

CREATING TOMORROW TODAY

CREATING THE PLAN

Region citizens map the future at subregional workshops

Results to inform regional scenarios

From mid-September to early October, over 130 citizens of Northwest Indiana unrolled maps and rolled up their sleeves for a series of hands-on Subregional Cluster Workshops. They were there to help develop a physical vision for Northwest Indiana in 2040 and to identify the means to get there.

With tools consisting of maps, markers and paper dots, participants mapped out centers of population and employment as well as the corridors to connect them and the green areas, both agricultural and natural, to support a high quality of life within them. In order to draw out local knowledge and preferences, workshops were convened throughout the region: in Gary at Indiana University Northwest, Crown Point at the Crown Point Civic Center, Westville at Purdue North Central, Valparaiso at Valparaiso University and Portage at the NIRPC offices. Approximately 133 citizens participated in the workshops, all of which were open to the public. The information NIRPC received at these Subregional Cluster Workshops will inform the development of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, Northwest Indiana's first ever three-county comprehensive plan.

Each county workshop consisted of four parts: an introduction, a county mapping activity, a regional issues discussion and a reporting period. To open, NIRPC staff and Phil Hanegraaf of HNTB went through

a brief presentation that described the background, purpose, and process of the workshops. Participants then spent the bulk of their time engaged in a small group exercise for their particular county. The goal of the exercise was to develop a framework for their county by plotting where centers (future growth and development areas) should go, identifying the corridors

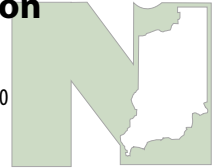


(transportation routes and modes) necessary to support it and demarcating green areas (areas that should be conserved as open space or agricultural land). To do this, participants were provided with a series of large-scale county maps showing existing roadways, bodies of water and floodplains, and public lands. Participants were also given a set of symbols used to mark new and existing population centers as well as colored markers to draw in both new and enhanced transit and road corridors and to identify new or enhanced conservation areas. After completing the county maps,

Continued on page 2

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NIRPC and the 2040 CRP

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Northwest Indiana, NIRPC is responsible for completing a long-range transportation plan to guide the programming of federal funds. As a state designated council of governments for Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties, NIRPC is also charged with environmental and economic development planning. The 2040 CRP marks the intersection of these two mandates. In it, NIRPC is for the first time creating a truly integrated regional plan, identifying recommendations across the areas of transportation, economic development, environmental management, land use and social equity.

In this issue:

- Subregional Cluster Workshops.....pages 1-2
- CRP Open Houses.....page 3
- Other News.....page 3
- Upcoming Events.....page 4

2040 CRP Draft Vision Statement

- Stretching from the treasured shores of Lake Michigan to the historic banks of the Kankakee River and committed to an ethic of sustainability:**
- A vibrant region – Our economy is thriving, our people are well educated, and our environment is clean;**
- A revitalized region – Growth is planned, urban areas are renewed, and natural and rural areas are valued and protected;**
- An accessible region – Our people are connected to each other and to equal opportunities for working, playing, living, and learning;**
- A united region – Celebrating our diversity, we work together as a community across racial, ethnic, political, and cultural lines for the good of the region.**

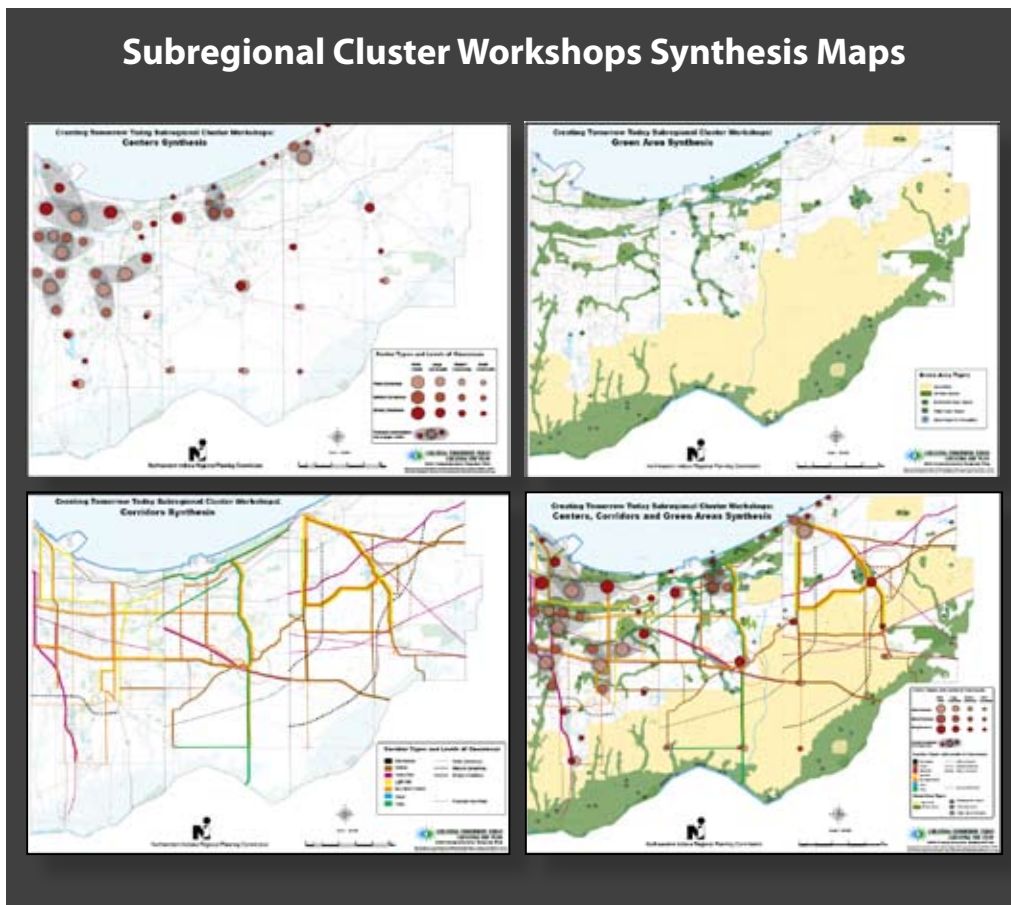
Subregional Cluster Workshops results (continued)

participants were asked to discuss regional and intergovernmental issues. Lastly, each table reported out on the key findings of both the county and regional exercises. At the regional workshop held at the NIRPC office, participants used a regional map for the first exercise instead of a county map, and identified centers, corridors and green areas for the entire region.

After completing the workshops, NIRPC staff synthesized the data from the different table maps and the notes made by the recorder. The maps were synthesized into four regional maps: one for centers, one for corridors, one for green areas, and one called the regional composite, which combined the other three.

The maps as well as the other workshop results may be found in the *Subregional Cluster Workshop Synthesis Report*, available on the NIRPC website.

NIRPC will integrate this information into the alternative regional scenarios that will be developed and refined during the coming year.



Get the whole story:

View and download the full size maps and the *Synthesis Report* at www.nirpc.org

Key needs and challenges identified at the Subregional Cluster Workshops:

- *A Clear Call for Transit*
- *Accomplishing Regeneration of the Urban Core*
- *The Illiana: Is a southern access route really needed?*
- *Agriculture and Natural Resource Preservation: How will we do it?*
- *Collaborative Governance*
- *Economic Competitiveness: Moving business, education and labor in the same direction*
- *Sustainability*
- *Priorities and Equity*

Attend upcoming open houses and tell us what you think

We're halfway there.

Over the course of the last year, NIRPC, along with the citizens of Northwest Indiana, has made great strides toward the development of a regional vision and a Comprehensive Regional Plan. The process thus far has been an exercise in intense public involvement, beginning with the 500-participant *Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana* in December of 2008 and concluding 2009 with the Subregional Cluster Workshops in September and October.

In order to mark the close of the first half of the CRP process and confirm that we're on the right track, the results of these events and more will be on display during two open houses. The public is encouraged to attend one of these sessions. NIRPC staff will be present to answer questions and to take comments.

Open House Schedule

Tuesday, January 19th, 4pm - 6pm
Indiana University Northwest,
Library Conference Center
3400 Broadway
Gary, IN 46408

Wednesday, January 20th, 4pm - 6pm
NIRPC Offices
6100 Southport Road
Portage, IN 46368



Cluster Workshop participants map the future of LaPorte County.

John Swanson presents CRP to NWI Quality of Life Council

On December 4, NIRPC Executive Director John Swanson appeared at the Northwest Indiana Quality of Life Council quarterly meeting to speak to the 120 attendees about the 2040 CRP process and vision. The event, entitled "Creating Regional Unity," was part of an effort to coordinate three different visioning initiatives: the NIRPC 2040 CRP process, the Ivy Tech "Dare to Dream" project and the Northwest Indiana Times "One Region-One Vision" initiative. It was held at the Lost Marsh Clubhouse in Hammond.

Along with John Swanson, the meeting featured presentations by O'Merrial Butchee, director of Ivy Tech's Gerald I. Lamkin Innovation & Entrepreneurship Center in Gary; Bill Masterson Jr., Northwest Indiana Times Publisher; and Jim Flannery, executive director of the Northwest Indiana Quality of Life Council.

Resources available online include:

- *Subregional Cluster Workshops Synthesis Report*
- *Where We Stand: A Snapshot of Northwest Indiana*
- *Our Values, Our Vision: The Final Report from the Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana*
- *The Forum on the Future Participant Guide*
- *The 2040 CRP Planning Timeline*
- *The 2040 CRP newsletters*
- *2040 CRP Steering Committee minutes, presentations and more*
- *Additional participation opportunities*

Please visit www.nirpc.org for this information and more

Questions / Comments?

NIRPC staff are available to speak at the next meeting of your organization.

Your involvement in the development of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan is important to ensure that we, as a regional community, are making wise investments, creating sustainable policies and improving the quality of life for ourselves and for future generations.

Questions or comments may be directed to Gabrielle Biciunas at:

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For information on a copy of this document in an alternate format please contact NIRPC.

Upcoming Events

January 19, CRP Open House

4-6 pm at Indiana University Northwest (IUN), Gary

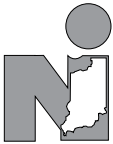
January 20, CRP Open House

4-6 pm at NIRPC, Portage

January 28, CRP Steering Committee

9 am at NIRPC, Portage

The CRP Steering Committee meets regularly in the NIRPC Auditorium at 9 am on the fourth Thursday of the month. Meetings are open to the public.



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