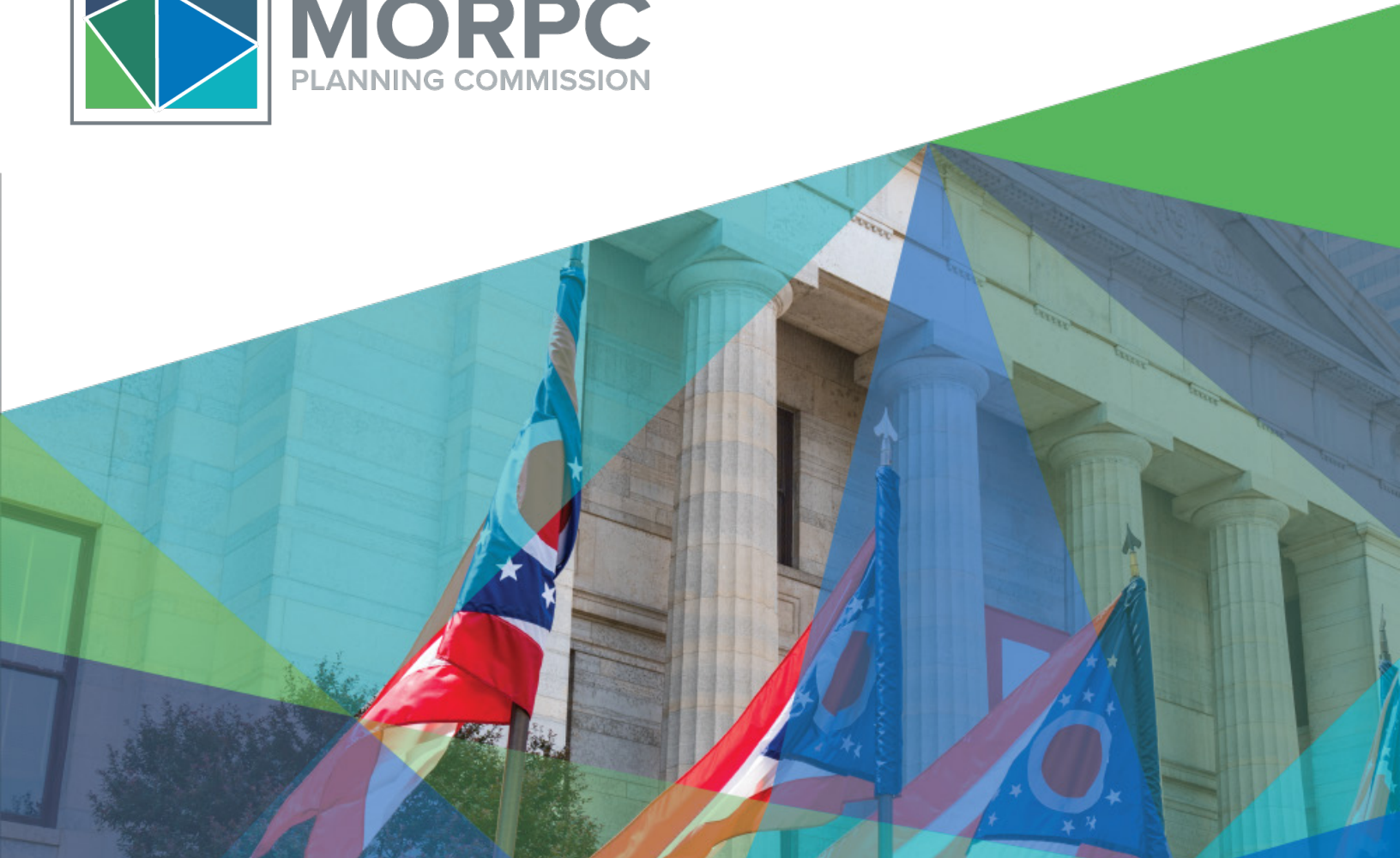
PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

2023–2024

REGIONAL ADVOCACY FOR CENTRAL OHIO AT THE STATE AND FEDERAL LEVELS



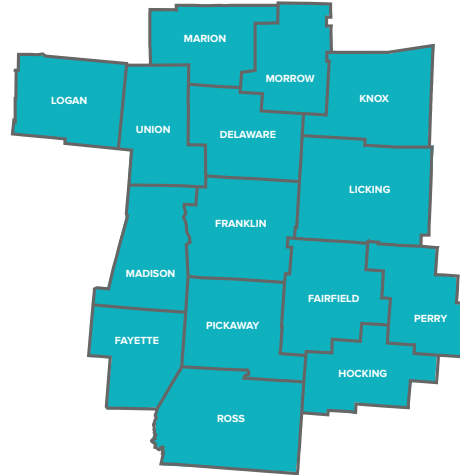
MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION



WHO WE ARE

MORPC is Central Ohio's regional council for more than 80 members and community partners. We take pride in bringing communities of all sizes and interests together to collaborate on best practices and plan for the future of our growing region. We do this through a variety of programs, services, projects, and initiatives that help improve the quality of life for everyone in the Central Ohio region.

MORPC SERVICE AREA



WHAT WE DO

- Serve as Central Ohio's information, resource, and data hub and leadership forum for shared regional challenges and best practices.
- Convene local governments and regional partners to plan, prioritize, and advance strategic transportation and infrastructure projects and investments.
- Provide data tools, insights, and technical assistance for sustainability programs, growth planning, residential services, and shared solutions.
- Engage and represent Central Ohio's community leaders, residents, and partner organizations on public policy.

OUR AGENDA

The 2023-2024 Public Policy Agenda reflects the needs and interests of our diverse membership. The agenda was developed by a working group of local governments, businesses, non-profits, and other regional partners, chaired by Columbus City Councilmember Lourdes Barroso de Padilla. It also included members of MORPC's Regional Policy Roundtable, chaired by City of Lancaster Mayor David Scheffler, which directs our public policy and advocacy priorities. This collaborative agenda details policy that makes Central Ohio a better place for all of its residents and actions that address racism and eliminate disparities.

We encourage leaders in Washington and Columbus to work together using this agenda and MORPC's government affairs team as resources.

To stay up to date on MORPC's government affairs efforts, visit morpc.org/GovAffairs.

OUR STRATEGY

-  **PAY IT FORWARD:** MORPC enhances public service leadership and builds capacity in communities.
-  **DRIVE INVESTMENT:** MORPC creates opportunities for all our communities to enhance their assets.
-  **BUILD VALUE FOR MEMBERS:** MORPC works diligently to find creative ways to increase our members' returns on investment.
-  **CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT FOR PROSPERITY:** MORPC delivers essential tools for the region to get better as it grows bigger.

GOAL 1: REGIONALISM

Promote regionalism at the local, state, and federal levels of government to create an environment for prosperity for all Central Ohio residents by fostering economic growth, equity, and efficient use of resources.

- Advocate for policies and legislation that enhance local government efficiency, innovation, and collaboration.
- Leverage insight2050 to advocate for policies that will provide Central Ohio with the needed tools to plan for growth.
- Promote and advance local government authority to improve the quality of life, environment, and economy of our region.
- Support federal and state tax and budget policies that promote inclusive economic growth and equity while also ensuring the ability to provide vital local government services, including increases to Ohio's Local Government Fund.
- Advance our *Drive Investment* strategy by identifying and supporting significant projects and grant opportunities to benefit all Central Ohio residents.
- Promote policies, programs, and funding to ensure our region's transportation, broadband, water, housing, sewer, and material management infrastructure are well maintained, equitable, affordable, resilient, and accessible to all.
- Encourage legislation that allows all local governments to hold public meetings virtually at their discretion.
- Support legislation that encourages local governments to use new forms of technology for communications, official notices, contracts, and outreach to foster greater participation and reduce travel time.
- Continue to advocate for administrative flexibility and support related to ongoing rollout of COVID-19 pandemic recovery resources.
- Oppose legislation that withholds local government funds from any local government.
- Work through the U.S. Economic Development Administration to form an Economic Development District (EDD) in Central Ohio to better leverage the involvement of the public, private, and non-profit sectors.
- Advocate for policies, incentives, and funding that increase Central Ohio's supply of quality housing of all types and at all price levels.

GOAL 2: TRANSPORTATION

Achieve an advanced, inclusive, safe, and exceptional transportation system that connects Central Ohio's people and products to the world.

- Seek additional revenue mechanisms for transportation at the local, state, and federal levels.
- Promote state and federal support and recognition of metropolitan and rural planning organizations and their regional approach to transportation planning and funding.
- Advance the logistics industry in Central Ohio and support investments and innovation in intermodal, rail, air, and other freight facilities.
- Support funding and policies that measurably improve transportation safety and equity, and advance Vision Zero efforts at the local, state, and federal levels, including enhanced penalties for distracted driving.
- Support increased funding for Transportation Improvement Districts (TIDs) in Central Ohio, promoting intergovernmental and public-private cooperation to advance transportation projects and leverage state and federal funding.
- Advocate for an advanced, more equitable multi-modal transportation system that improves interregional access to more public and private transportation choices, connecting to regional, national, and international markets, including LinkUS, the 3C&D and the Chicago-Columbus-Pittsburgh corridors.
- Pursue policies and funding to improve quality of life through expanded multimodal transportation options connecting marginalized communities in rural, suburban, and urban areas, including LinkUS and rural collaborations.
- Pursue policies and funding to advance the goals of RAPID 5 and the Central Ohio Greenways strategy for developing a more interconnected active transportation network for all.
- Advocate for regional policies that prepare Central Ohio communities for additional smart-infrastructure and innovative technology investment.
- Advocate for policies and funding that support the study and deployment of ultra-rapid transportation, passenger rail, and hyperloop technology in Ohio.
- Support policies, funding, and incentives to expand the use of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, allowing for more rapid, region-wide adoption of zero-emission vehicles at scale.

GOAL 3: SUSTAINABILITY

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.

- Advance and expand the integration of energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy for a healthier, more resilient, and cost-effective energy portfolio.
- Advocate for innovative strategies and funding for public and private partners to achieve and maintain attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards, while decreasing air pollution exposure for Central Ohio residents.
- Advocate for policies, innovative strategies, and funding to enhance and protect the quality and quantity of our water resources, balancing public- and private-sector interests, and existing and emerging economic activities in our growing region.
- Advance locally sourced energy aggregation policies, funding, and innovative financing that foster economic growth, equity, resiliency, and higher quality of life.
- Support and advocate for policies and funding for a timely cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields and/or vacant, blighted, or abandoned land, and historic buildings in order to revitalize communities.
- Assist in the rapid development of an advanced transportation network, inclusive of electric and alternative fuel vehicles and their infrastructure, to provide connectivity throughout the region's rural and urban communities.
- Pursue funding and policies to help protect existing and secure new parkland, wetlands, trails, prime agricultural land, and green space.

GOAL 4: DATA & DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Promote effective data policies and the equitable deployment of digital infrastructure that benefit Central Ohio communities.

- Pursue funding and support initiatives, such as the Franklin County Digital Equity Coalition, that keep Central Ohio at the forefront of data, digital equity, and technology innovation.
- Encourage the adoption of data governance policies at the federal, state, and local levels that promote open data and standardization, while protecting the security of private, personal, and otherwise sensitive information.
- Support the ability of local governments to fund, manage, and maintain digital assets and infrastructure.
- Support planning and development for secure, reliable, and affordable broadband in every home, business, school, and service provider within the region.
- Encourage implementation of data sharing and analytics that result in data-driven decisions and collaboration with local governments, regional partners, and federal and state agencies.

GOAL 5: RACIAL & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Raise awareness of racial and social justice issues and work to continually improve communities within our growing region.

- Advocate for policies that declare racism as a public health crisis.
- Support public health and safety systems that protect residents of all backgrounds.
- Support equitable development and affordable, quality housing access for all.
- Improve access to job opportunities, broadband, resources, homeownership, health systems, and connected green space for marginalized communities.
- Support policies that work to eliminate racial and social disparities and physical divisions in our growing region.
- Encourage the development of universal design policies and walkable communities that support lifelong and inclusive age-friendly communities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Promote a robust and inclusive regional economy and actively collaborate with economic development and business organizations, non-profits, universities, and local governments to pursue an economic development district, improved national and state policies, and new funding to advance economic development.
- Support One Columbus's vision in making Central Ohio the most prosperous region in the country.
- Advance job-attraction and retention incentives, new tools, and strategies to encourage new jobs and investment that benefit the region.
- Collaborate with partners in education, labor, and the private sector to develop a more skilled and diverse workforce to readily meet the needs of Central Ohio businesses, reduce workforce shortages, and expand upward mobility into quality careers.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- Promote efficient and effective use and management of waste streams through diversion, reuse, and recycling programs.
- Advocate for innovative land-use regulations and planning tools as a way to promote sustainable development, maintain and reuse existing housing and commercial buildings, conserve environmentally sensitive areas, encourage farmland preservation, reduce energy consumption, provide transportation alternatives, and promote effective material management.
- Advocate for policies and funding that support a broad spectrum of housing options – in alignment with the Regional Housing Strategy and LinkUS – to meet the region's growing residential and workforce needs.
- Support policies and incentives that leverage existing infrastructure and encourage redevelopment and reinvestment in Central Ohio's neighborhoods and commercial districts.
- Promote projects and policies that advance local food systems, supply chains, and farmland preservation to achieve food security.

DRIVE INVESTMENT

- Support federal funding for defense installations, research, and other initiatives that benefit Central Ohio.
- Participate in coalitions and partnerships for MORPC local government members to understand, engage, and better position themselves for federal funding through appropriations, authorizations, bills, grants, and other opportunities.
- Advocate for the protection of existing federal funding streams.
- Assist MORPC local governments in seeking and attracting historic federal investment opportunities that will help advance regional infrastructure, plan for growth, and cultivate job creating projects in our region.





MID-OHIO REGIONAL
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Mayor David Scheffler
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