



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

111 Liberty St., Suite 100  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
www.morpc.org

**NOTICE OF A MEETING:  
CENTRAL OHIO BLUEWAYS STEERING COMMITTEE**

*HYBRID MEETING:  
February 12, 2025: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM*

**AGENDA**

**1. Welcome & Purpose**

The purpose of the meeting was to provide updates on Central Ohio Greenways, discuss progress of Working Groups, and review updates to the Central Ohio Blueways Program.

**2. Central Ohio Greenways Updates – Melinda Vonstein**

- Expanded Regional Trail Vision
  - Growth from seven counties in 2018 to 15 counties in 2025.
  - 500 miles of trails initially proposed—expanded to 667 miles of proposed trails, 335 miles currently developed.
- Increased Funding & Trail Development Acceleration
  - COTA ballot initiative (2024) introduced new funding, allowing for \$60 million annually for standalone bike and pedestrian infrastructure projects until 2050.
  - MORPC’s funding prioritization increased allocations for standalone trails from \$2–\$4 million to \$60 million in the past cycle.
  - 25% of the COG Vision in Franklin County expected to be constructed in the next five years.
- Gateways of Regional Significance Initiative
  - Identifying and enhancing key trailheads to provide user-friendly access points.
  - Proposed locations include Westerville, London, Dublin, Shawnee Hills, Buckeye Lake, and Mt. Vernon.
- Mapping Franklin County’s Natural Assets Project
  - Partnership with Franklin Soil & Water to create an environmental sensitivity index.
  - Used data from EPA, ODNR, and other sources to assess conservation priorities.
  - Focuses on connecting tree canopies and preserving ecologically valuable land.
  - The interactive public map is expected to be released soon.

**3. Working Group Updates – Jonathan Miller**

a. Environmental Stewardship Working Group

- Current Project: Onion Bag Implementation Guide (May 2025)
  - Drafting installation and maintenance guidelines for watershed litter control efforts.
  - Outlines approvals for municipalities, townships, and nonprofits.
  - Considerations include site selection, disposal logistics, and liability disclaimers.

**William Murdock, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Chris Amorose Groomes**  
Chair

**Michelle Crandall**  
Vice Chair

**Ben Kessler**  
Secretary

- Upcoming Projects:
  - Native Vegetation Guide (August 2025) – User-friendly reference for trail users.
  - Invasive Species ID Guide (October 2025) – Focused on practical recognition and mitigation.
    - Rationale for Simplified Guides:
      - Existing resources are too technical for general users.
      - The goal is to engage novice users with accessible information on local ecology.
- b. Water Trail Designation Working Group
  - Goals & Progress:
    - Updating mapping data with new GIS fields for trail amenities and environmental concerns.
    - Refining draft partnership agreements to define responsibilities, signage, and accessibility.
    - Obtain Designation
      - Public engagement for Big Walnut Creek Water Trail Designation (December 2025) is scheduled.
      - Submission process to ODNR includes compiling PDF maps, public engagement records, and access point tables.
  - Challenges & Next Steps:
    - Ensuring consistent branding with Central Ohio Greenways signage plans.
    - Developing a stakeholder engagement process for obtaining designation.
- c. User Experience Working Group
  - Goals
    - Hazard Removal Consortium Draft (May 2025)
      - Proposal for a regional contract to streamline hazard removal across communities.
      - Securing an RFP for a task-order consultant to remove river obstacles.
      - Communities can opt-in to reduce administrative burdens.
    - Signage Plan & Access Point Sponsorship (December 2025)
      - Aligning waterway signage with Central Ohio Greenways Wayfinding Plan.
      - Developing a sponsorship program to maintain and improve access points.
      - Coordination with MORPC's new Central Ohio Cycling Guide project.

#### 4. Central Ohio Blueways Program Updates

- Leadership Transition
  - Jonathan Miller announced his departure from MORPC
  - Moving forward, the following contacts will oversee Central Ohio Blueways:
    - Water Trail Designation & User Experience: Tunazzina Alam & Karina Peggau
    - Environmental Stewardship: Karina Peggau & Meghan Means
- Merging Working Groups
  - Water Trail Designation & User Experience Working Groups will be combined.
  - Staff will adjust meeting cadence to align efforts.

#### 5. Adjourn



Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
*Hybrid Meeting*

Blueways Steering Committee Meeting

February 12, 2025

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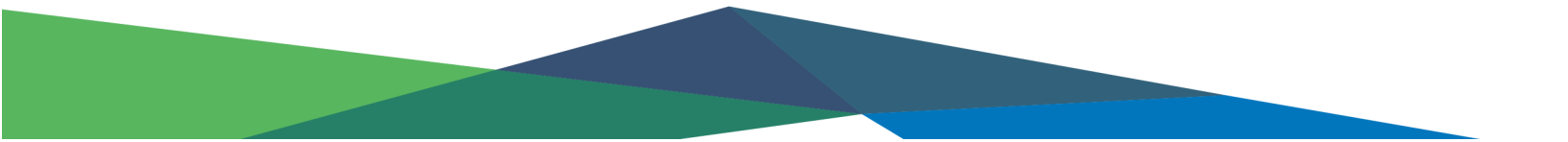
Members Present

- Aryeh Alex, City of Columbus
- Maria M. Conroy, The Ohio State University
- Doug Crandall
- Zach Guthrie, City of Gahanna
- Dan Kaderly, Metro Parks
- Justin Milam, City of Upper Arlington
- James R. Ramsey, Franklin County Engineer's Office
- J.M. Rayburn, City of Dublin
- Broc Sehen, Madison Soil & Water Conservation District
- Pamela Steck, City of Columbus

Staff Present

- Tunazzina Alam
- Brian Filiatraut
- Morgan Fuller
- Lynn Kaufman
- Darcy Maas
- Jonathan Miller
- Karina Peggau
- Sam Smith
- Melinda Vonstein

Public Present

- Rohn Benedetti
  - Megan Meyer, City of Bexley
- 



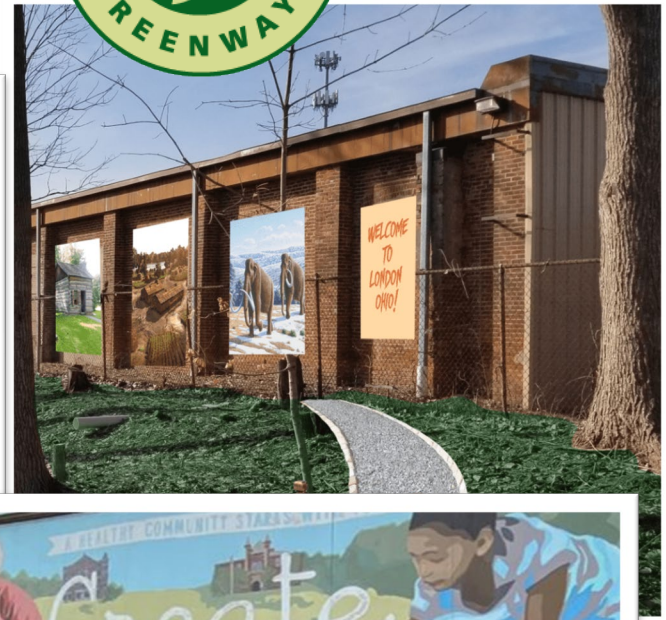
# Greenways Planning Studio

## Central Ohio Greenways Regional Trail Vision



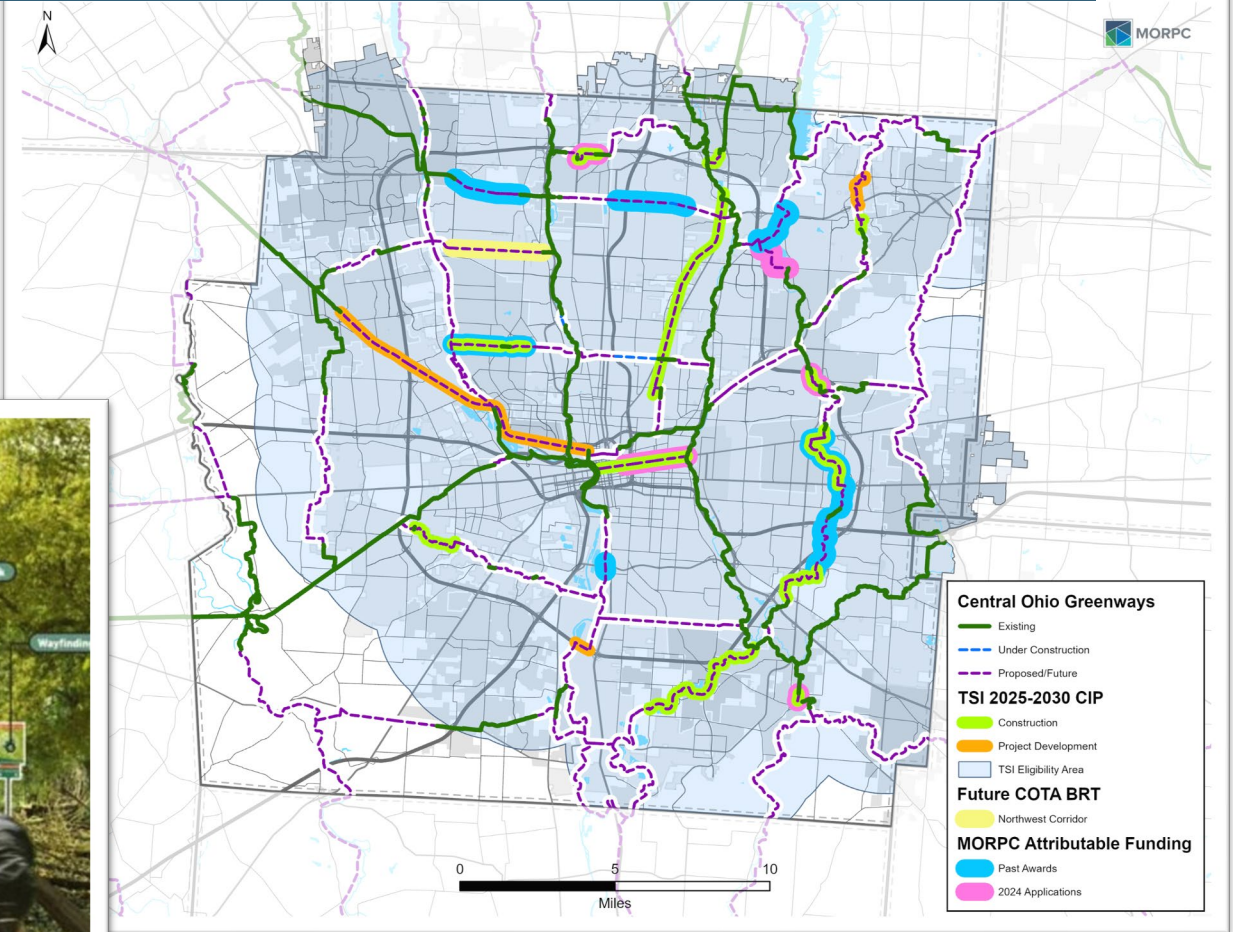
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# CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF THE CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS BOARD



# A TRANSFORMATIVE TRAIL BUILDING ERA

*In the next 5 years regional funding is going toward either constructing or development over a **25% of the COG Vision in much of Franklin County!***

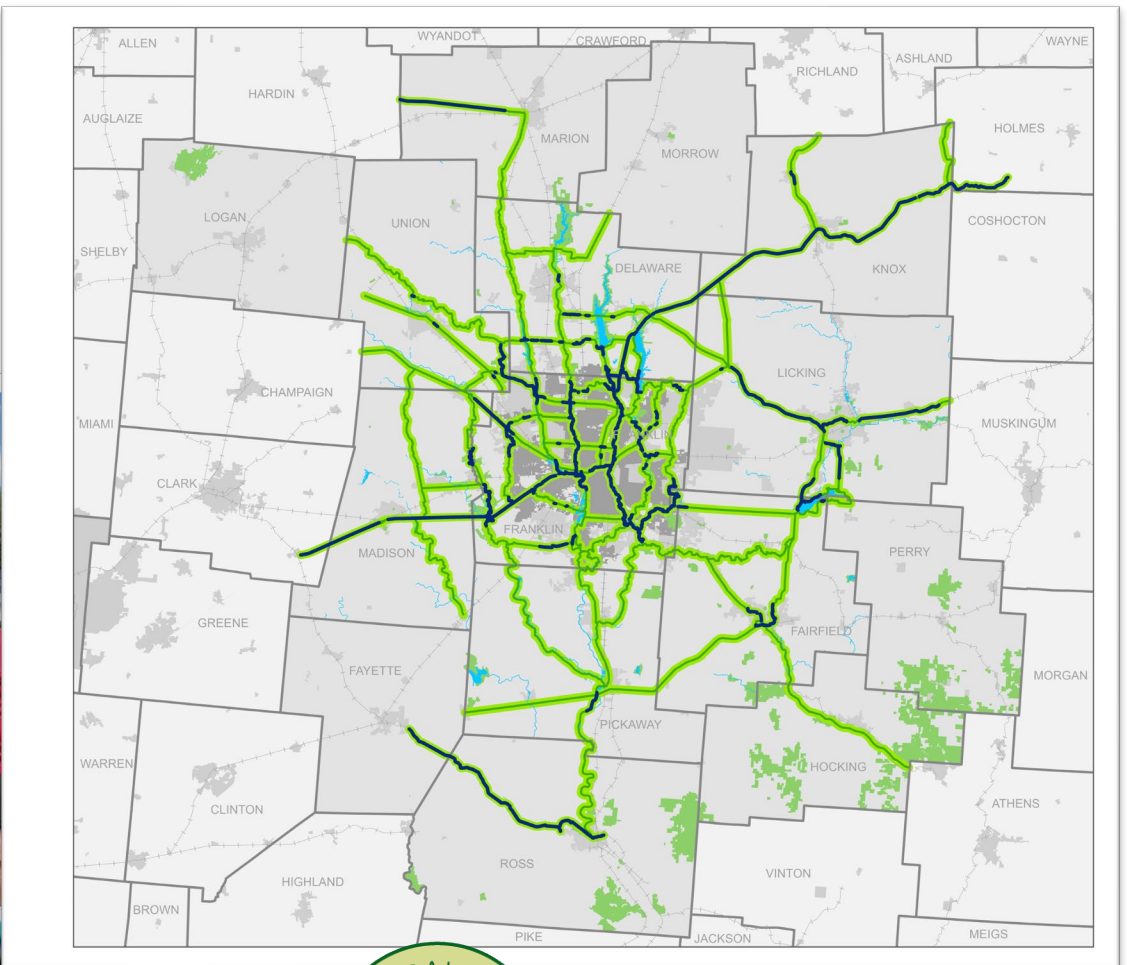


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# EXPANDED REGIONAL TRAIL VISION

2025

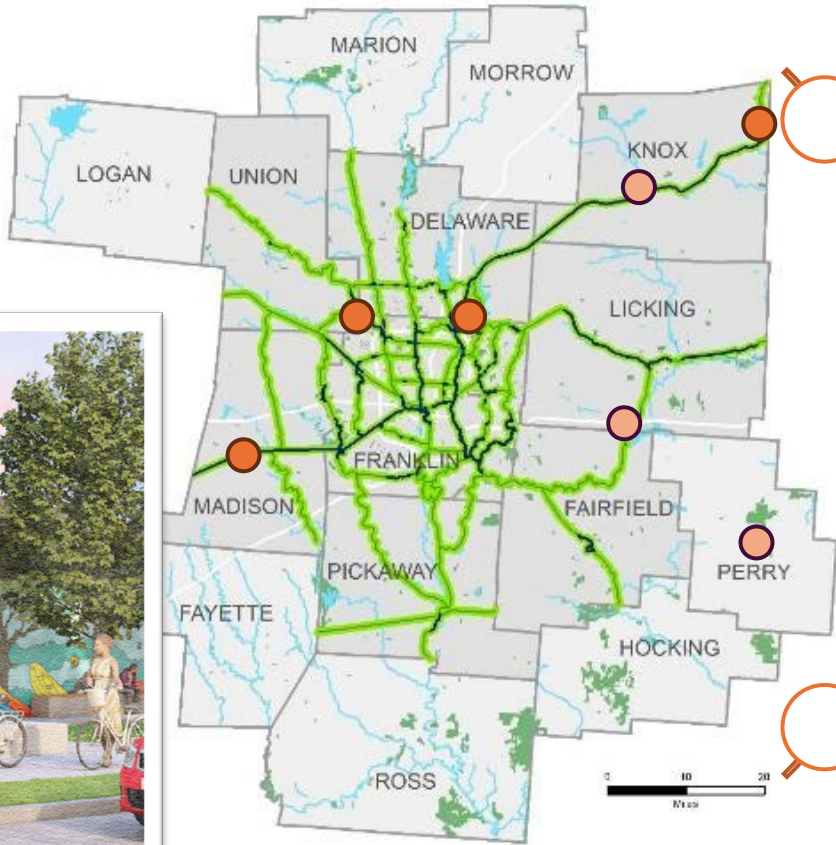
- 335 miles of existing trails
- 667 miles of proposed trails
- 15 Counties



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# GATEWAYS OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

*A Gateway of Regional Significance is a premier trailhead located along a Trail of Regional Significance that provides and/or connects trail users to amenities, services, and information necessary to navigate the trail system.*



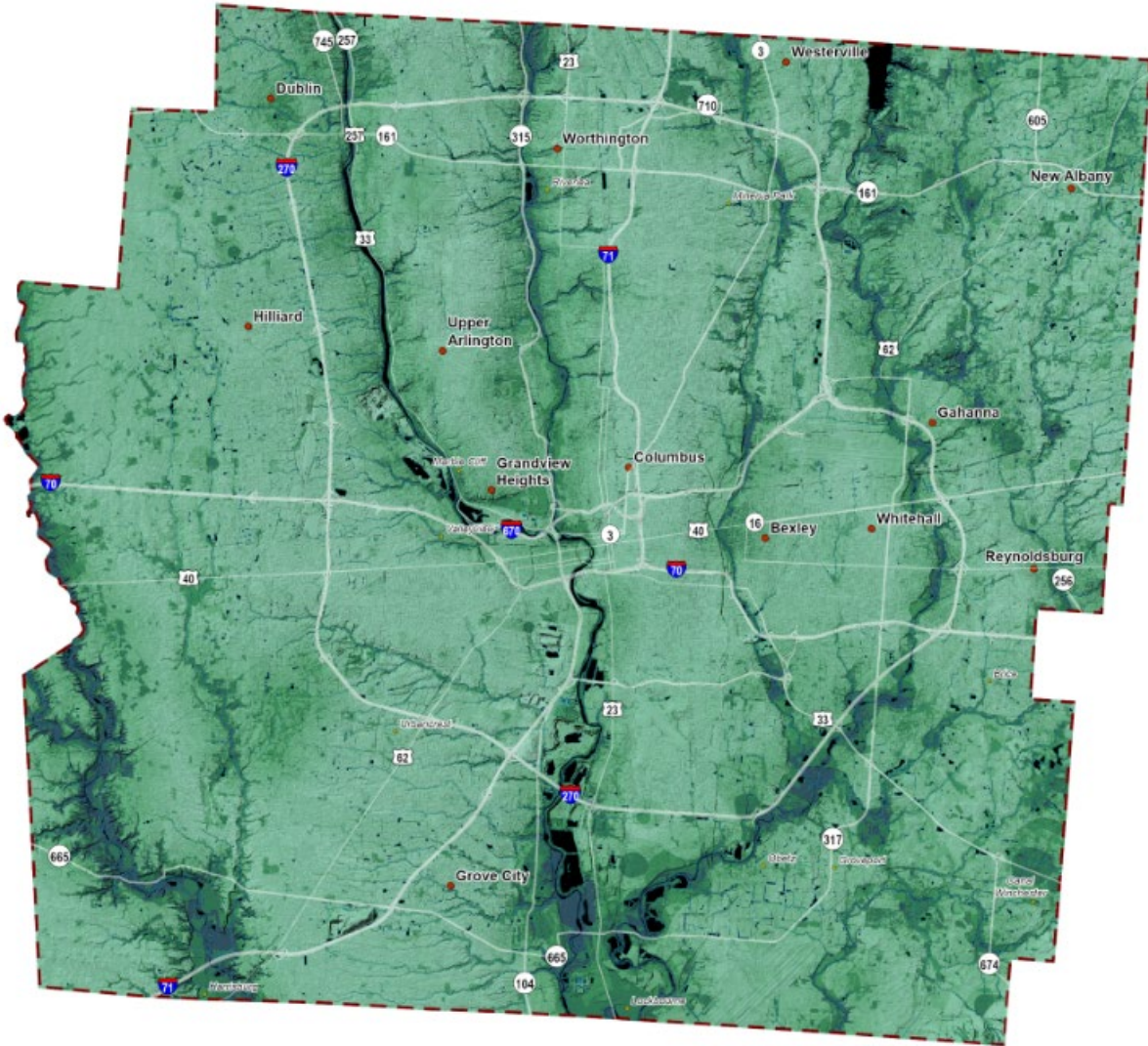
- Westerville
- Howard
- London
- Dublin
- Village of Shawnee
- Buckeye Lake
- Mt Vernon



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# MAPPING NATURAL ASSETS



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# THANK YOU!

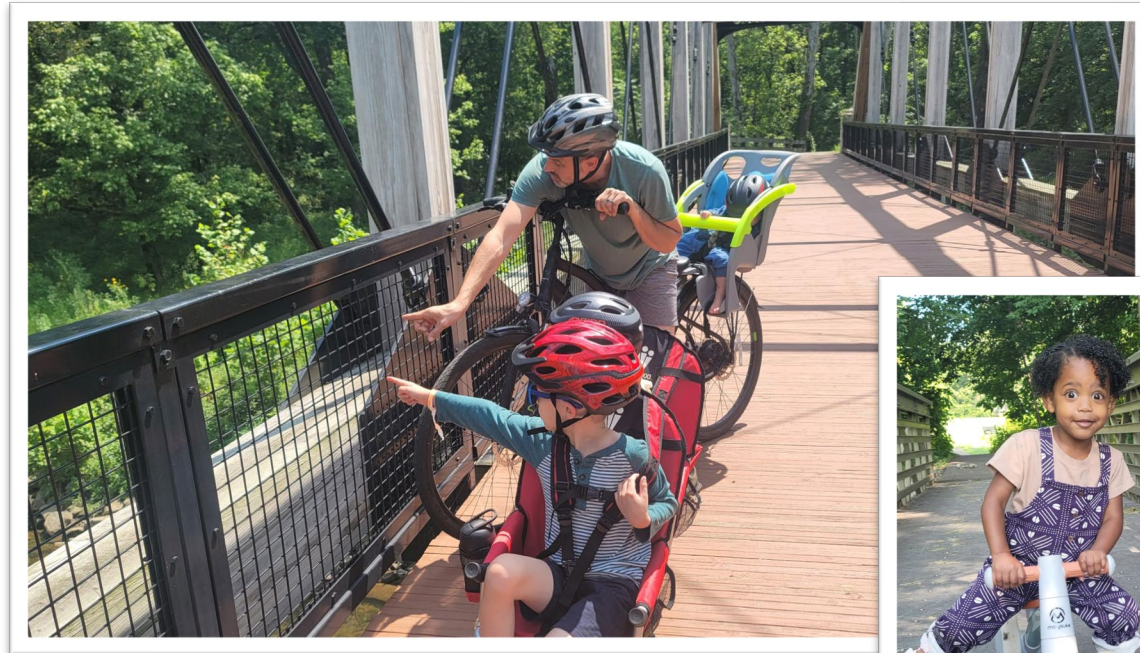
## MELINDA VONSTEIN, AICP

*Greenway Planning Studio Lead*

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

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# CENTRAL OHIO BLUEWAYS

**Steering Committee**

*February 12, 2025*



MID-OHIO REGIONAL  
**MORPC**  
PLANNING COMMISSION

# AGENDA



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- **WELCOME & PURPOSE**
- **UPDATE: CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS**
- **UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS**
  - *Environmental Stewardship*
  - *Water Trail Designation*
  - *User Experience*
- **UPDATE: CENTRAL OHIO BLUEWAYS PROGRAM**
- **ADJOURN**



# UPDATE: CENTRAL OHIO GREENWAYS



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# UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS



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## *ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP*

### ONION BAG PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

- CURRENT PROJECT (MAY 2025)

### NATIVE VEGETATION GUIDE

- AUGUST 2025

### INVASIVE SPECIES ID GUIDE

- OCTOBER 2025



### OUTLINE:

*BACKGROUND*

*ACQUIRING APPROVALS*

*CHOOSING A DESIGN*

*INSTALLATION*

*MAINTENANCE*

*OTHER CONSIDERATIONS*

*TIMELINE*



# UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS



MORPC

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

### ONION BAG PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

- CURRENT PROJECT (MAY 2025)

### NATIVE VEGETATION GUIDE

- AUGUST 2025

### INVASIVE SPECIES ID GUIDE

- OCTOBER 2025

Size	Genus Species	Common name	Family
Large Tree	Acer negundo	Boxelder	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)
Medium Tree	Acer rubrum	Red maple	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)
Medium Tree	Acer nigrum	Black maple	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)
Large Tree	Acer saccharum	Sugar maple	Sapindaceae (Soapberry Family)
Shrub	Sambucus canadensis	Elderberry	Adoxaceae (Moschatel Family)
Shrub	Rhus glabra	Smooth sumac	Anacardiaceae (Cashew Family)
Shrub	Rhus typhina	Staghorn sumac	Anacardiaceae (Cashew Family)
Small Tree	Asimina triloba	Pawpaw	Annonaceae (Annona Family)
Shrub	Ilex verticillata	Winterberry	Aquifoliaceae (Holly Family)
Small Tree	Carpinus caroliniana	American hornbeam	Betulaceae (Birch Family)
Shrub	Corylus americana	American hazelnut	Betulaceae (Birch Family)
Small Tree	Ostrya virginiana	American hopbeam	Betulaceae (Birch Family)
Shrub	Diervilla lonicera	Bush-honeysuckle	Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle Family)
Shrub	Viburnum acerifolium	Maple-leaved viburnum	Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle Family)
Shrub	Viburnum prunifolium	Black Haw viburnum	Caprifoliaceae (Honeysuckle Family)

## Poison Hemlock

*Conium maculatum*



### Species at a Glance

A tall, biennial herb in the carrot family which typically forms a basal **rosette** in the first year of growth and a tall, flowering plant in year two. It has purple splotches along the stem. All parts of the plant are poisonous to mammals and the toxicity can change depending on growing conditions like sunlight and soil composition.

### Identification

**Leaves:** Fern-like, delicate leaves are compound, finely divided, and smooth with pointed leaf tips. During the first year of growth, glossy green leaves are in a **rosette** and measure around 61 cm (2 ft) long. In the second year, leaves are shorter and grow **alternately** along a tall stem.

**Flowers:** Tiny, white and arranged in a small, umbrella-shaped cluster 7.6–15 cm (3–6 in) in diameter at the tips of branches. Plants bloom May–August.

**Fruits:** Each flower develops into a green, deeply ridged **fruit** that contains several seeds.

**Stems/Roots:** Green stems have distinct purple to reddish mottled spots and are hollow. During the second year the stem can grow 2–3 m (6-10 ft) tall. Poison hemlock has a large taproot.



# UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS



MORPC

## WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION

### UPDATE MAPPING DATA

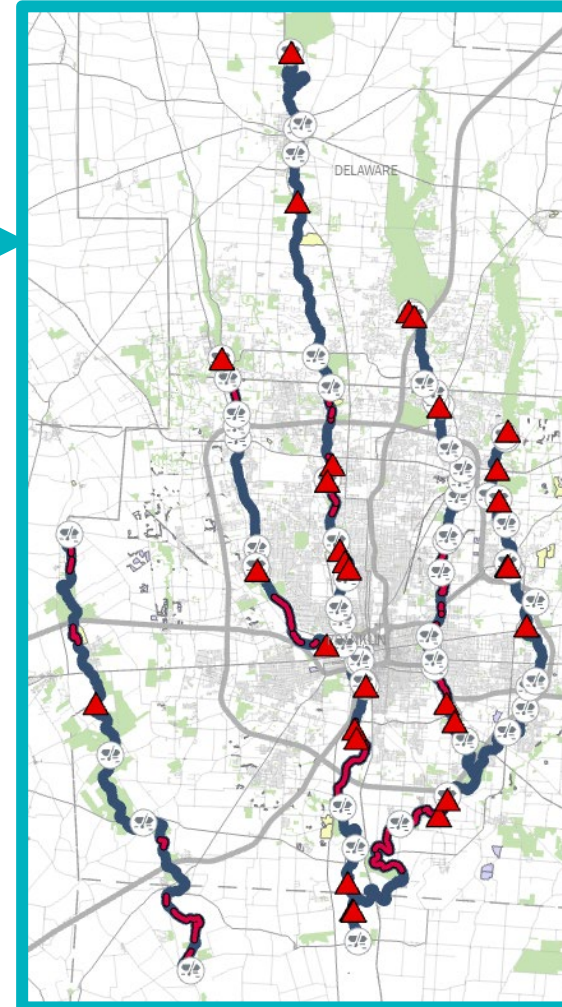
- CURRENT PROJECT (MAY 2025)

### UPDATE DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

- JULY 2025

### BIG WALNUT CREEK WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION

- DECEMBER 2025



FIELD NAME	ALIAS
ID	OBJECTID
AP_ID	Access Point ID
Name	Access Point Name
Address	Address
Blueway	Blueway
Jurisd	Jurisdiction
Zip	Zip
County	County
Mile	Mile Marker
Dist_From	Distance From
Dist_To	Distance To
Difficulty	Difficulty
Diff_Desc	Difficulty Description
Sign_Road	Roadway Signage
Sign_Blue	Blueway Signage
Desc	Description
Env_Conc	Environmental Concerns
ADA	ADA Accessibility
Type	Access Type
Boat_Stor	Boat Storage
Bike_Acc	Bike Access
Parking	Parking
Park_Pri	Primary Parking
Park_Sec	Secondary Parking
Park_Fee	Parking Fee
Park_Dist	Parking Distance
Camping	Camping
Picnic	Picnic Areas
Shelter	Shelter Pavilions
Trash	Trash Receptacles
Restroom	Restrooms



# UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS



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## *WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION*

### UPDATE MAPPING DATA

- CURRENT PROJECT (MAY 2025)

### UPDATE DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

- JULY 2025

### BIG WALNUT CREEK WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION

- DECEMBER 2025

#### OUTLINE:

STAKEHOLDERS

PURPOSE

GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

SIGNAGE AND BRANDING

ACCESSIBILITY

RESPONSIBILITIES

TERMS

#### PROCESS:

MEET W/ STAKEHOLDERS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

EDIT AGREEMENTS

CREATE PDF MAPS

ITEMIZE ACCESS POINTS

SUBMIT TO ODNR

# UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS



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## *USER EXPERIENCE*

### HAZARD REMOVAL CONSORTIUM DRAFT

- CURRENT PROJECT (MAY 2025)

### SIGNAGE PLAN / PACKAGE

- OCTOBER 2025

### ACCESS POINT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

- DECEMBER 2025



#### PROCESS:

*SECURE CONSULTANT  
(QUOTE V RFP)*

#### OUTLINE:

*BACKGROUND  
ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES  
COMPENSATION  
SUBCONTRACTING  
TERMS / CONDITIONS*



# UPDATE: WORKING GROUPS



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## USER EXPERIENCE

### HAZARD REMOVAL CONSORTIUM DRAFT

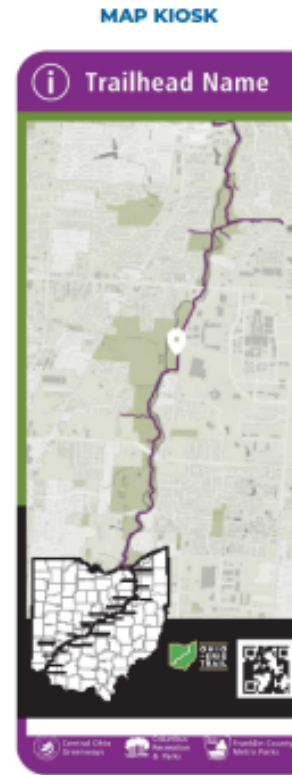
- CURRENT PROJECT (MAY 2025)

### SIGNAGE PLAN / PACKAGE

- OCTOBER 2025

### ACCESS POINT SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

- DECEMBER 2025



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2

3

4

## GUIDELINES

### IDENTIFY THE TRAILHEAD

Associate the trailhead to its name by placing it at the top of all maps.

### ORIENT USERS

A universal location icon at the trailhead's location lets users know where they are. COG trails should use a bold lineweight and their assigned color. The map background color and some associated features, such as parks and open spaces, should utilize tones of the standard COG green. Gray tones should be used to denote water bodies, buildings, streets, and other features.

### PROVIDE MORE CONTEXT

An inset map shows the broader context of a user's location.

### LINK TO MORE

More information can be provided via digital maps using a simple QR code.

# BLUEWAYS PROGRAM UPDATES



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## WORKING GROUPS

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



**KARINA PEGGAU**  
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**MEGHAN MEANS**  
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WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION

USER EXPERIENCE

WATER TRAIL DESIGNATION / USER EXPERIENCE



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**KARINA PEGGAU**  
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**THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!**

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