



# Mount Vernon

*An Innovative Community; Authentically Hometown*

## Planes, Trains, Automobiles and River Corridors

*City officials host MORPC in tour that focuses on improvements*

MOUNT VERNON, December 20, 2024 – Officials from the City of Mount Vernon hosted two visitors from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) earlier this month to focus attention on how Mount Vernon is positioning itself to meet the needs and challenges of a growing City – and a growing region – in the years to come.

Mayor Matthew Starr, Engineer Brian Ball and Assistant Engineer Quentin Platt escorted Parag Agrawal, chief mobility and infrastructure officer and senior director of programming at MORPC, and Jessica Kuenzli, MORPC’s chief regional planning officer and senior director of planning, to five local sites – the Knox County Airport, the Central Ohio Industrial Park on the south side of the City, the Arch Avenue Park river corridor,

Central Ohio Farmers Co-op on Lewis Street, and the nearby State Route 13 corridor.



*From left, Assistant City Engineer Quentin Platt, Parag Agrawal of MORPC, City Engineer Brian Ball and MORPC’s Jessica Kuenzli review plans for the Kokosing River shoreline at Arch Park earlier this month.*

“While Mount Vernon officials are obviously focused on providing local services to residents, businesses and anyone visiting the City 24/7/365, we also have to acknowledge that Mount Vernon is part of the most vibrant and growing region in Ohio,” said Mayor Starr. “Just as the decisions we make may affect all of Knox County as well as MORPC’s 15-county membership area, MORPC and other regional leaders have a lot to offer us. It’s a two-way relationship that’s very much worth our while to cultivate. We cannot operate in a vacuum.”

With Knox County, particularly the southern half of the County, poised for growth as Intel and subsidiary businesses take shape in Licking County, the Knox County Airport is going

to see increased activity – and increased needs for funding to handle air traffic.

Also on the south end of town, truck traffic into and out of the Industrial Park has long been a source of complaints from nearby residents. During the recent tour, City officials discussed with the MORPC representatives what can be done to improve the traffic flow there.

“The City of Mount Vernon is working to develop the City’s infrastructure and create new economic development opportunities for the City’s residents,” said Agrawal. “From improvements to the Knox County Airport to developing better local and regional connections, Mount Vernon is in the forefront of the best land use and economic development practices. MORPC looks forward to working with the community residents to enhance their quality of life.”

Several improvements are in the works for the west side of Mount Vernon; all are needed, while some are designed to be transformative. To that end, the City and MORPC officials reviewed the measures being developed to protect residents from the Kokosing River, discussed how a revamped SR 13 corridor will better channel truck traffic through the City, and considered the possibilities with a rail line that extends to the Central Ohio Farmers Co-op at 600 Lewis Street. More rail traffic, of course, could mean less wear and tear on the City's streets.

"There are incredibly exciting things happening in Mount Vernon and we greatly appreciate Mayor Starr inviting us out to take a tour. Of particular interest for me was the work that is being done along the river and the great potential for the community. Knowing everything that Mount Vernon is working on helps us keep opportunities top of mind that may help to support this work and strengthen our Central Ohio region," said Kuenzli.

"This 'Planes, Trains, Automobiles and River Corridors Tour' was by no means a 'one-and-done' gesture," said Mayor Starr. "Our relationships with MORPC and other regional and statewide organizations go back years, and will only be strengthened going forward. There's too much at stake for everyone involved. With everything this City has planned, we can't do it alone."

### END ###

### **ABOUT THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON:**

The City of Mount Vernon is an innovative community with an authentic hometown feel. The City is dedicated to providing modern services with an emphasis on continual improvement, customer service and equitable laws that support our citizens and visitors, while retaining and attracting investors in our community. Home to 17,000 people, Mount Vernon is the county seat for Knox County and boasts historic buildings and districts as well as business and professional, educational and recreational opportunities through many adaptive reuses of the community's infrastructure and spaces. The City has strong ties to higher education, with Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College and Central Ohio Technical College operating satellite locations in the historic downtown. Located 40 miles northeast of Columbus, Mount Vernon is near the geographic center of Ohio and has connections all over the globe.

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