

## LIMA ALLEN COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

# NETWORK NEWS



Fall 2020; Volume 21, Issue 1



@LACRPC



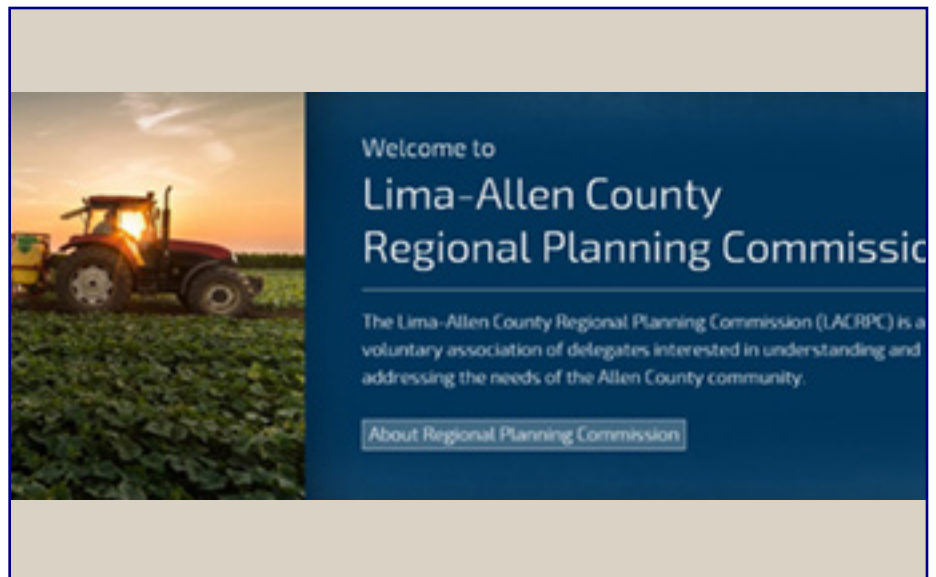
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### WELCOME

This is the first quarterly FY 2021 newsletter published by the Lima Allen County Regional Planning Commission. It is intended to provide timely updates on local transportation projects, area (re) development initiatives, as well as transit and paratransit related news, highway safety, and other activities undertaken by the Planning Commission and our partners. 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 Planning Commission member political subdivisions.

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### NEW BEGINNINGS

Welcome to the Commission's first e-newsletter. We are striving to make it easier for you to receive important community news, on most of your mobile devices. The format may be different, but the information will still be valuable to help residents understand the complex issues that affect our community as well as to encourage your participation in deciding Allen County's future. We can still surface mail the newsletter too - just let us know what works best for you.

There are still more changes, including a new LACRPC website. RPC staff has been working hard to make the site comprehensive, yet as easy to use as possible. That is a big challenge, because we have always worked to provide the community with as much information as possible, even before you ask. While, the site is under construction, we invite you to visit at [www.lacrpc.com](http://www.lacrpc.com) and let us know what you think, or how we can improve.

If all of this (continued - page 2)

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## WINTER ENERGY PROGRAMS

Ohio's Energy Assistance Programs can help income eligible Ohioans manage their utility bills. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and emergency HEAP provide the benefit directly to a customer's utility bill. The Percentage of Income Payment Plan Plus (PIPP) is an extended payment plan in which customers pay a percentage of their income toward their utility

bill each month. If you are looking to improve the energy efficiency of your home, the Home Weatherization Assistance Program (HWAP) or Electric Partnership Program (EPP) can help. For more information about HWAP and EPP visit [energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://energyhelp.ohio.gov). To complete an application, you will need: 1) proof of citizenship for each household member; 2) proof of income for

each household member; 3) copies of most recent utility bills; and disability verification if appropriate. If eligible, the HEAP benefit amount will depend on federal funding levels, how many people live with you, total household income, and the main fuel used. For more information visit [www.energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://www.energyhelp.ohio.gov), or contact the West Ohio Community Action Partnership, 540 S. Central Avenue, Lima, 419.227.2586.

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## COMMUNITY HEALTH & SAFETY EVENT



COVID-19 changed everything. For the past several years community partners: Activate Allen County, West Ohio Community Action Partnership (WOCAP), Lima Allen County Neighborhoods in Partnership (LACNIP), West Ohio Food Bank, the Regional Planning

Commission, local hospitals, and many others have worked together to host a bike rodeo and helmet distribution for area children. Because the pandemic resulted in protocols intended to protect the health and safety of children, parents, and volunteers alike, these

community partners were unable to host a bike rodeo this year. Instead, on Saturday, September 24, volunteers held a drive-through event at WOCAP distributing not only helmets, but all sorts of toys, supplies, and food to help area families.

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## NEW BEGINNINGS (CONTINUED)

was not enough, since the beginning of the year, Lisa Steffen and Sophie Fisher, both associate planners, as well as Jim Patterson, Traffic Engineer, left the employ of the RPC. While, Jim retired, Lisa went to ODOT District One and Sophia to, the City of Lima. Adam Haunhorst joined the staff in March as planning engineer. Then in May, Thomas Mazur, Executive Director, retired after nearly 30 years of service. Long-time board member of the Commission, Shane Coleman, formerly Delphos Safety Service Director, became the new executive director.

Many tasks for which each of these staff members were responsible have been shuffled to others on staff. For instance, if you have zoning or lot split questions, contact Dode Makley at [dmakley@lacrpc.com](mailto:dmakley@lacrpc.com). Or, if you have flood plain or traffic engineering questions contact Adam at [ahaunhorst@lacrpc.com](mailto:ahaunhorst@lacrpc.com). Or, if you don't know exactly what you need, just call the Commission at 419.228.1836. Still another option is to go to the [www.lacrpc.com](http://www.lacrpc.com) homepage, leave your comment or question, and a staff member will contact you.



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## PARTING LACRPC FRIENDS

Recently, there have been some notable resignations from the LACRPC Board of Directors and committees. Bruce Plumb recently resigned from the Board of Directors, after serving the Commission for more than 56 years. The Allen County Planning Commission was formed in 1954, then was reorganized in 1964 to assume expanded community responsibilities. Bruce was Board secretary, in 1964 when the Lima Allen County Regional Planning Commission was created. Bruce says of his years of service, "I thoroughly enjoyed working on

the RPC Board. Every meeting was something new. I learned so much and enjoyed working with so many different people to make the community a better place to live." Leaving us too is Carol Bertrand, a long time friend of the Planning Commission, serving since 2002 on the Community Advisory Committee. New executive director, Shane Coleman, says, "... It is a wonderful to find individuals willing to volunteer their time and expertise. I appreciate all of their contributions and wish them nothing but the best."

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## VILLAGE OF HARROD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The RPC has been working with jurisdictional leaders from the Village of Harrod to develop a comprehensive plan to the year 2040. The Plan is intended to provide a broad statement of community goals and policies that work together to direct development into the future. The Plan will guide land use and (re)

development over the next twenty years. A comprehensive plan not only provides a structure within which to achieve future growth by providing predictable stability, it encourages the community to maintain a sense of shared self identity.

As in all comprehensive planning, a detailed analysis of important community variables is necessary to identify problems and potential solutions. Not only must residents voices be heard, but their desires as well as concerns must be considered in plan development. To that end, Village residents were recently asked to complete a survey, to learn more about the residents and how they see the future of the Village.

Respondents were asked to identify community issues of importance and then to rank those issues by degree of importance to them and their families. The results of the survey will be used to identify and prioritize community goals, related to a number of issues, including: quality of life, community character, infrastructure, economic devel-

*The Plan will  
manage growth,  
while maintaining  
the Village's shared  
culture.*



opment, housing, land use, agriculture, and environmental matters.

While striving to balance shared community values with the need for development, the Plan will provide the guidance necessary to preserve the Village's existing quality of life, by managing growth, while maintaining the Village's shared culture.

The 2040 Village of Harrod Comprehensive Plan will be available for public comment within the next few months. If you have questions about the Plan, you can email Shane Coleman at [scoleman@lacrpc.com](mailto:scoleman@lacrpc.com) or call the Commission at 419.228.1836.

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## 22ND ANNUAL SAFE COMMUNITY - FOPA - FOP AWARDS

### **Timothy Thurston - Children Safety Award**

Tim Thurston has been the Director of CASA since 2015. CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocates - is a program of Crime Victim Services managing volunteers who work with abused children. He has led the growth of the program from serving 159 abused children in 2015 to 325 children in 2019. Tim grew the volunteer program from 45 volunteers to 117, and volunteer hours from 2,047 to 4,065. As the child abuse cases increased, so did home visits across the region, thus volunteer driven miles increased from 15,681 in 2015 to 41,106 in 2019. Allen County is one of only seven counties with more than 100 CASA volunteers.



### **Officer Scott Jones & Mac - School Safety Award**

Officer Scott Jones oversees the Campus Protection Officers throughout the Lima City School District. He and his canine Mac, also serve as the school resource officer for Lima Senior High School. Both Scott and Mac serve in the capacity of support and counselor for students and staff. Sometimes Mac can be seen hanging out with students, who simply need a furry hug, or with students who enjoy walking him through the building. Officer Jones and Mac can be seen traveling throughout the community conducting house calls, making deliveries of food, technology, and school work - especially during the pandemic - or just doing well checks on students. All the residents of Allen County commend you for helping to make and keep Allen County a Safe Community.



### **Brian Berheide - Fire/EMS Award**

Brian Berheide started working at the Lima Fire Department on August 8, 1986 and retired at the rank of Deputy Chief on June 19, 2020. Brian served as Acting Chief for six months during the pandemic. He researched and gathered information and helped not just the Lima Fire Department through a difficult time, but also the City of Lima. Brian always seemed to have the right answer when confronted with the COVID-19 problems encountered. Brian always looked at himself as a firefighter first and a Deputy Chief second. He never dealt with people with a "one-size-fits-all" approach. He always knew you must relate differently to different people - whether on calls or in the classroom. It is a unique gift, and it is called compassion. Brian, has given his life in service to others.



### **Trooper Zachary Norris - Traffic Safety Award**

Trooper Zachary Norris' work in the area of crash prevention and investigation over the past year has contributed greatly towards improving the overall safety of Allen County roads. He is a consummate professional and can be counted on to handle difficult tasks. Since he joined the Patrol in 2016, Trooper Norris has been an integral part in the Lima Post's crash reduction and traffic safety efforts. This graduate of the Patrol's basic investigator course, and 2012 graduate of Shawnee High School, is a go-to crash investigator. He provides mentorship to other troopers and is consulted by supervision due to his expertise in several areas of traffic and drug enforcement. In addition, he is a leader in safety belt and distracted driving enforcement and teaches area youth about traffic safety.



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## Deputy Damien Tibbs - Youth Safety Award

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Deputy Damien Tibbs started with Allen County Sheriff's Office in 2004 as a corrections officer; in 2007, he began uniform patrol as a deputy. In 2014, Deputy Tibbs became a School Resource Officer (SRO), working primarily at Bath, Allen East, and Perry schools. As an SRO, Deputy Tibbs maintains safety in school systems and positive relationships with students as well as staff. Alongside the Lima Police and Fire departments, Damien has helped train hundreds of kids in the community about Stranger Danger and Fire Safety at Safety City. By presenting ALICE training, Deputy Tibbs is also responsible for teaching kids K-12 how to respond safely to an active shooter incident. He is a certified RAD-KIDS instructor and trains children to fight off would-be abductors. He also teaches firearms safety through the National Rifle Association's Eddie Eagle program. Deputy Tibbs exemplifies what it means to be an active community leader. His commitment to youth safety is unsurpassed.

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## Lt. Timothy Grigsby - Leadership Award

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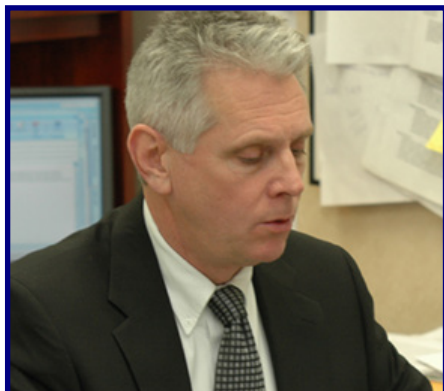


Lt. Timothy Grigsby, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Lima Post Commander, has been a champion of traffic safety and interagency cooperation to promote safer roadways in Allen County. Lt. Grigsby is not just about enforcement; he advocates for many traffic safety initiatives within ODOT District One, employing "education, engineering, enforcement, and emergency medical services" to make area roadways safer. He worked with other Patrol posts and ODOT to create the first Distracted Driving Corridor on I-75 in west central Ohio. He participated in public and local stakeholder meetings regarding traffic safety engineering projects or planning studies, providing a law enforcement perspective as well as advocating for engineering countermeasures. He participates in ODOT's District Safety Review Team to identify traffic safety problems and develop solutions. He works with traffic safety advocates to develop driving safety events at local schools. Lt. Grigsby is an advocate of interagency collaboration and has consistently demonstrated his commitment to public safety and traffic safety in Allen County.

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## Thomas Mazur - Lifetime Achievement Award

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Thomas Mazur was Executive Director of the Lima Allen County Regional Planning Commission for nearly 30 years. As such, his responsibilities as leader of a metropolitan planning organization, or MPO, helped local political subdivisions focus on transportation infrastructure development - leveraging local, state, and federal funds to accomplish their common goals. He also focused on the effects of traffic safety on long term transportation planning. As a result, the MPO became the only Ohio MPO to be a grantee of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, housing a Community Traffic Safety Program. For the next 30 years, almost no other MPO in the nation had an identified goal to reduce traffic crashes in their local community, except this one. Today, MPOs across the nation are required by the U. S. Congress to set traffic safety goals aimed at making their communities' and the nation's transportation safer. Thom Mazur is a visionary who sees local traffic safety initiatives as a crucial part of transportation planning.

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS

The following is a list of standing committee meeting dates and times. Planning Commission meetings are open to the public. Typically, meetings are held in the Conference Room of the Commission, at 130 W. North Street, Lima; however, during COVID-19, virtual meetings can be attended online. For details, call 419.228.1836; or attend meetings via Facebook Live.

### COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

October 2020				November 2020				December 2020			
Committee	Day	Date	Time	Committee	Day	Date	Time	Committee	Day	Date	Time
CAAC	TUE	10/8	3:00 pm	CAAC	THU	11/5	3:00 pm	CAAC	THU	12/3	3:00 pm
DCC	THU	10/13	3:00 pm	DCC	TUE	11/10	3:00 pm	DCC	TUE	12/8	3:00 pm
CDC	THU	10/15	3:30 pm	CDC	THU	11/12	3:30 pm	CDC	THU	12/10	3:30 pm
CAC	TUE	10/20	10:00 am	CAC	TUE	11/17	10:00 am	CAC	TUE	12/15	10:00 am
TAC	TUE	10/20	1:30 pm	TAC	TUE	11/17	1:30 pm	TAC	TUE	12/15	1:30 pm
TCC	THU	10/22	3:00 pm	TCC	THU	11/19	3:00 pm	TCC	THU	12/17	3:00 pm
EC	THU	10/22	4:00 pm	EC	THU	11/19	4:00 pm	EC	THU	12/17	4:00 pm
DCC	TUE	10/27	3:00 pm	DCC	TUE	11/24	3:00 pm	DCC	TUE	12/22	3:00 pm