

**Erie Regional Planning Commission and
Metropolitan Planning Organization**



Winter Report
2019

Winter Report

Table of Contents

- Department Information.....2-3
- Community Development.....4-6
- Erie County Land Bank.....6
- Economic development.....7
- Metropolitan Planning Organization.....9-17
- Other Projects and Activities.....18-20



Winter Report

Erie County Department of Regional Planning and Development

Erie County Regional Planning Commission

What Can We Do For You?

We would be more than happy to assist with...

Planning Services

- ◆ Zoning Code/Resolution Development and Revisions/Updates
- ◆ Subdivision Regulations Development and Revision/Updates
- ◆ Comprehensive Planning
- ◆ Special Planning Studies
- ◆ Planning Research
- ◆ Downtown Revitalization Activities
- ◆ Legal Opinions on Zoning and Planning Issues
- ◆ Newsletters with Planning Information
- ◆ Grant Search Assistance and Writing
- ◆ Subdivision Review for Unincorporated Areas
- ◆ Lot Split Review and Approval
- ◆ Rezoning Review for Zoning Changes in Unincorporated Areas
- ◆ Census Bureau Programs
- ◆ Floodplain Program Administration

Economic Development

- ◆ Enterprise Zone (EZ) Program Administration
- ◆ Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA)
- ◆ Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)
- ◆ Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Grant Search Assistance and Writing

Housing and Community Development Services

- ◆ Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Administration
- ◆ Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) Administration
- ◆ Fair Housing Services
- ◆ Handicapped Access Improvements to Residential Units

Mapping/GIS/Computer Services

- ◆ Geographic Information System (GIS) Access
- ◆ Zoning Map Maintenance and Reproduction
- ◆ Specialized Maps for Documents or Presentations
- ◆ Assistance with Preparation of Documents or Presentations

Winter 2019

Officers of ERPC Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):

Chair:
Pat Sheingo

Vice-Chair:
Gary Boyle

Secretary:
Nicole Grohe

Officers of Erie Regional Planning Commission (ERPC):

President:
Dave Foster

Vice-President:
Ed Enderle

Secretary:
Tim King



Flowchart of Erie County Regional Planning



**Erie County
Commissioners**

**County Administrator
Pete Daniel**

**Planning and Development Director
Steve Poggiali**

**Administrative
Assistant
Cindy Rogers**

*Erie Regional
Planning
Commission (ERPC)
Contracted by Erie
County*

**Financial Economic
Development Specialist
Zach Rospert**

**Senior Planner
Tim King**

**Associate
Planner
Nicole Grohe**

**Senior Transportation
Planning Engineer
Carrie Whitaker**

**Transportation MPO
Policy & Technical Advisory
Committees**

Contact Information:
419.627.7792
Monday-Friday
8:00 AM-4:30 PM
Planning@ErieCounty.OH.Gov
2900 Columbus Avenue
Sandusky, Ohio 44870



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grant Update (CDBG) Awarded Grants: In 2018 Erie County was awarded \$196,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding which is primarily designed to help low/moderate income residents or for the elimination of slum/blight. During the project review process the following projects were selected for funding, approved by the Commissioners and submitted to the state. Following the state of Ohio's approval of Erie County's application a grant agreement was executed and the necessary environmental/historical reviews were completed and the funds released.

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Volunteers of America Homeless Shelter Operating Expenses | \$40,000 |
| Milan Township ADA Restrooms | \$35,000 |
| Berlin Heights West Main Street Improvements | \$81,800 |
| Erie County Admin/Fair Housing | <u>\$39,200</u> |
| | \$196,000 |

Below is a description of the approved projects and the status of each.

Since the early 1990's the Erie County Commissioners have been steadfast supporters of the **Volunteers of America Homeless Shelter** through the CDBG program and during this grant cycle the Commissioners set aside funding for the operations of the homeless shelter. During the CDBG planning process both the Community Development Implementation Strategy Committee (the CDBG recommending board) and the Erie County Commissioners identified the Volunteers of America (VOA) homeless shelter operations as the number one priority. These funds will go to pay for heat, buy food and keep the lights on at the shelter. This project is currently underway.

The **Milan Town Hall on the Village Square:** Due to the buildings age (built in 1877) much of the building needs to be brought up to code to satisfy the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The 2018 CDBG funds will be utilized to retrofit the first floor restrooms and make them ADA compliant. A new elevator has recently been installed in the building which adds to the buildings accessibility. The CDBG funds will cover almost the entire project cost with Milan Township picking up a small portion. The restroom project has design work and estimate completed with expectations it will bid out this winter followed by construction in early spring of 2020.

The **Village of Berlin Heights' West Main Street :** Located in the heart of downtown, Berlin Heights, West Main Street is in poor condition and in need of resurfacing as well as drainage improvements. It should be noted, the project was qualified by door to door income surveys as the beneficiaries are required to be at least 51% low/moderate income. The \$81,800 budgeted in CDBG funds will cover almost 82% of the total estimate of \$100,000 with Ohio Public Works funding approved for the drainage portion of the project. Project design work has been completed with a winter bid and the start of construction slated for the spring of 2020.

The above projects are required to be completed by August 31, 2020, with funds drawn by September 30, 2020 and grant closed-out by October 31, 2020. Erie County will once again apply for additional CDBG funding in June of 2020 with project solicitation during that spring.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

2017 Community Housing Impact & Preservation (CHIP) Grant Wrap Up: The 2017 CHIP grant was recently completed with all of the goals met and the funds expended. The goals and results of the 2017 CHIP grant were as follows:

The 2017 budget was as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Erie County | \$450,000 |
| City of Huron | \$350,000 |
| City of Vermilion | \$350,000 |
| City of Sandusky | \$250,000 * Home |
| Total: | \$1.4 million |

2019 Community Housing Impact & Preservation (CHIP) Grant: This year Erie County was awarded an additional \$1.25 million in CHIP funds to continue assisting Erie County residents with rehabilitating their homes. Some background on the program; Erie County has a “Walk Away” policy that stipulates that homes with costs estimates in excess of the allowed maximum are deemed a walk-a-way. In these cases the program cannot provide assistance. In addition there is no direct costs to applicant. The only cost is the payoff of the lien upon sale of the rehabbed home. First started in 1995 previous successes are as follows:

| <u>Amount</u> | <u>Year</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| \$500,000 | 1995 |
| \$600,000 | 1998 |
| \$500,000 | 2000 |
| \$555,000 | 2002 |
| \$555,000 | 2004 |
| \$540,000 | 2006 |
| \$522,000 | 2010 |
| \$400,000 | 2013 |
| \$575,000 | 2014 |
| \$1,400,000 | 2017 |
| \$1,250,000 | 2019 |
| \$7.397 million – total | |
| \$672,454 average award | |



This year’s partnership is slightly different from the 2017 application due to the demand for assistance from Sandusky. The partnership breakout is as listed below:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Erie County | \$300,000 |
| City of Huron | \$300,000 |
| City of Vermilion | \$300,000 |
| City of Sandusky | \$350,000 * Home |
| Total | \$1.250 million |

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/LAND BANK

News in Community Development Planning: Planning and Zoning Update: The planning staff continues to work with political jurisdictions across the county in an effort to update their zoning codes. Most recently text updates have been completed for Groton Township along with work on zoning and long range land use maps across the County. Many of the zoning codes in the County had not been updated in 20 years. Staff have also provided numerous rezoning recommendations to townships and in some cases partnered with the Erie County Prosecutor's Office on the final recommendations.

News in Land Bank Planning: The Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) Demolition Program Will be closed out in 2019 and it will signal the end of what has been a highly successful program helping Ohio counties fight blight and abandonment.. The Ohio Housing Finance Agency's NIP utilized Federal Hardest Hit Funds to provide over \$190 million in demolition and greening assistance to land banks throughout the State. Erie County benefitted from this program with an allocation of just under one million dollars. To date, the Erie County Land Reutilization Corporation (ECLRC) has used NIP funds to demolish 60 blighted properties comprising 90 residential units at a cost of over \$935,000.

Of the 60 properties demolished, 28 have been either transferred or are pending transfer to new owners, putting those once unproductive properties back to positive re-use and back on the tax roll. ECLRC envisions taking down one to two additional blighted structures before the end of 2019. At that time this funding source will be exhausted, and there is no definite source of funding ready to take its place.

Blight Fight Funding Efforts Continue: The Western Reserve Land Conservancy's Thriving Communities Institute (TCI), spearheaded by Director Jim Rokakis, has been actively seeking new funding sources to continue Ohio's blight fight. House Bill 252, introduced by State Representative David Greenspan earlier this year would potentially provide additional demolition dollars for commercial, industrial and residential properties. Ohio House of Representatives' Speaker Larry Householder has asked TCI and the Land Bank network to provide information as to the unmet demolition need that still remains in Ohio. To that end, ECLRC provided a county-wide listing of 135 properties that are either vacant, abandoned, condemned, tax delinquent, needing to be demolished or a combination of all of the above, as well as properties at risk of falling into one or more of the above mentioned categories or needing demolition in the near future without some sort of intervention. Mr. Rokakis believes the bill should get out of the house late this year or early 2020, where it will next meet the challenge of the Ohio Senate.



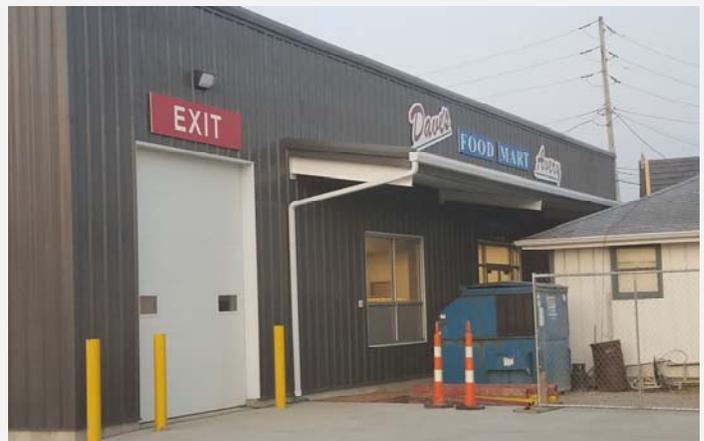
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF): The Erie County Revolving Loan (RLF) fund offers a loan program with favorable rates to new and existing businesses located or considering locating within the County. The program is designed to fill the gap between the owner's equity and a private lender loan. Therefore, most of the loans are made to those who have exhausted all other financing avenues. The loan cannot exceed 50% of the entire budget/project cost and there is a job creation requirement affiliated with each loan. The RLF loan can be used in concert with other local, state, and federal loan programs. All monies from the County's RLF are generated by repayments from businesses that have received financial assistance on Community Development Block Grant Economic Development (CDBG ED) projects. County staff and an outside RLF Committee evaluate all requests and make recommendations regarding loan proposals.

Erie Regional Planning Staff was busy during the fourth quarter of the year working to bring two loan requests to fruition. The first was a loan to Dave's Park Avery to purchase equipment for their new drive-thru and kitchen area at their gas station and convenience store located at 104 West Mason Road in Milan. Plans call for demolishing the existing convenience store with the gas pumps remaining in the current location. The total project cost was estimated to be \$1,200,128 with the RLF providing \$100,000 for equipment. Completing this project will allow Dave's Food Mart to retain four employees, and create 10 new jobs within the first year.

Owners Joe Fisher and his mother, Philomena Fisher have been in the convenience store business for 40 years. They also own the Dave's Food Mart drive-thru on Benedict Avenue in Norwalk.

The second RLF funding application approved was a request from Buderer Drug Company in Sandusky to assist with the demolition of a dilapidated bakery building they had acquired at 627 Hancock Street. The bakery is located next to their current location on the corner of Monroe and Hancock Streets and once demolished could provide a site for a possible expansion of their pharmacy operation. The \$50,000 loan was the first time Erie County Revolving Loan Funds had been used for a project in Sandusky. However, since the City had declared the area "spot slum and blight" and committed a \$150,000 grant to the demolition project, the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) indicated it could be funded by the RLF. The Loan Committee structured the loan so it could convert to a partial grant for each job created should there be an expansion within three years.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Ohio Enterprise Zone Program: The Ohio Enterprise Zone (EZ) Program is another economic development tool administered by municipal and county governments that provides real and personal property tax exemptions to businesses making investments in Ohio. While Erie County is certified as an active Enterprise Zone, businesses must first negotiate and have any abatement approved before the project can begin. The maximum exemption level of 100% for 15 years must be approved by the local school district.

The Erie County Commissioners approved an Ohio Enterprise Zone (EZ) Agreement for Strategic Weapons & Tactical Training, LLC (DBA: Lake Erie Arms) in September of 2018. The agreement approved a 15-year tax abatement for a project to construct and equip a new 90,000 plus square foot Guntry Club that included rifle lanes, indoor trap/skeet, a restaurant, special event space and hobby retail on property located at 10110 Milan Road in Milan Township. The project cost was estimated to be \$12,000,000 with job creation of five full-time, two part-time and the hiring of 43 additional employees by December 31, 2021. The EZ Agreement called for the construction of the project to be completed by the end of 2019; however, due to complications, the deadline could not be met. Therefore, the project owners requested an extension of the tax abatement until December 31, 2020. The extension request was approved by Milan Township as well as the Edison and EHOVE School Districts. Ultimately it was also approved by the Erie County Commissioners for one year with the end of 2020 as the deadline for completion.

Community Reinvestment Areas: Community Reinvestment Areas: The Ohio Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Program is an economic development tool administered by municipal and county governments that provides real property tax exemptions to business making investments in Ohio. In order to use the CRA program, a city, village or county petitions to the Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA) for confirmation of a geographical area in which investment has traditionally been discouraged. Part of the petition reviewed by the ODSA is a survey performed by the respective political subdivision. Once an area is confirmed, communities may offer real property tax exemptions to tax payers that invest in the area.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is another economic development mechanism available to township, municipal or county governments to finance public infrastructure improvements and, in some circumstances, residential rehabilitation. Payments derived from the increased assessed value of any real property are directed into a separate fund (often referred to as Payments in Lieu of Tax “PILOT”) used to pay off the bonds associated with the financing of the improvements.



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

News in Transportation Planning-Ohio Public Works Commission: Erie Regional Planning has been tasked with administering the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) Program and serving as a member of the Round 34 District 5 Executive Committee. District 5 covers nine counties in the northwest portion of the state. Project dollar amounts this year were \$5,801,400 for the **State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP)** and \$2,755,000 for the Local Transportation Improvement Program (LTIP). Eligible applicants are counties, cities, villages, townships, and water and sanitary districts. Eligible SCIP projects include improvements to roads, bridges, culverts, water supply systems, wastewater systems, storm water collection systems, and solid waste disposal facilities. Whereas, because the LTIP is funded by gas tax dollars, the funding is constitutionally limited to roads and bridges. Eligible applicants for the LTIP are counties, cities, villages and townships.

Erie County project sponsors submitted 12 applications for Round 34 funding and at the time of this writing four of the projects appeared to score high enough to be awarded funding. All SCIP and LTIP project selections will be finalized by the end of December with project construction being completed during the spring, summer and fall of 2020.

ERPC Staff and Commissioner Matt Old also serve on the Natural Resources Assistance Council to review and approve applications submitted for funding through the OPWC Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program. The Clean Ohio Program is dedicated to funding environmental conservation including acquisition of green space and the protection and enhancement of river and stream corridors. Grant recipients agree to maintain the properties in perpetuity so that they can be enjoyed and cherished for generations to come. This year's allocation was \$2,037,993 with project sponsors submitting eight funding requests totaling \$3,025,707. Finally, it should be noted, none of the project requests were from Erie County.



Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Updates: Staff has been actively working on a plan update to the county's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. A draft of the plan is available by request and online. A public meeting was held December 2nd. Currently staff is working with the plan steering committee and the MPO policy committee to complete the final paperwork to formalize the plan early next year. More about the final plan will be featured in the summer newsletter. The plan is an update to the 2013 plan and will be valid through 2025.



Protected Bike Lanes 101: What is it? Protected bike lanes help eliminate perceived risk and fear of collisions; reduce the risk of crashing into car doors; and add a level of predictability making streets safer for everyone. Because they use planters, curbs, parked cars or posts to separate bike and auto traffic on busy streets, protected lanes are essential to building a full network of bike-friendly routes. Once that network is built, it makes riding a bike a pleasant and practical way for many more people (not just the bold or athletic) to make trips of a mile or two.

When Riding a bike...

- Yield to pedestrians and wheelchair users who may be crossing the road and protected bike lane and give an audible signal before overtaking and passing another bicyclist.
- Watch for turning vehicles when approaching intersections, driveways and alleys.
- Be alert for passing bicyclists within the bike lane and for pedestrians crossing the bike lane to access parked motor vehicles.
- Be aware that the bike lane may weave as it approaches intersections to make bicyclists more visible to motorists.
- Stay to the right and allow faster users to pass safely.
- Watch for bicycle signals and obey all traffic signs and signals.

When Walking or using a wheelchair...

- Watch and listen for protected bike lane users traveling from either direction just as you would when crossing a street.
- Cross a protected bike lane at a crosswalk when crossing the street.
- Be alert for nearby cyclists when crossing a protected bike lane to access a parked vehicle.
- When traveling along a street, use the sidewalk if it is practical to do so.

When Driving...

- Park in the marked lane between the travel lane and the bike lane in instances where on-street parking is available.
- Take extra caution and look both ways before turning across the bike lane at intersections, driveways and alleys, especially when the barrier protected bike lane is protected by on-street parking.
- Watch for people on bikes traveling in both directions in two-way protected bike lanes.
- Remember through bicyclists have the right-of-way at uncontrolled intersections, driveways and alleys.
- Don't drive in a protected bike lane. You can turn across a protected bike lane, but must yield to people riding bicycles.

Adapted from <https://peopleforbikes.org/green-lane-project/protected-bike-lanes-101/> and <https://www.columbus.gov/publicservice/bicycle-program/Protected->

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MPO Overview: As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Sandusky Urbanized Area, the ERPC is the designated agency responsible for developing and maintaining a comprehensive, coordinated and continuing transportation planning process. This “3-C” process has been adopted to ensure that the region’s local transportation network continues to be developed cognizant of various land use patterns, and one in which the safe and efficient movement of goods and people is paramount. The agency’s transportation planning activities are predicated on a predetermined committee structure which includes the Policy Committee and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The Policy Committee is comprised mostly of local elected officials who meet on a regular basis in order to determine transportation needs and improvement schedules. The TAC, which reports to the Policy Committee, represents a cross section of technical expertise that meets to evaluate and review policies and applications before they appear before the Policy Committee. The MPO also involves the general public into the planning processes. In order to ensure input and community involvement, the agency utilizes the services of its Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and other ad-hoc advisory committees. The MPO also receives valuable input from its Safety Review and Improvement Committee. The MPO’s responsibility to further an integrated transportation plan for the region is a difficult task which requires an informed decision making process involving a diverse cross section of representatives from the community. These committees associated with the MPO meet on a regular basis to give guidance to those projects and policies implemented through the MPO. These committees also work to ensure greater public outreach and comment as a component of future MPO projects.

Technical Advisory Committee Members (TAC):

- Andy Johns-Federal Highway Administration
- Aaron Klein- City of Sandusky Engineer
- Andy White-City of Huron, City Manager
- Mike Schafrath-ODOT D3
- Dave Foster-ERPC
- David Moyer-Erie County Utilities Director
- Abbey Bemis- Erie Co. Econ. Develop. Corp. Director
- Matt Lasko- Sandusky Comm. Develop. Director
- Amy Moore-Erie Metro Parks
- Robert England-Erie County Health Department
- Eric Dodrill-Erie Soil & Water
- Nicole DeFreitas-Sandusky Transit Administrator
- Tony Valerius-City of Vermilion
- Nick Kataros -Utilities Representative
- Gary Boyle-Perkins Township

Policy Committee Members:

- Eric Wobser City of Sandusky City Manager
- Dennis Murray-Ex-Officio Mayor, City of Sandusky
- Paul Sigsworth-Erie County Sheriff
- Andy Johns-Federal Highway Administration
- Angela Byington -City of Sandusky
- Andrew Shepler-ODOT, Central Office
- Pat Sheingo-Erie County Commissioner
- Mike Schafrath-ODOT D3
- Aaron Klein-City of Sandusky Engineer
- Gary Boyle-Perkins Township
- Mayor City of Huron-City of Huron
- Jim Forthofer-City of Vermilion, Mayor



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

ERPC MPO Transportation Improvement Program: Coordinating the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) represents one of the Erie Regional Planning Commission's (ERPC) major responsibilities as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Sandusky Urbanized Area. The TIP functions as the formal listing of the federal funded transportation improvement projects that will be implemented within Erie County during the next four years. The formal TIP listing serves as a prerequisite to expending U.S. Department of Transportation federal surface transportation funding on the transportation system improvements within the county. The four-year TIP has primarily two elements, an Annual Element, which are projects programmed for the first year, and a multi-year element, which are projects that have been identified for future years. Below are the ERPC MPO funded projects currently in the State Fiscal Year 2020 – 2023 TIP.

| | Jurisdiction | Project Location | Project Description | MPO Approved Funds |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|---|---|--|
| S F Y 2 0 2 0 | City of Vermilion | Vermilion Road | Phase 2 - Resurfacing | \$673,094 Surface Transportation Funds |
| | Erie County Engineer | Columbus Avenue (Perkins - Bogart) | Resurfacing | \$790,400 Surface Transportation Funds PROJECT COMPLETED |
| | City of Huron | Berlin Road/US 6 | Intersection Improvements | \$350,000 Surface Transportation Funds |
| | City of Huron | US 6 Bridge over Huron River | Parapet and Handrail Painting | \$90,000 Transportation Alternative Funds |
| | City of Sandusky | Meigs Street | Reconstruction and Multi-use Path-Preliminary Engineering/Detail Design | \$186,556 Surface Transportation Funds |
| S F Y 2 0 2 1 | Perkins Township | East Strub Road (250-Perkins) & Perkins Ave. (Strub-Peterson Lane) | Install Sidewalks (Design, Utilities, Right of Way, Environmental) | \$91,360 Transportation Alternative Funds |
| | Erie County Engineer | Strub Road (Columbus - US 250) | Resurfacing, Sidewalk Installation | \$225,600 Surface Transportation Funds \$176,000 Transportation Alternative Funds |
| | City of Sandusky | Monroe Street (Decatur St to Meigs St) | Roadway Reconstruction (Environmental, Right of Way, Detail Design) | \$75,943 Surface Transportation Funds |
| | City of Huron | US 6 @ Center Street | Intersection Modifications | \$500,000 Surface Transportation |
| S F Y 2 0 2 2 | City of Sandusky | Meigs Street | Reconstruction and Multi-use Path (Construction) | \$849,615 Surface Transportation Funds |
| | City of Vermilion | Sunnyside Road (350' north of Jerusalem Rd. to 800' north of Norfolk/Southern grade crossing) | Road repair/resurfacing | \$825,606 Surface Transportation Funds |
| | Perkins Township | East Strub Road (250-Perkins) & Perkins Ave. (Strub-Peterson Lane) | Install Sidewalks (Design, Utilities, Right of Way) | \$339,680 Transportation Alternative Funds |
| S F Y 2 0 2 3 | City of Sandusky | Monroe Street (Decatur St to Meigs St) | Roadway Reconstruction (Construction) | \$683,484 Surface Transportation Funds |

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

MPO Project Solicitation and Selection Process Updates: Throughout 2019 the MPO's Project Selection Committee met several times to discuss updating its project solicitation and selection process. The committee has recommended moving the call for new projects to an every other year cycle for specified state fiscal year(s) to be determined by the MPO's Policy Committee and dependent upon surface transportation and transportation alternative budget availability.

The committee is recommending the project application cycle to run from March 1st through April 30th. After April 30th of a solicitation cycle, ERPC staff will review all submitted project applications to ensure eligibility requirements have been met then in mid-May the project selection committee will meet to score and rank the projects using MPO defined criteria. Results of the scoring and ranking process will be summarized by staff and made available to the MPO's Citizens Advisory Committee and the public to gather input. Results of the scoring and ranking along with any comments received will then be sent onward to the MPO's Technical Advisory and Policy Committees for final project funding decisions.

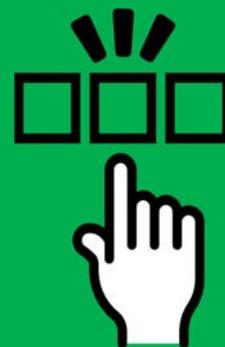
The project selection committee also recommended revisions be made to the project application and surface transportation project scoring sheet. Project application instructions were also created to provide further guidance to those filling out a MPO project application. The MPO's Technical Advisory and Policy Committee will consider approval of these recommended changes and documents at their December 19th meeting. Should the committees recommend approval of the new updates at the December meeting, staff anticipates requesting approval for solicitation of new Surface Transportation Projects in January 2020. The Project Selection Committee plans to continue meeting during 2020 to discuss updates for the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP).

ERPC MPO Long Range Transportation Plan Update: ERPC MPO staff is in the beginning stages of updating the MPO's long range transportation plan (LRTP). The LRTP is a 25-year future plan that provides a strategy of capital improvement programming developed to guide the investment of public funds in transportation facilities. The ambition of the LRTP is the development of an intermodal transportation system, one that is efficient, fiscally sound, environmentally friendly, & which provides the regional infrastructure to better compete in the global economy. Federal law requires the LRTP be updated every five years.

As such, staff is currently compiling data and in order conduct analysis to review current existing conditions of the region's transportation network. The plan will analyze all forms of transportation including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities and make project recommendations to best fit the future needs of the region while meeting fiscal constraints.

Staff is also in the process of developing the public involvement plan, which is one of the major components for the update process. Conducting stakeholder interviews, publishing hard copy and online surveys, and hosting various public meetings are all activities staff will be completing to ensure opportunities exist for public comment.

The first public meeting for the plan update has been scheduled for February 12, 2020 from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m. in the Downtown Commissioners Chambers located at 247 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky. A brief presentation will be made on the plan's goals and objectives, existing conditions of the region's transportation network, and results from completed stakeholder interviews/surveys. We are seeking public input on our region's transportation needs so we hope to see you at the meeting!



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

US State Route 6 Corridor Planning Study: The US 6 Corridor Planning Study is now complete and will go to the MPO's Policy Committee for final approval on December 19th. The purpose of the study was to increase efficiency, enhance safety and improve multi-modal options along the corridor.

TranSystems consultants were retained by the Erie Regional Planning Commission to analyze conditions on Cleveland Road (US 6) from Sycamore Line (US 250) in the City of Sandusky to Rye Beach Road in the City of Huron. The study also included the analysis of Butler Street (from Milan Road to Cleveland Road) in the City of Sandusky and Rye Beach Road (from Cleveland Road south to the rail crossing) in the City of Huron.

Existing conditions related to the roadway, railroad, culverts, bridges, signage, geotechnical considerations, utilities, way-finding, multi-modal connections, public transit, and environmental concerns were analyzed throughout the study area. Stakeholder and public meetings were also held throughout the process to present findings and gather feedback to develop and refine feasible alternatives. Based upon the provided information and evaluations, specific alternatives have been proposed and recommended for advancement. A list of the potential alternatives, along with a brief description and planning level cost estimates, is shown in the following table. Alternatives in bold text represent the recommended alternatives.

Roadway Alternatives and Planning Level Cost Estimates

| Alternative | Description | Construction Costs (in 2024 dollars) | ROW/Utility Costs | Society Safety Benefit |
|-------------|--|---|-------------------|------------------------|
| A | Signal modernization, removal of unwarranted signals, pavement restriping, removal of reversible lane, and add EB right turn lane on US 6 at Remington Avenue intersection in the City of Sandusky. | \$1,530,000 | \$145,000 | N/A |
| A1 | Butler Street remains open with a signal upgrade (includes total pavement replacement). | \$2,940,000 | \$0 | N/A |
| A2 | Butler Street closed with a cul-de-sac and signal removed. | \$90,000 | \$5,000 | \$1,360,000 |
| B1 | Construction of modern roundabout at Cedar Point Drive intersection (eastern alignment). | \$1,400,000 | \$510,000 | \$863,500 |
| B2 | Construction of modern roundabout at Cedar Point Drive intersection (western alignment). | \$1,380,000 | \$535,000 | \$863,500 |
| C1 | Construction of modern roundabout at Perkins Avenue intersection. | \$2,290,000 | \$250,000 | \$917,000 |
| C2 | Perkins Avenue at-grade intersection realignment. | \$4,390,000 | \$360,000 | \$157,800 |
| C3 | Perkins Avenue grade separation over railroad tracks. | \$12,700,000 | \$960,000 | \$157,800 |
| D1 | Construction of modern roundabout at Camp Road intersection. | \$2,920,000 | \$130,000 | \$3,020,100 |
| D2 | Widen US 6 at Camp Road intersection, add EB and WB left turn lanes and EB right turn lane on US 6 (maintain existing stop control on Camp Road). | \$1,950,000 | \$720,000 | \$987,300 |
| E | Widen US 6 between Camp Road and Rye Beach Road, add center turn lane throughout and add WB right turn lane at Sawmill Creek Drive. | \$2,390,000 | \$160,000 | \$1,606,400 |
| F1 | Construction of modern roundabouts along Rye Beach Road at US 6 intersection and SR 2 interchange (EB and WB ramps). | \$4,030,000 | \$380,000 | \$1,234,400 |
| F2 | Signal upgrades and pavement restriping along Rye Beach Road from US 6 to Sawmill Parkway. | \$990,000 | \$0 | N/A |

(cont'd...)

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

US State Route 6 Corridor Planning Study (cont'd): In addition to the recommended roadway improvements described above, a series of independent active transportation enhancements are recommended to improve sidewalk connectivity to and along US 6, as well as to provide a multi-use path between Sandusky and Huron. These are shown in the table below along with planning level cost estimates. Additionally, accommodations for the transit stops in the study corridor should be considered, including the addition of bus shelters and bus pull-out stops.

Other Alternatives and Planning Level Cost Estimates

| Description | Construction Costs (in 2024 dollars) | ROW/Utility Costs | Society Safety Benefit |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Multi-use path along the north side of US 6 from E. Shoreway Drive to Rye Beach Road. | \$1,090,000 | \$160,000 | N/A |
| Modal connection along the north side of US 6 from Cedar Point Drive to E. Shoreway Drive in the City of Sandusky (bike path or sidewalk to be determined). | \$645,000 | \$5,000 | N/A |
| Complete select sidewalk connections along US 6 in the City of Sandusky. | \$365,000 | \$80,000 | N/A |
| Multimodal connection along the east side of Rye Beach Road in the City of Huron (bike path or sidewalk to be determined). | \$85,000 | \$5,000 | N/A |

Once the feasibility study is officially approved by the MPO’s Policy Committee, the local agencies and potential project sponsors will need to further refine what will be necessary to support the advancement of individual projects through the preliminary and final design phases of project development. Stay tuned to the Planning Press for future updates!



US 6 and Perkins Avenue

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Coordinated Transportation Planning Update: What's new in coordinated planning? Erie County continues to meet with the mobility manager funded through the Ohio Department of Transportation. The annual review of the Coordinated Transportation Plan occurred last month and has been submitted to ODOT. ODOT has been exploring and test piloting the creation of regional coordinated plans. It is anticipated that Erie County will be included in a plan in the future. Staff will provide updates as they occur. Other services that are available to those in Erie County include travel training and passenger care attendant services.

If you need help using transportation, travel training can help. Mobility Management trainings provide education on scheduling rides, boarding and exiting vehicles, using wheelchairs and other mobility devices, understanding fares and rules, and other topics related to accessing transportation. One-on-one and group trainings are available. For more information or to schedule a training, contact Kelly Hammond, Mobility Advocate, 419-333-6075 or krhammond@glcap.org.

Mobility Management also offers a Passenger Care Attendant program for riders who may need travel assistance. Passenger care attendants are trained volunteers who help individuals with mobility impairments by offering door-through-door assistance, assistance with grocery bags and packages, and boarding and exiting vehicles. If you would like more information or are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact Alyssa Buccione, Mobility Specialist, 419-332-2028 or ajbuccione@glcap.org

ERPC MPO Regional Safety Plan: Nationally, over 30,000 persons are killed in motor vehicle crashes annually and in Ohio, this number averages 1,000 per year. As such, ODOT has invested Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to partner with the ERPC MPO to develop a regional safety plan. The goal of the plan is to identify strategies and actions to address the critical factors contributing to crashes and provide a framework to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on all roads in the ERPC MPO region. Between 2009 and 2017, Erie County experienced an average of 9 fatalities and 99 serious injuries per year.



Analysis of ODOT crash data as documented in the GIS Crash Analysis Tool (GCAT) database was completed and presented to stakeholders at two stakeholder workshops led by the consultant staff. Following the review and discussion of high-level crash trends, stakeholders prioritized four emphasis areas to prioritize efforts and resources: intersections, roadway departure, distracted driving, and speeding. Stakeholders also reviewed priority safety locations in the region and discussed/identified areas of major concern, issues, factors, actions, and improvements that could be used to reduce fatalities and serious injuries across the region's roadway network. With this input, WSP will develop an action plan that prioritizes identified strategies, determine who is implementing/leading them, and establish a timeframe for implementation, and resources needed. This action plan, as well as the results of the data analysis will be combined into a final plan for use by all transportation and safety stakeholders in the ERPC MPO region to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. The plan is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

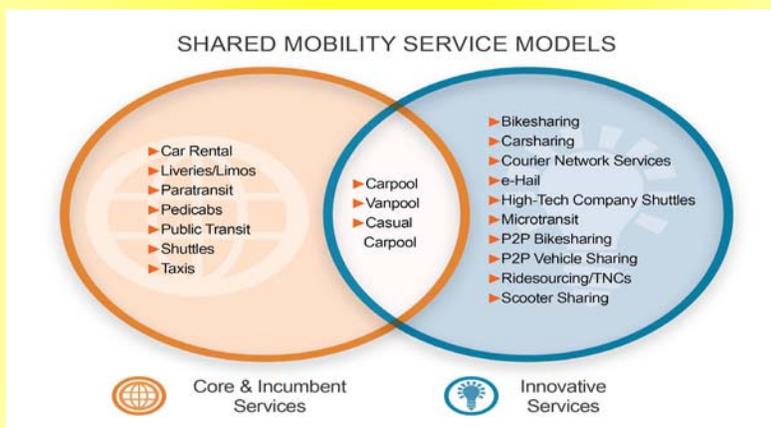
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

[News in Transportation Planning: What is Shared Mobility?](#) *Shared mobility is the use of a vehicle, bicycle, or other low-speed travel mode— transportation strategy that enables users to have short-term access to a mode of transportation on an as-needed basis.*

Shared mobility includes various service models and transportation modes that meet the diverse needs of travelers, including roundtrip services; one-way station-based services; and one-way free-floating services. Shared mobility directly influences and is influenced by most facets of urban planning, including the following:

- **Transportation** and circulation such as travel patterns, modal choice, vehicle occupancy, and vehicle miles traveled.
- **Zoning, land use, and growth management** including zoning requirements, parking demand, and the use of public rights-of-way.
- **Urban design** by promoting walking and cycling, providing first-and-last-mile connections to public transportation, and potentially reducing the need to own personal vehicles.
- **Housing** by supporting affordable strategies by potentially reducing parking demand and allowing for reduced minimum parking requirements at new developments.
- **Economic development** by creating new opportunities for employment and generate revenue from underused resources.
- **Environmental policy, conservation, and climate action** by reducing negative impacts commonly associated with surface transportation.

Shared mobility and planning: Understanding shared mobility can aid planners in leveraging the positive impacts and taming the negative impacts to achieve planning and public policy goals, including reducing driving and parking congestion; lowering vehicle miles traveled and vehicle ownership rates; improving air quality and achieving climate action targets; and providing mobility access to underserved populations, such as low-income travelers. Insights into shared mobility can aid planners in understanding impacts on public infrastructure, implementing supportive policies, and making informed transportation and development decisions.



Adapted from: The American Planning Association, PAS Report 583 Planning for Shared Mobility, Cohen and Shaheen. https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/publication/download_pdf/PAS-Report-583.pdf

Bayfront Corridor Committee:

Erie Regional Planning Staff also serve on the City of Sandusky Bayfront Corridor Committee. The group meets each month on the third Thursday to discuss a number of issues relative to development along the City of Sandusky waterfront. Topics discussed include the Paper District, transient marina project, the development of the properties west of the Paper District, Lions Park redevelopment, infrastructure and beautification projects, parking, Sandusky Bay Pathway and other related development and recreation projects associated with the Bayfront Corridor.

Erie County Community Council:

ERPC staff also attends Erie County Community Council. Community Council meetings allow staff to share with other social service groups what programs the department has available.

GIS Advisory Board: Staff continues to attend the Erie County GIS Advisory Board. The GIS Board advises county staff on GIS services.



Other County Projects and Activities

Ohio Association of Regional Councils: Erie Regional Planning Commission (ERPC) staff has become very active at the state level over the past few years with the Ohio Association of Regional Councils (OARC). Currently, ERPC staff serves on the OARC Policy Committee working on a strategic agenda with one collective voice with a proactive framework to assertively advocate for issues, policies and interests throughout the State of Ohio. OARC is interested in developing innovative and responsive public policies and legislation that will ensure strong infrastructure, cultivate new public and private sector relationships, create new jobs, enhance the quality of life, and secure a formidable presence for our state. Currently, the Policy Committee is tracking the following bills:

HB 7 - WATER FUND

HB 13- BROADBAND EXPANSION

HB 72 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

HB 115 - REGULATIONS

HB 149 - TAX EXEMPTION

HB 163 - WATER/SEWER SERVICE

HB 190 - BROADBAND PROGRAM

HB 252 - LAND REUTILIZATION

HB 264 - INFRASTRUCTURE LOANS

HB 288 - EMINENT DOMAIN

HB 295 - ELECTRIC SCOOTERS

SJR 1 - WATER BONDS

SB 1 REGULATIONS

SB 2 - WATERSHED PROGRAM

SB 161- CAR SHARING



Metropolitan Planning Organization Executive Directors from around the State of Ohio

The Firelands Partnership: Staff continues to serve on the Steering Committee of the Firelands Partnership. The Firelands Partnership brings together business, educational and community leaders, local government officials and other supporters to provide insights on fostering change and creating economic opportunities. The goal is to create collaboration and partnership over a multi-county area.



Other County Projects and Activities

Lot Splits:

- Berlin – 2 splits; 3 transfers; 1 revised legal
- Florence - 4 transfers; 4 exempt (over five acres); 1 revised legal
- Groton - 6 splits; 1 transfer; 2 exempt (over five acres); 2 revised legals
- Huron - 2 splits; 3 transfers; 7 exempt (over five acres)
- Margaretta - 2 splits; 4 transfers; 4 exempt (over five acres); 2 revised legals
- Milan - 5 splits; 3 transfers; 7 exempt (over five acres); 2 revised legals
- Oxford - 3 splits; 3 transfers; 1 exempt (over five acres)
- Perkins – 17 splits; 11 transfers; 4 revised legals
- Vermilion – 1 split; 6 transfers

Just a Reminder...We will be closed:

- December 25th, Christmas
- January 1st, New Years Day
- January 20th, MLK Jr. Day
- February 17th, President's Day
- May 25th, Memorial Day



Members of Erie

Regional Planning Commission:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>City of Sandusky</i> | <i>Margaretta Township</i> |
| <i>City of Vermilion</i> | <i>Milan Township</i> |
| <i>City of Huron</i> | <i>Oxford Township</i> |
| <i>Village of Berlin Heights</i> | <i>Perkins Township</i> |
| <i>Village of Castalia</i> | <i>Vermilion Township</i> |
| <i>Village of Kelleys</i> | <i>Village of Bay View</i> |
| <i>Island</i> | |
| <i>Village of Milan</i> | |
| <i>Berlin Township</i> | |
| <i>Florence Township</i> | |
| <i>Groton Township</i> | |
| <i>Huron Township</i> | |



Presentations: Planning staff made numerous presentations this year to various political subdivisions and local community groups. Topics for these presentations included metropolitan planning organizations, development procedures for townships and municipalities and economic development in Erie County.

Website: The Department's website can be found at:

<http://www.eriecounty.oh.gov/departments-and-agencies/economic-development/erie-regional-planning-commission/>. The site is updated to include news and information regarding the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Regional Planning/Zoning, Census Information, Comprehensive Plan Development and Department Publications.

