

Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission

2023 Annual Report



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While the recent work of this agency is important, it is necessary to acknowledge the duties accomplished from the last 70 years that have shaped Allen County’s communities. In the early-to-mid 1900s as the area continued to grow and shift, engineers with innovative minds were needed to evaluate land usage, transportation patterns and safety concerns. For this reason, the Allen County Planning Commission was created in 1954. Just 10 years later in 1964, Lima was added to the county’s planning responsibilities to establish the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission (LACRPC).

Jumping forward to 2023, this annual report serves as a snapshot of the recent accomplishments and details about the area. Many people have been involved in order for LACRPC to provide excellent data and planning for Allen County. It could not have been done without partnering agencies, local municipalities, community groups and local citizens who have all worked together not only last year, but for the past 70 years.

A quick overview of duties covered by the LACRPC planning staff and partners include preparing population and housing reports; providing traffic and crash analyses; facilitating the subdivision review process for those unincorporated areas outside of municipal jurisdictions; and providing zoning, land use, soil, and other development-related information.

The work of the agency can be seen throughout the county. Almost anywhere tires hit the road in Allen County, LACRPC has been instrumental in transportation projects focused on safety and efficiency for the residents. For example, the Eastown Road expansion project provided connectivity from Elm Street to State Route 117, which opened up the area for new economic development. Working in coordination with the City of Lima, underpasses were constructed on North Street and Vine, which allows for greater efficiency of traffic flow downtown. In partnership with the City of Delphos, new curbing, bike paths and sidewalks were installed along Fifth Street to create greater mobility options for its residents. Similar initiatives were implemented in Spencerville to install bike paths. LACRPC also helped secure funding for water and sewer lines in Harrod and Lafayette, which was an instrumental step needed in each community’s growth process.

LACRPC takes pride in the work accomplished over the decades. Its staff has clocked millions of labor hours in order to provide the public with accurate traffic counts, comprehensive plans, extensive studies, and detailed maps and reports. This unified effort has been to help make Allen County, Ohio a great place to live, work and visit. Thank you for supporting LACRPC throughout the years.

Tara Reynolds Bales
Tara Reynolds Bales
Executive Director



7 STAFF MEMBERS

2 Cities

215,496 RESIDENTS SERVED

1 County

6 Partners

7 Villages

21 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

12 Townships

about

LACRPC

OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR ONGOING COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN ALLEN COUNTY THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC POLICIES, PLANS, AND REGULATORY CONTROLS.

United Way of Greater Lima
 Allen County Public Health
 City of Lima
 Mercy Health
 West Ohio Community Action Partnership
 Lima/Allen County Chamber of Commerce

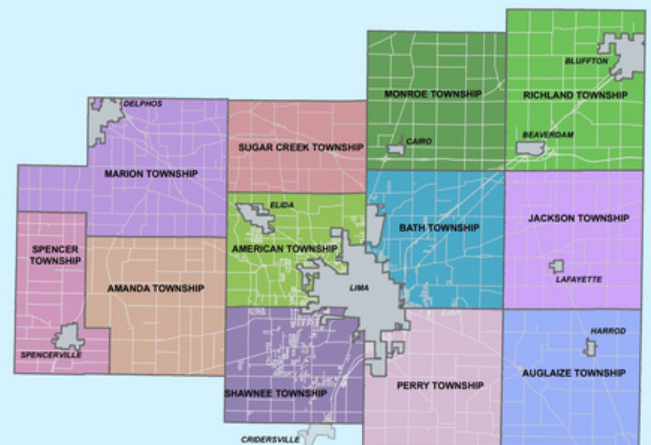
The Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission (LACRPC) was established in September 1964 and assumed the powers and duties of the Allen County Planning Commission, which was created in 1954. The LACRPC is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Allen County, including the portions of the City of Delphos, the Villages of Bluffton, and Cridersville that lie outside of Allen County. In 2023, the West Ohio Rural Planning Organization (WORPO) was created to serve Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam, Van Wert and Wyandot Counties. The Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission is responsible for comprehensive planning and program implementation within Allen County and its various communities and serves in an advisory capacity to community decision-makers who have come to rely on data, analyses, and planning recommendations provided by the Commission. A 34-member Board of Directors assists the Commission by reviewing and recommending plans and strategies to develop and improve the entire region. In addition, the agency works closely with other professionals such as city and county engineers, sanitary engineers, prosecutors and auditors. Other agencies like Allen County Public Health, Allen Soil and Water Conservation District, Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, and multiple local utilities provide valuable input to this process.

MEMBER MAP

Over 20 local jurisdictions including cities, townships and villages in Allen County are members of the LACRPC. They work together to promote and advocate for all jurisdictions in Allen County.

LACRPC STAFF

- Tara Reynolds Bales, *Executive Director*
- Rebecca Phillips, *Director of Finance*
- Dode Makley, *Associate Planner*
- Cody Doyle, *Senior Planner*
- Adam Haunhorst, *Planning Engineer*
- Colleen Barry, *Associate Planner*
- Megan Kinnear, *Public Outreach and Community Program Planner*



2023 REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICERS

Beth Seibert, President
Doug Post, President-Elect
Brion Rhodes, Secretary
Jerry Gilden, Treasurer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sean Chapman	Brion Rhodes
Kevin Cox	Chuck Schierloh
Howard Elstro	Beth Seibert
Steve Ewing	James Mehaffie
Jerry Gilden	Thomas Tebben
Mitch Kinglsey	Larry Vandemark
Doug Post	*Paul Basinger

ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Howard Elstro	Brion Rhodes
Steve Ewing	Thomas Tebben
Jerry Gilden	Mitch Kingsley
Doug Post	James Mehaffie

Kelli Singhaus

DEVELOPMENTAL CONTROLS COMMITTEE

Paul Basinger	Kent McCleary
Brad Baxter	Doug Post
Mark Bishop	Chuck Scheirloh
Kevin Cox	Beth Seibert
Steve Ewing	Kim Stiles
Jerry Gilden	Dave Stratton
Randy Ackerman	Ron Meyer
Joe Gearing	Rick Keller
Mike Zimmerly	Dave Louth

DELEGATES

Beth Seibert, Allen County
Dave Stratton, Allen County
Kelli Singhaus, Allen County
Dave Louth, Allen County
Ron Meyer, Allen County
Berlin Carroll, Allen County
Sharetta Smith, City of Lima
Howard Elstro, City of Lima
Shane Coleman, City of Lima
Ian Kohli, City of Lima
Chuck Scheirloh, City of Lima
Marin Harbur, City of Lima
Thomas Tebben, City of Lima
*Rob Nelson, City of Lima
James Mehaffie, City of Delphos
Robert Swisher, Village of Beavertown
Mitch Kingsley, Village of Bluffton
John Vandemark, Village of Cairo
Dave Metzger, Village of Elida
Tony Blake, Village of Harrod
Sean Chapman, Village of Spencerville
Doug Post, Amanda Township
Paul Basinger, American Township
Larry Vandemark, American Township
Steve Ewing, Auglaize Township
Brad Baxter, Bath Township
Randy Ackerman, Jackson Township
Jerry Gilden, Marion Township
Steven Beam, Monroe Township
Kevin Cox, Perry Township
Michael Zimmerly, Richland Township
Ted Ciminillo, Shawnee Township
Michael Keith, Shawnee Township
Rick Keller, Spencer Township
Kent McCleary, Sugar Creek Township

**Notates a mid-year appointment to fill a vacancy*

COMMITTEES AND MEMBERS

TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sean Chapman	Shawn McPheron
Eric Davis	Jed Metzger
Karen Garland	Ron Meyer
Daniel Hoying	Kirk Niemeyer
Dan Kaseman	Jack Neal
Brad Niemeyer	Stefanie Motter
Greg Kessen	Jacob King
Cindy Leis	Adam Francis
James Mehaffie	Tony Wilkerson
*Paul Basinger	Lawrence Hall

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Kevin Cox	Adam Francis
Howard Elstro	Beth Seibert
Steve Ewing	Thomas Tebben
Jerry Gilden	Larry Vandemark
Ian Kohli	Dave Stratton
Mitch Kingsley	Brad Baxter
James Mehaffie	David Louth
Doug Post	Karen Garland
Brion Rhodes	Lawrence Hall

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tyler Black	Sean Chapman
Alice Curth	Shane Coleman
Derry Glenn Michael	Joan Davis
Hensley	Peggy Ehora
Brandon Fischer	Todd Gordon
Patrick Maloney	Marin Harbur
John Schneider	Casey Heilman
Adam Francis	Greg Kessen
Randy Ackerman	Dan Kaseman
Jon Basinger	Lynn Mohler
Laura Bassitt	Andria Perkins
Tony Blake	John Vandemark
Carole Enneking	Josh Unterbrink
Joe Lewis	Jack Neal
Jodie Owens	Sarah Berry
Elisha Reineke	Jackie Fox
Tony Wilkerson	Jessie Doyle
Michelle Ramage	Charles Schreck

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Jon Basinger	Andria Perkins
Laura Bassitt	Kelli Singhaus
Berlin Carroll	John Vandemark
Randy Ackerman	Kirk Niemeyer
Tony Blake	Marin Harbur
Sue Gerker	Shane Coleman
Mitchell Kingsley	Sean Chapman
David Metzger	Doug Mullenhour
Lynn Mohler	Rob Nelson

THANK YOU

TO ALL THOSE WHO GIVE OF
THEIR TIME, ENERGY AND
EXPERTISE TO HELP US BETTER
SERVE OUR COMMUNITIES

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

As the metropolitan planning organization, LACRPC provides cooperative, comprehensive, and continuous transportation planning to the Lima urbanized area. This process ensures the region's local transportation network continues to be developed consistent with the safe and efficient movement of people and freight. The MPO's overall purpose is to allocate transportation investments of federal and various other transportation funding resources, provide a comprehensive examination of the Lima area's future, and facilitate the collaboration of governments, agencies, interested parties, and residents in the planning process.

Transportation

- ✓ Created the Rural Transportation Improvement Program (Auglaize, Hancock, Hardin, Mercer, Putnam, Van Wert, and Wyandot)
- ✓ Completed FY2023 Unified Planning Work Program
- ✓ FY2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program - completed May 2023
- ✓ FY2024-2029 Long Range Transportation Plan - completed June 2023
- ✓ Traffic Surveillance (Amherst - Diller - Allentown & Cable - Allentown & King - Breese & Dixie - Elizabeth & Murphy - Carolina & King - Grubb & Piquad)
- ✓ Speed Studies (Shawnee)
- ✓ Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Review
- ✓ Allen County Bridge Inventory Update
- ✓ Streetlight Data Analyses
- ✓ 2022 Crash Summary Report
- ✓ 2022 Fatal Crash Report
- ✓ High Crash Intersection Review/Fatal
- ✓ Adopt Safety Based Performance Measures



Active Transportation

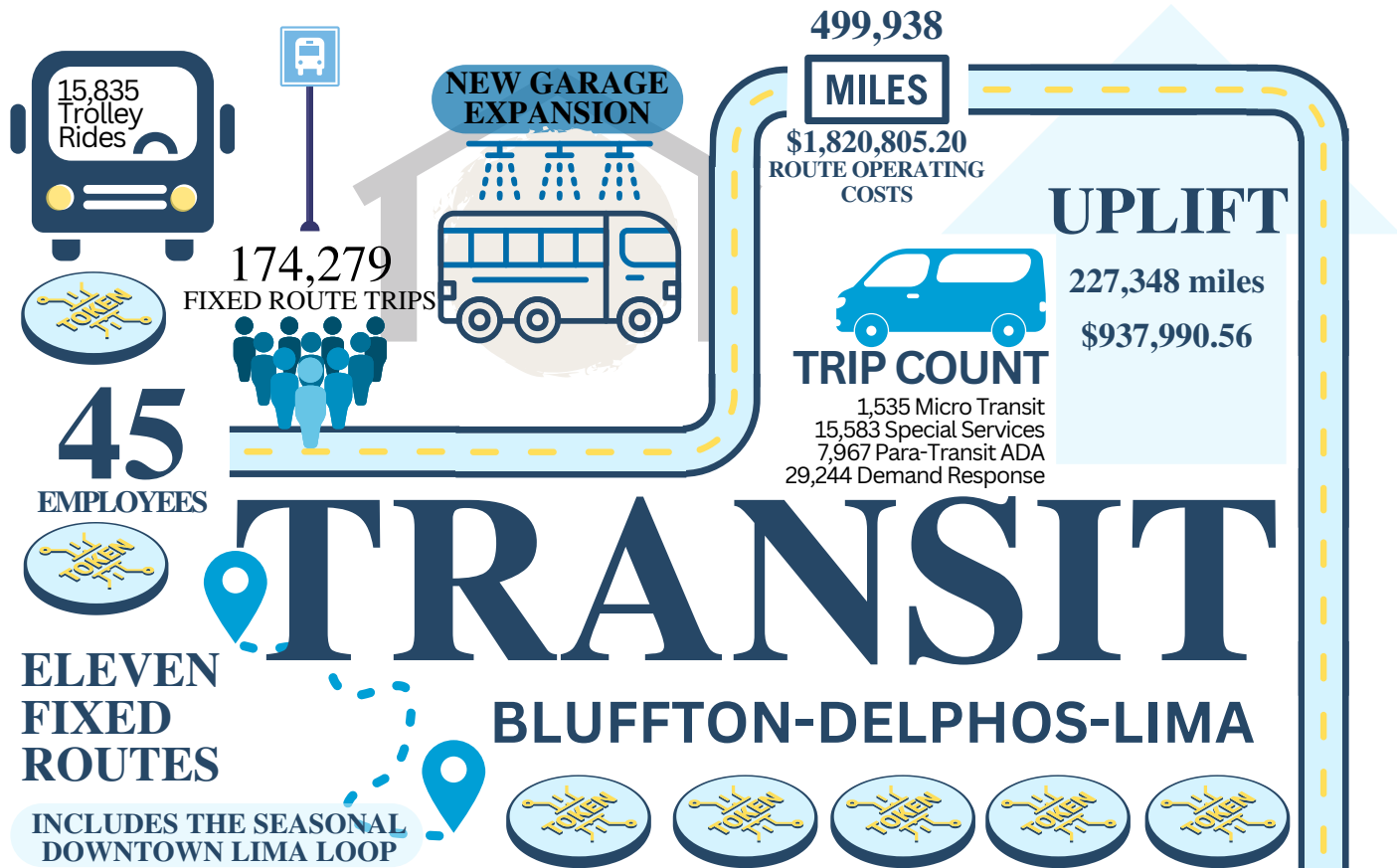
- ✓ Biannual Bike and Pedestrian Count Program
- ✓ ADA Transition Plan Work (Delphos & Spencerville - completed)
- ✓ Active Transportation Plan Updated
- ✓ Bluffton Complete Streets Initiation

Long Range Planning, Sustainability, and Environment

- ✓ Village of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan – completed
- ✓ WOCAP Community Assessments - completed January 2023 (Allen, Auglaize and Mercer Counties)
- ✓ Lima Crime Data Collection
- ✓ Ohio Department of Education Designated School Mapping

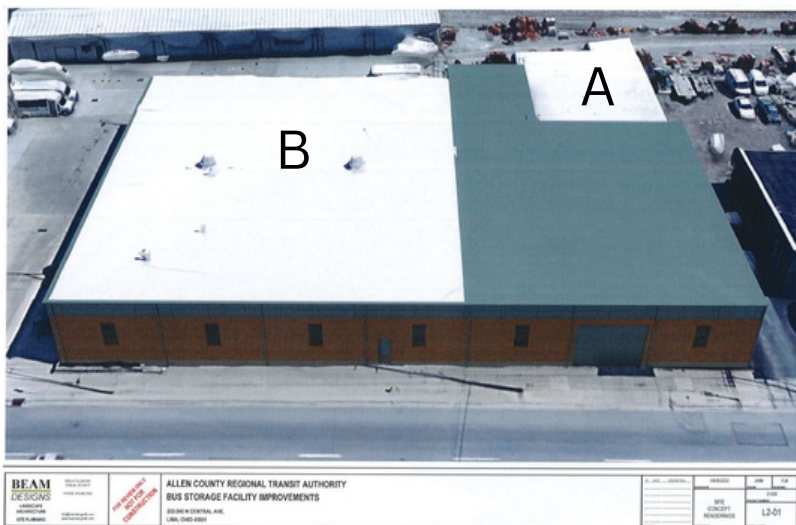


Market & Main Roundabout



The Allen County Regional Transit Authority (ACRTA) was created in 1974 by the Board of Allen County Commissioners to provide needed transportation services across Allen County. Transit management reflects a seven-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Allen County Commissioners who oversee the operations of fixed-route and complementary paratransit services. In addition, ACRTA works with ODOT and LACRPC to optimize federal and state funding for necessary rolling stock, equipment, maintenance, facility upgrades and technical assistance.

RTA GARAGE EXPANSION!



The RTA garage expansion project began in November 2023 with an estimated completion date in November 2024. The project will incorporate RTA's existing garage (A) with the building directly before the existing garage (B). There will be a drive-thru bus wash in the space between the buildings that currently exist. The façade of the garage will match up with the façade of the downtown entities including Lima Sr High School. The expansion will create enough space for all RTA vehicles to be housed inside at all times meaning they will no longer be exposed to the elements when not in use. The drive-thru bus wash will allow RTA buses to get cleaned daily. Future possibilities include non-profit and/or governmental agencies being able to utilize the drive-thru bus wash as well.

2022-2023 SAFE COMMUNITIES GRANT

Since 1994, LACRPC has managed traffic safety-related projects using federal funds through grants administered by the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS). The 2023 Safe Communities Grant models a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration plan that targets interventions to reduce the occurrence of traffic crashes and the associated economic, societal and personal costs. A few 2023 initiatives include:

- Increase the countywide observational seatbelt surveys documented restraint use from 77% to 82%. (Data provided by the University of Akron.)
- Partner with coalition member Your Hometown Lima Stations to cultivate a series of public service announcements addressing seasonal safety concerns.
- Participate in events such as Allen County National Night Out, the Lima Half-Mile Motorcycle Races, Blessing of the Bikes, Safe Summer Block Party and more.
- Distribute awareness materials including “I’m bucklin’ it” McDonald’s dessert coupons, yard signs, banners and vehicle magnets.
- Promote children’s bicycle safety with partners Activate Allen County, Mercy Health and Lima Memorial Health System by distributing bicycle helmets to area youth.

ANNUAL SAFE COMMUNITIES AWARDS

Every year, the Safe Community Coalition takes nominations from our partners and the community to honor individuals who put in the work daily to make Lima-Allen County a safer place. Congratulations to this year’s award recipients:

Emergency Medical Services
Grant Recker
Mercy Health, ER Manager

Traffic Safety
Ptl. Justin Wireman
Lima Police Department

Traffic Safety
Tpr. Brandon Schreiber
Ohio State Highway Patrol

Youth Safety
Chris Jackson
*Bradfield Community Center,
Executive Director*

Outstanding Citizen
Denise James
LACNIP, President

Outstanding Citizen
Chelsea Rue
Narcan Distribution and Advocacy

Lifetime Achievement Award
Jeff Osborne

Thank you to all the men and women who work tirelessly to ensure our community has safety in every aspect including emergency services, fire safety, traffic safety, engineering, youth safety, children's safety. Thank you, too, for being outstanding citizens.

ACTIVATE ALLEN COUNTY

Our locally built environment is largely determined by land use and transportation decisions, and these decisions affect the quality of life of the community over the long term. Activate Allen County looks to use civic engagement and regulatory controls to address issues with the help of a broad-based coalition of local healthcare providers, major employers, development professionals and community leaders whose goal is to create a community in which all residents can thrive in our built environment. Concerns and discussions over transportation costs, as well as the expenditures required for roadway maintenance and safety projects, are finding allies with local residents who are concerned with active transportation, urban sprawl, farmland, preservation and water/air quality standards. In a spirit of cooperation, this committee is working to explore the nature of these issues from a more holistic perspective. In a unique partnership, the LACRPC has entered into conversations, programming and activities to examine sustainability and sustainable development on a number of different levels focusing on developing a balanced and equitable approach to transportation, land use, employment and an improved quality of life.

Allen County
.....
Allen County Public Health
.....
City of Lima
.....
Lima/Allen County Chamber of
Commerce
.....
Lima-Allen County Regional
Planning Commission
.....
Mental Health & Recovery
Services Board
.....
Mercy Health
.....
The Ohio State University- Lima
.....
United Way of Greater Lima
.....
West Ohio Community Action
Partnership

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG grants support affordable housing, necessary infrastructure improvements, and the delivery of antipoverty programs in eligible communities.

The Allen County Board of Commissioners is responsible for developing and delivering eligible local projects consistent with the program's national objectives. However, projects must benefit low-to-moderate income persons, aid a targeted population (such as senior citizens or the disabled), or provide for the elimination of slum/blight conditions.

In 2023, Allen County worked to deliver Community Housing Improvement Program Preservation (CHIPP) services to provide rehabilitation, first-time homebuyer assistance, emergency home repair, etc., to qualified residents of Allen County. In addition, the County CDBG Program, administered by LACRPC, funded WOCAP and GLCAP housing foreclosure counseling and fair housing education.



\$216,368 in CHIP Funds

-and-



\$150,130 in CHIP Funds

INFORMATION SERVICES

The LACRPC strives to provide information and data analysis to local decision-makers to enhance an intelligent decision-making process. The Commission concentrates on data collection and analysis activities in community development, transportation, environmental planning, and other areas of local interest. Most of the information gathered by LACRPC is available on our website at www.lacrpc.com. We also provide information via our technical library, our designation as a local Census affiliate, and many relationships we have built throughout Allen County due to many opportunities to provide technical support. The agency website proved to be a valuable tool for local information as it recorded 6.8K hits and 3.4K user sessions in 2023.

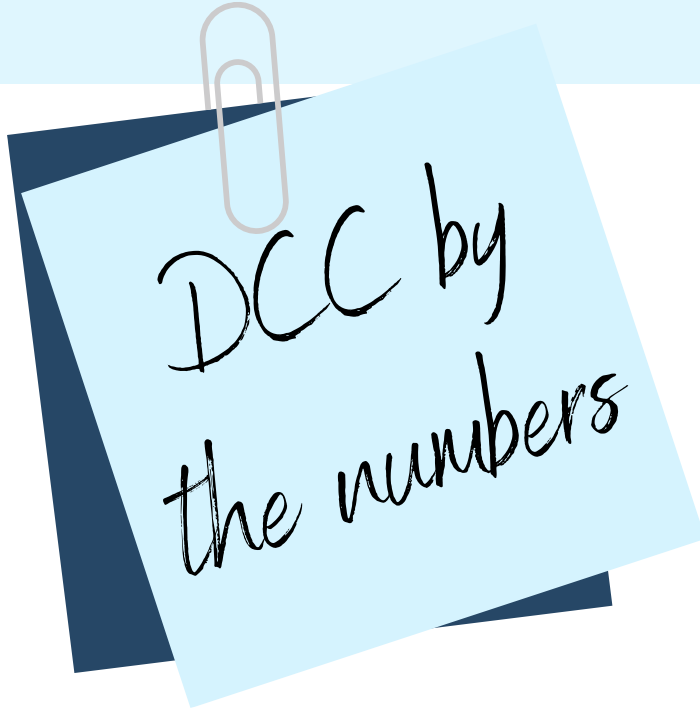
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

LACRPC has a unique and vital leadership role in Allen County. Founded upon regional collaboration, cooperation, and consensus-building principles, LACRPC serves as the common ground where area partners come together to work toward a shared vision across the region. Together, public and private partners develop and implement innovative and sustainable strategies that enhance the region's quality of life and economic vitality.

LACRPC recognizes that a public participation plan (PPP) provides methods, strategies, and desired outcomes for public involvement and is committed to meaningful and proactive public participation. This plan includes outreach to a broadly defined audience of effected parties to ensure projects and planning activities evolve from and address public needs. Providing a forum for public participation demonstrates that the region recognizes citizens' rights to be heard. These forums, coupled with careful attention to feedback, will result in better, well-informed decision-making. To find out how you can participate, visit our website at www.lacrpc.com.

DEVELOPMENTAL CONTROLS

LACRPC, in conjunction with a host of local agencies, assists its members in monitoring, reviewing, and approving development activities within Allen County while helping establish regulatory controls to minimize adverse environmental and economic effects as a result of development. The agency administers the minor and major subdivision process and floodplain regulations in the unincorporated areas of Allen County. In addition, the agency is responsible for the review of a host of zoning issues every year.



MAJOR LAND DIVISIONS

Final Plat:

Camden Ridge, *Shawnee Twp*
Country Aire Expansion 5-C, *American Twp*
Lost Creek, *Bath Twp*

MINOR LAND DIVISIONS

Affecting a Total of 1428.322 Acres

- 46 Land Transfer
Affecting 294.4 Acres
- 39 Exempted Land Divisions
Affecting 975.5 Acres
- 28 Lot Split
Affecting 66.08 Acres
- 4 Ag Exempt
Affecting 89.2 Acres
- 4 Re-Plat
Affecting 3.171 Acres

ZONING REGULATIONS

- 10 Zoning Amendment
American - Bath - Marion - Richland - Shawnee - Sugar Creek
- 7 Zoning Petition
American - Bath - Marion - Perry - Shawnee
- 6 Zoning Variance
Amanda - American - Bath - Monroe - Richland

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT

- 9 Permits
- 1 Permit Renewal
- 3 Violations



FINANCIAL REPORT

The LACRPC's expenditures totaled \$812,580 in CY 2023. Local membership assessments of \$110,221 were used in the operating budget to leverage state and federal planning grants by approximately 5.74 to 1. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Transportation funded the agency's transportation planning activities. At the same time, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) supported various safety initiatives.

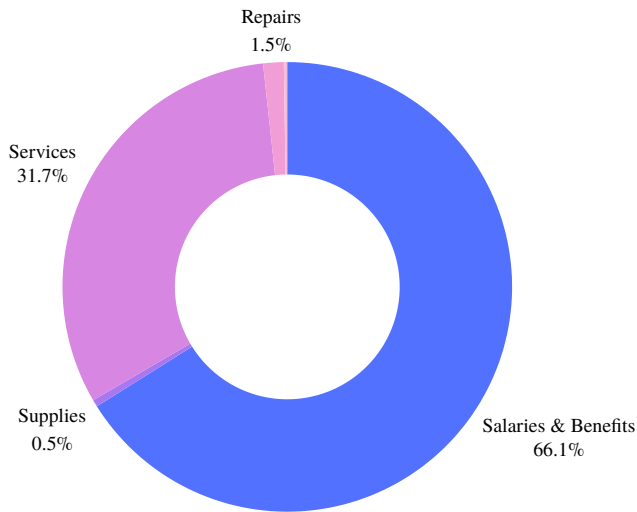
The LACRPC Board of Directors is responsible for making sure that sound decisions are made concerning spending and stimulating the flow of state and federal funds in Allen County. Member governments invested \$110,221 in per capita fees to the LACRPC. The community received grants, services, and capital improvements of more than \$15.3 million. A simple assessment reveals "a return of approximately \$138.81 to the larger community for every \$1 entrusted to LACRPC." In addition, LACRPC delivered noncash benefits to its members by providing a vehicle to exchange valuable information.

Delivering a Return

"A RETURN OF APPROXIMATELY \$138.81 TO THE LARGER COMMUNITY FOR EVERY \$1 ENTRUSTED TO LACRPC."

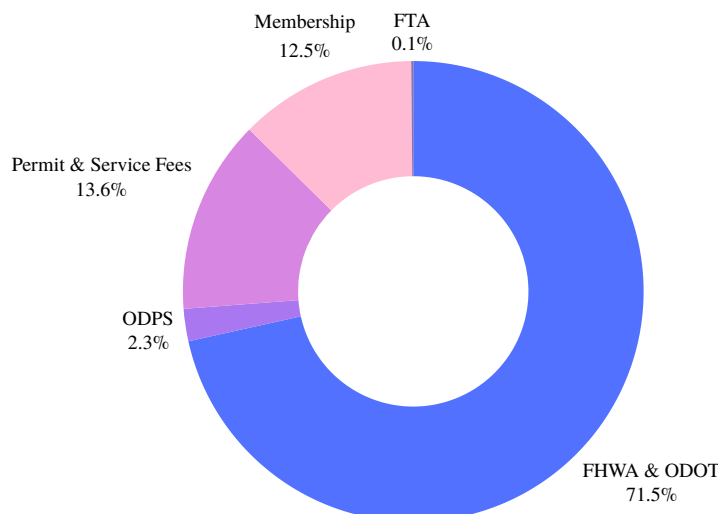


EXPENSE



Expenses	Amount
Salaries & Benefits	\$536,989
Supplies	\$4,120
Services	\$257,455
Repairs	\$12,000
Others	\$1,608
Travel	\$408
Total:	\$812,580

INCOME



Income	Amount
FHWA & ODOT	\$632,763
ODPS	\$20,077
Permit & Service Fees	\$120,380
Membership	\$110,221
FTA	\$1,256
Total:	\$884,697

West Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization

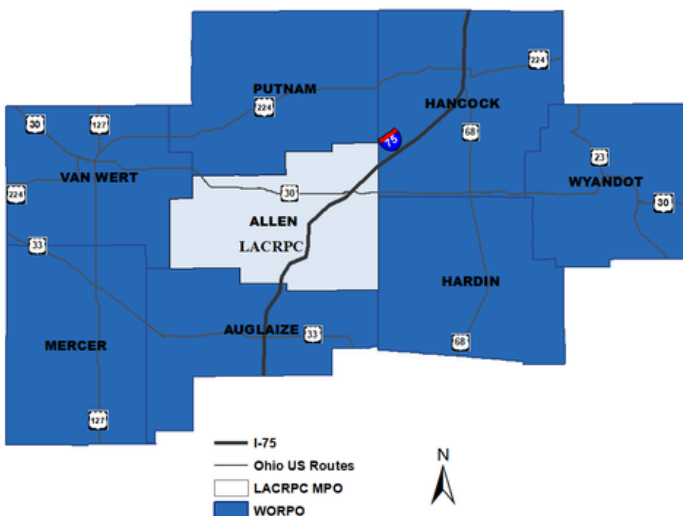
The goal of the West Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization is to conduct coordinated, comprehensive, and continuing regional transportation planning for non-metropolitan areas. Assisting the member governments in identifying the unique issues and needs that come with living in rural communities, and helping them to obtain the funding and resources will ensure that they are better integrated with the development and implementation of regional transportation goals.

In the summer of 2021, the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission (LACRPC) began discussions with the Ohio Department of Transportation Districts 1 and 7 in Western Ohio about the opportunity to form a Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). Discussions continued in 2022 with county engineers and local elected officials in seven counties of interest; Auglaize, Hardin, Hancock, Mercer, Putnam, Van Wert, and Wyandot. The West Central Ohio Rural Planning Organization was officially established on December 10th, 2023, with all seven counties agreeing to join the RTPO.

WORPO is a committee of the Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission, which provides technical, administrative, and staffing support to WORPO's members via funding provided by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

WORPO member counties are represented by The WORPO Rural Planning Committee and the WORPO Rural Planning Subcommittee. The WORPO Rural Planning Committee provides representation from elected officials and other stakeholders from WORPO-member counties to develop a rural transportation plan. This committee will meet at least once per year and consist of three individuals from each county. Two of the members will be selected by county subcommittees, and the third member from each county will be chosen by the WORPO collectively.

WORPO Rural Planning County Subcommittees are composed of representatives from diverse backgrounds. These include local municipalities, transportation agencies, transit services providers, mobility managers, public utilities, economic development organizations, the private sector, academia, and others. The subcommittees advise and guide WORPO in the development of all elements of the transportation plan as well as carry out most of the public involvement in this process.



- WORPO COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
- Auglaize**
 Andrew Baumer, *Auglaize County Engineer*
 Doug Spencer, *Auglaize County Commissioner*
 Craig Moeller, *St. Mary's Community Service Director*
- Hancock**
 Doug Cade, *Hancock County Engineer*
 Michael Pepple, *Hancock County Commissioner*
 Jeff Huncker, *Township Associate President*
- Hardin**
 Luke Underwood, *Hardin County Engineer*
 Tim Styker, *Hardin County Commissioner*
 Mark Doll, *Hardin County Regional Planning Director*
- Mercer**
 Jim Wiechart, *Mercer County Engineer*
 Dave Buschar, *Mercer County Commissioner*
 Jared Ebbing, *Economic Development Director*
- Putnam**
 Mike Lenhart, *Putnam County Engineer*
 John Schlumbohm, *Putnam County Commissioner*
 Michael Lammers, *Putnam County Commissioner*
- Van Wert**
 Kyle Wendel, *Van Wert County Engineer*
 Kory Thatcher, *Van Wert Deputy County Engineer*
 Todd Wolfrum, *Chairman of County Commissioners*
- Wyandot**
 Michael Kohl, *Wyandot County Engineer*
 Dave Courtad, *Wyandot County Commissioner*
 Kyle McColly, *Mayor of Upper Sandusky*