



Lima/Allen County  
**REGIONAL PLANNING  
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TO: TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
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Mr. Daniel Hoying Mr. Steve Kayatin  
Mr. Greg Kessen Ms. Cindy Leis  
Mr. Mike Leis Mr. Jamie Mehaffie  
Mr. Shawn McPheron Mr. Jed Metzger  
Mr. Ron Meyer Mr. Kirk Niemeyer  
Mr. Charles Schreck Mr. Tony Wilkerson

FROM: Mr. Dan Kaseman, Chair

DATE: July 13, 2021

RE: TAC Meeting

There will be a **Transportation Advisory Committee** meeting of the Lim-Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **Tuesday, July 20, 2021** at **1:30 p.m.** at the Commission office located at 130 W. North Street, Lima, Ohio.

The agenda will be as follows:

1. Roll Call & Introductions
2. Approval of TAC minutes – May 25, 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

**Beginning this month (July), all Committee meetings will be in-person as per Ohio Sunshine Laws. Meeting agendas/minutes are published on the LACRPC website; click on the “Committees” tab on the left for more information. Any questions, please feel free to contact the Commission Office at 419-228-3196.**

c: Mr. Chris Hughes, ODOT

**NOTE: PLEASE CALL THE LACRPC WHETHER OR NOT YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.**

## TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 20, 2021

There was a **Transportation Advisory Committee** meeting of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **Tuesday, July 20, 2021**, at **1:30 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 & Introductions
2. Approval of TAC minutes – May 25, 2021
3. RTA Report
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10. Other
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A quorum being present, Charles Schreck brought the meeting to order and proceeded with the agenda.

### 1. **ROLL CALL**

Ms. Karen Garland	Allen County Regional Transit Authority
Mr. Jamie Mehaffie	City of Delphos
Mr. Shawn McPheron	EMH&T
Mr. Ron Meyer	Allen County Engineer's Office
Mr. Charles Schreck	Ohio Department of Transportation District 1

### **GUESTS**

Mr. Trevor Hubert	Lima News
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### **STAFF**

Mr. Shane Coleman	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Ms. Marlene Schumaker	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Mr. Cody Doyle	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission

### 2. **APPROVAL OF TAC MINUTES – May 25, 2021**

#### **Motion 28 (07-20-21) TAC**

Ron Meyer made the motion that the TAC minutes of May 25, 2021, be approved. Seconded by Jamie Mehaffie; motion carried.

### **3. RTA REPORT**

Karen Garland reported that ridership numbers continue to follow an upward trend. 2 new routes out of Bluffton and Delphos, were added the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June. Since the routes were opened there have been 29 trips out of Delphos and 18 out of Bluffton. Both communities are extremely receptive to the routes and it is anticipated that numbers will pick-up as word-of-mouth spreads and residents familiarize themselves with the RTA. Karen Garland reported that the ridership for community events was 1,838. Daycares are utilizing the buses to go on field trips, as well as the summer camp The ARC, in a joint venture with Find A Ride. Karen Garland reported that it is anticipated that there will be two new buses coming September. Shane Coleman asked about business stops in Bluffton and Delphos. Karen Garland reported that the buses are stopping at accessible businesses such as Lakeview Farms as well as a couple of others in Delphos. In Bluffton, the buses are stopping at SumiRiko. Karen Garland reported that "Brian" has reached out to business in the Bluffton and Delphos areas to let them know about the new routes. It is anticipated that once people start going back to work, ridership to businesses will increase. At this point riders flag down the buses. Karen Garland reported that they hope to have actual stops in the future. Marlene Schumaker asked about residents being able to ride the bus from Delphos to Lima and transfer buses. Karen Garland stated that it is possible and the cost of the bus ride from Delphos to Lima is \$2.00.

#### **Motion 29 (07-20-21) TAC**

Shawn McPheron made the motion to accept the ACRTA Report. Seconded by Ron Meyer; motion carried.

### **4. DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)**

Shane Coleman reported that the CEDS was first created in 2005 and is required to be updated every 5 years. The last update was in 2015 making Allen County a year behind. The reason a CEDS is important is that in order for the county to be eligible for Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding, an entity that might apply for EDA funds must be a part of the CEDS document. Shane Coleman reported that since the last CEDS update, it has been discovered that The Economic Development Administration (EDA) is not going to allow the current CEDS document to suffice for application purposes. In order to allow local entities to apply for federal money, a completed update is needed ASAP. It had previously been discussed to wait until the 2020 Census Data, due to be released in August, to fully update the CEDS as Section 4 relies heavily on population data

Shane Coleman stated that at this time the entire staff of the LACRPC is working on the various sections to update them. A draft is not available at this meeting as updates are still taking place. It is anticipated that a final version will be ready for committees next month. It is also anticipated that there will be a version ready, in print, for 2 committees, TCC and EC, Thursday 22 July and posted to the LACRPC website on Friday 23 July. Marlene Schumaker asked Cody Doyle about the link on the LACRPC website for public review. Cody Doyle stated the link is on the LACRPC homepage under "Recently at RPC". Shane Coleman reported that he wanted to take the next month for public review of the CEDS and to gather comments. Shane Coleman stated an updated version will also go out directly to the Allen Economic Development Group, (AEDG), for input. Shane Coleman stated that he had a meeting scheduled with a representative from EDA to get some final details nailed down as to some additional content they wanted, but he was unable to meet with her as she was still on vacation.

Shane Coleman referred to Section 2 of the CEDS as it talks about the process to get the draft complete. Shane Coleman stated that the process has relied upon the efforts of Allen/Lima leadership. They had done a survey last fall and had roughly 800 respondents. AEDG used that survey in addition to an internal survey of their staff and their board to create their strategic plan, which is what we will incorporate and outline in Section 8 of the

CEDS. This section Between following the strategic plan, data collection at LACRPC, and conversations with committees, the document needs to be updated, approved, and submitted to EDA in order to continue the regions eligibility for federal program funds. Shane Coleman stated that some local entities applied for EDA funds last year (City of Lima and City of Delphos) and both requests for funds were not granted as priorities of the EDA were changed due to the pandemic. The Allen Water District and the Allen County Sanitary Engineer's Office (ACSEO) are both interested in applying for EDA funds for projects as the funds become available. Shane asked Marlene about the update progress she stated she thinks it is going well. And asked for any other questions. Marlene Schumaker asked that the board go to the LACRPC website and take a look at the document and offer comments. Marlene Schumaker asked for a motion to accept Shane Coleman's update on the DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY and forward it on to the TCC.

**Motion 30 (07-20-2021) TAC**

Jamie Mehaffie made a motion to accept the update on the DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY. Seconded by Shawn McPheron; motion carried.

**5. THAYER ROAD CLASSIFICATION REVISION**

Shane Coleman referred to a packet that includes a letter, a statement of justification, a map of the corridor, and the Thayer Road Corridor Study that will be sent to ODOT to request that the section of Thayer Road from US 30 to State Route 81 be reclassified as it has changed from local use to a more regional use. There was a Thayer Road Corridor study done by ODOT, Lima/Allen County Regional Planning and Allen County. The study helped identify safety concerns related to increased traffic and speed along that corridor related to online mapping systems (GPS) directing traffic to the area. Shane Coleman referred to Cody Doyle to expand upon the study as he worked on the project with Mott McDonald.

Cody Doyle introduced that the functional class of a road determines the amount of federal funding it receives. Anything not on the federal functional class is considered a local road and is only funded locally. The corridor of interest has been the section of Thayer Road from 30 to State Route 117. State Route 117 N to State Route 81 to is on the functional class. From State Route 81 to US 30 it is considered local. Cody Doyle stated that the entire stretch of Thayer Road from State Route 117 to US 30 is being used the same way. It is a major collector of traffic. It is anticipated that the submission of the request to ODOT will result in the section of road being reclassified in order to better reflect the way it is used today.

Shane Coleman reported that use of the roadway has changed dramatically. From 2005-2021 the number of vehicles increased from 947 vehicles to 2675 vehicles. According to Streetlight data over 75% of Northbound vehicles and over 60% of Southbound vehicles originated from over 30 miles away. Shane Coleman stated that reclassification to the functional class would also help to bring project funding. Charles Schreck asked for a motion to recommend functional class reclassification to the TCC.

**Motion 31 (07-20-21) TAC**

Shawn McPheron made the motion to recommend functional class reclassification to the TCC. Seconded by Ron Meyer; motion carried.

**6. BIKE/PEDESTRIAN UPDATE**

Shane Coleman requested to skip item A and come back to it. Referred to item D first.

a. Bike/Ped Count Review- Shane Coleman referred to a presentation that Adam Haunhorst had created in order to submit an update to Activate Allen County on bike and pedestrian counts that are gathered every May and September. Shane Coleman reported that Adam Haunhorst compiled data from 2017-2021. 2021 saw a dramatic increase in pedestrian activity and the 2021 bicycle counts remain elevated compared to pre-COVID counts. Shane

Coleman reported that these counts are single day events that are subject to variation. The 5 heaviest areas of activity in terms of bike/ped were Kendrick Woods park route, Hermon Woodlands, the intersection of Market St. and Main St., the intersection of Market St. and Spring St., and the Riverwalk at Heritage Park. There were 522 total counts in May, but 53% went uncounted. The counts are all a volunteer effort and weekend counts were least signed up for. Shane Coleman stated that it would be good data to have when submitting for grants for projects. Although There were some locations that have been historically counted that were not included, there were significantly more counts in 2021 than 2020. Up 12.8%. LACRPC is working with Activate and the Health Department to determine if those locations have been removed in order to make sure the data is reflective. Activate Allen County and the Health Department are increasing efforts to increase volunteering for counts. Marlene Schumaker relayed information regarding signing up for September counts. Marlene Schumacher stated there will be a sign-up sheet available and that information is also available on Activate Allen County's website.

Shane Coleman stated that the Streetlight Software data is starting to incorporate some pedestrian and bicycle measurements as well. LACRPC is using that data in comparison with the counts actually taken to determine the software's accuracy. Shane Coleman stated that LACRPC wants to figure out a way that is better suited to measure counts and even expand the areas that are counted.

b. Walk.Bike.Ohio Plan Review- Shane Coleman stated that the final version was recently released. Shane Coleman stated that the plan will play a heavy role in ODOT planning and it is anticipated that Lima/Allen County will incorporate it as well in future planning strategies in the weighting of projects for transportation, sidewalks, trails, etc.... The document outlines the steps and goals ODOT has as it relates to active transportation and implementation of planning and guidance, educational and promotional activities and ways they develop and use data.

c. ADA Transition Plans- Shane Coleman reported that the region continues to work on getting the plans drafted, implemented and approved. Shane Coleman stated we are currently working with the city of Spencerville in order to engage in surveying their local sidewalks and ramps in partnership with the LACRPC in order to help put the plan together. Shane Coleman reported that LACRPC is committed to the cities of Bluffton and Delphos to do the same. Shane Coleman stated that it is a huge undertaking but we have the ability to put the plans together here at the LACRPC. It is the goal of the LACRPC that by next year at this time, ADA Transition Plans will be complete. Shane Coleman reported that because of the work done by Tom and staff at LACRPC, the region was invited to participate in a webinar from ODOT on August 12<sup>th</sup>, dealing with ADA plans. They would like Lima's perspective on how we have worked with member agencies in an effort to help implement the plans.

d. Ohio Trails Detour Map- Shane Coleman referred to the Planet Ohio packet released by ODOT. Shane Coleman reported that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources ODNR has started to map trails around throughout the State of Ohio. Johnny Appleseed has sent their GIS information to ODNR for implementation. It is anticipated that over the course of the next several months that the Allen County region pull in some GIS information and reach out to some partners in order to submit as much of the regions information to ODNR for implementation on the app.

**No motion needed. Just an update.**

## **7. ALTERNATIVE ENERGY UPDATE**

Shane Coleman reported that there is some solar activity in Shawnee Township and there is currently some solar activity in Perry Township. There is a company working to secure at least 1000 acres. Shane Coleman stated that the region needs to get ahead of the game as far as Alternative Energy is concerned and come up with ways to bring it to the region more effectively by showing the benefits and opportunities, both, financially and esthetically, alternative energy can bring to the region. As part of the budget process the legislature has

given the county a little more control in overseeing the implementation of alternative energies. LACRPC has been talking with the townships regarding zoning and long-range plans in order to identify this type of development in their land use plans. There is a need to establish the want and need for each township and if so, where does it go? It is anticipated that over the next year LACRPC will be working closely with the townships in regards to their plans and zoning. Shawnee Township just passed their wind and solar energy zoning. American Township is currently going through the zoning process.

**No motion made. Just an update.**

**8. HB168-WATER AND SEWER QUALITY GRANT PROGRAM**

Shane Coleman reported that as part of the state budget process \$250 million has been allocated towards water and sewer improvements. The county engineers have been put in charge of the application process. The county engineers met in Columbus with the Engineers Association, The County Commissioners, and a member of the LACRPC in order to establish guidance through the application process. The proposed timeline was for the criteria to be published by July 30<sup>th</sup>. And a deadline for a prioritized list of county engineers by August 27<sup>th</sup>. Shane Coleman stated that it is anticipated that those deadlines will not be met as there are still a lot of questions for ODOD. Once those questions are answered there will be a small window in order to complete the application process. With this particular round of funding all projects will go through the county engineer. The county engineer will need to prioritize all the projects submitted and will need to set up a body to review applications and send those applications to the state level for review. Shane Coleman stated that it is anticipated that the city utilities within the region will submit applications for funding and guidance will be provided as more information becomes available.

**No motion needed. Just an update**

**9. TOWNSHIP FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

Shane Coleman referred to a packet that contains a presentation that was given at the Executive Directors meeting. Shane Coleman stated that Charles Schreck sent the guidance that is available on the ODOT website. Shane Coleman reported that there is a one-time program that gives a total of \$8 million of funding available to townships. A funding limit of \$250 thousand per project. ODOT will provide 100% of eligible costs for all phases of the project up to the specified project funding limit. The project funds will be prepaid to the township and must be spent by December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024. There are 1,308 townships in the state of Ohio vying for funding. To be eligible for the funding, the project must be within the township limits, require no or minimal environmental right of way work, and must be a sidewalk, a roadway or a culvert less than 10 ft. County Engineers, Metropolitan Planning Organizations and RTPO's may submit an application on behalf of a township as long as the township is aware and in agreement with it. Shane Coleman stated that there is a lot of different funding due to the many infrastructure packages being passed at the federal level. LACRPC is committed to helping townships, villages and cities apply for funding by helping put together and application and supplying data. Shane Coleman stated that it is the responsibility of the townships to let LACRPC know the type of projects they are looking at as the time frame to apply for the funding is small. Marlene Schumaker stated that from what she read previously the deadline is October, but it could be as short as 2 weeks in August. Shane Coleman reported that Project solicitation will begin August 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 townships must complete and submit an application for funds to ODOT by October 15<sup>th</sup> 2021. The applicant is strongly encouraged to contact and meet with their county engineer and ODOT district to discuss the projects, LACRPC is happy to be a part of the process as well. Shane Coleman stated he would send a copy of the package to the townships. Charles Schreck stated the information is available on the ODOT website. Charles Schreck referred to the earlier discussion of road funding pointing out that this funding is not dependent upon whether or not the road is in the functional class. This funding allows townships to do projects they

would not normally get funding to do. Shane Coleman stated that the Ohio Revised code rules regarding force accounts are still in place.

**No motion needed. Just an update**

**10. OTHER**

Shane Coleman reported District 13 Clean Ohio Round 16. Clean Ohio Open Space Fund project solicitation beginning July 21 2021. Have the ability to have a project review by local rep by January 14<sup>th</sup> 2022 .All Applications are due to the chairman January 21<sup>st</sup> 2022

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion 32 (07-20-21) TAC**

Ron Meyer made the motion that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Shawn McPheron; motion carried.