



## Trenton I. Weaver

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### MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (MORPC) REPRESENTATIVE REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL OCTOBER 6, 2025

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#### MORPC SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABILITY

MORPC hosted leaders from around the region to discuss community-driven projects and engagement opportunities to advance Central Ohio's environmental goals.

Sessions explored practical initiatives, from solar-powered air monitors to equitable tree canopy tools, underscoring the importance of working with development to align economic growth with quality of life.

Discussion included Ohio's House Bill 15, which seeks to balance surging energy demand, utility transparency, and consumer affordability.

The keynote reinforced the role of partnerships and innovation in addressing climate barriers, providing timely insights relevant to Gahanna's sustainability work.

#### MORPC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

- The Commission last met on September 11, 2025. The meeting was live-streamed.
- Upcoming Commission Meeting: October 9, 2025.

#### LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

[Read MORPC's September legislative summary here.](#)

#### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- **EDA GRANT**

MORPC's Economic Development District received a \$70,000 Partnership Planning grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to support short-term planning, including the 5-year update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

- [AIR QUALITY ALERTS](#)

MORPC continues to issue alerts during high-pollution days and partners with communities like Gahanna to reduce emissions. [Read more about air quality alerts here.](#)

- [FORMER U.S. TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY, RAY LAHOOD VISITS COLUMBUS](#)

MORPC hosted Ray LaHood for a Central Ohio Rail Executive Network Roundtable, highlighting how modern passenger rail could drive development, connect talent, and boost regional competitiveness as Central Ohio grows toward three million residents by 2050. [Learn more here.](#)

- [GOHIO COMMUTE](#)

GOhio Commute continues to support regional workforce mobility through rideshare programs, vanpools, and emergency ride home services. [Learn more here.](#)

- [FREE RESIDENTIAL SERVICES](#)

MORPC provides no-cost home repair and energy efficiency (weatherization) programs to income-eligible Franklin County residents, offering services such as furnace repair, insulation, air sealing, and safety checks. Eligibility is based on household income or enrollment in programs like SSI, TANF, PIPP, or HEAP. [Read more and apply here.](#)

- [MORPC INSIGHTS DATA PLATFORM](#)

An interactive hub offering expertly curated, presentation-ready data, visuals, and tools on Central Ohio's transportation, sustainability, and housing trends, built for decision makers, planners, researchers, and the public. Check back regularly for new datasets, commentary, and downloadable resources. [Learn more here.](#)

- [OU VOINOVICH SCHOOL VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE](#)

Ohio University's Voinovich School will showcase its Sustainability, Security, and Resilience certificate and master's programs(virtual). Employees of MORPC member governments receive a 15% tuition discount. [Learn more here.](#) -Tuesday, Oct. 14, 12–1 p.m.

- [PODCASTS](#)

MORPC leadership was recently featured on two podcasts. Executive Director William Murdock and Sustainability Director Brandi Whetstone joined SWACO's *WastED* podcast to discuss innovative sustainability efforts, while Chief Regional Planning Officer Jessica Kuenzli appeared on *Ohio Policy Talk* to highlight MORPC's work with partners to plan for smart regional growth. [Learn more about the SWACO podcast here.](#)  
[Learn more about the Ohio Policy Talk podcast here.](#)

- [SHARE YOUR STORY](#)

MORPC invites partners to share ongoing projects, accomplishments, and future priorities to help build a competitive project pipeline for federal funding. Contact [economicdevelopment@morpc.org](mailto:economicdevelopment@morpc.org) to participate.

- [SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS](#)

Switch Together Columbus is a group-buying program for solar and battery systems, open to Central Ohio residents. Registration is free and non-obligatory; interested residents can sign up to be notified when the program launches in their area. [Read more here.](#)

- [TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS](#)

MORPC and CORPO propose allocating \$2.45M in federal funds to transportation projects for SFY 2026–2027 and are accepting public comments through October 10.<sup>th</sup> [Learn more here.](#) - Oct. 10, 2025

- [WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM](#)

MORPC's Robert Williams shared how no-cost home repair and weatherization programs help income-eligible residents stay comfortable year-round, while reducing energy bills, on NBC4's *Columbus Living*. [You can watch the segment here.](#)

## KEY FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- [ADVANCED ENERGY FUND GRANT](#)

The Ohio Department of Development is offering \$8.5M for energy efficiency projects (e.g., insulation, lighting, HVAC, windows/doors) that reduce energy use by at least 15%. Applications are due this October. [Learn more here.](#)- Oct. 31, 2025

- [BROWNFIELD LOAN PROGRAM](#)

The Ohio Water Development Authority offers loans up to \$500K for Phase II Environmental Assessments and up to \$5M for assessments with remediation. Applications are due next May. [Learn more here.](#)- May 21, 2026

- [COMMUNITY FACILITIES DIRECT LOAN & GRANT PROGRAM](#)

The USDA offers low-interest loans, grants, and loan guarantees on a rolling basis for cities, villages, and townships under 20,000 residents. [Learn more here.](#)

- [DRIVE INVESTMENT](#)

MORPC supports member communities in securing federal funding through tools like the [Drive Investment Portal](#) (curated funding notices and deadlines) and GrantFinder (a real-time database of grants). MORPC also partners on regionwide applications, including the [HUD PRO Housing Grant & Regional Housing Strategy](#), [USDOT SMART Grant](#), [USDOT Grants – LinkUS West Broad Street Bus Rapid Transit Corridor](#), and [USEPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant \(CPRG\)](#). Contact Eileen Leuby ([eleuby@morpc.org](mailto:eleuby@morpc.org)) for more information.

- [FY2025 DISASTER SUPPLEMENTAL GRANT PROGRAM](#)

\$1.447B for long-term economic recovery in federally declared disaster counties (2023–2024); Readiness and Implementation Paths have rolling deadlines, Industry Transformation Path closes March 3, 2026. [Read more here.](#)

## UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

- [\*\*REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY\*\*](#)

MORPC launched the Regional Economic Development Academy in August, offering training on economic development tools and strategies. The next session focuses on Comprehensive and Master Planning, featuring Planning NEXT instructors and Township Trustee William Bogantz. [Register Here.](#) - October 7, 2025 (9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m)

- [\*\*COLUMBUS PARTNERSHIP'S CAPITAL BUDGET PRIORITY LIST\*\*](#)

Communities seeking state capital budget funds are encouraged to also submit projects to the Columbus Partnership's regional priority list, shared with the Ohio General Assembly. Applications are due this November. Contact [publicpolicy@columbuspartnership.com](mailto:publicpolicy@columbuspartnership.com) with questions. - November 14, 2025

## MEMBER BENEFITS

MORPC offers members support through the Community-Based Planning Assistance and Planner Pool Programs, providing tailored planning and staffing help.

## MONEY MONDAYS

Every Monday from 1:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., MORPC hosts "Money Mondays" virtual presentations. These sessions are an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about key funding opportunities.

[Click here to register for Money Mondays and be added to our calendar invite list.](#)

[Click here to view the video archive of past Money Mondays webinars.](#)

## OPPORTUNITIES

Check out opportunities to serve with MORPC. Details are available at [morpc.org/careers](https://morpc.org/careers).