Lima Allen Council on Community Affairs

Community Assessment

ALLEN COUNTY

July 2015 Update

540 S. Central Avenue
Lima, Ohio 45804
www.lacca.org
I. Introduction: LACCA Community Assessment

Federal planning guidelines require community assessments be completed every three years and reviewed annually for needed updates. The Head Start Policy Council and Board of the Lima Allen Council on Community Affairs (LACCA) approved this update to the 2013 Community Assessment in August 2015. Data collected for this update originates from multiple sources published on varying dates. As such, whenever possible data sources and their dates of publication are cited in this document and its appendices. Sections not addressed in this update had no update data available/found or little to no change at the time of this update.

II. Population and Socio Economic Demographics

As reported in Section 2.1 the population of Allen County, Ohio was 106,331 persons, according to the most recently available American Community Survey (ACS) data the population of Allen County, Ohio has dropped to 105,895, this is a decrease of 436 people or 0.41%. This decrease is part of a trend which was first identified by the 1990 census, no one factor can be identified as a primary cause for the population decrease; however job availability and cost of living both contribute. Comparing data from Section 2.4 ACS data also shows that the number of Allen County residents over the age of 65 has gone from 14.8% of the total population to 14.2% of the total population, showing a slight decrease in the senior population. The number of residents under the age of 5 has gone from 6.4% to 6.3% also showing a slight decrease. As a result of the decrease in children under the age of 5 in Allen County LACCA has requested a Head Start Enrollment Reduction for the Howard and O'Neal classrooms located at 411 East 8th Street in Lima. Census data indicates that residents are moving out of the area served by these classrooms due to poor housing quality and reduced property values which has resulted in LACCA having difficulty maintaining full enrollment for those classrooms.

Race and Ethnic Diversity, discussed in Section 2.5 of the Assessment has also shown a slight shift based on the ACS Data. Percent of population by race has changed as follows: White only has increased from 83.8% to 84.18%, African American has decreased from 11.9% to 11.72%, American Indian or Alaskan Native alone has increased from 0.2% to 0.27%, Asian alone has increased from 0.7% to 0.75%, and Two or More Races has increased from 2.6% to 3.07%.
Educational Attainment, discussed in Section 2.7 has shown little change. Those with no High school Diploma or GED increased from 11.1% to 11.63%, conversely the number with Some College or an Associate Degree increased from 29.8% to 31.4% and those with Bachelors or Higher increased slightly from 17.1% to 17.2%. Decreased costs of local post-secondary educational institutions could be a contributing factor to the slight increases in college participation and degree attainment.

Poverty Status, discussed in Section 2.9, showed that in 2011, 19.2% of all individuals, 18.9% of all households and 8.5% of all families in Allen County were below poverty level and 30% of those 0 to age 17 were below the poverty level. The newest US Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates data shows that 16.1% of all individuals, 17.5% of all households, and 13.6% of families in Allen County are below the poverty level and 22.9% of those 0 to age 17 are below the poverty level, with all rates being higher than those for the state of Ohio. This shows a marked decrease in poverty rates in Allen County which can be partially attributed to education and services provided by LACCA and other community based organizations in Allen County.

III. Community Housing Stock

Compared to the data reported in Section 3.2.1 the total number of housing units in Allen County has decreased 0.22% from 44,999 to 44,902 housing units according the latest ACS data. This decrease can be partially attributed to the City of Lima’s efforts to demolish abandoned and dilapidated properties.

In Section 3.2.2 it was reported that the Owner Occupancy rate was 70%, according the latest ACS data that rate has fallen to 68.6%.

In section 3.2.3 the latest ACS data indicates that the percentage of vacant housing units is now 9.7%, showing a small increase, which is consistent with the trend of decreasing population, indicated in Section II of this update.

Housing Value, reported in Section 3.2.6 has shown a slight decrease in the county median $105,400 to $105,000 (with a margin of error of +/- $2,466)

As reported in Section 3.2.8 the ACS reported 1755 manufactured/mobile homes in the county, representing 4.3% of the housing stock, that number has increased to 2,049 or 4.6% of Allen County’s housing stock.

Section 3.5.2 of the assessment addresses housing costs. According to ACS data we see an increase of median rent from $603 per month to $647 per month. The Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income (GRAPI) shows that 6,423 households pay more than 30% of their Household Income on rent. LACCA’s Financial Literacy program is attempting to address this issue through household budgeting education.
The 2014 Allen County Homelessness Point in Time report, updating data for Section 3.5.4, indicates that there were 48 households, comprising 69 individuals in Allen County that were considered homeless (unsheltered or in emergency or transitional housing). Of those 7 households included at least 1 child.

IV. Local Educational Opportunities
Both Rhodes State College (Section 4.2.4) and Apollo Career Center (Section 4.3.1) have begun expansion projects to offer more programming to more individuals in the area. Section 4.10 discusses LACCA’s Head Start & Early Head Start Programming which has shown expansion in several areas since the initial community assessment. LACCA now partners with Trinity UMC, Shawnee Weekday, Kingdom Daycare, Kid’s Depot, The Children’s Place and Little Rascals daycare programs to offer Early Head Start services at their locations. As a counter point, as discussed in Section II of this update LACCA has also requested an enrollment reduction at the Howard and O’Neal sites due to a trend of population decline and redistribution.

V. Environmental Determinants: Quality of Life and Human Health
Updating Section 5.5.1 Housing Foreclosures, Vacancies & Blight, the current Allen County Foreclosure Rate, according to http://www.realtytrac.com/statsandtrends/foreclosuretrends/oh/allen-county, is 0.12% which is also the State of Ohio Foreclosure Rate. Bank Owned Foreclosures in Allen County have increased 69.2% since this time last year, however Foreclosure Auctions have only increased by 13.3% and Pre-Foreclosures have dropped by 51.7%. The drop in Pre-Foreclosure activities can be partially attributed to Foreclosure Prevention activities provided through LACCA’s Home Ownership Counseling and Financial Literacy Programs which educate clients on how to avoid home foreclosure.

VI. Poverty, Needs & L.A.C.C.A. Programming
In Section 6.1 Poverty Rates for several demographics were reported using the 2011 American Community Survey. According to the 2013 American Community Survey the Overall Poverty Rate in Allen County has dropped from 19.3% to 16.1% (15,963 individuals), which is only 0.3% higher than the National Rate and 0.2% higher than the Ohio Rate. 2013 ACS Childhood Poverty Rate (ages 0-4) is 27.9% (1,781 children), which is an increase of 6.5% since the 2000 Census. Racial poverty rates have shown a minor change since previous data. Of those living in poverty 14.87% identified as White, 41.5% identified as Black or African American, 56.25% identified
as Native American or Alaskan Native, 5.98% identified as Asian, 27.76% identified as some other race, and 32.97% identified as Multi-Racial.

Section 6.3 Local Health Disparity Issues indicated that in 2013 Allen County was ranked 78 of 88 counties for positive health factors, as of the writing of this update Allen County is ranked 57 of 88 counties for Positive Health Factors according to http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/ohio/2015/rankings/allen/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot. This change in Positive Health Factors Rating can be attributed to work done by Activate Allen County and L.A.C.C.A.’s nutrition education for children and families.

The most recent data regarding LACCA’s Client Needs, as addressed in Section 6.5 indicates that the top 3 problems in Allen County as perceived by LACCA’s clients are “Finding jobs that provide a living wage” (50.63% of respondents), “Drug and/or alcohol abuse” (47.8% of respondents) and “Living in poverty” (44.03% of respondents). As a result of these concerns LACCA’s clients recommend that LACCA give highest priority to programming focusing on Reducing Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Child Abuse Prevention, Domestic Violence, Job Creation and Affordable Housing.

Those who completed the survey fell into multiple income categories but the majority fell into two categories, those making less than $17,600 per year (35.22%) and those making over $33,440 per year (50.31%). 27.67% of respondents were unemployed at the time they took the survey but 47.8% of those surveyed were employed and worked First Shift (or equivalent) and only 3.14% worked for a Temporary Employment Agency. The average household size of those who completed the survey is 2.9 individuals per household and an average of 1 child under the age of 18 and 0.2 over the age of 65. 69.83% of respondents had at least some college education up to and including advanced degrees.

Section 6.8 describes LACCA’s Child Development Services offerings which are also referenced in Sections II and IV. According to the American Community Survey there has been a 6.5% increase, to 27.9% (1,781 children) in Allen County of children ages 0-4 in poverty between 2000 and 2013, compared to a 7.61% increase in the State of Ohio and 5.8% Nation Wide. According to LACCA’s most recently available (2013-2014 school year) Head Start and Early Head Start Program Information Reports (PIRs) the programs served 652 (cumulative enrollment) children from ages 0-4, 18 of which were reported as being homeless and 259 were enrolled for at least 2 years and 53 had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicating they have been determined eligible by the LEA to receive special education and related services. In addition to the service locations identified in Section 6.8 LACCA also offers Early Head Start Partnership services through local Child Care providers as identified in section IV of this update. As a result of population redistribution and research
indicating that children attending a full day of preschool perform better on kindergarten readiness assessments, have better attendance and demonstrate more gains in general academics, social-emotional development and physical health. LACCA has decided to change the Howard and O’Neal Head Start locations from 3 ½ hour double session classrooms to 6 hour single session classrooms. This shift will result in losing the ability to serve 60 children in the 2015-2016 school year; however due to population changes in the area served by those classrooms LACCA will be able to maintain full enrollment for these classrooms and provide more beneficial services to the children served.

VII. Summation & Recommendations
As described in Section 7.1.1 LACCA continues to offer healthier food options during client meetings and events. In addition LACCA has partnered with Activate Allen County to provide classes teaching families how to prepare healthier meals at home and the Mobile Produce Market, which provides fresh vegetables at discounted prices, parks in LACCA’s Central Parking Lot every Thursday from 1:00pm until 2:00pm.

As recommended in Section 7.1.4 LACCA now has a certified Smoking Cessation Counselor on staff to provide services to clients and families.

Based on recommendations in Section 7.1.6 LACCA does the following:

• Communications have been and continue to be developed in a manner that is culturally sensitive and considerate of literacy levels of the targeted audience;
• Ongoing communication with parents and stakeholders is necessary to ensure trust and the successful delivery of student, family, agency and stakeholder services;
  o Staff has and shall continue to conduct home visits when sensitive information needs to be discussed.
• Language barriers and language familiarity/preferences may require the use of Interpreters and/or consideration/implementation of the following:
  o Oral and written communication in the native language of the child and family using an interpreter has been and shall continue to be provided when necessary;
• Regular monthly newsletters have been and shall continue to be published touting the Agency’s accomplishments and concerns;
• Regular meetings with community stakeholders have been and shall continue to be convened to share and discuss the Agency’s services and programming to foster community support and support an open exchange of ideas; and,

• Program orientation activities have been and shall continue to be held at the beginning of the year for families, staff, and community partners.

As discussed in Section 7.1.8 LACCA offers Financial Literacy classes to the public multiple times per year and through a partnership with the Lima City Schools GED Classes are offered at LACCA’s Central facility.

Further recommendations, as discussed in Section 7.2, are being addressed as described below and progress can be seen at a glance in the table on the following page.

• LACCA has completed policies related to air and water quality for all sites and increased well water testing to 4 times per year at Allen East and St. Matthew’s.

• LACCA now participates on Regional Planning Commission committees to advocate for safe and well-designed walkways and other community concerns.

• LACCA sits on a subcommittee of the Housing Consortium that is currently working on developing a standardized language for housing quality as well as supporting and partnering with a new 24 unit permanent supportive housing complex. The committee developed a checklist that will be utilized by community agencies. The checklist will not require services to be withheld from qualified applicants. This checklist will help the Consortium and the City:
  o Identify problem areas within the community and strategize creative ways to overcome issues.
  o Assist with service selection for the clients including referrals.
  o Assist the consortium with the collection of data on the quality of housing and housing problems faced by clients in Allen County.

• LACCA has expanded lead based testing for HCRP clients with children under the age of 6.

• LACCA believes that other organizations would be more suited to designing and implementing safety restraint training and promotion and would be happy to partner with other organizations who wish to do so.

• LACCA has secured funding to expand several programs
- Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships to serve 80 additional children
- Fatherhood will be expanded to serve more clients in Allen County and begin serving fathers in Auglaize and Mercer Counties
- Transportation services currently offered in Auglaize and Mercer Counties will be expanded into Allen County
- Financial Literacy will be expanded to serve more clients in Allen County and begin serving clients in Auglaize and Mercer Counties
- The Community Housing Improvement Program (CHIP) is now being offered in Mercer County
- Steps to Success Boot Camp for employment readiness and training has been piloted in Auglaize County and will soon expand to Allen County
- Summer Youth Employment has been piloted in Auglaize County and additional Adult and Youth Employment services will be expanded to Allen and Mercer Counties.

- Due to a lack of funding LACCA has discontinued the AEP Community Assistance Program and is exploring other avenues to provide educational and programming efforts regarding efficient energy usage in homes.
- LACCA has developed a housing quality inspection check list in partnership with the Housing Consortium to ensure rental assistance provided is in a decent and safe house.
- LACCA has begun working with additional partners to increase the scope and accuracy of the homeless count in not only Allen County, but also in Auglaize and Mercer Counties.
- LACCA has secured contracts to expand transportation services for job access to Allen County.
- LACCA is a partner in Link Lima, a group which supports employment opportunities in Allen County by removing barriers to employment.
- LACCA has piloted the Steps to Success Boot Camp in Auglaize County which provides job readiness and job training to TANF eligible clients. This program will soon be expanded into Allen County.
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<th>Task ID</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Task Description</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Develop Communication Plan that provides timely, accurate data on child’s health care to parents, medical service providers, LACCA staff and administrators.</td>
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<td>Develop policies related to air and water quality when considering, providing or facilitating childhood education/recreational facilities.</td>
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<td>Implement multi-media educational outreach on the negative effects of using harmful substances.</td>
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<td>Develop readily accessible recreation facilities needed to support healthy and active lifestyles for young children.</td>
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<td>Advocate for safe well designed walkways.</td>
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<td>Execute a public awareness campaign on traffic laws and roadway safety related to bike/pedestrian transportation.</td>
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<td>Promote safe walkable communities with higher quality housing stock.</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Expand lead-based paint testing for children under the age of 6 years.</td>
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<td>Implement public information and education campaign targeting increased use of safety restraint systems in motor vehicles.</td>
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<td>Explore funding opportunities that will enable expansion of LACCA services throughout Allen County.</td>
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<td>Underwrite efforts to improve quality of housing stock in Allen County.</td>
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<td>Expand educational and programming efforts regarding efficient energy usage in homes.</td>
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<td>Adopt policies and regulations that ensure quality property management, maintenance and inspection.</td>
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<td>Work with community stakeholders to ensure an accurate homeless count across the community.</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<td>Research gaps in transportation services regarding geographic limitations.</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Work with local partners to develop workforce intermediaries to service low income employment opportunities.</td>
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<td>Provide education and skills development activities, career and work readiness credentials, and post secondary education opportunities for the local workforce.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Exploit Federal and state funding opportunities to develop and deliver low income workers to employers.</td>
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