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MORPC Seeks Public Input on TRAC Projects

Central Ohio projects seeking more than \$80 million in TRAC funding

[COLUMBUS, OH, Aug. 4, 2020] – The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission is seeking comments on projects for which funding is being requested from the Transportation Review Advisory Council of the Ohio Department of Transportation.

TRAC assists in developing a selection process for ODOT’s largest transportation project investments. Applications have already been accepted for its 2020 selection round for major new projects. These are projects that have a total project cost more than \$12 million, add transportation capacity, and are critical to the mobility, economic development, and quality of life of Ohio residents.

“Each one of the projects in Central Ohio has a total cost range between \$26 million and \$154 million, so receiving TRAC funding really makes a difference in bringing a project to fruition,” said Thea Ewing, MORPC director of transportation & infrastructure development.

As part of the selection process, ODOT requests that metropolitan planning organizations like MORPC provide local input by prioritizing the applications for projects that fall within the agency’s transportation planning boundaries.

“The feedback we receive from the public will help MORPC as we prioritize the projects,” MORPC Strategic Projects Manager Dina López said. “The final selection of funded TRAC projects will take place near the end of the year.”

Applications for projects located within the MORPC area include:

I-71 & Big Walnut Interchange

The Big Walnut Interchange project will construct a new interchange on Interstate 71 at Big Walnut Road in Delaware County. The new interchange includes an additional lane on I-71 northbound from exit 121 to the proposed Exit 124 and local road improvements in the vicinity of the new interchange. The City of Delaware is requesting \$3 million for right-of-way acquisition in fiscal year 2023.

Far East I-70 Interchange Improvements at Taylor Road and SR-256

This project is for interchange improvements at SR-256 and Taylor Road, including realignment of ramps at SR-256, continuing the auxiliary lane between SR-256 and Brice Road, and a new bridge over I-70 for Taylor Road with ramps to I-70. The project also includes the construction of auxiliary lanes between the SR-256 interchange and Taylor Road SW, as well as the addition of turn lanes at the SR-204 and Taylor Road SW intersection, and the Taylor Road and Taylor Road SW

intersection. Taylor Road SW will be widened between Taylor Road and SR-204. ODOT District 5 is requesting \$5 million for preliminary engineering in fiscal year 2021.

Far East Freeway: Phases 2 & 3

These phases of the Far East Freeway project will address safety and congestion issues in the I-70 corridor at the Brice Road interchange area. Phase 2 includes the reconfiguration of the north half of the Brice Road interchange and construction of westbound ramps to the I-270 interchange, as well as the replacement of the Brice Road bridge. Phase 3 constructs the south half of the Brice Road interchange. ODOT District 6 is requesting \$1.1 million for right-of-way acquisition and \$47 million in construction funding for state fiscal years 2022 and 2024, respectively.

US-33 at Pickerington Road & Allen Road

This project will remove the existing intersections along US-33 at Pickerington Road and Allen Road and replace them with an interchange facility to be located between the Hill-Diley Road and Winchester Road interchanges. ODOT District 5 is requesting \$11.4 million – with \$1 million for preliminary engineering (FY21), \$400,000 for detailed design (FY23) and \$10 million for right-of-way acquisition (FY23).

I-270 & US-23 Interchange

This project will improve the safety, capacity and operation of the US-23 and I-270 interchange by removing two cloverleaf ramps, constructing two new signalized ramps, rehabilitating two structures, and resurfacing portions of I-270 and US-23. ODOT District 6 is requesting \$14 million for construction activities in fiscal year 2022.

One-page fact sheets on the projects are available at morpc.org/funding.

The public is encouraged to provide comments or any additional information to help set MORPC's priorities, including advantages and/or disadvantages of projects. All comments must be submitted by e-mail to dlopez@morpc.org or in writing to Dina López, Re: TRAC Public Input, MORPC, 111 Liberty Street, Suite 100, Columbus, OH 43215. The deadline to submit feedback is 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 11, 2020.

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The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is Central Ohio's regional council with more than 70 members comprised of counties, cities, villages, townships, and regional organizations. 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.