Welcome to the last quarterly newsletter of FY 2018. This newsletter is published by the Planning Commission and is intended to provide timely updates on local transportation projects, area (re)development initiatives, transit and paratransit related news, highway safety and other activities undertaken by the Planning Commission as well as other area organizations. The newsletter is supported in part with funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), and member political subdivisions of the Planning Commission.

Thomas M. Mazur
Executive Director

2040 Transportation Plan Update

The RPC and its partners, are finalizing the 2040 Transportation Plan Update for Allen County. When completed the Plan will be submitted for approval to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The purpose of the 2040 Update is to ensure local transportation needs are identified and resources made available to address future demands through the development of an intermodal transportation system that is efficient, fiscally sound, environmentally friendly, and enhances the region’s ability to compete in the global market. The Plan recommends the region’s transportation system needs for the next 20 years based on the best data available, including an analysis of current and future conditions. The Plan recognizes the relationship between transportation, employment, land use, freight, and air quality; while, emphasizing the maintenance and efficiency of the existing system before new facilities are considered. The Plan also recognizes that improvements to rail, pedestrian, and transit systems increase mode choice and improve the overall level of service of the system.

The Draft Transportation Plan reflects $687.1M in Federal, State and local funds to be made available for eligible projects, programs, and services as identified through 2040. Approximately $301.7M is programmed over 150 proposed projects included in the Draft Plan. Most projects are carryovers from the previous Plan and are moving forward through the pipeline as monies are made available. The Plan addresses the ongoing maintenance of local bridges ($41.9M), freight-related projects necessary to support economic development ($60.3M), transit projects ($12.0M), and basic pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects ($15.8M). The task going forward is to prioritize the remaining monies and identify projects to be included in the Plan Update through 2040.

Over the months of July and August, the Planning Commission will be working to reach final consensus, by reviewing the Plan with local political subdivisions, transportation stakeholders, and the general public. Outreach to the political subdivisions has already been completed and neighborhood meetings are now underway. To solicit public input, two public meetings are planned. The first public meeting will be held on Thursday, August 9, at 10:00 a.m. in the Allen County Regional Transit Authority (ACRTA) Conference Room at 200 E. High Street, Lima. The second will be held on Friday, August 10, at 3:00 p.m. in the Memorial Book Room at the Lima Public Library, 650 W. Market Street. Both facilities are disabled/elderly population accessible and are on the ACRTA fixed route. For information about bus routes/schedules as well as Uplift services, visit the ACRTA website at www.acrta.com or call 419-222-2RTA. Finally, Planning Commission staff will be available to discuss the Plan Update at the LACRPC booth in the Merchants’ Building during the 2018 Allen County Fair - August 17th through the 25th. If you have additional questions, email Thomas Mazur at tmazur@lacrpc.com or call 419-228-1836.
In The News...

20th Annual Safe Community/FOPA/FOP Annual Awards
Do you know a person or group who has done something to help make Lima-Allen County a safe community? If so, nominations are now open for the 20th Annual Safe Community/FOPA/FOP Awards. Winning nominees will be recognized at the Safe Community/FOPA/FOP Award Luncheon on Thursday, September 20, at the FOP Hall. Awards are given in the following categories to a worthy person or group:  Emergency Medical Services, Fire Safety, Engineering, Traffic Safety, Children Safety (0-15 years), Youth Safety (16-25 years), and Outstanding Citizen. A nomination form is available at www.lacrpc.com, follow the link—What’s New. Send completed forms to esmith@lacrpc.com or mail to the Commission office at 130 W. North Street, Lima, Ohio 45801. Alternatively, a nomination form can be completed online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018SafeCommunityAwards.

Community Development Block Grant Formula Application
The Program Year (PY) 2019 Community Development Block Grant Formula application has been submitted to the Ohio Development Services Agency for a total grant amount of $236,000. The first public hearing was held on March 6, 2018, and the second on May 24, 2018. Based on both citizen input and local officials assessment of the County’s needs, the County is proposing to undertake the following CDBG activities for PY 2019: Village of Lafayette - mail distribution facilities improvements to facilitate accessibility - $63,800; City of Delphos - Canal Street resurfacing/upgrades - $125,000; West Ohio Community Action Partnership (WOCAP) - Fair Housing Outreach and Education - $7,000; and $40,200 to be used for environmental services, grant preparation, and program administration.

Bike Rodeo Held
Young cyclists from around the area learned how to have a safer summer biking experience on Saturday, May 19, between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon at West Ohio Community Action Partnership, 540 S. Central Avenue. The youngsters, ages 5 to 12 years old, rode their bicycles through a series of skill tests, learning how to balance at a slow speed, ride in a circle slowly, maneuver through an obstacle course, or how to stop and signal at an intersection. Many local sponsors worked together to make this event possible. The West Central Ohio Safety Council and the American Pediatrics Academy provided free helmets to all youngsters who attended the event and needed a helmet. Crankers was on hand to make minor repairs to the young participants’ bicycles - checking tire air pressure, adjusting seat height, tightening chains, and much more. The Northside Neighborhood Association provided snacks and water to the participants. Volunteers from Activate Allen County, Lima Memorial Health Systems, St. Rita’s Mercy Health, the Lima Police Department, Lima Roadrunners, and Regional Planning Commission helped the children through the course. Many thanks to everyone who took time out of their Saturday to help make cycling a safer experience for area children.

NRAC Funding Available
District 13 Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC) announces the application period is now open for Round 13 of Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Funding. Approximately $7,165,279 is available to local communities and non-profit organizations to preserve natural areas, protect streams, and create outdoor recreational opportunities. Applications for Green Space improvements under the Clean Ohio Round 13 program will be accepted July 11, 2018, through January 25, 2019. District 13 is comprised of Allen, Auglaize, Hancock, Logan, Mercer, Putnam, Shelby and Van Wert counties. For further information contact Thomas Mazur at 419-228-1836 or tmazur@lacrpc.com.
FEMA Updating Floodplain Mapping

Local property owners and public officials should be aware that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is currently working on updating the floodplain mapping for the Auglaize River Watershed under their Risk Mapping, Assessment, and Planning (Risk MAP) program. FEMA’s Chicago Regional Office hosted a Flood Risk Review meeting on June 27th to showcase updated floodplain mapping and engineering analyses for Allen County. The meeting held at the Allen County Sanitary Engineer’s Office was intended to provide an interactive opportunity for interested parties to review draft working maps, ask questions about the engineering methods used to develop the spatial flood risk data, and provide comments and early feedback to FEMA. The work maps depict the results of updated hydrologic and hydraulic modeling analyses and the redelineation of numerous Zone AE and Zone A reaches. The meeting also allowed community officials to receive updates on the status and remaining schedule of the Auglaize Watershed flood hazard mapping project and begin preparations to communicate with the public about possible changes in flood risk. Hard copy maps are available at the Regional Planning Commission for public review during normal business hours. Local officials are encouraged to review the maps and areas that affect the local community before the next phase of the mapping process. For more information, interested parties are encouraged to email Sophia Finlayson-Schueler (sfinlayson@lacrpc.com) or Thomas Mazur (tmazur@lacrpc.com); or, alternatively, call the Planning Commission at 419-228-1836.

Summer Crisis Program

The Summer Crisis Program is designed to help qualified households pay for summer cooling. The Program applies to electric utilities only and is available from July 1 through August 31, 2018. The Office of Community Assistance (OCA) funds the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) - Summer Crisis Program. Locally, the Summer Crisis Program is administered by the West Ohio Community Action Partnership (WOCAP). All requests for assistance must be directed to WOCAP. To be eligible, households must have a gross annual income at or below 175 percent of the federal poverty level, have a member of the household who is at least 60 years old, or have a documented medical condition. WOCAP has Chronic Medical Forms available at the front desk or a form can be faxed to qualifying individuals. For customers of investor-owned utilities regulated by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, the program provides a one-time benefit up to $300 or a maximum $500 for municipal utilities or rural electric cooperatives; a co-payment could apply. The benefit must result in continuation of service for 30 days. An active/current PIPP Plus customer is not eligible for assistance of a monetary payment on their electric bill. Proof of income and Social Security numbers for all household members, a picture ID as well as current electric and gas bills are required. While the Program officially does not provide air conditioners or fans this year, WOCAP will be providing air conditioners available on a first come first serve basis for eligible clients. For more information call WOCAP at 419-227-2586, or to make an appointment for this help call 855-286-7559. Remember, an appointment with WOCAP doesn’t prevent the utility service in question from being disconnected by the utility, so plan accordingly.
MOVESafe Allen County

Summertime is here, luring us all outside. We walk more and bicycle more. Sometimes we walk and bike so we can get where we need to go; sometimes it’s just for fun! As a result of all of this active transportation, there are more opportunities for collisions. When compared to Ohio counties of similar size, Allen County ranked number 1, in the 5 years 2012 through 2016, with 116 pedestrian and 97 bicycle crashes. In that same 5-year period, 5 pedestrians and 1 bicyclist died. Allen County can do more to make active transportation safe for everyone. We all need to work together to make sure Allen County roadways, bike paths, and sidewalks are safe. This summer, the Lima-Allen County Safe Community Coalition and Allen County Public Health are working with area traffic safety partners to remind everyone—pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists—that we all share the road. Because we share the road, we also share the responsibility to make active transportation a safe option. An Allen County awareness campaign called “MOVESafe Allen County” reminds all of us to MOVESafe. The MOVESafe campaign focuses on promoting active transportation safety via social media. Also, watch for billboards this summer reminding pedestrians to use crosswalks, bicyclists to ride with traffic, and motorists to allow at least 3 feet when passing a bicycle—It’s the law! If pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists all obey Ohio’s traffic laws and work together, Allen County will be a Safe Community. Join us on Twitter @MOVESafe4Allen and “Like” us on Facebook at MOVESafe Allen County. For more information contact Evelyn Smith at 419-228-1836 or esmith@lacrpc.com.

RPC Completes LUCA 2020 Operation

As mandated by the U. S. Constitution, America gets just one chance every ten years to count its population - so it is important that we get it right. The Census is mandated in Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution and determines the number of seats each state has in the U. S. House of Representatives and is also used to distribute billions in federal funds to local communities. Census 2020 will require counting an increasingly diverse and growing population; therefore, an accurate address list is essential to ensure that every person is counted. The LACRPC completed the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) process this past month for each of Allen County’s townships and the City of Delphos. The LUCA Operation allows local governments the opportunity to review the U.S. Census Bureau’s residential address list prior to Census 2020. LUCA ensures that the Census Bureau has as complete and accurate an address list as possible, assuring inclusion of every person and household in the Census. The RPC efforts identified 251 addresses that needed to be added, corrected, or stricken from the Census Bureau’s residential address list. The most accurate local address list was found in Sugar Creek Township, where no additions, corrections, or deletions were required. In American Township, some 75 new addresses were added and 10 were removed. As a result of the Operation, residential addresses are now available in a digital format, in which each structure has latitude and longitude coordinates. Better address listings help ensure an accurate decennial census count and an accurate census count helps the federal government not only apportion Congressional representation, but also allocate more than $675B annually across 26 federal agencies for state and local government programs and services. For more information email Dode Makley at dmakley@lacrpc.com or call the Commission at 419-228-1836.
For a variety of reasons, more and more motorcyclists are taking to the road. In the U.S., there are over 4 million registered motorcycles, while in Allen County there are over 4,000, a 15% increase since 2005. Because of the increase in motorcycle use, there is a corresponding increase in the likelihood of motorcyclists becoming involved in a crash.

Motorcycle crashes result in a disproportionately high number of fatalities, because the motorcycle itself provides the cyclist with virtually no protection. And, while motorcycle fatalities represent approximately 5% of all highway fatalities each year, they represent only 2% of all registered vehicles in the United States. Nationally, approximately 80% of reported motorcycle crashes result in injury or death. Local motorcycle crash statistics are similar; during 2016 in Allen County, there were 42 motorcycle crashes; 1 motorcyclist died, while 30 were injured, or 71.4% of motorcycle crashes resulted in injury or death.

As motorcyclists there are some things you can do to protect yourself, including:

- Never ride without a certified motorcycle helmet and eye protection. Insist on a helmet that has a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) label.
- Wear protective clothing. Protective clothing and equipment serve a three-fold purpose for motorcyclists: comfort and protection from the elements, some measure of injury protection, and through use of color or reflective material, a means for other motorists to see the motorcyclist.
- Know and obey traffic laws, including local ordinances.
- Maintain a safe speed consistent with driving conditions and your capabilities.
- Watch the road surface and traffic ahead to anticipate problems and road hazards. Gravel on the road and slippery road surfaces can be hazardous. Painted roadway markings and manhole covers can be extremely slippery when wet. Railroad tracks should be crossed at an angle as close to 90 degrees as possible.
- Be especially alert at intersections - approximately 70% of motorcycle-vehicle collisions occur there.
- Check the rearview mirrors before stopping and always signal before changing lanes. A quick stop or lane change could result in a crash. Use brakes wisely. Always use both brakes together. Brake firmly and progressively and bring the motorcycle upright before stopping.
- Avoid tailgating and don’t let other drivers tailgate you.
- Pass only when it is safe to do so. Do not pass or ride on the shoulder.
- Assume that you are invisible to other motorists and operate your motorcycle accordingly. Avoid riding between lanes of slow moving or stopped traffic.
- Dogs can be a problem for riders. Don’t become distracted and don’t kick at a dog. As you approach a dog, downshift, when you reach the dog, accelerate quickly away.

Motorcycle Safety

To learn how to safely and skillfully operate a motorcycle, attend a Motorcycle Ohio (MO) rider training course. MO is an educational program conducted by the state of Ohio with training locations throughout Ohio serving 28 counties. In Allen County, Motorcycle Ohio offers rider training to motorcyclists at the Apollo Career Center. To register for a class go online to www.motorcycle.ohio.gov.
**Upcoming Meetings**

The following table outlines upcoming meeting dates and times for the various standing committees serving the Planning Commission and the local community. Meetings are held at the specified times in the Conference Room of the Planning Commission located at 130 W. North Street, Lima, Ohio, 45801. Meetings are open and the public is invited to attend.

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