

One Lenawee is...a collaboration of concerned people dedicated to the **Vision of making Lenawee County a Great Place to live, work, learn, worship, play, and invest.**

We bring attention and action to important community issues.

Uniting and Connecting partners and committed people, we identify, support, and develop initiatives and projects that optimize community resources to **The Vision.**



2021 OBJECTIVES

- * **Continue to work on the seven Focus Areas**
- * **New priorities:**
 - **Public Transportation**
 - **Attainable Housing**
 - **Communications**

OUR PROCESS:

- **Evaluate**
- **Educate**
- **Engage**

Steering Committee Notes May 20, 2021 Zoom Meeting

Present: Chris Miller, Madeline DeMarco, Lynne Punnett, Mark Haag, Sue Lewis, Randy Yagiela, Tim Robinson, Tim Kelly, Dave Maxwell, Joe Williams, Marty Marshall, Don Taylor, Misty (Transportation Navigator)

ONE LENAWEE STRATEGIC VISION PRIORITIES 2021 AND BEYOND:

Public Transportation:

The pilot route between Tecumseh and Adrian with First Student is a go and will start July 1st and end 12/31. There will be two complete circuits and the service will run Thursday through Saturday between the hours of 5:00 pm and 10:00 pm. The charge will be \$1.00 per trip. This effort will start out as more of an entertainment route.

Misty shared that the Transportation Task Force is currently working on its by-laws and MOU's. Her position is funded through MDOT and CAA acts as fiduciary. DHHS supplied matching funds and they also furnish her with an office and supplies.

Attainable Quality Housing for All:

Lynne provided a summary of the key issues from her Affordable Housing Overview Report to Marty (April 2021). Lynne reiterated that we are interested in all types of housing solutions as stated in her handout. All recent trends, even prior to Covid, indicated that more people were working from home. Covid just accelerated it. The great thing about Lenawee County is that it is rural, but still close to metropolitan areas, so we do not want to miss out on this opportunity. We need workforce housing and bandwidth to be the destination we want to be. There are a lot of groups in Lenawee working on housing, but they need leadership to take their housing efforts to the next level, and this must be countywide, not just Adrian. An entity needs to be identified that can act as the convener and be accountable to established goals. Next, they need to look at the master plans of every community and engage the Lenawee Housing Development Corporation. Funding will also need to be identified.

Marty shared that this is not a new discussion, it has been going on for years. How do you make quality housing affordable and where you can work from home? He stated that American Rescue Plan dollars can tie to economic development, but we do not know yet what is going to be included in the federal government infrastructure plan. All American Rescue Plan money must be spent by 2024. He said first we need to look at increasing housing stock, but this is not a good time due to the high cost of building materials.

A question was posed asking how other counties do this, regarding the issue of leadership such as with a housing czar. Marty shared that individual townships and cities take precedence over everything and they oftentimes do not appreciate the county intervening. With that said, the county should not take the lead. He also said that recent population distribution data indicated the growth has been in the townships, not the cities.

Other discussion included the following:

- A plan needs to be made regarding repairs for older houses so in the next few years we are not dealing with blight.
- Could the county fund a position for a housing czar? Yes possibly, but it would end in 2024.
- Next steps – a case would need to be made to the County Commissioners.
 - An application would need to be submitted regarding money from the American Rescue Plan. (\$19.5 million available) Townships would be getting their own funds as well.
 - Recommended that a group of 3-4 people sit down with a few commissioners (Dawn Bales and Dave Stimpson for sure)
- Rentals are a real challenge because the standards are lower than for homeowners.
- Mark suggested that we first concentrate on those communities who are interested, work with the willing.
- Dave asked how we would address this issue if no funds were available and how can we somehow connect some of the main organizations on the Housing in Lenawee County (2021) report. The existing organizations are focused primarily on affordable housing and no one is looking at housing holistically.
- To be successful we must take a holistic approach.
- The question was asked to Joe if the Lenawee Community Foundation could provide this leadership role. He said that he would think about it and take it to his board. He said it is necessary for us to identify the status of our current state and then describe what the future state would look like, and someone would need to own this daily. To him it appears to be more of an economic development issue and maybe better served at Lenawee Now.
- Tim would like to see some immediate action and not spend so much time on planning.
- A small group will be formed including members who have already started to work on this to come up with an action plan. (Joe, Dave, Lynne, Randy, Marty)

Status of fundraising for the Kiwanis Trail extension to Tecumseh:

A Patronicity fundraising platform for the Kiwanis Trail has been established. Please consider donating to support this cause.

https://www.patronicity.com/project/kiwanis_trail_tecumseh_connection#!/

Priority Groups:

Communications/Marketing:

Lynne is working on the Daily Telegram article with a focus on housing and the unique opportunity we have in Lenawee County.

WLEN: Don will put us on the schedule for June with the topic being the pilot transportation project between Tecumseh and Adrian.

ONE LENAWEE STRUCTURE AND SUCCESSION: This topic needs more discussion and will require a special meeting. Someday we will have this discussion .

Next meeting date: Thursday, June 17, 7:30am. Facilitator - Randy