



MID-OHIO REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, COLUMBUS, OH

Diversity and Inclusion have been at the forefront of MORPC's work for several years. Local leaders in the Columbus, OH area issued resolutions declaring racism a public health crisis in 2020 after the killing of George Floyd. MORPC also released a statement, which was included in its existing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan and on its website, alongside an existing Diversity Statement. Local municipalities and MORPC members began reaching out for resources, training and speakers on topics related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. To provide this, MORPC partnered with YWCA Columbus to provide social and racial justice classes for MORPC employees, member organizations and community partners. In 2021, six classes were offered to around 200 people on the subject of antiracism and racial equity. Together with the Atlanta Regional Council, MORPC led the Racial Equity Conversation Series in response to interest expressed from executive directors across the nation.

MORPC has a Diversity & Inclusion Committee, designed to prioritize diversity and inclusion goals and to implement new internal structures to improve capacity, results and prioritization. The committee consists of representation from the areas of the agency directly involved in monitoring, adjusting, and improving priority goals, including improving the diversity of new employees, increasing diverse

voices and representation on the commission and its committees and in program planning, establishing new goal-specific staff contacts to advance the plan, and providing focused data, context and technical assistance. In addition to this committee, MORPC is prioritizing including discussion of DEI in other Committees and employee groups- including for example the public policy committee.

Diversity Statement:

Diversity refers to the differences that make us unique. Inclusion is the action of engaging and valuing cultural differences. MORPC recognizes, values, embraces, and celebrates diversity by respecting and utilizing all of our differences to enhance our lives and our society.

Statement on Racism:

Over the past few weeks, we have all witnessed and felt the sadness, the outrage, and the frustration concerning the deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and so many other senseless deaths and unnecessary trauma across the nation and closer to home. These tragedies impact us deeply and cast a brighter light on racism and its long legacy and impact on every community.

We support our local government members across the region as they work to eliminate racism and discrimination, especially the City of Columbus and Franklin County in declaring racism to be a public health crisis. Racism affects all members of our society and deserves action from every level of government.

MORPC reaffirms our commitment to work to eliminate racism and discrimination throughout Central Ohio by addressing disparities and inequities through our programs and initiatives.

Through our work to convene and facilitate regional conversations, we promote collaboration and urgent effective action.

Through our transportation and economic development initiatives, we work to ensure everyone has equal access to education, jobs, healthcare and other community resources.

Through our programs in residential services, we provide free services to populations historically underserved and overburdened with energy and housing costs.

Through our planning and sustainability efforts, we work to improve air quality conditions that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations.

Through data and mapping, we identify trends and disparities to improve opportunities for resources for everyone.

Through our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we provide opportunities for traditionally underrepresented communities to share their thoughts, voices, and perspectives in planning for our region.

Through our Regional Housing Strategy, we work with our community partners to identify gaps in affordable and sufficient housing to meet our current and future market demands.

There is much more work to be done.

We commit to build on our progress, acknowledge and address our shortcomings, improve and measure our impact, and advance new efforts.

There is much more work to be done.

We commit to build on our progress, acknowledge and address our shortcomings, improve and measure our impact, and advance new efforts.

We will bring more focus on identifying and eliminating systemic racism through our public policy and planning work.

In service to and partnership with over 70 member communities in Central Ohio, we stand together with our regional and state partners to address racism, to create a more just and prosperous region, and to strive to make sure all in our region are moving forward.

Links:

[Eliminate Racism website](#)

[Diversity & Inclusion page](#)

[2019-2020 Diversity and Inclusion Work Plan](#)

