



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 16, 2011**

Contact:  
Hanna Greer, Commissioners, 525-5848

**NEW COURTHOUSE, SCIOTO MILE RECEIVE  
2<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL HARRISON SMITH AWARD**

During a lunchtime forum of the Columbus Metropolitan Club this week, the Franklin County Commissioners and the project team for the new Franklin County Common Pleas Courthouse were awarded the 2011 Harrison Smith Award. The award is given annually by the Downtown Commission to projects that positively impact the urban environment.

The Franklin County Common Pleas Courthouse was one of two 2011 recipients.

The Common Pleas Courthouse is the first newly constructed courthouse in Ohio to receive Gold LEED certification from the US Green Building Council. The \$105-million dollar project opened in June 2011 and is a green, state of the art building featuring a green roof, low flow plumbing and uses sustainable and locally produced materials throughout.

The courthouse was recognized for being state of art in design and construction and from an environmental and sustainability standpoint. The building was also honored for standing out as an elegant new addition to the southern end of downtown Columbus and representing excellence and quality in all its aspects.

“We are honored to accept this award,” said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. “Franklin County’s new Common Pleas Courthouse is a highly functional, beautiful and sustainable civic building that will serve our community for many, many years. I applaud the work of our entire project team that worked tirelessly to get this Courthouse completed. “

“Harrison Smith questioned conventional wisdom and made our community, not just better, but great because of his energized persistence,” said Commissioner Paula Brooks. “As a friend of his, this award has personal meaning to me. It evidences the forward thinking Harrison appreciated. “

“At the heart of every town square or downtown, throughout the nation, you’ll find a courthouse,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “They are the cornerstone of any community. On behalf of our citizens, the Board of Commissioners is proud of this important civic project and honored that it has been recognized by the Downtown Commission.”

The second 2011 Harrison Smith award was presented to the Scioto Mile.

The Scioto Mile Riverfront Park opened in July 2011. With world-class water features, a beautiful tree-lined promenade and a performing arts stage, this park has drawn hundreds of thousands to the riverfront in just a few short months. Funded through a historic public-private partnership, The Scioto Mile is an investment that will last for generations to come. In 2008, Franklin County committed \$5,000,000 with multi-year payment schedule. The County's last payment was made this year.

"We designed the Scioto Mile to be a magnet to attract visitors and residents to the riverfront. And it worked... The Scioto Mile has been packed with people playing in the fountains, eating at the Milestone 229 restaurant, strolling the promenade or enjoying the swings," said Guy Worley, President/CEO of the Columbus Downtown Development Corporation, the development manager for The Scioto Mile. "Thanks to projects like the Scioto Mile, Downtown is once again a hub of activity and energy. We appreciate the Downtown Commission's recognition and we're honored by this award."

"This was a tough year to make a decision for the Harrison Smith awards. We had two extraordinary projects completed in 2011 that merited attention. Both took many years and the work and contributions of so many throughout the community to see accomplished. Both deserved recognition and that is what we see today," said Steve Wittmann, Chair of the Columbus Downtown Commission, during the presentation of the awards.

Wittmann continued, "We are fortunate to see these things accomplished. The community had to work together to get them done. And the community, and the leaders in the community, had to have a commitment to quality to see them done the way they were."