

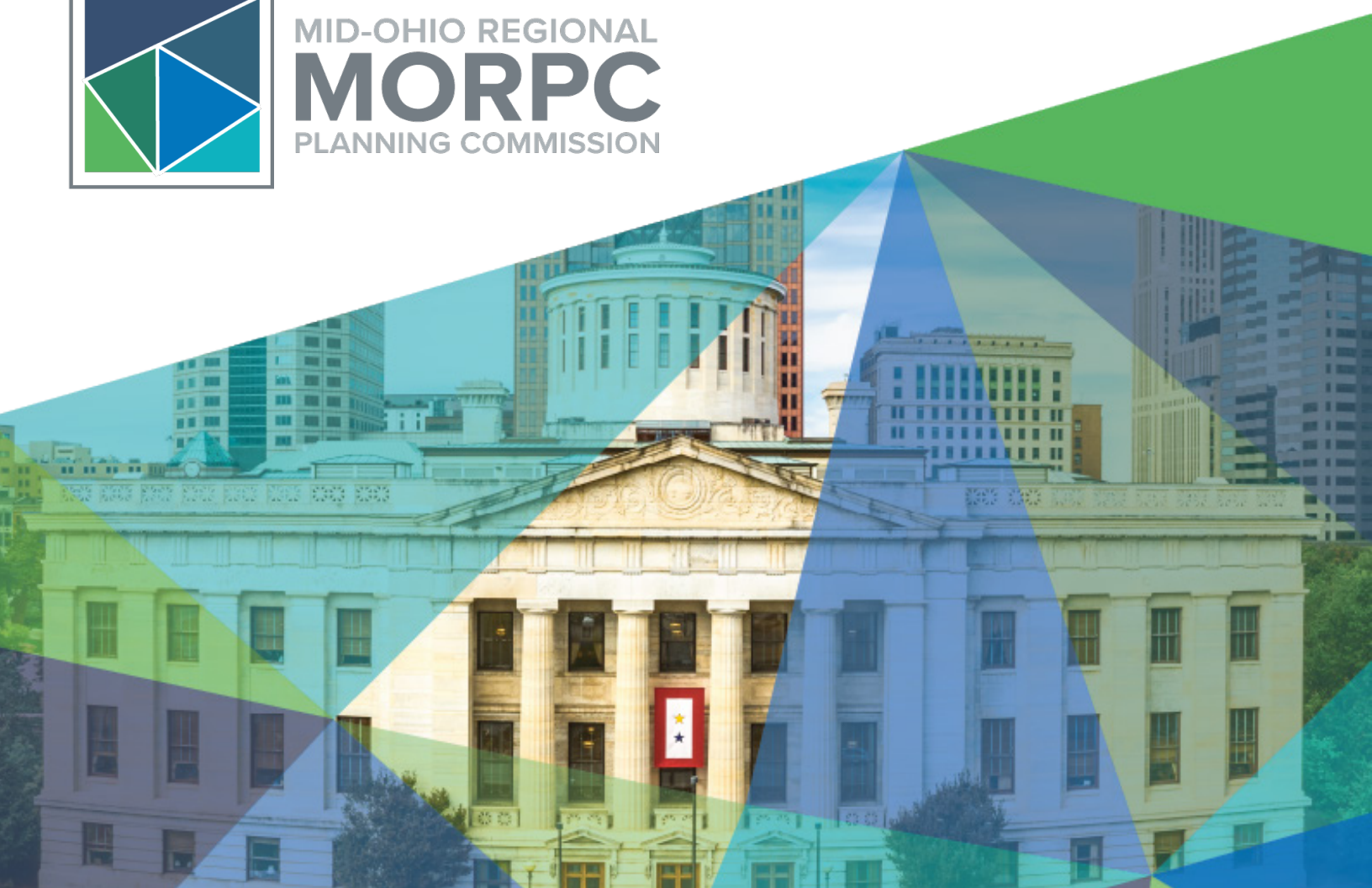
PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

2025–2026

REGIONAL ADVOCACY FOR CENTRAL OHIO AT THE STATE AND FEDERAL LEVELS

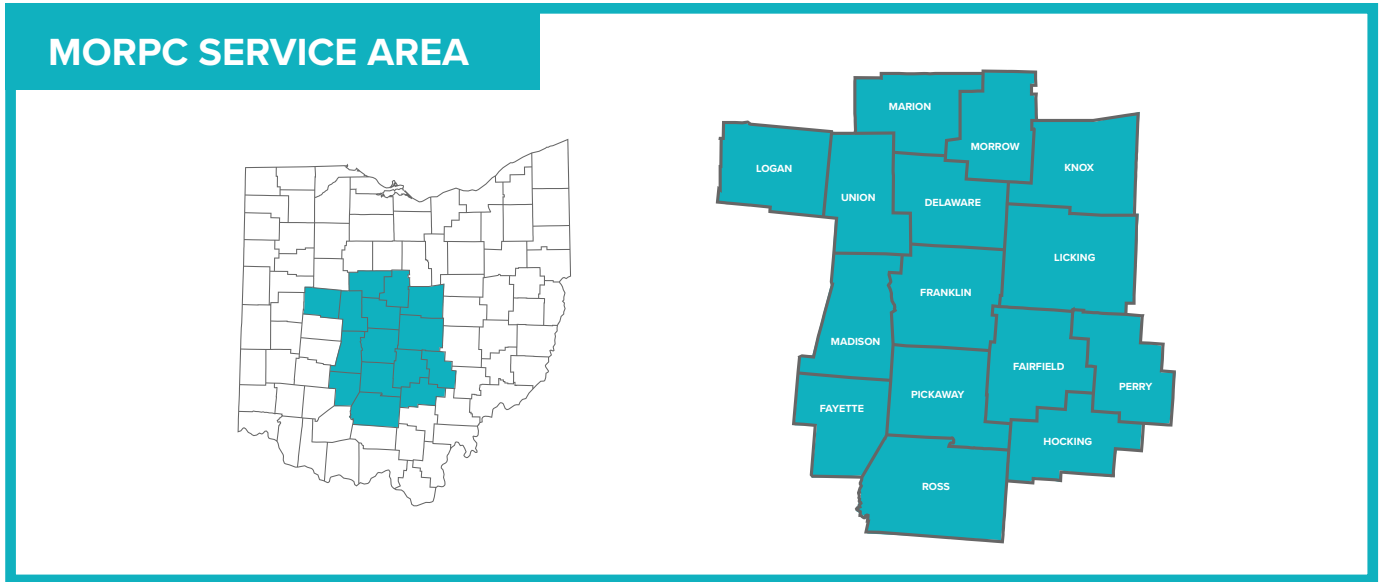


MID-OHIO REGIONAL
MORPC
PLANNING COMMISSION



WHO WE ARE

MORPC is Central Ohio's regional council for 90 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.



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 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 2025-2026 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 New Albany Mayor Sloan Spalding. It also included members of MORPC's Regional Policy Roundtable, chaired by Columbus City Councilmember Lourdes Barroso de Padilla, which directs our public policy and advocacy priorities. This collaborative agenda details policy that makes Central Ohio a better place for its residents.

We encourage leaders in Washington and Columbus to work together using this agenda and MORPC's government affairs team as resources, to cultivate a region that gets better as it grows bigger!

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 competes for investments 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 and efficient use of resources.

- ▲ Advocate for policies and legislation that empower local governments to enhance efficiency, innovation, and collaboration.
- ▲ Support policies that will provide Central Ohio with tools to help the region grow better as we get bigger.
- ▲ Promote and advance local government authority and collaboration to improve the quality of life, environment, and economy for our region.
- ▲ Support federal and state tax policies that promote inclusive economic growth and ensure the ability to provide vital local government services.
- ▲ Advocate for increases to Ohio's Local Government Fund.
- ▲ Oppose legislation that withholds local government funds from any community.
- ▲ 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 maintain and grow our region's critical infrastructure.
- ▲ 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.
- ▲ Advocate for policies, incentives, and funding that increase Central Ohio's supply of quality housing of all types and at all price levels.
- ▲ Pursue funding to support collaborative community research projects of strategic significance to Central Ohio
- ▲ Advocate for policies and legislation that support regional sewer and water collaboration.
- ▲ Support policies and legislation to maintain a robust supply of sustainable energy
- ▲ Support policies and resources that promote open data and standardization, protect the security of private, personal, and otherwise sensitive information, and enhance overall cybersecurity capabilities of local governments.
- ▲ Support the ability of local governments to fund, manage, and maintain digital assets and infrastructure
- ▲ Encourage implementation of data sharing and analytics that result in data-driven decisions and collaboration with regional partners, and federal and state agencies.



GOAL 2 Mobility

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

- ▲ Advocate for an advanced multi-modal transportation system that improves interregional access to more public and private transportation choices, connecting to regional, national, and international markets, including LinkUS, 3C+D, Midwest Connect, and passenger rail corridors throughout Ohio.
- ▲ Advocate for policies, funding, and other resources that support the study and deployment of passenger rail in Central Ohio, including the establishment of an Office of Passenger Rail within the Ohio Rail Development Commission and membership in the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission.
- ▲ 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, GOHIO Commute, and rural collaborations.
- ▲ Seek new revenue mechanisms for transportation at the local, state, and federal levels.
- ▲ Preserve funding streams created by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and support continuation or expansion of IIJA programs in future surface transportation reauthorization legislation.
- ▲ Promote increased 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, advancing Vision Zero efforts and the Safe System Approach.
- ▲ 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.
- ▲ Pursue policies and funding to advance the goals of RAPID 5 and the Central Ohio Greenways and Blueways strategies 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.
- ▲ Support policies, funding, and incentives to expand 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 and water for our growing region.

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



GOAL 4 Prosperity & Opportunity

Prosperity and Opportunity: Drive initiatives that enhance community prosperity and create opportunities for every resident in our growing region.

- ▲ Improve access to job opportunities, broadband, resources, homeownership, health systems, and connected green space for marginalized communities.
- ▲ Encourage development of affordable, accessible, quality housing.
- ▲ Advocate for policies that declare racism a public health crisis.
- ▲ Support policies that work to eliminate disparities and physical divisions in our growing region.
- ▲ Support public health and safety systems that protect residents of all backgrounds.
- ▲ Support policies and legislation to ensure fair enforcement of enhanced traffic safety laws.
- ▲ 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.
- Utilize MORPC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to better leverage involvement of the public, private, and non-profit sectors, and advocate for funding and policies to advance local economic development interests.
- Support improved national and state policies and new funding to advance economic development.
- Be a critical partner to One Columbus' vision to make 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.

DRIVE INVESTMENT

- Support federal funding for defense installations, missions, 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 and state funding through appropriations, authorizations, bills, grants, and other opportunities.
- Advocate for retaining Congressionally Directed Spending/Community Project Funding in the federal appropriations process.
- 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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William Murdock, AICP
MORPC

Chair

Mayor Chris Amorose Groomes
City of Dublin

Regional Policy Roundtable Chair

Councilmember Lourdes Barroso de Padilla
City of Columbus

Regional Policy Roundtable Vice Chair

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