

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

January 16, 2025

There was a meeting of the **Community Development Committee** of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission held on **January 16, 2025**, at **3:30 p.m.** in the Conference Room of the Commission office located at 130 West North Street, Lima, Ohio.

With a quorum present, chairman Mr. Kingsley brought the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. and proceeded with the agenda.

1. **ROLL CALL**

Laura Bassitt	Jackson Township
Ross Harmon	American Township
Mitchell Kingsley	Village of Bluffton
Stefanie Motter	Area Agency on Aging
Rob Nelson	City of Lima
Joe Recker	Shawnee Township (via Zoom)
Ben Suever	Village of Spencerville
John Vandemark	Village of Cairo
Carmillia Zion	City of Lima (via Zoom)

STAFF

Colleen Barry	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Cody Doyle	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Liwen Kang	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Megan Kinnear	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Tonya Dye	Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Agenda was approved by consensus. No motion was taken.

3. **APPROVAL OF CDC MINUTES – October 17, 2024 (Held)**

Motion 1 (01-16-2025) CDC

Mr. Nelson made the motion to approve the CDC minutes of October 17, 2024 (Held). Seconded by Ms. Motter; motion carried.

4. **PRESENTATION: COLLEEN BARRY – WORPO, CMAQ Funding and TIP Update**

Ms. Barry presented to the committee the LACRPC Planning update. She stated that the West Central Ohio Regional Planning Organization (WORPO) had been officially designated by Governor Mike DeWine on December 18th, 2024 and LACRPC received notification of the same on December 23rd, 2024. She explained that with the designation, the organization can now do bigger things, such as working on a regional safety action plan that will be the basis for the Safe Streets 4 All program, and start putting projects together in their Transportation Improvement Program for funding. After questions regarding the Safe Streets 4 All program, Ms. Barry differentiated the program from the Safe Routes 4 School for the committee. The Safe Streets program focuses on driver safety with some pedestrian aspects. The Safe Routes 4 School involves field work to determine the routes school children take to get to and from school and to upgrade the pedestrian facilities related to those pedestrian users.

Ms. Barry continued her presentation by discussing available CMAQ funding. This is awarded every year during the TIP cycle for signal timing improvements, sidewalks, improvements to mass transit, and other types of projects. CMAQ focuses more on active transportation, such as pedestrian and bikeways, but is also used for roundabouts to reduce idling times. CMAQ projects start at the township level and involve an 80-20 percent match for the township. The process can take a couple of years to complete, so planning is best done early.

Ms. Barry stated that the first draft of the Transportation Improvement Program has been finished as is due to ODOT on January 31st. It is going to be put on the website for public comment. The send draft is due at the end of March. LACRPC will be hosting an Open House at the RTA building to discuss the TIP and other transportation planning projects and initiatives by LACRPC and WORPO. She stated that there are lots of different pools of ODOT money dedicated to specific types of projects so we try to mesh those with the projects presented to us by our jurisdictional partners. She encourages people to attend the Open House and see what we hope to accomplish over the next few years.

5. PRESENTATION: MITCH KINGSLEY, Lions Way Pathway

Mr. Kingsley gave a presentation on the Lions Way Pathway in Bluffton to the committee. The pathway began due to looking at the corridor on SR 103. About a year and a half ago, ODOT came through to repave the road near the north end of Bluffton. This is near the food areas. The Village looked at the safety issues around that corridor to town, with people walking to either get food or to places of employment in areas without sidewalks. As this is an area right off the interstate, the safety concerns needed to be addressed. Bluffton had been working on its own pathway system, which had completed several projects involving private and public money, and a lot of local fundraising. However, as this was a State Route, ODOT was involved. With state funding, there are more standards to be met that smaller, locally funded projects do not require. This included ODOT securing right-of-way and engineering studies. When they saw that it could be put on the TIP, it was necessary to make sure everyone was on board so as to secure the local matching dollars. Engineering is an extra part of the project, so time needed to be built into the overall plan as well for that to be completed. ODOT specifications required that the pathway be 10 feet across and at roadway depth. Other details to look at involved existing telephone poles and whether they would need to be moved, which would add another complication. One of the considerations for Bluffton leadership on this project was also to make sure that donors were appropriately recognized, and thus they had a sign developed by a local sign company, which donated the signs to the project as part of its contribution.

Overall, Mr. Kingsley summarized the experience as a positive one that brings a needed resource to the community but also reiterated that these types of infrastructure improvements take time to develop, plan, and secure the necessary funding.

6. PRESENTATION: MEGAN KINNEAR, LACRPC's partnership projects with ACRTA

Ms. Kinear spoke to the committee about projects she has been undertaking with ACRTA. She has been assisting in the production of social media postings and public service announcements regarding bus ridership and other safety topics. She has also helped to develop a "How to Ride the Bus" video that will be available in three languages. She submitted a grant application at the end of December for a "Baby-on-Board" program. There has been an influx of new residents without access to transportation. One of the complications of not having reliable transportation for new mothers is that they do not necessarily have access to appropriate car seats for their children. This has been an issue noticed at regional hospitals as newborns cannot leave the hospital without an appropriate car seat, which is not provided with taxis or other services. Ms. Kinear said that if the grant application is successful, mothers with newborns up to children aged 2 may be able to gain access to RTA cards to get to prenatal appointments, grocery stores, daycare, and other places. The RTA does not require car seats on their fixed route services. The requested grant funding was \$200,000 over four years. Grant notifications will be done later this year.

7. OTHER

The next two meetings of the CDC are field experiences. It will be necessary to meet at the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission to conduct the administrative portion of the meeting before moving on to the field trip. The first trip on the agenda is on April 10th to the Agricultural and Engineering Facility at Lima Senior High School. This is not a normal date for the CDC, but it was determined that to accommodate the school's spring break and there is enough notice, moving this meeting was not a problem. Committee members who attend on April 10th will be able to ride the RTA trolley to the site. On July 17th, the CDC will be going to tour the West Ohio Food Bank. Ms. Kinnear stated that she would make the tours available to both the CDC and the CAC committees.

Ms. Zion stated that she may have some information on some of the neighborhood associations in Lima to pass along.

Mr. Doyle and Ms. Kang spoke briefly to the committee regarding LACRPC's development of a Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (LESA) that they have been working on since the summer. The project stated with Amanda Township who needed a new comprehensive plan to take advantage of the Ohio Department of Agriculture's farmland preservation programs. The model looks at a variety of factors such as parcel size, access to existing sewer and water, distance to major transportation routes, current zoning plans, and floodplain data to determine if a property is suitable for development or to remain as agricultural land. It is hoped that this is a model that can be used for the remaining townships in the county.

8. ADJOURNMENT

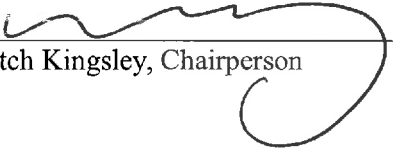
Motion 2 (01-16-2025) CDC

Mr. Nelson made the motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Suever; motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

The next meeting is April 10, 2025.

Approved April 10, 2025.



Mitch Kingsley, Chairperson