

ERIE REGIONAL
PLANNING COMMISSION
&
METROPOLITAN
PLANNING
ORGANIZATION

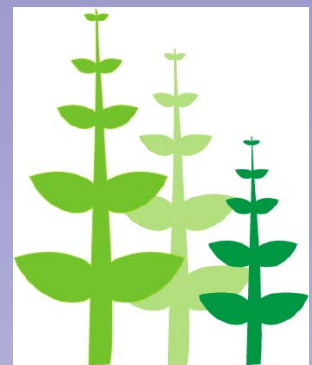
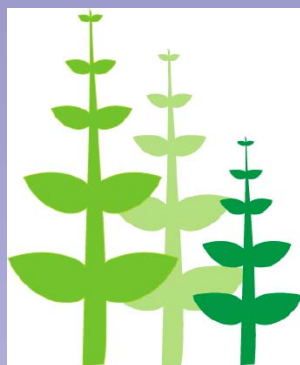
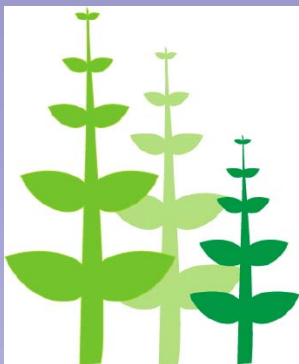


Spring Quarterly Report 2017

Spring Quarterly Report

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Spring Quarterly 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
- ◆ Zoning Code/Resolution Reproduction Services
- ◆ 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 for Industrial Developments
- ◆ Community Reinvestment Areas (CRA)
- ◆ Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)
- ◆ Tax Increment Financing (TIF)



2017

Grant Search Assistance and Writing Housing & 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

Officers of ERPC Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):

Chair:

Pat Sheingo

Vice-Chair:

Gary Boyle

Secretary:

Nicole Grohe

Mapping/GIS/Computer Services

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

Officers of Erie Regional Planning Commission (ERPC):

President:

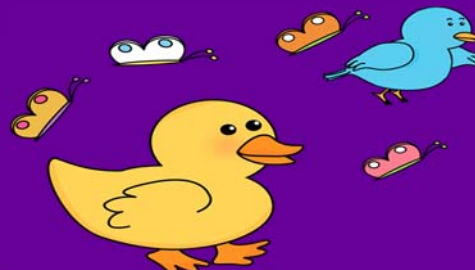
Dave Foster

Vice-President:

Ed Enderle

Secretary:

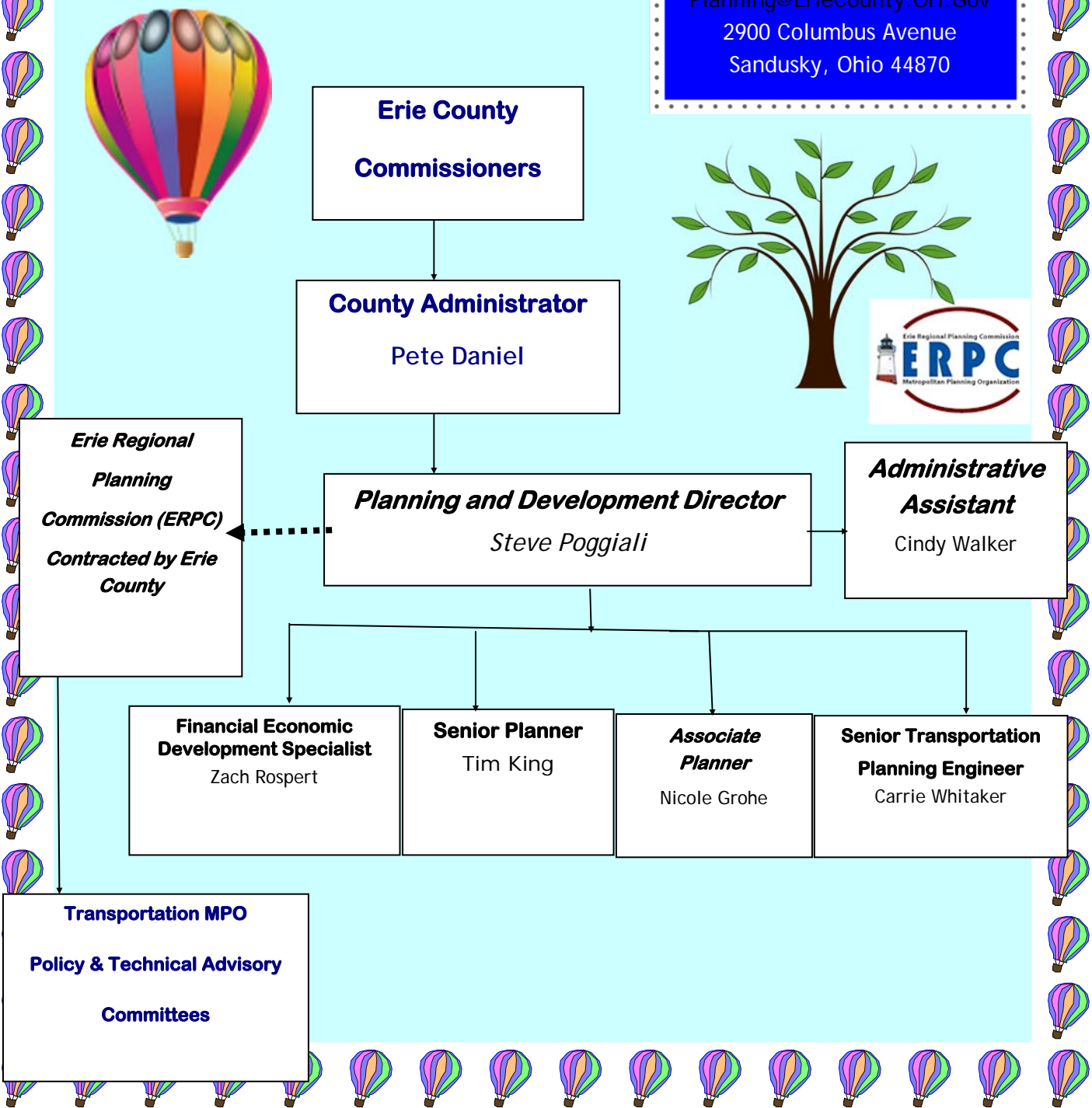
Tim King



STAFF

Flowchart of Erie County Regional Planning

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

News in Community Planning: Land Use Debate: In December, Erie County, Sandusky City Schools, Perkins Township, the City of Sandusky and the Erie Soil and Water Conservation District held the 8th Grade Land Use Debate. The debate, held annually since 1990, challenges students to develop a given piece of property while facing real world regulations and challenges.

This year's student developers didn't fail to impress. The students were given the 15 acre Apex Property on First Street in Sandusky. Seven groups of student developers proposed various fictional developments and the winning group's proposal would give our existing amusement and water parks some serious competition. The Great Lakes Horizon Hotel and Casino was the winning proposal and featured a modern hotel with a skywalk, a convention center, marina, ferry boats to the islands, Jet Ski and kayak rentals along with a restaurant and casino.

The debate was held in the ballroom of Castaway Bay with kudos going out to Cedar Point for the use of the facilities.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program: The Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) Program provides funding to local governments to improve and provide affordable housing for low- and moderate-income citizens. CHIP funds are distributed to communities in one competitive funding round from the state of Ohio. Communities are allowed to submit only one application in any application round.

The Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) Program funding allows communities to undertake housing-related activities, including necessary infrastructure improvements. CHIP grants to communities encourage flexible, community-wide approach to improving and providing affordable housing and strengthening neighborhoods through community collaboration.

The county's population is 31% low/moderate income (LMI) and 38% of homes built prior to 1960 demonstrates a great need in the county for housing activities. Analysis indicates that regardless of income levels, 55% of owner-occupied, and 54% of all renter-occupied housing units contained lead based paint. The fact that the county's housing needs far exceed available resources makes it even more important that limited resources to aid residents must be spent on activities that will have the greatest impact.

Historically Erie County's housing stock is older than both the state and national average. But with the assistance of the state Office of Community Development the Community Housing Impact and Preservation Program (CHIP) has infused new life into some old homes. Since 1995 Erie County has received just under \$5 million in CHIP funding to help rebuild the housing stock of our low and moderate income population from Bayview to Vermilion. New roofs, furnaces and wheelchair ramps have helped our residents stay in and get in their homes.

May of calendar year (CY) 2017 is the next funding round during which the 2017 CHIP application will partner Erie County with the cities of Sandusky, Huron and Vermilion and total \$1.4 million. The grant funding will benefit persons that qualify financially and who needed assistance with housing repairs or homeownership. Applicants have, traditionally, been able to receive several forms of assistance including the following:

Home/Building Repair: Those who qualify for the funds could receive up to \$8,000 to fix a problem that poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of the occupants. This form of assistance allows for administrative flexibility because the grant does not require the repairs to be bid out in a formal bidding process; therefore, once identification of a problem is made, staff can hire contractors immediately.

Private Rehabilitation Program: The funds from this portion of the CHIP grant are used for non-emergency types of home repairs. In the past, CHIP home rehabilitation funds have been used to fix crumbling foundations, roof replacements or vinyl siding of a house.

CHIP grants are funded in two-year grant cycles with the last funding received through the 2014 grant application that partnered Erie County with the City of Vermilion. Erie County would have been prohibited from applying in the 2014 funding round absent the partnership with the City of Vermilion that totaled \$575,000 with 54% or \$308,000 for Vermilion and 46% or \$267,000 for Erie County. Planning staff recently closed the 2014 CHIP with 27 housing units rehabbed and provided rental assistance to 28 individuals in conjunction with the Erie Metropolitan Housing Authority. All told Erie County has been awarded \$4,747,000 in CHIP funding starting in 1995 for an average allocation of \$527,444.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): Change appears to be on the horizon for the Community Development Block Grant program. In the past Erie County would annually receive an allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Planning staff recently received notice from the state of Ohio that the annual allocation may now be changed to a biennial allocation. This change would delay Erie County from receiving CDBG funding until 2018 (provided Congress doesn't eliminate the program altogether.) Unfortunately, that would mean a delay in receiving the funding; however, Erie County would receive a double allocation at one time allowing for the ability to fund larger projects that might have a greater impact.

The CDBG grant is awarded to Erie County on a formula basis through the state of Ohio and may be used for a wide range of activities. The formula is based on a statutory formula which takes into account population, poverty, incidence of overcrowded housing and age of housing. CDBG funds are available only to political jurisdictions and non-profit organizations, not to individuals.

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. Beginning in 1974, the CDBG program is one of the longest continuously run programs at HUD.

The primary statutory objective of the CDBG program is to develop viable communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment and by expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. The county must ensure that at least 51% of its CDBG grant funds are used for activities that benefit low to moderate-income persons. This general objective is achieved by granting maximum feasible priority to activities, which benefit low to moderate-income families or aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight. Under unique circumstances, the county may also use their funds to meet urgent community development needs.

Planning staff is responsible for the administration of the county's CDBG Small Cities Formula Grant Program. The county received \$126,600 in grant funds for Calendar Year (CY) 2016 and they will be expended during CY 2017 to eliminate slum and blight conditions or to benefit low to moderate-income persons.

Administration of the grant program involves several public hearings, the preparation of the grant application, the preparation of bid documents for approved construction projects, the monitoring of project progress, and the drawdown of grant funds from the Ohio Development Services Agency, Office of Community Development (OCD).

The County's CDBG funds must be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons. Uses of the funds are determined by Erie County, following a thorough comprehensive strategic planning process, which includes an application and at least two annual citizen participation meetings. This year Erie County's allocation is \$126,000 and it was submitted to the state of Ohio in June.



(continued...)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) (cont'd):

The CDBG allocation to Erie County in 2015 was down significantly due to cuts at the federal level. Erie County's allocation was at an all-time low of \$84,000, a reduction of 27% from 2014. The CDBG allocation to Erie County for 2016 bounced back 33% to \$126,000 over 2015's allocation of \$84,000. Projects that will be funded in the 2016 CDBG grant application include the following;

Volunteers of America	Operations	\$19,000
Perkins Township	ADA Playground	\$46,800
Erie County Senior Center	Facility Improvements	\$45,000

The projects should commence in the spring of 2017 once they receive both historic and environmental review clearances



Senior Center



04/18/2015

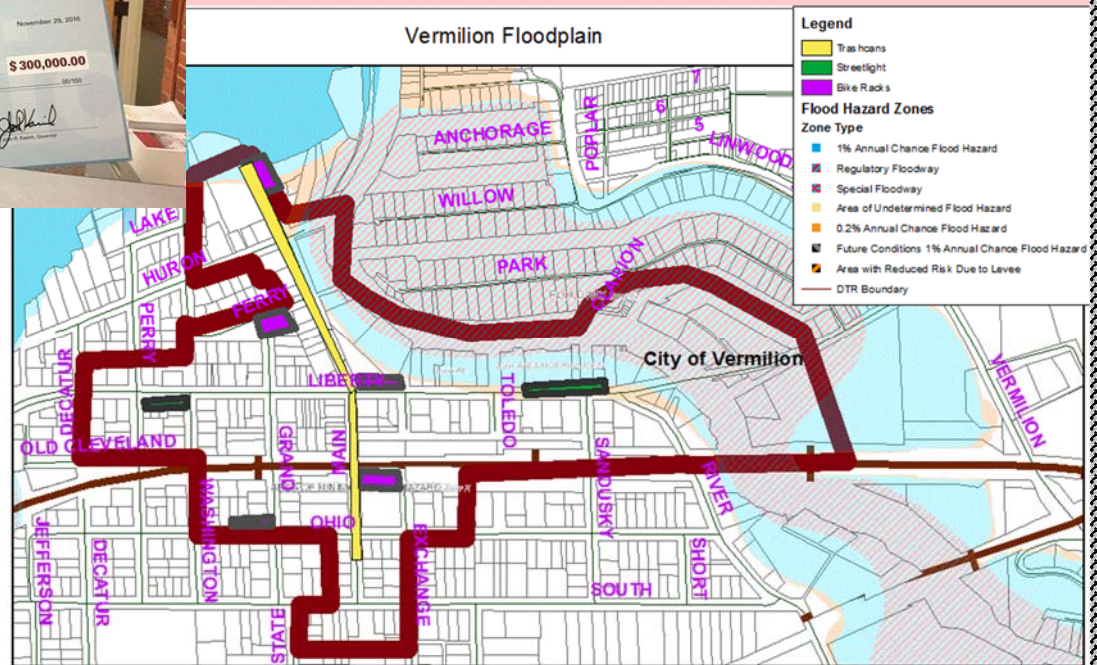
BAYVIEW SEWER CONNECTIONS ASSISTANCE TAKES SHAPE: Work continues on the Bay View Sewer Connection Assistance Program as planning staff are working to assist in the execution of contracts. Bids were received from a total of seven different contractors and the lowest bid was awarded the contract. A total of 27 connection contracts will be executed in the first round. \$100,000 was budgeted to help those that can't afford to connect into the new sewer service. To date Erie County has committed roughly \$50,000 of the \$100,000 connection assistance fund. Once the first round is finalized a second round of applications will be accepted.

During 2015 Erie County applied to the state of Ohio and was funded in the amount of \$600,000 as part of the state's Residential Private Infrastructure Grant to assist homeowners that qualify financially to connect into the newly installed sanitary sewer throughout the Village of Bayview. Approximately 70% of the grant was budgeted to assist with installation of the sanitary sewer infrastructure. Applications for assistance can be found at the Bayview Village Hall or by contacting the Planning Commission office at (419) 627-7792.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Revitalization (DTR) Grant Funded: Recently, the state of Ohio notified Erie County that its 2016 Downtown Revitalization Grant (DTR) application was funded for the maximum amount of \$300,000. Erie County has once again partnered with the City of Vermilion and after considerable work with Vermilion Mayor Eileen Bulan, city staff, community activists and numerous volunteers DTR funds were awarded by the state. It should be noted, only the top ranked 37 of 69 applications submitted to the state were funded making this application round very competitive. The DTR will partner Erie County with the City of Vermilion to fund renovations to downtown businesses. Specifically, projects will target the Vermilion Central Business District and improvements will include: improvements to blighted streetscapes and rehabilitation of deteriorated building facades and address building code violations

All of the businesses in the downtown can apply for the grant. The total budget is \$220,000 is for private rehabilitation to help downtown businesses bring their buildings up to code. In addition, the budget sets aside \$50,000 for street improvements, street lights, garbage cans and bike racks in the downtown area and \$30,000 for administration. Businesses will be able to apply after the County executes a contract with the state of Ohio and the proper state clearances are granted. Many recipients in the downtown have benefited from other downtown grants through the years making improvements to businesses, including Brummer's Chocolates and Main Street Grille. Bulan noted other past successful County/City grants include the 2015 Neighborhood Revitalization Grant (NRG) in the amount of \$300,000 to repave streets in the Vermilion-on-the-Lake neighborhoods, demolish an abandoned home and improve park lighting and drainage. Other grants the County and City have partnered on include the Community Housing Impact and Preservation (CHIP) grant which renovates housing for those that financially qualify and a number of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant projects. "We've partnered with Erie County on numerous grant applications and we look forward to continuing that partnership moving forward" Bulan said.



News in Land Bank Planning: Ohio Moves To Ban Plywood Boarding On Vacant and Abandoned Properties:

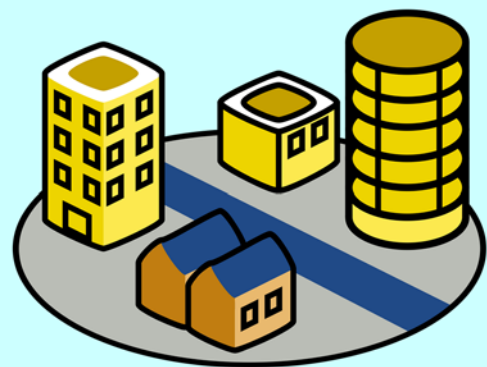
Ohio became the first in the nation to outlaw the use of plywood on properties certified as vacant and abandoned. The prohibition, part of HB 463, was tucked into one of 28 bills signed in early January by Governor John Kasich. The law takes effect in 90 days.

Plywood has been an industry standard for securing vacated housing for so many decades that the very act of doing so is called "boarding up" the property. It's widely available, easy to use and inexpensive. However, supporters of using a different material say plywood is susceptible to break-ins and vandalism, obstructs the visibility for first responders and sends a visual signal that depreciates surrounding property values. Plywood will be replaced by clearboard, a plexiglass manufactured by SecureView in Cleveland, which has been catching on around the country. Fannie Mae, the federal government-sponsored mortgage association, has been using the clear polycarbonate windows and doors for several years and, in November, declared plywood unacceptable for securing vacant properties.

Considerable concern over HB 463 has been expressed by municipalities and their safety service personnel. Lt. Matthew Hertzfeld of the Toledo Fire Department stated "Our sole focus is the safety of our firefighters inside that structure fighting that fire or performing a rescue. In the event of an emergency inside there, they need to egress immediately, break out a window if they have to." He also noted that plywood is easy to remove when fighting a fire. Clearboard is not. Another concern has been the cost of the clearboarding system. A 4-by-8-foot sheet of plywood that's 15/32 inches thick costs \$17 to \$20, while a similar-sized sheet of clear polycarbonate costs about \$115. Cleveland Councilman Tony Brancatelli says he can understand why some might be worried about using the clear boarding process over plywood in boarding up a home because in most cases it's at least double the cost.

In Ohio, the plywood ban comes close on the heels of another new law that sped up foreclosures on vacant and abandoned properties. It establishes a fast-track system trimming Ohio's foreclosure process from two years or more to as little as six months. Rep. Jonathan Dever, the bill's sponsor, said the plywood ban applies only to properties sent through that process, which should now be turned over much more quickly. "If you drive through a neighborhood and there's boarded-up houses, what does that tell you? Nobody's there," Dever said. "The idea is, if you're going to foreclose on a house, let's not advertise that it's empty. Let's avoid break-ins and vandalism and let's get it sold as soon as possible."

Brancatelli said the interpretation of the new law is that only banks running a home through the fast-track foreclosure process will be required to use the polycarbonate product and pay the additional cost and that cities and land banks will not be forced to use the higher priced product. *Excerpted from Cleveland Plain Dealer, WTOL Toledo, Columbus Dispatch*



LAND BANK/ECONOMIC PLANNING

Cleanup Work At Castalia Abandoned Gas Station Begins: One 6,000 gallon and one 10,000 gallon Underground Storage Tank (UST) have been removed at the former Citgo Gas Stations at the intersection of SR 101 & SR 269 in Castalia. The project was made possible by an Abandoned Gas Station Cleanup Grant the Village of Castalia received from Ohio Development Services. Contaminated soil from around the tanks was also removed and replaced with clean fill. Environmental consultants Mannik & Smith Group, who have been spearheading the project, are now completing their environmental reports and look to get the property a clean bill of health from the State of Ohio's Bureau of Underground Storage Tank Regulation (BUSTR) later this spring. Once the site is determined "clean" it can be marketed and returned to productive use.



Land Bank Gearing Up For Next Rounds Of Demolitions: At their January 26th meeting, the Erie County Commissioners approved contracts for the demolition of 8 properties in Erie County. 5 within the Sandusky city limits and 3 in Perkins Township. 1722 & 1724 Putnam St., 1710 Pierce St., 1002 W. Washington St., 813 N. Depot St. (all in Sandusky) & 3610 Spencer Ave., 3614 Beatty Ave., & 3604 Grant St. (all in Perkins Township). These properties were identified by the individual municipalities and the Land Bank as either vacant, abandoned, blighted, tax delinquent, condemned or a combination of all 5. All demolitions will be funded by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency's Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP).

This is the first batch of demolitions (8) put out to bid under the City-County partnership that was put in place last fall. There will be a second batch (7) that will be advertised for bid in late February. Out of this group 6 properties are within the Sandusky city limits and 1 is in Berlin Heights. With contracts approved, the work should begin soon and should be completed in approximately 60-90 days. With programs like NIP the County Land Bank is able to eliminate neighborhood eyesores and nuisance properties through targeted demolition. These properties often become targets of vandalism, reduce the property values of the surrounding properties and are a drain on the resources of the individual municipalities. The lots left after demolition can become additions to adjoining neighbor's properties, reducing neighborhood densities and providing more green space or can potentially become a site for future infill development.

News in Economic Planning: Is Cash Still King?: Are consumers abandoning cash at an increasing rate? An article in Shopping Centers Today (SCT) noted that Euromonitor International had predicted by the end of 2016, credit and debit card payments would surpass cash payments globally for the first time with the trend set to accelerate. Consumer-card and mobile commerce payments totaling around \$23.1 trillion are anticipated to grow by 6.6 percent and 23 percent compounded annually between now and 2021. However, global cash payments are projected to grow by a comparatively meager 1.3 percent. Mobile commerce is a winner in this trend having risen 53 percent between 2015 and 2016. The stagnant growth of cash payments signals a shift from an increase of cash supply to a decrease and is a major victory for card and electronic payments. "This stagnant growth of cash payments signals a shift from an increase of cash supply to a decrease and is a major victory for card and electronic payments, said Kendrick Sands, a senior consumer finance analyst at Euromonitor International.

Moreover, a study by Javelin Strategy & Research of retail point-of-sale market share by payment type finds that cash has represented the smaller share of total payments at all retailers for years. The data show that cash and checks comprise 27 percent of all retail transactions today, compared with 66 percent of transactions for the debit and credit-card-side. The remaining seven percent involves prepaid and gift cards and mobile proximity payments. Clearly, the world is evolving in a cashless direction, and it's the direction that all retailers are heading in." said Ken Perkins, founder of Retail Metrics, a research firm that analyzes store sales and retail earnings.

The question becomes do the trend lines spell the end of cash which has stubbornly clung to relevance for the past few years. Not necessarily according to Marshal Cohen, a retail industry analyst for NPD Group, "it is funny how the scale has shifted but even back when cash was king, credit had a role and now we see the reverse."



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF): 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 or 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. Anyone interested in the RLF loan program should contact the Regional Planning Commission at 419.627.7792.

Ohio Enterprise Zone Program: The Ohio Enterprise Zone 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.

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.

Regional Planning staff, the County Auditor's Office and the Tax Incentive Review Council ("TIRC") met on March 1, 2017 to vote on the status of each active tax incentive. Members of the TIRC were presented with the total dollar-value investment, and jobs created as a result of the real estate improvements. Each township or municipal corporation with active incentives in place assigned individuals to join representatives from the local school districts in reviewing and recommending to continue or discontinue the incentive. These recommendations were then presented to the Erie County Commissioners who hold the final decision as to the status of the incentive for the 2017 tax collection year. All active tax incentives can be found on the Ohio Development Services Agency website, at development.ohio.gov.



News in Transportation Planning: Pedal Trends:

Party Bike: A is a multi-passenger human powered vehicle, invented in 1997. A party bike is sometimes mistaken for a larger scale version of a pedicab, but it is not since the party bike is powered by the passengers while the steering and braking is controlled by a driver who does not provide pedaling power.

State law (Ohio HB 47 passed in 2015) allows Ohio cities to establish open-container party districts is a provision. The provision exempts passengers of any commercially operated "quadricycle" from open container laws, provided each passenger has no more than 36 ounces of beer or 18 ounces of wine. Hard liquor is not allowed. The vehicle must be operated by the vehicle owner or the owner's employee, who cannot imbibe or possess an open container. A small keg contains just enough beer to meet the legal standard for a full vehicle. Pedal Taverns have already taken off in Cincinnati, Columbus and Toledo.

Pedicabs: A three-wheeled public conveyance operated by pedals, typically one having a hooded cab for two passengers mounted behind the driver.

They are also in Ohio in the larger cities. Pedicabs offer a greener unique form of transportation.



News in Transportation Planning: Public Transit Wins Big at the Ballot Box: For those in the public looking for ways to improve transit funding, results from the 2016 election should find them encouraged. According to the January 2017 edition of *Planning*, 70 percent of 77 transportation initiatives were approved by voters in the November election. Those initiatives will translate into nearly \$170 billion in new transit investment over 23 states.

Policy experts say the trend of more measures and strong voter support for transit shows no likelihood of abating any time soon. Commenting by press release, American Public Transportation Chair Doran J. Barnes stated, "Americans from every background agree that more public transportation is great for their community and with a passage of 69 percent they are more than willing to pay for it."

Locally this is important news because Erie Regional Planning Staff is currently working on an update of the Coordinated Transportation Plan (see page 15 for more information). The Coordinated Transportation Plan identifies gaps in the transportation system and looks for ways to fund them from federal, state and local sources. One of the issues wrestled with by the Steering Committee is finding enough funding to keep the Sandusky Transit System (STS) functioning throughout Erie County. Funding sources are also being sought for capital costs and improvements throughout the different agencies to provide transportation to their clients. If the mood among voters from around the country is to approve funding measures for transit activities, future funding locally may be realized through ballot initiatives.

News in Transportation Planning: Coordinated Transportation Plan Update:

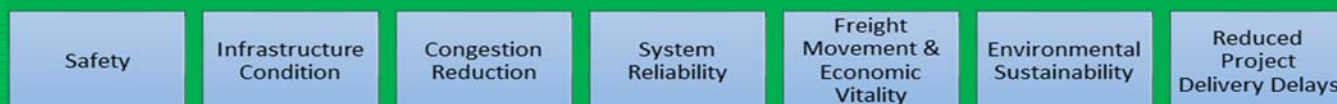
Staff is continuing updates to the coordinated transportation plan. It is anticipated that the plan will be completed by summer of this year. By having an approved plan Erie County is able to apply for supplemental transit funds. Stay tuned for more details.

News in Transportation Planning: Transportation Performance Management:

Under the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and the Fix America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), more emphasis has been placed on incorporating performance management into transportation planning and programming processes.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines transportation performance management as a strategic approach that uses system information to make investment and policy decisions to achieve national performance goals. Since the passage of these bills, FHWA has been working with states and national planning organizations to transition and implement a performance based approach to carrying out the Federal Highway Program.

MAP-21 established the national performance goals for 7 key areas.



In order to assess system performance in these key areas, the U.S. Department of Transportation was tasked with establishing performance measures. A performance measure is based upon a metric and utilized to evaluate progress towards goals, objectives, strategies, and achievement of established performance targets. Once the measures are established, performance targets are required to be established.

A performance target defines a specific level of performance that is desired to be achieved within a given time frame. Federal legislature requires that the states are to establish their own statewide performance targets. Currently, ODOT, Ohio Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Ohio Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs), and transit agencies are working together to establish targets that support the national performance areas. The impact to MPOs will be that they are required to either support the established statewide targets or develop their own; integrate performance measures into their long range planning (LRP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) processes, and develop a process to report out on performance measures.

As this new program continues to develop, more information will be shared with the various ERPC MPO Committees as well as in future editions of the ERPC newsletter.



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.

Policy Committee Members:

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

Technical Advisory Committee Members (TAC):

- | | |
|---|--|
| Andy Johns-Federal Highway Administration | Aaron Klein- City of Sandusky Engineer |
| Jack Meyers-Erie County Sanitary Engineer | Andy White-City of Huron, City Manager |
| Tony Valerius-City of Vermilion | Mike Schafrath-ODOT D3 |
| Dave Foster-ERPC | Jack Farschman-Erie County Engineer |
| Gary Mortus-Utility Representative | Marvin Ranaldson -Sandusky Transit (STS) Administrator |
| Gary Boyle-Perkins Township | Eric Dodrill-Erie Soil & Water |
| Robert England-Erie County Health Department | Matt Lasko- Sandusky Comm. Develop. Director |
| Abbey Bemis- Erie Co. Economic Development Corp. Director | Amy Moore-Erie Metro Parks |

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The 2020 Census: As mandated by the U.S. Constitution, America gets just one chance each decade to count its population. The decennial U.S. Census counts every resident in the United States. Accurate census data helps to determine congressional representation, grant funding and guide local decision-makers on where to build new roads, hospitals, housing, schools and more.

Did you know that every year, the federal government distributes more than \$400 billion to state, local and tribal governments based on census data? For example, some of the programs that receive federal funding based on this census data include Community Development Block Grant Programs, Surface Transportation and Transportation Alternative Programs, Head Start Programs, Title I grants to educational agencies, Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) (food grants), programs for the elderly, and many others.

So as the 2020 Census approaches, the U.S. Census Bureau has begun reaching out to tribal, state, and local jurisdictions across the nation to request their assistance with building accurate address lists of every housing unit in their respective area. This effort is called the Local Update of Census Addresses Operation (LUCA) and was authorized in 1994 under the Census Address List Improvement Act.

What is most important to note about LUCA is that this is the only opportunity offered to tribal, state, and local governments to review and comment on the U.S. Census Bureau's residential address list for their jurisdiction prior to the decennial census. The Census Bureau relies on this complete and accurate address list to reach every living quarters and associated population for inclusion in the census.

Active, functioning governments are eligible to participate in LUCA for areas including: Federally recognized tribes with a reservation or off-reservation trust lands; States; Counties; Cities (incorporated place); and Townships (minor civil divisions).

Below is a LUCA schedule the Census Bureau has developed that provides opportunities for training workshops, self-training aids, and webinars.

- January 2017: Advance notification of the LUCA operation mailed to the highest elected official (HEO) or Tribal Chairperson (TC) of all eligible governments and other LUCA contacts.
- March 2017: LUCA promotional workshops begin.
- July 2017: Invitation letter and registration forms mailed to the HEO or TC of all eligible governments.
- October 2017: Training workshops begin. Self-training aids and Webinars will be available online at the LUCA website.
- February 2018: Participation materials mailed to registered participants.
- August 2019: Feedback materials offered to participants with the results of address canvassing.
- **April 1, 2020: Census Day.**

ERPC encourages all local jurisdictions to participate in the LUCA program. If your government lacks the resources to participate in LUCA, please contact the ERPC office to discuss how we may assist you with your review. Also, more information is available on the Census website at <https://www.census.gov/geo/partnerships/luca.html> .

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

SFY 2018-2021 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 TIP is developed from short range and long range planning processes which identify location and type of improvements needed across the MPO region. 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. Local political subdivisions, the county engineer and the local Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) District office initiate TIP projects. Applications from these agencies are submitted to the ERPC as requests for federal funding from the MPO's allocated Surface Transportation Program (STP) and Transportation Alternative Program (TAP). All projects receiving federal funding must be programmed in the TIP to be eligible to receive federal transportation monies. Because of this provision, the ERPC MPO Policy Board has considerable control on the use of federal transportation funds in the MPO region.

The chart below is the most current TIP Project List for SFY 2019-2022. Please note - that SFY 2018 not shown as no projects are currently scheduled for SFY 2018, typical MPO funds requested are 80% of the total project cost unless jurisdiction requests less, and those projects utilizing TA funds are noted 'TA' below).

SFY 2019

Jurisdiction	Project Location	Project Description	MPO Requested Funds
Erie County Engineer/Perkins Township	Strub Rd./Columbus Ave.	Resurfacing and sidewalk installation along Strub Rd.	\$1,162,000
City of Huron	Berlin Road/US 6	Intersection Improvements	\$350,000
City of Vermilion	Vermilion Road	Phase 1 - Resurfacing	\$815,496

SFY 2020

Jurisdiction	Project Location	Project Description	MPO Requested Funds
City of Vermilion	Vermilion Road	Phase 2 - Resurfacing	\$673,094
City of Sandusky	Meigs Street	Reconstruction and Multi-use Path (Engineering Design)	\$94,197
Erie County Engineer/Perkins Township	Perkins Avenue (Remington - US 6)	Resurfacing	\$728,000

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

SFY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (continued...):

SFY 2021

Jurisdiction	Project Location	Project Description	MPO Requested Funds
Perkins Township	East Strub Road (250-Perkins) & Perkins Ave. (Strub-Peterson Lane)	Install Sidewalks (Design, Utilities, Right of Way)	\$91,360 TA

SFY 2022

Jurisdiction	Project Location	Project Description	MPO Requested Funds
City of Sandusky	Meigs Street	Reconstruction and Multi-use Path (Construction)	\$941,974
Perkins Township	East Strub Road (250-Perkins) & Perkins Ave. (Strub-Peterson Lane)	Install Sidewalks (Design, Utilities, Right of Way)	\$339,680 TA

Federal regulations also call for the official TIP document to be updated at least every four years. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the MPOs have established a two year update cycle of their TIPs to meet this federal requirement. As such, staff has completed the first draft for the ERPC MPO SFY 2018-2021 TIP. The draft document has been circulated to both the Ohio Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration for their review and comment. The public review period for the SFY 2018-2021 TIP will run from March 6th through April 20th. During this time, the draft document will be available for viewing at the ERPC MPO office located in Erie County Service Center, 3rd Floor 2900 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, OH. The document will also be posted on our website at:

<http://www.eriecounty.oh.gov/departments-and-agencies/economic-development/erie-regional-planning-commission/mpo/transportation-improvement-program-tip/>

Additionally, a public meeting will be held on March 28th where the draft ERPC MPO TIP, other Ohio MPO draft TIPs, and ODOT's draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) will be available for public review and comment. The meeting will take place from 800am until 430pm in an open house type format, located in the 3rd Floor Conference Room at the Erie County Service Center, 2900 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, OH. A brief presentation will be available for those interested and staff will be on hand to answer questions.

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION/Other County Projects and Activities

Traffic Counts: As we hope to begin the 2017 traffic count program April, ERPC staff is now working on the location schedule. If your jurisdiction has any specific traffic count location requests please contact Carrie Whitaker at 419-627-7652 soon so we can incorporate your request into the schedule!

SFY 2018 Work Plan: ERPC staff is drafting its annual work plan as federally required. The work plan outlines staff activities for the upcoming state fiscal year and includes annual budgetary information. The draft SFY 2018 Work Plan will be submitted to ODOT and FHWA for their review and comment by March 3rd. Copies of the draft will be available in the ERPC office and it will also be posted on the ERPC website for review beginning on March 6th. ERPC anticipates taking the plan through the MPO committee process this April to secure final approval.

Main Street:

Regional Planning staff continues to participate with the Main Street organization in the City of Sandusky and Vermilion. Both organizations are designated Main Street Programs that have earned the coveted National Main Street Community title. The local not-for-profit organizations provide leadership, education and economic development initiatives to the membership as well as the community as a whole.

Regional Planning staff continues assisting the City of Vermilion in applying for grant applications.

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

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.



Clean Water Coalition:

Staff is also active in the Clean Water Coalition. The Clean Water Coalition (CWC) formally known as the Storm Water Committee is made up of multiple municipalities and agencies in Erie county. The goals of the CWC are to protect our water resources, storm water education, enhance economic growth in Erie County and comply with Ohio EPA's Phase II Storm Water Program. Our 2011 Storm Water Educational Theme is a concept created by the Solid Waste District and will be "Every Drop Counts!"

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 130 (DataOhio)
- HB 512 (Water Systems Testing)
- HB 333/SB 210 (Township Contracts)
- HB 463 (Expedited Mortgage Foreclosure)
- SB 235 (Property Tax Freeze for Pending Development)
- SB 58 (Sewage Systems)
- SB 315 (Transportation Appropriations)
- HB 528 (License Fees)

The OARC is comprised of 23 agencies serving more than 1,500 municipalities, townships, villages and counties accounting for 10.5 million people across the state of Ohio. The organization tackles a variety of regional issues facing local communities including transportation, economic development, land use, housing, environment, aging services and energy.



Other County Projects and Activities

Lot Splits:

Huron Twp - 1 exempt over five acres

Margaretta Twp - 1 revised legal; 3 exempt over five acres

Milan Twp - 1 revised legal; 1 exempt over five acres

Perkins Twp - 1 split; 1 revised legal; 1 exempt over five acres

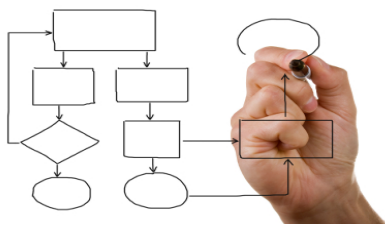
Vermilion Twp - 8 exempt over five acres

Just a Reminder...We will be closed

May 29th Memorial Day

July 4th Independence Day

September 4th Labor Day



Newsletters

Planning staff continues to produce semi-annual reports and quarterly newsletters. Topics covered include the Metropolitan Planning Organization and updates, CDBG grant projects, Lead Hazard Control Grants, Neighborhood Stabilization Program, lot splits and other ERPC news. The latest edition the newsletter and semi-annual report can also be found on the Erie County Regional Planning website.

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.

Members of Erie

Regional Planning Commission:

Village of Bay View

Village of Berlin Heights

Village of Castalia

Village of Kelleys Island

Village of Milan

Berlin Township

Florence Township

Groton Township

Huron Township

City of Vermilion

Margaretta Township

Milan Township

Oxford Township

Perkins Township

Vermilion Township

City of Huron

City of

Sandusky

