

A map of the state of Ohio is shown with a blue outline and a yellow drop shadow. In the center of the state, a small area representing Fairfield County is highlighted in solid green.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION

ANNUAL REPORT
2015

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Introduction

The RPC provides a broad range of services to its members including subdivision review and approval, grant writing and administration, local food initiatives, active transportation planning and implementation, and other long range planning services. The following list includes the major RPC services and accomplishments in 2015:

- Prepared \$300,000 grant application which was awarded to the Fairfield County Board of Commissioners for community improvements to the Village of Baltimore.
- Completed Project Management Services for the County Commissioners:
 - CDBG Projects
 - Village of Carroll Neighborhood Revitalization Projects
 - High Street Sidewalks
 - Beaver and Oberle Street Improvements
 - Center Street Curbs
 - Canal Park Basketball Court Rehabilitation
 - Canal Drainage Improvements
 - Lancaster Public Transit ADA Vehicle
 - Richland Road Generator Project
 - County Parking Lot Project
 - Resurfacing of several county owned parking lots.
- Completed various State Capital Budget requests for the county.
- Provided zoning technical assistance and conducted zoning training for our local zoning officials.
- Served on various boards and commissions to coordinate planning and development at the regional level.
- Coordinated monthly Local Food Council meetings and provided technical assistance to the development of the Keller Market House, a local food initiative.
- Provided technical support to the Active Transportation Sub-Committee responsible for furthering the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the county.

These are the major activities that the RPC participated in 2015 while continuing its daily operations of the office. RPC staff plans to continue to seek new opportunities to help grow our organization and assist with improving the quality of life for our member communities.

Regional and Community Planning

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The RPC Executive Director served as the Vice-Chair of the TAC in 2015.

The US 33 Interchange at Winchester Road/Carroll commenced in the spring of 2015. RPC staff continued to work with the local communities and ODOT as they prepare for this new interchange and plan for the long term upgrades of this corridor to a limited access highway.

In 2015, the idea of a Rural Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) emerged. The RTPO would include the counties surrounding the Columbus Metropolitan planning area and its purpose would be to enhance the planning, coordination, and implementation of statewide strategic long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs, with an emphasis on addressing the needs of non-metropolitan areas of the State. As part of the RTPO, if implemented, Fairfield County would have its own sub-committee that would guide and develop a long range transportation plan for the county. RPC staff facilitated discussions on joining the RTPO with the anticipation of this group being formalized in 2016.

Watershed Planning

The purpose of the Storm Water Advisory and Educational Sub-Committee is to provide a forum for public participation in the development and implementation of a storm water program to compliment any existing public input processes currently established for those communities within Fairfield County that the Environmental Protection Agency has identified as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) community. This advisory and educational board will be focused towards the MS4 communities in Fairfield County and includes representatives from Violet Township, Liberty Township, the City of Pickerington, the City of Lancaster, the Soil and Water Conservation District, the Utilities Department and the County Engineer's office. Other communities may also participate, if so desired.

The Committee continued to meet in 2015 providing an opportunity for the MS4 communities to network and discuss best practices. These meetings also provide an opportunity for the public to express interest and concerns regarding storm water issues. In 2015, the main focus of the committee was identifying themes for watershed education.

Community Assistance Activities

The RPC's Community Assistance Activities started several years ago through the Intergovernmental Review System (formerly A-95). The purpose of the IGR system (formerly A-95) is to coordinate federally funded activities and to provide a procedure for local review and comment on applications for federal assistance. The RPC may forward one of several recommendations to the funding agency, ranging from project clearance to recommendation that funding be delayed due to specific concerns. The review agency may also request that specific questions or concerns be addressed prior to funding approval. While the IGR process does not give the RPC the authority to approve or deny a funding request, it does offer valuable opportunity for local agencies, political units, and citizens to comment on federally assisted projects.

Over the years, the Community Assistance Activities have been expanded to provide input on the impacts of various grants on farmland preservation and to provide letters of support for grant applications for housing, economic development and parks. The projects are reviewed for conformance with the county plan and county plan policies are cited in the letters of support. During 2015, the RPC reviewed 18 projects and programs requesting federal or state funds or letters of support.

As part of this activity, the RPC also participates in the annexation and vacation review process spearheaded by the Commissioners. RPC staff is one of several agencies that reviews these proposals and provides feedback to the Commissioners. In 2015, the RPC staff reviewed and provided comments on 10 annexations/vacation petitions.

Community Assistance Activities

The RPC also serves as a network to provide information to our member communities. For example, at its monthly meetings, the RPC hosts presentations by local and regional organizations to help promote local planning and other related topics to our member communities. In 2015, some of these presentations included:

- Sustaining Scioto – Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
- Insight 2050 – Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
- Energy Aggregation – Palmer Energy Company
- Crunch Out Obesity Program
- Lancaster Public Transit System Update
- County and Bridge Project Update
- Fairfield County Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) Update
- Keller Market House

