

# City-County Planning Commission

## Of Warren County

The Planning Commission is comprised of twelve members appointed by the governing bodies in Warren County. Four members are appointed by the Warren County Fiscal Court, four by the City of Bowling Green and one each by the incorporated cities of Oakland, Plum Springs, Smiths Grove and Woodburn. This twelve member body has oversight of the Planning Commission office including the budget and employees. In addition to these duties, these twelve members also have the decision making

responsibility on land use and policy decisions regarding the Comprehensive Plan and the Subdivision Regulations and makes recommendations to the governing bodies on zone changes and text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. In addition to the Planning Commission, staff acts as a liaison to 7 other boards which, in total, are comprised of approximately ninety members who are mostly citizen appointed volunteers. We could not do our job without their service. To learn more about our boards, our serving members, and our staff, please visit our website at [www.warrenpc.org](http://www.warrenpc.org).

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# Better Together

In February's edition of the American Planning Association's Planning Magazine, an article was published exploring the differing perspectives of developers and planners. We thought it was a good read and wanted to share our takeaway from the article, entitled Better TOGETHER: When planners and developers understand one another, life can be a whole lot easier.

“Real estate development is often described as a game. Sometimes it seems like planners and developers are competing against each other in a contest that only one side — the ‘greedy developer’ or the ‘rigid planner’ — can win. When that dynamic governs the process, the project — and therefore the community — can lose out. But it doesn't have to be that way. If planners and development teams can broaden their perspectives and work together as partners, the process can work better for everyone — including the public that planners are committed to serve.”

For anyone involved in public-sector employment, it may be no surprise that planners are bound to operate under regulatory requirements for what seems like every operation — from posting times and locations of public hearings (you know, those yellow signs) to adequately informing adjacent property owners and publishing a legal ad in the Dailey News, seven days in advance. Developers on the other hand operate on short timelines, often burdened with significant financial impacts. The process-driven approach of planners and the time-is-money



Rendering of downtown development used in Midland, Michigan to communicate clearly the vision of the project.

approach of developers typically presents some serious challenges for both sides. And this is just one of the barriers that come between the two parties. Oftentimes, what a community's planning regulations state as black or white can stifle a developer's creativity and leave the community with a ripple effect of the same types of development for years past their expiration date. The balance between fostering a development process to encourage creativity and innovation, whilst ensuring compliance, fairness, and integrity is a tough act. And one that few communities have mastered. Adding to the complexity is the resistance to change.

## 5 STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN DEVELOPERS & PLANNERS

1. UNDERSTAND THE DEVELOPER'S TIME LINES AND PRESSURES
2. BE CLEAR ABOUT WHAT ISN'T - AND WHAT MIGHT BE - NEGOTIABLE
3. IDENTIFY SHARED GOALS
4. DON'T TAKE CONFLICT AND DISAPPOINTMENT PERSONALLY
5. BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE

*Source: American Planning Association, February 2018 Issue*

The supporting article references a planner who states, “A lot of our work is trying to help people see how to advance their own self-interest by working together.’ If people have been legitimately harmed by past decisions, he adds, it can be hard to rebuild trust. ‘But it's ultimately self-defeating to sit out. We never ask anyone to support outcomes at the beginning of the process, but we do ask them to support the process.’” While changing an established development process may find resistance, changing the character of parts of a community often bring more resistance. So in



both instances, change is inevitable and the regulations planners abide by are necessary to ensure context sensitive development and sustainable growth. How then, do planners and developers meet on common ground? And where does the community input come in? Well, no matter the case, communication is key. Planners and developers are also community members and also bear the weight of change, development, and growth.

Communicating ideas with a flexible mindset and seeking to understand, rather than be understood, is a platform where all can benefit. An Austin city planner turned developer summed it up by adding “All of the players, she says, have their own perspectives – developers, the city, and residents. ‘It can be hard for them to get out of their own silos, but when you can explain it clearly, you have a better chance of success.’ [Her job shift] expanded her own perspective, too. ‘When I was in the city silo, it was easier to focus on our needs rather than those of others,’ she says. ‘It’s eye-opening to try to view issues through another perspective.’” No matter the case, people will see development in very different ways, making communicating the key to moving forward. If all sides – planner, developer, public – can communicate his or her ideas, there will likely be a more positive response.

## Planning & Zoning Changes Streamline Development Process



Construction of the new Jennings Creek Elementary School on Russellville Road - one of the many examples of growth in our community.

In the last issue, we talked about 2017 being a year of learning how to communicate with the public and sister agencies. To take action on what we’re preaching, the Planning Commission is in the final stages of reworking the development process, has finalized proposed zoning ordinance changes, and now we’re trying to inform all involved and affected by these changes of what’s going on. If you’re a “normal” citizen, you may have no idea what a zoning ordinance is, let alone what any of the terms or definitions mean. Essentially, the

zoning ordinance outlines different “zones” throughout the county. Each zone has specific standards and restrictions that outline what you can do with a property within that particular zone. These rules can identify anything from sign height and fence material to tree plantings and required parking spaces. The changes we’re proposing to the zoning ordinance align with our long-range land use plan – the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Together, these documents help guide the ways our community develops and grows – our parks, schools,

restaurants, residential housing, commercial areas, agricultural uses, and industrial sites. The Zoning Ordinance also assists in setting minimum standards for which new developments must follow when constructed. The proposed changes started with communication between staff and city and county agencies, then developers and other stakeholders and also feedback from the public. To learn more, we’ve put together a summary of the changes [here](#). Additionally, we’re always open to conversation about why we do what we do and how it may affect you – so feel free to contact us!

We are now on Social Media! Please bear with us though, it is a work in progress. Follow us on the following accounts:

Facebook  
Twitter  
Instagram  
YouTube  
LinkedIn  
GooglePlus

# Planning Commission by the Numbers

As part of the development process, the City-County Planning Commission oversees pre-application meetings, the application process, and a variety of other services. The table below further summarizes some of the services we have provided thus far in 2018. These numbers are 21.5% higher than the numbers from last year at this time. Most of this change was in the county (outside of city limits), where there was an overall 40.3% change in services provided in the county.

## The 2020 Census Operational Overview

ESTABLISH  
WHERE TO  
COUNT

MOTIVATE  
PEOPLE TO  
RESPOND

4 5 6  
COUNT  
THE  
POPULATION

RELEASE  
CENSUS  
RESULTS



In addition to these normal duties and services, our staff is reviewing every address in Warren County to ensure a proper U.S. Census count is performed for the 2020 Census. This is a very tedious process, required to be completed in a short time-frame. While most of the address verifications can be done in the office through use of several data sources, some properties must be verified through on-site visits. Address verification is only the first step in preparing for a census count. Why does it matter? Essentially, an accurate census count ensures adequate funding for communities based on their population and demographic distribution - which all starts with verified addresses for all dwelling units within the designated count area.

	2018 OVERALL TOTAL	2018 TOTAL (BG)	2018 TOTAL (COUNTY)
<b>Planning</b>			
Single Family Lots Approved	248	1	247
Multi-Family Units Approved	564	60	504
Zone Changes Approved	15	5	10
Detailed Development Plans Approved	3	3	0
Subdivision Approvals	43	14	29
<b>Subdivision Construction</b>			
Construction Plans Reviewed	13	6	7
Engineering Inspections	598	209	389
<b>Code Enforcement</b>			
Zoning Complaints	42	15	27
Site Inspections	42	15	27
Notices of Violation	16	4	12
<b>Geographic Information Systems (GIS)</b>			
Maps Created	118	43	75
Addresses Assigned	303	40	263
Parcels Drawn	1,473	636	837
<b>Plan Review Services</b>			
Building Permits Reviewed	455	201	254

If you would like a more extensive report of our office's activity, you may call (270) 842-1953 or visit us at 1141 State Street from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., M - F.



# Bowling Green-Warren County Metropolitan Planning Organization

## What's a MPO?

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) exist in urbanized areas with populations greater than 50,000. MPOs hold the responsibility of implementing transportation planning, programming, and coordinating federal highway and transit investments. With the input of community stakeholders, MPOs gain knowledge on issues influencing the efficiency and effectiveness of the area's roadways, sidewalks, and transit systems, which allow the organization to implement transportation policies for Bowling Green and Warren County.

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## Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Takes Place of Greenways Commission

The last few months have brought about a few changes for what used to be called the Greenways Commission. In December of 2017, the Greenways Commission made a motion to abolish their formal committee and to redistribute all roles and duties under the umbrella of the MPO. Because the MPO deals with all forms of transportation planning and programming, staff, along with committee members, elected officials, and other interested parties, sought to consolidate all transportation-related planning efforts within one agency. Throughout the process, the Greenways Commission established a new name, which seeks to focus on not just Greenways (multi-use paths), but on all forms of bicycling and pedestrian activity. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) will serve as an open forum for all previous Greenways Commission members, in addition to anyone in the community who is interested in the bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts of our community. The BPAC established four primary

focus areas which will guide the committee's efforts. These areas explore: planning, advisory, advocacy, and education. The BPAC will work with partnering agencies, such as the City of Bowling Green, Warren County, and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) to communicate priorities for construction.

Upon the establishment of the Greenways Commission, funding for construction was made available through earmarked funds supported by Mitch McConnell. These funds enabled the construction of many of the first few miles of Greenways throughout Bowling Green. Today, there is no budget for the construction of Greenways, thus the community relies upon various grants – primarily Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds made available through the KYTC. While we have been quite fortunate the last few years to receive funding for various projects (connection at Moss Middle School, improvements and connections in *continued on next page...*



## Greenways/BPAC cont'd...

the West End), it is oftentimes a slow and tedious process to get shared-use paths constructed – and many of these projects must come in different phases. Our planning staff recognizes the need for greater bicycle and pedestrian trail connections and safety measures throughout our community; we will continue to work on creative solutions to solve many of the concerns and requests voiced about safe bike/ped connections. In the meantime, several resources are available and are in the process of being improved. Check out the [Bicycle Comfort Level Map](#), which outlines which roadways to ride a bicycle on based on your skill or comfort level. May is national bike month and we're encouraging any and all individuals, schools, and employees to get out and ride! If your organization would like to plan an event, please contact us, or visit the League of American Bicyclist's site for more info. Finally, to keep up with our latest events and news, follow us on [Facebook](#).

## Recycled Cooking Oil to Fuel WKU's Topper Transit

WKU's Topper Transit, of Parking & Transportation, is collaboratively working with WKU's School of Engineering & Applied Sciences, Agriculture & Research Education Center, and Restaurant Group on a biodiesel project to promote better environmental sustainability and to reduce our carbon footprint within the community. Students are working on the project at the WKU Ag Farm to convert donated cooking oil from campus restaurants for the use in the transit bus. The use of biodiesel in mass transit is widely practiced by many agencies, and WKU is excited about jumping on board with this project. How does the process work?



Collaboration between multiple WKU departments enables sustainable growth for fueling a Topper Transit bus.  
*Photos courtesy Clinton Lewis, WKU.*

- WKU Restaurant Group provides dining and catering services at WKU. They are donating used cooking oil from the campus dining services to the WKU Agriculture & Research Education Center.
- Engineering students from the WKU Ogden College of Science & Engineering process the used cooking oil to turn it in to biodiesel.
- WKU Topper Transit uses the biodiesel in a bus that operates on one of the daily routes around campus.
- A project logo posted outside the bus helps to identify the biodiesel bus. The process will be displayed on story boards inside the bus for passengers to read while being transported between classes.



The target date of the bus operating on 100% biodiesel is April 19, 2018 – WKU's Earth Day Festival. Topper Transit is planning to operate the bus from April to late October. The operation is set to resume in March of 2019 as outside temperatures rise.

# Planning Studies for the MPO

The MPO is wrapping up two transportation planning studies with the final reports of each study being published within the coming weeks. Over the past year, we've reported on the Plano Road Corridor Study & Policy Development and the Fairview Avenue Safety & Capacity/LOS Study. Each of these studies have analyzed current roadway conditions; collected data about roadway attributes, traffic counts, and crash counts; projected traffic volumes for future years; and accounted for growth of the community. The Plano Road study lays out a series of transportation recommendations for planners, developers, and engineers to consider as development occurs along Plano Road. Specifically, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the City, County, KYTC, CCPC, and MPO was drafted to ensure proper access management is enacted with future development along Plano Road. This means that together, these agencies have discussed the proper spacing of roadways, general placement of traffic signals, and how roadway access may be permitted.

While the Plano Road study proposed numerous recommendations based on different roadway sections and scenarios, the Fairview Avenue study developed and recommended specific roadway improvements. Fairview Avenue has nearly 24,000 vehicles traveling it per day (2016) and that number is expected to grow substantially over the next 20 years. The final recommendations of this study include intersection improvements at the intersections with US 31W Bypass and Hampton Drive/Kereiakes Park. It is also recommended to widen the roadway sections, apart from the cemetery, from four lanes of travel to five to include a middle turn lane. Though both of these studies



Repaving of State Street recently took place as part of the City's repaving program. A total of approximately 23 miles of City's streets will be paved by June 2018 with this year's contract.

have provided the MPO with great recommendations for improving our transportation system, they are only planning studies and do not ensure funding for the recommended projects to be carried out. In 2019, the MPO will work on prioritizing and recommending specific roadway projects into the 2020 Highway Plan, which will allow the projects to move through the various funding phases into construction.

## City Public Works Starts Paving Program & City Improvements

The City of Bowling Green Public Works Department recently completed design for the Smallhouse Road Phase II widening projects, which continues through to Ridgecrest Way. Currently, property acquisition is coming to a close while Atmos Energy is working to relocate a gas line. Construction on the roadway is expected to begin as early as summer, 2018.

The Public Works Department continues to work with the City's Parks & Recreation Department and Neighborhood & Community Services to provide better connections in, around, and through Lampkin Park as well as the entirety of Census Tract 112 in the west end of Bowling Green. Together, these two projects will construct sidewalks and crosswalks in an effort to improve safe pedestrian travel in the West End. The construction contract for the Lampkin Park Pathways Project was recently awarded to Scotty's with construction scheduled to begin in spring 2018, which will provide new six-foot asphalt paths throughout the park. While this project focuses on Lampkin Park alone, the Census Tract 112 Sidewalks Project will offer sidewalk improvements throughout the West End. This sidewalk project coincides with a Transportation Improvement Program (TAP) grant awarded to the City in conjunction with the former Greenways Commission. Design is underway for various improvements on the West End that focus on safe pedestrian and bicycle routes. The project(s) would provide connections between existing downtown greenways facilities, key destinations in the West End, and would ultimately improve problematic intersection crossings.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

	MAY	JUNE	JULY
<b>MPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b> <i>Meets 4th Mon. at 1 P.M.*</i>	21	25	23
<b>MPO POLICY COMMITTEE</b> <i>Meets 2nd Mon. of new quarter at 9 A.M.**</i>	-	SC <sup>†</sup>	9
<b>BICYCLE &amp; PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b> <i>Meets 2nd Mon. of even months at 4 P.M.*</i>	-	11	-
<b>HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD</b> <i>Meets 4th Thurs. at 5 P.M.**</i>	24	28	26
<b>UNIVERSITY DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD</b> <i>Meets 2nd Wed. at 5 P.M.**</i>	9	13	11
<b>BOARD OF ADJUSTMENTS</b> <i>Meets 2nd Thurs. at 5 P.M.**</i>	10	14	12
<b>DESIGN REVIEW BOARD</b> <i>Meets 3rd Wed. at 5 P.M.**</i>	16	20	18
<b>PLANNING COMMISSION</b> <i>Meets 1st and 3rd Thurs. at 6 P.M.**</i>	3, 17	7, 21	5, 19

All meetings overseen by the CCPC have a filing deadline; deadlines can be viewed on the CCPC website.

<sup>†</sup>Special-Called Policy Committee meetings will likely be held and are under the discretion of the MPO and participating parties.

\*Meetings are held at the City-County Planning Commission, 1141 State Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room.

\*\*Meetings are held at BG City Commission Chambers, 1001 College Street.

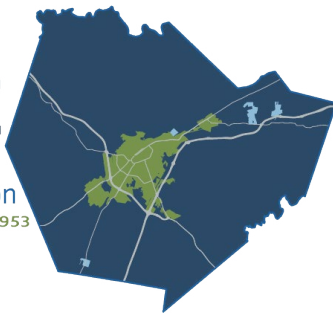
Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status.

## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Do you have questions, comments or concerns regarding land use planning, development patterns, or our transportation system? Send us your input to help us plan for the future of our community.



**CCPC**  
City-County  
Planning Commission  
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