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Howard Elstro
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Secretary

Shane A. Coleman
Executive Director

TO: TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Mr. Dave Belton Mr. Frank Burkett
Mr. Kevin Cox Ms. Joan Davis
Mr. Steve Ewing Mr. Jerry Gilden
Mr. Mitchell Kingsley Mr. Doug Post
Mr. Brion Rhodes Mr. Chuck Schierloh
Mr. Charles Schreck Ms. Beth Seibert
Mr. Robert Sielschott Mr. Thomas Tebben
Mr. Larry Vandemark

FROM: Mr. Howard Elstro, Chair

DATE: August 19, 2021

RE: TCC Meeting

There will be a **Transportation Coordinating Committee** meeting of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **Thursday, August 26, 2021** at **3:00 p.m.** at the Commission office located at 130 W. North Street, Lima, Ohio.

The agenda will be as follows:

1. Roll Call
2. Acceptance of TAC minutes – August 24, 2021
3. Approval of TCC minutes – July 22, 2021
4. RTA Report
5. Final Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
6. Thayer Road Classification Update
7. Bike/Pedestrian Update
8. FY 2022 Unified Work Plan Budget Update
9. Township Funding Update
10. Other
11. Adjournment

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 COORDINATING COMMITTEE

September 2, 2021

There was a **Transportation Coordinating Committee** meeting of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **Thursday, September 2, 2021**, at **3:00 p.m.** in the Conference Room of the Commission office located at 130 West North Street, Lima, Ohio.

The August meeting of the TCC was postponed to September 2, 2021, because no quorum was available for August 26, 2021.

The agenda was as follows:

1. Roll Call
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3. Approval of TCC minutes – July 22, 2021
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9. Township Funding Update
11. Other
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A quorum of the committee participating, Howard Elstro brought the meeting to order and proceeded with the agenda and introductions.

1. **ROLL CALL**

Mr. Dave Belton	Shawnee Township	Virtual
Mr. Kevin Cox	Perry Township	In Person
Mr. Howard Elstro	City of Lima	In Person
Mr. Mitchell Kingsley	Village of Bluffton	In Person
Mr. Chuck Schierloh	City of Lima	In Person
Mr. Charles Schreck	Ohio Department of Trans. District 1	In Person
Ms. Beth Seibert	Allen County	Virtual
Mr. Robert Sielschott	Bath Township	Virtual

GUESTS

STAFF

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

2. **ACCEPTANCE OF TAC MINUTES – August 24, 2021**

Motion 38 (09-2-21) TCC

Kevin Cox made the motion that the TAC minutes of August 24, 2021, be accepted. Seconded by Charles Schreck, motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF TCC MINUTES – July 22, 2021

Motion 39 (09-2-21) TCC

Kevin Cox made the motion that the TCC minutes of July 22, 2021, be accepted. Seconded by Mitchell Kingsley, motion carried.

4. RTA REPORT

Marlene Schumaker reported that ridership numbers continue to follow an upward trend on the two new routes out of Bluffton and Delphos; RTA will be receiving two new buses in about a month. RTA is looking for CDL drivers as both Karen and Brian are driving several days a week currently.

5. DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDs)

Shane Coleman explained to the committee that a rough draft was presented last month, and the staff has been working on the updates since then.

Mr. Coleman went over the CEDs as follows:

Section 1 is an introduction outlining the history of the economic plan, the philosophy developed by a host of individuals, and the process that has historically been undertaken as a part of the CEDs process. Mr. Coleman reminded the committee that the plan was developed in 2005, updated in 2010, 2015, and again now.

Section 2 Organization/Management: Section 2.4 talks about the chronology of events. Some of the 2015 events remain to show a basis for what is in the document. It also includes the entire AEDG Strategic Plan to give one giant look at economic development since 2015. AEDG partnered with IQ Partners for a two-day workshop in 2015 and 2017 to create the Greater Lima Region Collaborative Growth Plan. The AEDG strategic plan incorporates a survey that Lima Allen Leadership conducted last fall. More than 800 responses were used to form the strategies in this strategic plan. Staff used this plan and the Business Outlook Survey conducted by AEDG as a basis for the CEDs. Another area to highlight in section 2 is 2.6, development issues. Many of these were held over from the previous document, so please look them over, and if there are other issues because of the pandemic, let us know, and we would be happy to include those. We do not want to miss anything.

Section 3 Site and Situation: not much has changed regarding the data and types of data collected. Mr. Coleman did want to highlight a couple of things on page 24 about land used based on parcel analysis. Based on Dec 2020 auditor parcel data (land uses from 2014 thru 2021). There was a 4600-acre increase in residentially zoned parcels. The total acres dedicated to industrial use have decreased by 250 acres, down from 5600 acres to a little over 5300, and agricultural land use has dropped by over 1700 acres. The two tables on page 24 show the land use by type, number of acres, and number of parcels and will show you how each of those has changed since 2014, which was interesting and worth noting. Then on page 25, in recent years, the agricultural ground has been used indiscriminately for development, especially family home sites. Such plan development has resulted in uncoordinated and haphazard development along once rural roadways and now results in the expansion of infrastructure for health, safety, and environmental hazards. That statement was part of the previous document. We left it in there because we discussed a much more long-term plan to develop long-range planning throughout the county, including

Allen County Water and Sewer and other Allen County entities. We are looking at the land use and where it best fits the county's commercial and industrial investment. I think you will see more work committed to this as we have had some great meetings. A County Commissioner and AEDG have put together monthly meetings of local stakeholders to discuss development. It has been very beneficial. We are starting to see people come together to do some long-term planning.

Section 4 Population: we have not touched this yet because we received the population data last week. There is a pretty good portion of this section that will still need to be updated. Anything that we can't update, we will come back and visit at a later date. We are pushing to get this passed and submitted so that everyone can remain eligible for the funding. Hopefully, you have all had a chance to see the census data, just a couple of interesting things. LACRPC has been tracking population since 1960, and when we talk about how the population has changed, we use the 1980 census numbers a lot when we talk about population decline. However, if you go back to 1960, the 2010 Census still showed a 2.5 % increase in the overall population since 1960. The 2020 Census now shows the population below the 1960 numbers. Allen County is now down 1.4% from the 1960 population total.

Section 5 deals a lot with the environment, and there is nothing to highlight there. The maps have all been updated, and every piece of data we could update has been changed. So, a lot of it doesn't change over time. But, we did note the Ohio H2O program related to the environment and water quality and things of that nature.

Section 6 is the big one for us as we talk about infrastructure factors; again, this is one of the main reasons the jurisdictions in the county wanted this update to happen. This document opens up the infrastructure funding at EDA, one of the most significant pots of money they have to draw on. This section deals with water, wastewater, and items of that nature. We highlight in our summary the critical issues of concern for future development, adequacy, and cost associated with infrastructure, transportation network, water distribution, wastewater removal, land use, and typical public concerns. The importance of the I75 and US 30 corridors is discussed and the link between industrial development and transportation. There is concern about how the transportation network affects growth and how we have to work and plan together for those areas. The community must begin to recognize the capital assets already invested in and devoted to its various water and wastewater systems. In addition, the ability to financially establish and support expansion must meet primary cost-benefit analyses. Concerns regarding water and wastewater systems include the age of distribution and collection systems. This is something that our communities are dealing with right now. Water and wastewater issues have been ongoing for many years and will affect our pocketbooks and future development.

Section 7 Economic Analysis: Some of the categories have changed, but the 2019 Labor Statistics suggest that just five employment sectors comprise 77.4 percent of the employment in Allen County. Those are Manufacturing, Professional/Management/Scientific, Retail, Education, and Arts/Entertainment/ Food Service. From 2014 thru 2019 there was a 18.5% drop in retail, a 45.5% increase in professional/management/ scientific sector. The other big change was a 27.4% increase in arts, entertainment, and recreation. Page 37 begins the agricultural census data.

Section 8: Mr. Coleman requested that committee members look at this section as the action plan, and future goals are being developed and approved. Please let us know if anything needs to be included. The goals and strategies are from the goals set over the past years and from the strategic plan. Some of the goals are stand-alone, while others intertwine with

the goals of the previous CEDS. From the committee's perspective, sections 2 and 8 are pretty important. We would appreciate any feedback you may have on the document.

Motion 40 (09-2-21) TCC

Chuck Schierloh made the motion to accept the final CEDS. Seconded by Kevin Cox, motion carried.

6. THAYER ROAD CLASSIFICATION UPDATE

Shane Coleman reminded the committee that last month there was a discussion on the reclassification of Thayer Road from US 30 thru SR117. The request was made to ODOT to reclassify that section of Thayer to a Major Collector, the request was granted, and the entire corridor is now eligible for federal funding. In addition, the new classification more accurately depicts the usage of the road.

Mitch Kingsley asked how the area on Thayer will be changed. Mr. Coleman replied ODOT would be putting in an R-Cut and explained an R-Cut, using SR 101 near Ft Wayne as an example. Some discussion was held on how R-Cuts work. Shane Coleman explained to the committee they could go to the ODOT website and type in Thayer Road and see what ODOT intends to do. Questions were asked about Cool and Mayberry. Mr. Coleman replied that Cool is closed on both sides, Mayberry will be closed on the south side. Both Mr. Kingsley and Mr. Elstro spoke about the concerns of bike riders on Thayer.

No motion is needed—just an update.

7. BIKE /PEDESTRIAN UPDATE

Bike and pedestrian counts will be completed from September 13-19, 2021. If you have participated in the past, Thank You, and please do so again; if you have not counted in the past but would like to do so now, please let us know, and we will send you the sign-up information.

Mr. Elstro questioned if the information on bike/pedestrian counts can be obtained from Streetlight. Shane responded at this time; we have not done so. However, as we learn more about Streetlight, we may also be able to use it for bike counts.

No motion needed—just an update

8. FY 2020 UNIFIED WORK PLAN BUDGET UPDATE

Marlene Schumaker explained to the committee that in July/August, an update to the Unified Work Program budget is required. The UPWP is initially prepared in January. In January, ODOT supplies LACRPC with an estimated amount to prepare the budget for the FY that begins on July 1. In July, ODOT then adjusts the amount for the budget to an actual encumbrance amount. In FY 2022, there was a decrease in the budget amount of approximately \$10,000. Also, in July, ODOT allows LACRPC to figure the remaining amount not spent in the previous fiscal year and put that carryover into the updated budget. For FY 2022, the Consolidated Planning Grant carryover was approximately 175,000, and the STP carryover was about \$140,180.

Motion 41 (09-2-21) TCC

Charles Schreck made the motion to accept the updated budget for FY 2022. Seconded by Kevin Cox, motion carried.

9. TOWNSHIP FUNDING UPDATE

A township funding opportunity was discussed in the committee last month. Currently, a couple of townships have reached out to LACRPC and the County Engineer for application assistance. LACRPC has sent several emails to let the townships know that the funding is available.

No motion is needed-just an update

10. OTHER

Mr. Coleman has two items.

- a. Mr. Coleman told the committee that he attended an OARC Transportation Directors Group where Michelle May spoke; she is the safety program manager for ODOT. Ms. May gave an update on significant changes taking place in the Safety program. Serious crash prevention is going to be at the forefront of that program. She talked about the many reasons they are looking at changes in the program, including a noticeable increase in traffic deaths. She mentioned that Ohio had missed the FHWA safety performance target for the last two years in a row. And that 87% of investments for FY 22 will address intersections that make up the bulk of the severe accidents. The other 13% will address issues like lane departures and things of that nature. As soon as we get the changes and deadline dates, we will pass them along to those of you who use safety money. We are currently working on the crash report in this office, and we are going to take the top ten and dig down to look at the data related to them. Some of the other MPO's are putting their scoring criteria right in the crash reports. We might want to look at that to see which intersections we would like to look into.
- b. Mr. Coleman mentioned that when he was a board member, he remembers Thom Mazur came to talk to the Board to discuss becoming an RTPO. District 1 contacted LACRPC about a month ago about an interest in heading an RTPO. Staff met with them and scheduled another meeting for September 14, 2021 regarding what an RTPO offers LACRPC and the other counties that would join. The MPO would still exist as it is, and the RTPO would be a separate entity. The difference in the past is the funding; the last time, there was no additional funding offered and no additional funding to the counties that joined. This time the joining counties are being offered some construction money, and the head group is being offered some additional administration funding. The last time the Board had concerns, they did not want any MPO funding to be used outside of Allen County. The upside for us is that there are now additional planning funds. We are still in the early stages of discussion. We want to make the committee aware that the conversation is back out there again. ODOT wants the liaison agency as some counties we would partner with would be much more rural than Allen.

Mr. Schierloh ask about the structure, and Mr. Coleman explained that we would be three agencies under one name, but the funding would be kept separate. Some of the counties we are talking about are the same ones we work with already, and some would be the same as the ECDD. Mr. Schierloh commented on how the school district combines some of these agencies, and over some time, it became more efficient, but the control went somewhere else. Mr. Elstro questioned the funding and how the setup would work but is willing for us to go forward if there is no loss to Allen County or the membership of the MPO and that there would be no loss of staff able to continue with MPO business. Mr. Coleman agreed we would not allow the MPO to lose what we currently have. Mr. Elstro mentioned that Mr. Mazur had said in the past the loss of the MPO status. Mr. Coleman mentioned that is a good comment since ODOT showed us a map of all of Ohio showing that this small section of Ohio is the only area without an RTPO. Mr. Coleman thinks it makes sense for the surrounding Counties. We need to make sure that it makes sense for Allen County to be the head of an RTPO and would like to have a serious discussion and check to see what is in it for us. . It is worth considering as long as we do not lose anything for the MPO. RTPO would be separate. The counties that would not have an RTPO right now, Putnam, Van Wert, Auglaize, Mercer, Hardin, and Hancock. We do not know if ODOT has talked to those counties or not. And we would still have to speak to those counties to see if they are on board. Mr. Schierloh asked which District Allen was in. Mr. Schreck said Allen County is in District One and all other counties except Auglaize in District Seven. Most other RTPO's cross ODOT districts. There will be more information coming.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion 42 (09-02-21) TCC

Charles Schreck made the motion that the meeting is adjourned. Seconded by Kevin Cox, motion carried.