



Lima/Allen County
**REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION**

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TO: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

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 Mr. Tom Ekleberry Ms. Sue Gerker
Mr. Todd Gordon Mr. Russ Holly
 Mr. Ahmad Houston Mr. Dan Kaseman
Mr. Greg Kessen Mr. Jamie Mehaffie
 Mr. Lynn Mohler Mr. Tony Wilkerson

FROM: Mitchell Kingsley, Chairman

DATE: May 13, 2021

RE: CDC Meeting

There will be a meeting of the **Community Development Committee** of the Lima-

Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **Thursday, May 20, 2021**, at **3:30 p.m.**, via teleconference in the Conference room of the Commission office located at 130 W. North Street, Lima, Ohio.

The agenda will be as follows:

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of CDC Minutes – February 18, 2021
3. RTA Report
4. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
5. FEMA Mapping Update
6. Other
7. Adjournment

To comply with Ohio Director of Health guidelines and order limiting/prohibiting group gatherings of more than 10 persons, no in-person attendance at LACRPC meetings by the public will be available. The public can view committee meetings via the LACRPC Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/Lima-Allen-County-Regional-Planning-Commission-114563720277180/>. Anyone wanting to exercise Privilege-of-the-Floor, for a committee meeting, must contact the LACRPC at 419-228-1836. Meeting agendas/minutes are published on the LACRPC website; click on the “Committees” tab on the left for more information.

NOTE: PLEASE CALL THE LACRPC WHETHER OR NOT YOU WILL ATTEND

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

July 15, 2021

There was a meeting of the **Community Development Committee** of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **Thursday, July 15, 2021**, at **3:30 p.m.** in the Conference Room of the Commission office located at 130 West North Street, Lima, Ohio.

The agenda was as follows:

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of CDC Minutes – May 20, 2021
3. RTA Report
4. DRAFT Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
5. Thayer Road Classification Revision
6. Bike/Pedestrian Update
 - a. Bike/Ped Count Review
 - b. Walk.Bike.Ohio Plan Release
 - c. ADA Transition Plans/ODOT Webinar
 - d. Ohio Trails DETOUR App
7. Alternative Energy Update
8. HB168 – Water and Sewer Quality Grant Program
9. Township Funding Opportunity
10. Other
11. Adjournment

A quorum being present, Shane Coleman brought the meeting to order and proceeded with the agenda (Mitchell Kingsley was not available to attend the meeting).

1. ROLL CALL

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Ms. Susan Crotty | City of Lima |
| Mr. Tom Ekleberry | Village of Harrod |
| Ms. Sue Gerker | Allen Economic Development Group |
| Mr. Todd Gordon | City of Lima |
| Mr. Russ Holly | Shawnee Township |
| Mr. Dan Kaseman | Village of Elida |
| Mr. Greg Kessen | Perry Township |

GUESTS

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Ms. Karen Garland | Allen County Regional Transit Authority |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------|

STAFF

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Mr. Shane Coleman | Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission |
| Mr. Adam Haunhorst | Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission |

2. APPROVAL OF CDC MINUTES – May 20, 2021

Motion 18 (07-15-21) CDC

Greg Kessen made the motion to approve the CDC minutes of May 20, 2021. Seconded by Todd Gordon; motion carried.

3. RTA REPORT

Karen Garland reported that Committee members should have received a copy of the RTA data report in their packets that were emailed. Ridership numbers for the Allen County Regional Transit Authority (ACRTA) are continuing to increase. The Delphos and Bluffton routes began in the second week of June. Ridership is sparse for now which is not surprising with new routes. Bluffton route had 18 riders and 29 riders for the Delphos route. RTA staff believes ridership will increase as word gets out. Karen Garland reported the parking lot project at the corner of North Street and Central Avenue should begin soon as RTA has approved the architect to go out for bid. Shane Coleman asked if RTA is making any stops at businesses in Bluffton or Delphos. Karen Garland replied in the affirmative and stated that an RTA bus goes to Lakeview Foods in Delphos and Sumiriko in Bluffton. Sue Gerker asked if RTA goes past Diamond in Bluffton. Karen Garland replied in the affirmative and reported that RTA buses are going to the manufacturing facilities in both Bluffton and Delphos. Lakeview Foods had informed RTA that they believed more employees would use the bus over time. Adam Haunhorst asked if there were maps and bus schedules on the RTA website. Karen Garland replied in the affirmative and stated that there are maps/schedules of every route plus the fees.

Motion 19 (07-15-21) CDC

Todd Gordon made the motion to accept the RTA report. Seconded by Tom Ekleberry; motion carried.

4. DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

Shane Coleman reported the Committee received an update of the document at the last meeting. At this time, there is no draft document ready for review as staff is still working on the report. The first CEDS for Allen County was written in 2005. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires an update every five years. The last update to the CEDS was in 2015. Shane Coleman reported that staff was going to wait until the recent Census data was released but at this time the Census data is set to be released in August. Section 4 of the CEDS focuses on population statistics and data of that nature. In the meantime, a couple of county entities (Allen County Sanitary Engineer's Office (ACSEO) and the Allen Water District) were interested in pursuing EDA funding for projects. Shane Coleman reported that in order to be eligible for EDA funding, the CEDS required updating at this time. There are numerous EDA funding opportunities that require an up-to-date CEDS. Staff met with EDA representatives three weeks ago and a meeting is scheduled for today. Shane Coleman reported Sections 1, 2 and 3 are basically completed. Staff is hoping to pass the CEDS without the updated Section 4 population data and wait until the Census Bureau releases the data. Sections 2 and 8 are the two largest sections and discuss the goals, strategies, and projects. Staff is relying on the Allen Economic Development Group (AEDG) for information pertaining to local economic development projects. Shane Coleman stated that he met with Dave Stratton of AEDG to formulate a strategic plan. AEDG used a survey developed by the Allen Lima Leadership Group which received 850 responses. The AEDG also completed an internal analysis to survey its staff and partners. The information from both surveys was used to develop the strategic plan which identified three primary goals and four secondary goals. Shane Coleman stated that staff will incorporate the AEDG strategic plan document into the CEDS. Next week, staff will send a copy of Sections 2 and 8 to AEDG and Allen Lima Leadership for review and comment. Section 7 is still in the works and deals with the economy, business statistics, agriculture, etc. Shane Coleman reported once a final draft of the CEDS is completed, a copy will be forwarded to all of the internal committee structure for review and comment. Staff is hoping to pass the final at the next round of meetings which would allow local entities to apply for EDA funds for their projects. Shane Coleman stated that last year the City of Lima and City of Delphos applied for EDA funds. Dan Kaseman asked why Lima and Delphos applied for EDA funds. Shane Coleman

4. DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS) (Continued)

replied that Delphos applied for EDA funds for water and wastewater improvements. Lima applied for EDA funds for several projects. Susan Crotty stated that Lima had several Streetscape and roadway projects that the city wanted to complete. The application for EDA funds was denied. Dan Kaseman asked if the projects must be related to economic development. Susan Crotty replied in the affirmative. Shane Coleman stated that the projects were not denied due to the type of projects but due to the pandemic, EDA's priorities had changed and refocused on where they were going to spend their funds. Dan Kaseman asked if any entity such as the Village of Elida, apply for EDA funds. Shane Coleman replied that he believed they could but would have to verify this. Greg Kessen asked if a water and sewer project would be considered to benefit economic development. Shane Coleman replied in the affirmative. Dan Kaseman asked about the possible creation of an EDD which was discussed at a prior meeting. Shane Coleman reported that about a month ago in conversations with the EDA, the EDA indicated that they are no longer advocating for single-county CEDS documents and looking towards a more regional approach. A regional Economic Development District (EDD) would not take away from the economic development tasks that the local entities work towards. The EDA stated that when applications are submitted, they will look at the local economic development entities and how they work together. Staff met with AEDG and Greater Lima Region (GLR) pertaining to establishing an EDD and have agreed to pursue a regional EDD which would include seven counties. Shane Coleman stated that the EDA would look at an application from Allen County but are pushing the idea of a regional EDD.

Motion 20 (07-15-21) CDC

Tom Ekleberry made the motion to accept the DRAFT Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report. Seconded by Dan Kaseman; motion carried.

5. THAYER ROAD CLASSIFICATION REVISION

Shane Coleman reported that a handout is included in each packet and stated that the handout relates to the Thayer Road Classification Revision. The local roadway system is called the Functional Classification of Roadways and each roadway is classified from interstates to local roadways. The MPO cannot allocate federal funds to township or local roadways, only to the higher order roadways. Shane Coleman stated that Thayer Road has had issues over the past five years. There was a Thayer Road Corridor Study that was completed about a year ago. The Study was conducted by Mott-McDonald, a consulting firm. Based upon the Study and other anecdotal evidence, the MPO will be requesting that the classification of Thayer Road be revised. Shane Coleman reported that the corridor has two different classifications US 30 to SR 117; from SR 81 to SR 117, Thayer Road is classified as one type of road and from SR 81 to US 30, Thayer Road is classified as a different type of roadway. The MPO is arguing that the roadway is now serving the same purpose and has basically become a by-pass around Lima and it is moving goods and people much more than in the past. The MPO has support from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) District 1 and the Allen County Engineer's Office (ACEO). Shane Coleman reported that the first page is a letter drafted by himself and Brion Rhodes, Allen County Engineer. The second and third pages contain a Statement of Justification and the last page is a map. The packet submitted also contained a copy of the corridor study. The packet was submitted to Brion Rhodes and ODOT District 1 for their review and comment. Shane Coleman reported that once the packet has gone through the internal committee structure for approval, the packet will be submitted to ODOT Central Office for review and comment/approval. If approved for reclassification, it will recognize what the corridor is actually being used as and will qualify the corridor for federal funding. Greg Kessen asked if the Statement of Justification was created by Brion Rhodes. Shane Coleman replied that it was developed from the Thayer Road Corridor Study as well as data gathered by the Streetlight

5. THAYER ROAD CLASSIFICATION REVISION (Continued)

program which uses GPS data to determine the beginning and end points of traffic along the corridor. It was determined that a large majority of the vehicles that use Thayer Road are coming from Columbus, Ft. Wayne and Chicago. Russ Holly asked about the R-Cut and round-about projects. Shane Coleman replied that the R-Cut project at US 30 and Thayer Road should begin this fall and the round-about projects should begin in early 2022. Dan Kaseman asked if there were specific criteria that were used to raid the corridor to the level of a major collector. Shane Coleman replied that it was less technical than one would believe; traffic counts were used, crash data, safety and crash statistics, use of the roadway, etc. Staff is unsure how the R-Cut and the roundabouts will affect the GPS algorithms that direct traffic to Thayer Road. Dan Kaseman asked how long till the request might be approved. Shane Coleman replied that the request will be submitted next Friday after it has gone through the internal committee structure.

Motion 21 (07-15-21) CDC

Todd Gordon made the motion to accept the Thayer Road Reclassification letter and packet and forward all to ODOT District 1 for review and approval. Seconded by Dan Kaseman; motion carried.

6. BIKE/PEDESTRIAN UPDATE

a. Bike/Ped Count Review

Shane Coleman reported that within each packet is a PowerPoint presentation that will be made to Activate Allen County next week. Staff partnered with Activate Allen County and the Bike/Ped Task Force to gather the bike/ped counts in May. Adam Haunhorst reported that in September and May each year, there are a number of locations are counted by staff and local volunteers. In 2021, there was a dramatic increase in pedestrian traffic. Bicycle counts remain elevated as compared to pre-COVID counts. The slides represent a single day count. Adam Haunhorst reported that the top 5 locations counted are Kendrick Woods Loop, Herman Woodlands, Market and Main, Main and Spring and Riverwalk at Heritage Park. Adam Haunhorst reported that there were 522 count locations available in 2021, 277 locations were uncounted (53%), some locations were not given on the sign-in sheets and weekend counts were the least sign-up for. The next counts will be taken in September. Adam Haunhorst reported that there were significantly more counts performed in 2021 vs. 2020 (12.8%) but slightly worse than 2019. Shane Coleman reported that the counts are taken during one week in May and one week in September. The data gathered is used by multiple entities such as Activate Allen County, Bike/Ped Task Force, RPC, health care entities, etc. Russ Holly asked how long are the count periods. Adam Haunhorst replied that they are about 2 hours long.

b. Walk.Bike.Ohio Plan Release

Shane Coleman reported the Walk.Bike.Ohio Plan was released today. Shane Coleman stated that he just got off the phone with ODOT before this meeting. This is the first time that ODOT has put together a statewide plan that truly incorporates bike and pedestrians and how this type of transportation will be included in long-range planning.

c. ADA Transition Plans/ODOT Webinar

Shane Coleman reported ADA rules and regulations passed in 1990 or 1991. All political jurisdictions are required to had an ADA Transition Plan in place. Staff is working with the Village of Spencerville to assist them with creating a plan. The village will conduct the surveying of the village's current facilities. The ADA focus for RPC is transportation focused which includes sidewalks, curb ramps, etc. Shane Coleman reported that staff has

6. BIKE/PEDESTRIAN UPDATE (Continued)

c. ADA Transition Plans/ODOT Webinar (Continued)

committed to help Delphos finish their ADA Transition Plan as well as assist Bluffton finish their Plan. These tasks are included in the RPC's FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The City of Lima completed their own ADA Transition Plan and it is in place.

d. Ohio Trails DETOUR App

Shane Coleman reported that the next handout refers to the Walk.Bike.Ohio Plan Release. The handout comes directly from ODOT and provides information pertaining to the Ohio Trails DETOUR App. The App is new from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). At this time Allen County is not part of the App. Staff reached out to Tyler Black of the Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District (JAMPD). JAMPD has already submitted information to ODNR. It will take some time for the information to be integrated into the App. Staff reached out to Bluffton, Lima and Delphos about providing their GPS data to ODNR to be added to the App.

Motion 22 (07-15-21) CDC

Greg Kessen made the motion to accept the Bike/Pedestrian Update and all related reports. Seconded by Susan Crotty; motion carried.

7. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY UPDATE

Shane Coleman reported that legislation passed at the State level as part of the budget process giving counties more input wind and solar projects. Staff is working with the Prosecutor's Office to determine what this legislation might mean. There are also multiple townships working with the Prosecutor for the same reason. Shawnee and American townships have passed zoning to address this type of activity. Russ Holly stated 50 mgh or smaller. Shane Coleman reported that because of these changes, staff believes that there may be action taken at the county level in terms of planning, land use plans, etc. Staff believes other townships will come back to the RPC to update their zoning resolutions and comprehensive plans to include alternative energy. Perry Township is already talking about zoning related to these items. Dan Kaseman asked if this issue is just related to wind or is solar included. Russ Holly replied that it relates to both wind and solar. For informational purposes only; no action required.

8. HB168 – WATER AND SEWER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM

Shane Coleman reported that State of Ohio passed a program as part of the budget authorizing \$250 million to be spent on water and sewer improvements. The County Engineers are in charge of the program. Project submissions must be made to the Allen County Engineer's Office (ACEO). At this time, staff does not know any of the rules or scoring but the timeframe will be tight (by September 1st).

9. TOWNSHIP FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Shane Coleman reported that last handout in each packet contains information pertaining to township stimulus funding. This is a one-time program that ODOT is putting out there for townships. Every township within the state is eligible to apply for funds from the \$8 million allocated for this program. There is a project cap of \$250,000 with projects eligible for 100% funding. The funds are available now and the funds must be spent by the end of 2024. Shane Coleman stated that staff was informed by the Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC) that there are very few restrictions. The funds can be used for culverts, stone roads, etc. Staff believes that ODOT will be direct-mailing all of the townships once the rules are identified. Staff

9. **TOWNSHIP FUNDING OPPORTUNITY** (Continued)

is available to assist if needed. No action required.

10. **OTHER**

None.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion 23 (07-15-21) CDC

Todd Gordon made the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Dan Kaseman; motion carried.