

Transportation Policy Committee
NIRPC/Forum Auditorium
May 14, 2013 9:00 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order by Chairman, Opening and Announcements

- a) Pledge of Allegiance; Introductions
- b) Meeting Participation Survey
- c) **Action** on the minutes of the April 9 meeting *(Pages 1-3)*

2. Programming

- a) FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendment #28 *(Gary Evers) (Page 4)*
Action to amend the TIP
- b) FY 2012-2013 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment *(Eman Ibrahim) (Page 5)*
Action to amend the UPWP

3. Planning

- a) Public Participation Plan *(Steve Strains) (Pages 6-59)*
Action to adopt the PPP

4. Presentation: HB-1067 *(Mike Jabo, DLZ) (Pages 60-62)*

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

- a) Project Lettings Report *(Chris Reynolds) (Pages 63-64)*

6. Public Comment

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 11, 2013.

Requests for alternate formats, please contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 131 or at mthorne@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

April 9, 2013

MINUTES

Members Present

Art Biciunas, Mitch Bishop, Joe Crnkovich, Dave Decker, Stan Dobosz, Stan Dostatni, Phil Gralik, Jerry Halperin, Jeff Huet, Bruce Lindner, Chris Meyers, Ed Morales, Ian Nicolini, Shawn Pettit, Craig Phillips, Brian Snedecor, Stu Summers, Claudia Taylor, Mary Jane Thomas, Tom VanderWoude, David Wright. Joyce Newland and Holly Ostdick participated via conference phone.

Guests

Marcia Blansett, Michelle Bollinger, Janet Cypra, Jim Earl, LuAnn Franklin, La’Kisha Girder, Mike Jabo, Pete Kohut, Katie Kukielka, Ed Leonard, Ed Linden, Sandy Linden, Chris Moor, Hubert Morgan, Chris Murphy, Spike Peller, Rick Powell, Chris Reynolds, Ray Riddell, Doug Robinson, Amy Thurman, Jim Wiseman, Eric Wolverton, Mike Yacullo

NIRPC Staff

Mitch Barloga, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Belinda Petroskey, Amanda Pollard, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne, Ty Warner

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- Chairman Shawn Pettit, NIRPC Commissioner and Merrillville Town Councilman, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- The committee currently receives email notification a week or more prior to the TPC meeting. In order to significantly reduce paper consumption and postage, the committee agreed to receive the draft agenda and accompanying materials via email at least two to three business days prior to the TPC meeting. It would also be available on the website. The day of the meeting, the materials would be viewed via projector. Only a few copies of the packets would be available for those attending who do not have computer access.
- Bruce Lindner motioned to approve the minutes of the January 8 meeting; seconded by Stan Dostatni. Motion carried.

2. Presentation – Public Participation Plan – Steve Strains reported that the 2007 plan needed an update. There was a 170-day plus comment period on several drafts and it is being finalized. Hubert Morgan added that significant input as well as TIP revision amendments and administrative modifications were received on changes in outreach and engagement comment periods. New outreach techniques will include Facebook, Twitter, webinars, Friends of NIRPC and youth outreach. NIRPC is taking the TPC out to communities in the region several times a year. Once broadband is installed, we will be able to webcast our meetings. Staff is completing internal review, and then meeting with the disability community. The plan will then go to the TPC for recommendation to the NIRPC board for action.

3. Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric reported that NIRPC staff will be working with the Illiana team on the Tier 2 process.

4. Planning

- Memorandum of Understanding Update Process – Steve Strains reported that the MOU between NIRPC, IDEM, INDOT and the transit operators would need to be updated due to MAP-21. The regulations have not yet been defined.
- 2040 Plan Implementation – Eman Ibrahim defined the new Livable Centers Initiative, meeting with communities to identify their livable centers and the Creating Livable Centers funding program, \$400,000 from STP funds to link transportation and downtown neighborhoods. Communities can apply to NIRPC for this funding. The *Pathway to 2040* committee will meet Thursday, April 11 at 9 a.m.
- Intelligent Transportation System Architecture – Kevin Garcia reported that workshops will be held May 9 and another date to be determined. A draft of the documents will be presented to the TPC by June 11.
- Northwest Indiana Rail VISION Status –Jack Eskin reported that the at-grade crossing study data collection phase is closing and staff is moving into the evaluation stage. The next Rail VISION meeting will be in early to mid-June.
- Functional Classification Revision status – Bill Brown provided an updated spreadsheet on revisions to date. A lot of traffic counting still needs to be performed. Our traffic count staff person can only do about 45 per year. Any assistance from communities is welcome.

5. Programming

- Quarterly Project Tracking – Gary Evers reported that he is contacting Portage, Hobart and Hammond to set dates. The first change order was done. We will check it contract by contract, and information will be posted on line in July or August.
- FY 2014-2017 TIP Development – Project selection for the two STP categories and HSIP was done recently and issues have been resolved. Next month the draft TIP, conformity determination and plan amendment will be presented to the TPC. They will then be released for public comment and then brought to the NIRPC board at the June meeting. The new TIP will be amended into the STIP late July or August. Stephen Sostaric received 17 HSIP project proposals, two in LaPorte and 15 in Lake and Porter counties for signage replacement and pedestrian infrastructure upgrades. INDOT will evaluate the projects in their safety committee. They will then be amended into the new TIP. Group 2 STP allocated funds will total about \$8.8 million. Group 1 available funds total about \$64.9 million with lettings projected at about \$51.5 million. This will utilize about 80% of dollars available for programming. There is about \$74 million in unfunded projects. Letting for some projects may be delayed due to fiscal constraints. Gary explained the letting process and timeframe.

6. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Chris Reynolds highlighted projects being let from March through July.
- Jim Earl of INDOT and Ed Leonard of Parsons Brinkerhoff presented on the Illiana Tier 2 corridor study which will better define the B3 corridor. The projected benefits to Indiana would include better travel time savings, job creation and economic development. Public meetings are scheduled for April 16 and April 18 and in early summer and a public hearing in the fall of 2013. Discussion followed.

7. Transit Operators Reports

- NICTD – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership is down from March 2012 totals but should be up in April due to spring break and baseball season. The ridership survey starts today. Work on the new high-level platform at the Dune Park Station has begun. Catenary replacement continues east of Michigan City.

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting
April 9, 2013
Minutes

- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that ridership figures are down 5% over March of 2012 due to fewer service hours. The 2013 co-marketing campaign with the Railcats has begun and GPTC will begin serving a larger senior community on the US 20 corridor. Sidewalks are needed on US 20 between Clay and Lake Streets. TOD plans are being put together by the City of Gary near the Miller Station.

8. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update.

No reports.

9. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority

NIRPC's certification review will take place June 18 to 20 with a public meeting. INDOT's STIP public meetings will be held on May 9 from 3 pm to 6 pm at the LaPorte District office. The new division administrator, Rick Marquis starts in June.

10. Planning Neighbors

- Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning – No report.
- South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association – Tom Vander Woude said Illinois Governor Quinn appointed a new millennium reserve steering committee to look at projects in the Calumet area for green infrastructure and multi-use trails. Tom is working with Kevin Garcia on GIS data.
- Southwestern Michigan Commission – No report.

11. Other Business, Public Comment and Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC

Announcements –

Stu Summers asked that a briefing on HB 1067 be put on next month's agenda. The bill, the Federal Fund Exchange Program, would allow a county or city to sell its federal funds to IDNOT at not less than 75 cents on the dollar.

Upcoming Meetings:

- *Pathway to 2040* CRP Implementation Committee will meet Thursday, April 11 at 9:30 a.m.
- NIRPC Full Commission/Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. April 18
- Illiana Corridor Public Meeting – 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. April 18 at Lowell Middle School, 19250 Cline Avenue, Lowell
- Cornucopia – 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. April 25 at Woodland Park in Portage (registration required)
- Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. May 2
- Environmental Boot Camp – May 7-9
- Land Use Committee – 10:00 a.m. May 15
- NIRPC Full Commission/Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. May 23

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 14, 2013 at NIRPC.

Chairman Pettit adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Amendment #28 May 2013

INDOT Projects

TIP Action: Add New Projects or Project Phases										
DES	Applicant	Project Name	Phase	Year	Total Cost	FHWA Funds	Total Non-Federal Funds	Air Quality Conformity Document Reference		In ADA Plan?
								Status	Table	
1297848	INDOT	I-65 Bridge Maintenance and Repair. 0.94 miles N of US 30. Includes slope wall replacement.	PE	2014	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 1,000	Exempt	Table 2, #19	
			CN	2014	\$ 223,000	\$ 200,700	\$ 22,300			
1298173	INDOT	SR 2 Bridge Maintenance And Repair. 1.19 miles W of US 6. Includes new concrete approach slabs.	PE	2014	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 1,000	Exempt	Table 2, #19	
			CN	2014	\$ 112,000	\$ 89,600	\$ 22,400			
1006751	INDOT	SR 51 Small Structure (Pipe Lining). 2.01 miles S of US 20.	RW	2013	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 1,000	Exempt	Table 2, #19	
1172173	INDOT	Traffic Signal Modernization: SR 2 at Andrew Ave, Colfax Ave, Heinz/Scott/North St.; US 35 at Johnson/Severs Rd, and at US 20; US 20 at Woodland Ave. New Flashers: CR 700 East at US 20 and SR 2.	CN	2014	\$ 990,000	\$ 990,000	\$ -	Exempt	Table 3, #2	

LaPorte County CMAQ Projects

TIP Action: Add New Projects or Project Phases										
DES	Applicant	Project Name	Phase	Year	Total Cost	FHWA Funds	Total Non-Federal Funds	Air Quality Conformity Document Reference		In ADA Plan?
								Status	Table	
Pending	LaPorte (City)	Purchase Four (4) Electric Charging Stations	PE	2014	\$ 72,960	\$ 58,368	\$ 14,592	Exempt	Per prior ICG Consultation	
Pending	LaPorte (City)	Cost Differential Funding: One Electric Motor Vehicle	PE	2014	\$ 14,650	\$ 11,720	\$ 2,930	Exempt	Per prior ICG Consultation	
Pending	Purdue University NC	Purchase Two (2) Electric Charging Stations	PE	2014	\$ 23,040	\$ 18,432	\$ 4,608	Exempt	Per prior ICG Consultation	
Pending	Purdue University NC	Cost Differential Funding: One Electric Motor Vehicle	PE	2014	\$ 14,650	\$ 11,720	\$ 2,930	Exempt	Per prior ICG Consultation	
Pending	LaPorte County	Construct Lincoln Trail in/near Westville. (Partnership with Town of Westville & MSD Van Buren Township)	PE	2014	\$ 160,000	\$ 128,000	\$ 32,000	Exempt	Table 2, #33	
			RW	2016	\$ 74,000	\$ 59,200	\$ 14,800			
			CN	2017	\$ 828,000	\$ 662,400	\$ 165,600			

TABLE I: FY 2014 UPWP SUMMARY LIST OF PROJECTS AND BUDGETS

PROGRAM CATEGORY	2014 TOTAL BUDGET	PL / 5303 SHARE	STP SHARE	FTA 5307 SHARE	CMAQ SHARE	PENDING OTHER	NIRPC SHARE	NOTES
2295 Planning Administration	422,308	337,847	-	-	-	-	84,461	Staff Charges + department exp. \$41,000 + \$12,000 traffic count equip
1- Planning Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2- Committee Support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
4- Administration of Transportation Projects	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2296 Data Management & Analysis	293,130	234,504	-	-	-	-	58,626	
1- Transportation Data Collection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2- Demographics Analysis & Forecasting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
3- GIS Support Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2297 Short Range Planning	235,408	188,326	-	-	-	-	47,082	
1- Unified Planning Work Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2- Transportation Improvement Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
3- ADA Transition Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
4- Creating Livable Communities Funding Program	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2298 Long Range Planning	639,350	511,480	-	-	-	-	127,870	
1- CRP/ TRP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2- Regional Land Use Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
3- Congestion Management Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
4- Environmental Mitigation Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
5- Non-Motorized Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
6- Safety & Security Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
7- Economic Development Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
8- Freight Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
9- Travel Network Modeling	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
10- Air Quality Conformity	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
11 - Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
12 - Livable Center Initiative	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2299 Outreach and Public Involvement	65,245	52,196	-	-	-	-	13,049	
1- Public Meeting & Communication Tools	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2- Website Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2300- Vehicles Oversight Program	9,470	7,576	-	-	-	1,894	-	
Total PL Funding	\$ 1,664,911	\$ 1,331,929	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,894	\$ 331,088	
2304 - STP Planning	\$ 120,000	\$ -	\$ 96,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,000	
Transit - FTA								
2112 - Transit Planning	100,000	-	-	80,000	-	-	20,000	
2530 - Transit Administration & ADA Review	293,936	-	-	235,149	-	-	58,787	
Total Transit - FTA Funding	\$ 393,936	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 315,149	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 78,787	
NIRPC Programs								
2535 - Air Quality Education/ Outreach	315,500	-	-	-	315,500	-	-	
2507 - Diesel Engine Retrofit	122,000	-	-	-	122,000	-	-	
2536 - Diesel Engine Retrofit	200,000	-	-	-	200,000	-	-	
2576 - Marquette Plan Update	55,000	-	-	-	-	55,000	-	
1128 - MS4 Stormwater Management	100,000	-	-	-	-	100,000	-	
Total NIRPC Programs Funding	\$ 792,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 637,500	\$ 155,000	\$ -	
NIRPC Administration - Indirect*								
9600 - General Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
9600 - Staff & Administration Support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total NIRPC Administration - Indirect	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
FTA Planning								
Valparaiso Transit Service Marketing Study	100,000	-	-	80,000	-	20,000	-	City of Valparaiso
Valparaiso Transit Route Analysis Study	100,000	-	-	80,000	-	20,000	-	City of Valparaiso
GPTC - Planning Activities	700,000	-	-	560,000	-	140,000	-	Gary Public Transportation Corporation
Total FTA Planning	\$ 900,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 720,000	\$ -	\$ 180,000	\$ -	
Total 2013 NIRPC Budget	\$ 3,871,347	\$ 1,331,929	\$ 96,000	\$ 1,035,149	\$ 637,500	\$ 336,894	\$ 433,875	

* See cost allocation plan

Public Participation Plan 2013

Draft
5/6/2013

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2013 NIRPC Board of Commissioners (Appointing Authority - Member)

Lake County

Lake County Commissioners - Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Executive Board
Lake County Council - Christine Cid
Lake County Surveyor - George Van Til
Mayor of Crown Point - David Uran, Chairman
Mayor of East Chicago - Anthony Copeland, Executive Board
Mayor of Gary - Karen Freeman-Wilson
Mayor of Hammond - Thomas M. McDermott, Jr.
Mayor of Hobart - Brian Snedecor, Vice-Chairman
Mayor of Lake Station - Keith Soderquist
Mayor of Whiting - Joseph M. Stahura
Cedar Lake Town Council - Robert Carnahan
Dyer Town Council - Jeff Dekker
Griffith Town Council - Stan Dobosz
Highland Town Council - Michael Griffin
Lowell Town Council - Donald Parker
Merrillville Town Council - Shawn M. Pettit
Munster Town Council - David F. Shafer
New Chicago Town Council - Philip Mores
St. John Town Council - Michael Forbes
Schererville Town Council - Tom Schmitt
Schneider Town Council - Richard Ludlow
Winfield Town Council - James Simmons

Porter County

Porter County Commissioners - Nancy Adams, Executive Board
Porter County Council - Jim Polarek
Porter County Surveyor - Kevin Breitzke
Mayor of Portage - Jim Snyder
Mayor of Valparaiso - H. Jonathan Costas
Beverly Shores Town Council - Geof Benson
Burns Harbor Town Council - Jeff Freeze
Chesterton Town Council - James G. Ton, Secretary
Dune Acres Town Council - John Sullivan
Hebron Town Council - Don Ensign, Executive Board
Kouts Town Council - James Murphy
Ogden Dunes Town Council - Tom Clouser
Pines Town Council - George Adey
Porter Town Council - Greg Stinson
Porter Township Trustee - Edward Morales
Union Township Trustee - Anthony Pampalone

LaPorte County

LaPorte County Commissioners - Dave Decker, Executive Board
 LaPorte County Council - Matthew Bernacchi
 LaPorte County Surveyor - Anthony Hendricks
 Mayor of LaPorte - Blair Milo, Treasurer
 Mayor of Michigan City - Richard Murphy
 Kingsbury Town Council - Mark Ritter
 Kingsford Heights Town Council - Rosalie Jacobs
 LaCrosse Town Council - Vacant
 Long Beach Town Council - Bob Schaefer, Executive Board
 Michiana Shores Town Council - Patrick Margraf
 Pottawattomie Park Town Council - Vacant
 Trail Creek Town Council - John Bayler
 Wanatah Town Council - Diane Noll
 Westville Town Council - Vacant
 Governor of Indiana - Ed Soliday, Executive Board

2013 Public Participation Task Force Members

Tom Anderson, Member, Izaak Walton League
Jena Bellezza, Marketing Director, Indiana Parenting Institute
Amanda Chraca, Economic & Community Development, 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator, Purdue Extension LaPorte County
Elias Crim, Citizen, City of Valparaiso
Stephen Gill, Northwest Indiana Field Representative, Indiana Youth Institute
Sandra Hall Smith, Assistant Director, Center for Urban & Regional Excellence, Indiana University Northwest
Tyler Kent, Director of Planning, City of Valparaiso
Tarry Martin, Pastor and Consultant, City of Gary
Jeannette Neagu, President, Save the Dunes
Angie Nelson, Public Affairs Manager, NIPSCO
Randy Novak, Fire Marshall, Michigan City Fire Department
Jim Pinkerton, Communications Director, INDOT
Sylvia Planer, President, Hammond Hispanic Community Committee
Charlotte Read, Environmental Advocate, Save the Dunes
Rev. Cheryl Rivera, Executive Director, Northwest Indiana Federation
Lisa Schmidt, Member, Leadership Northwest Indiana
Kathy Sipple, Consultant, Social Media
Tyrone Spann, Director of Programming, Foundations of East Chicago
Mary Jane Thomas, Director of Community Development & Planning, City of LaPorte

Chapter One: Introduction

Nestled in the Northwest corner of Indiana between the metropolitan influences of Chicago and Indianapolis, and shaped by sand and steel, Northwest Indiana draws on a rich history of economic accomplishment and unmatched natural beauty. Today, these advantages present us with a unique challenge in an unpredictable world – to shape our own future and to sustain our diverse quality of life.

Originally called the Lake - Porter County Regional Transportation and Planning Commission, the two-county agency was created by state statute in 1965 and defined as a multi-purpose, area-wide planning agency. It was organized in 1966. In 1973, by an amendment to the original state statute, the name was changed to the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC). In 1975, Indiana Governor Otis Bowen re-designated the agency as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the two-county region. LaPorte County joined in 1979, and the Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary was officially extended to include LaPorte County in 1994. NIRPC's metropolitan planning area consists of the entire three-county area of Lake, LaPorte, and Porter Counties.

The agency conducts the continuous, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process required of all MPOs. Planning is carried out in accordance with the federal transportation planning requirements of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and their predecessor acts. The United States Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) reviews the metropolitan area transportation planning process carried out by NIRPC, in partnership with INDOT and others every four years.

In 2003, major changes were made to NIRPC's functions and appointing authorities in a law passed by the Indiana General Assembly and signed by the Governor. The new legislation defined NIRPC as a council of governments (COG) and designated regional planning responsibilities in the areas of economic development, environmental resources, and transportation. Reorganizing as a council of governments increased the size of the Commissioner Board from 39 to 51. The new seats included representation from all 41 cities and towns in the three-county region. The legislation also specified that only elected officials could be appointed to serve on the Commission. In 2007 the legislation was amended to add trustees of a township with a population over 8,000 which do not contain a municipality. This added two more voting members, making the total

Commissioner Board 53. The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and public transit operators, selected by the operators, continue to participate on the Commission as non-voting members.

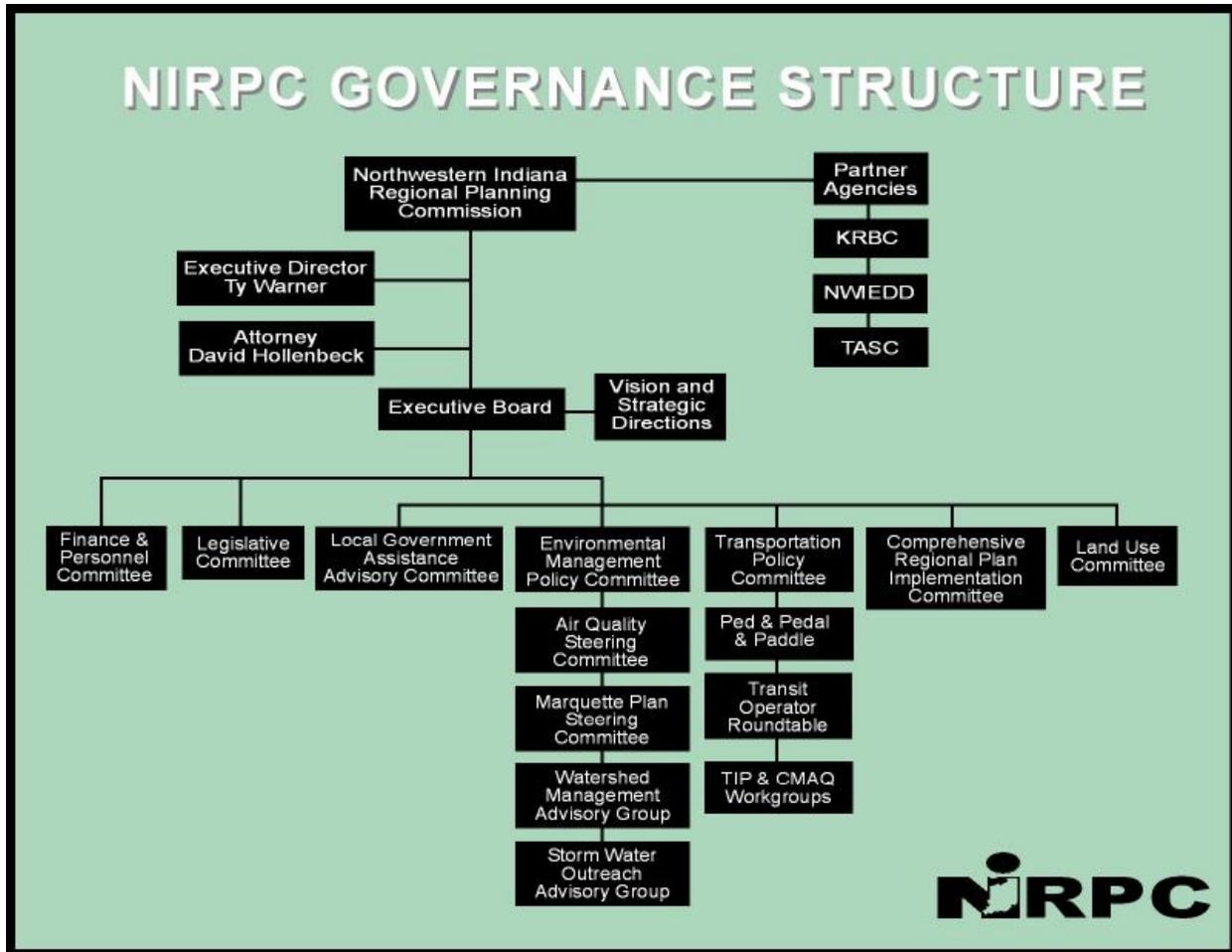


Figure A: NIRPC Governance Structure

The business of the agency is conducted through the Commission's governance structure as pictured in Figure A above. Many of the agency's planning activities are conducted through task forces or working groups which report to the appropriate policy advisory committee. Participation on these task forces and working groups is open to the public. Information on current planning initiatives and opportunities for participation are located on the NIRPC web site at <http://www.nirpc.org>.

To address its many planning responsibilities, NIRPC develops a wide variety of plans. Recent examples, in addition to this Public Participation Plan, include the:

- 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (2040 CRP);
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);

Watershed Management Plan;
Ped and Pedal Plan 2010; and
Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems Architecture.

NIRPC welcomes and encourages public participation in the planning activities of the agency. The Public Participation Plan presents NIRPC's goals and objectives for engaging the public as active participants in the agency's planning activities. It describes the various methods staff will use to solicit, involve, and respond to the region's residents during transportation and other planning processes. The plan provides NIRPC staff with a set of tools they will use, as appropriate, for working through these public participation processes and engaging people in a variety of ways.

While NIRPC faces challenges in dealing with declining federal, state and local funding, the agency will use available resources to ensure the participation of all residents of northwest Indiana. While every technique may not be used every time to involve and collaborate with the public, a combination of techniques mentioned in Chapter Five: Public Involvement Techniques will be employed by NIRPC staff to maximize outreach.

Through discussions and public meetings, NIRPC aims to reach the residents of Northwest Indiana through as many venues as possible. From the web to social media, as well as mass regular and electronic mailings and NIRPC's newsletter, *the regional view*, NIRPC will continue to inform and engage the public with traditional and non-traditional techniques. NIRPC's mission is to involve the public in its decisions that affects the future of Northwest Indiana, and to consider the public as stakeholders in the decisions that help strengthen the region.

In meeting notices, for example Transportation Policy Committee meetings, NIRPC is committed to using the language found on the inside cover (page 2) of this document and as it relates to TTY users.

Chapter Two: MPO Public Participation Requirements

As the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for Northwestern Indiana, NIRPC is responsible for complying with the transportation planning public participation regulations contained in 23 CFR 450.316 (see Appendix D) and published on February 14, 2007. The federal regulations call for a participatory process “for providing residents, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transit, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.” (23 CFR 450.316(a))

When a major planning process is undertaken, such as a Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, and accompanying Conformity Determination, NIRPC will form a task force or a steering committee to help formulate the plan/ program. In the case of an updated Public Participation Plan, the drafted plan has a minimum forty-five day public review and comment period. If significant public comment is made (see page 12), suggesting revision of the plan, the edits will be made and the plan will be posted to the public for an additional forty-five days. If the plan receives no major suggestions for revision, the plan is proposed to the NIRPC Board of Commissioners for adoption, upon hearing a recommendation from the Transportation Policy Committee. How NIRPC implements a major plan/ program of the transportation planning process, including public comments follows in Figure B.

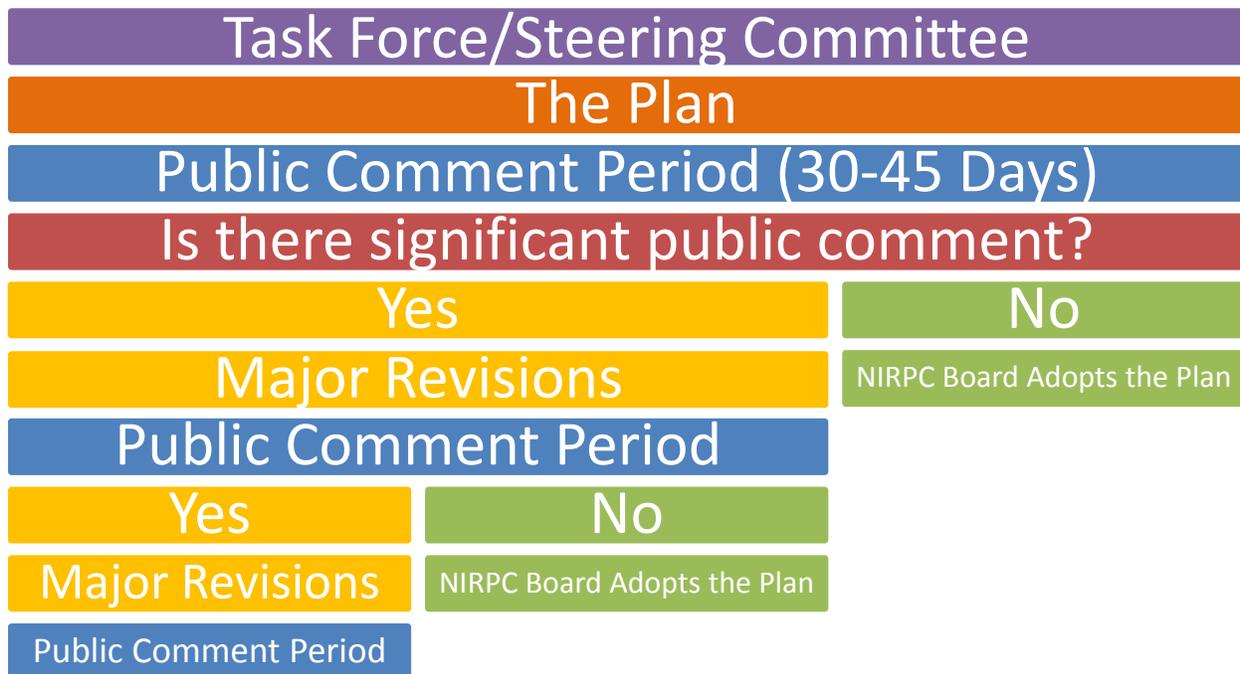


Figure B: NIRPC Comment and Action Process Chart.

Specifics on the length of required public review and comment periods required for the transportation planning and other NIRPC documents are contained in Figure C below. The U.S. Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proscribe a minimum length of 45 days for public comment periods on the new or updated Public Participation Plans. For other types of documents there is no minimum length required—in these instances the Metropolitan Planning Organization is permitted discretion in determining the minimum length. Historically, NIRPC has used a 30-day period (minimum) for these other documents. This Public Participation Plan retains this 30-day standard for all original documents, but does make two exceptions, as noted in Figure C below, for minor amendments to the TIP (as discussed in Chapter Three) and all amendments to the Unified Planning Work Program.

Public Comment Period Length by Document Type		
Document Type	Minimum Review Period	
	Required by Federal Regulation	Per NIRPC Policy
<i>MPO Planning Documents Required by Federal Statute & Regulation</i>		
Long-Range Transportation Plan	Not Specified	30
Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Not Specified	30
Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	Not Specified	30
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Not Specified	30
Major TIP Amendments	Not Specified	30
Minor TIP Amendments	Not Specified	7
Air Quality Conformity Determination	Not Specified	30
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Not Specified	30
UPWP Amendments	Not Specified	7
Public Participation Plans (PPP)	45	45
PPP Amendments	45	45
<i>Other Plans and Documents of Regional Significance</i>		
Corridor, Neighborhood, or Sub-Area Transportation Plans	Not Specified	30
Other Regional Plans	Not Specified	30
Comprehensive Regional Development Plan or Updates	Not Specified	30
Comprehensive Regional Environmental Plans/Updates	Not Specified	30
Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Plans or Updates	Not Specified	30
Other Significant Documents, Policies, Guidance, and Standards	Not Specified	30

Figure C: Document Comment Requirements

Comments received during the formal comment period are reviewed by staff and the applicable task force/ steering committee. Each comment will be classified as either Significant or Not Significant. Comments are defined as “significant” comments if they result in the following actions being taken:

1. Require substantive changes and additions to the draft document;
2. Propose major MPO policy revisions and additions; and/or
3. Contain major new projects not previously subjected to public review and comment.

Following each public comment period conducted for a major planning process, the task force or steering committee would review a Public Comment Summary Report prepared by staff. Such Reports will list each comment received, describe the manner in which the comment was considered by the staff, indicate the significance of the comment, and indicate if there is a need to modify the document. The Report must be reviewed by the appropriate NIRPC policy committee and received by the NIRPC Board prior to their taking action on the plan. The NIRPC Board must receive the Public Comment Summary Report prior

to adopting the document itself. The Report is required to be included in the final printed version of the Long Range Transportation plan, TIP, and Conformity Determination.

Disposition of Comments Received	
Comment Type	Action Required
All Comments	Prepare a written Public Comment Summary Report that is reviewed by the cognizant NIRPC Policy Committee and adopted by the NIRPC Board. Include the Report in the subject Document.
Non-Significant Comments	
No Change in Document Text Required	List the comment in the summary report.
Require Change in Document Text	Make the change to the document. In the Public Comment Summary Report, identify the change and the rationale for making the change.
Significant Comments	
Require Change in Document Text	In the summary report, identify the change, present an analysis of the issue (including the rationale for making the change), and identify any follow-up actions needed that are external to the document.
	Make the change to the document. Repeat the process (i.e., begin a new public comment period on the revised document). Prepare a new Public Comment Summary Report.

Figure D: Disposition of Comments Received

If all comments are classified as “Not Significant” and the document task force (or steering committee) determines that the draft document does not need to be changed, the document may be adopted by the NIRPC Board as it was released for public comment.

If all comments are classified as “Not Significant” and the document task force (or steering committee) determines that the draft document does need to be changed, the document may be adopted by the NIRPC Board as revised.

If any individual comment received is determined to be “Significant” and the document task force (or steering committee) determines that the draft document

does need to be changed, the document may be revised. However, in this case, a new public comment period will be started on the revised document.

Additionally, NIRPC will also document, consider, and respond to any public input received at any time during the development of the long range transportation plan and/or TIP (outside of a public comment period). The record of NIRPC's consideration and response to this type of input will also be included in the Public Comment Summary Reports, respectively, for the plan and TIP.

Increased Access to NIRPC Meetings

One of the first tasks in improving the participation of more residents, including involving more persons with disabilities, is to improve the accessibility to NIRPC meetings, task forces and working groups. Requests for alternate formats, such as large print or recorded materials, or assisted listening accommodations, such as signing, must be made at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

Due to the lack of public transportation to get across county lines in general, and across most municipal boundaries in particular, access to the NIRPC office is limited. NIRPC is committed to opening up the opportunities to participate by implementing several new initiatives.

- **Web-Casting Meetings** – In calendar 2014 NIRPC will pursue the ability to provide real-time meeting access through equipment, staffing and internet capacity. During that year NIRPC is expected to be in a new or remodeled office with access to an Internet feed of greater capacity upload and download. All meetings of the MPO transportation policy committee and transportation work groups and task forces will be available live on the web when NIRPC obtains the technology. People participating via the web cast will be able to request accessible format documents in advance and submit comments in real time. The full commission meetings held quarterly and monthly executive board meetings are recorded and rebroadcast as is currently being done with Access LaPorte County (ALCo).
- **Variable Meeting Locations** – In addition to providing real-time meeting access as resources for doing so become available, NIRPC will periodically rotate meeting locations among the three member counties for meetings of

the Transportation Policy Committee when significant transit planning decisions are on the agenda. Significant decisions include changes to the transit component of the long-range plan, a new or substantially revised TIP, or adoption of a new or updated targeted transit plan, such as the Coordinated Human Services Plan. Furthermore, NIRPC will consider rotating locations for its quarterly full commission meetings on occasion to further improve accessibility to all stakeholders. Those non-NIRPC meeting locations should have the ability to provide real-time meeting access.

Special Participants in the MPO Planning Process

The MPO planning regulations call for direct participation of the local public transit operators, paratransit providers, and other agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the planning area that are affected by transportation in the development of long-range plans and the Transportation Improvement Program. For public and paratransit operators this requirement is met through the Transit Operators Roundtable, a group that NIRPC convenes. It provides transit operators with direct access to the planning and programming processes and as a source for information on new or revised MPO policies or procedures. In addition, there is a planning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between NIRPC, the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and operators of public transportation. The current MOU is from 2008, which will be reviewed and updated in calendar 2013 starting with INDOT.

To strengthen the ties between the MPO and transit operators, NIRPC membership was altered to provide for a representative selected by the transit operators to sit on the NIRPC Board. Public, private and paratransit providers are also routinely included as stakeholders in transportation planning task forces and steering committees. Representatives of “other related agencies and officials,” including human services, municipal and county planners and highway officials, private and public sector economic development officials, environmental interests, airport operations, and freight interests are members of the NIRPC Transportation Policy Committee.

Representatives of other related agencies and officials, along with INDOT, the transit operators, and representatives of the disability community, the elderly, low-income and transit users, constitute the core group of stakeholders in the transportation planning process. This core group is the main source of volunteers

for working groups, steering committees and task forces formed as needed to support a specific planning activity, such as the long-range plan.

The last category of special participants is Federal Land recipients. In Northwest Indiana, this includes the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. The National Park Service maintains a consistent presence in the transportation planning process by having representation on the MPO Transportation Policy Committee and serving on related task forces and working groups. There are no Indian Tribal lands or National Forests in Northwest Indiana.

Coordination with Statewide Transportation Planning

In addition to fostering participation with the public and a broad range of stakeholders, the MPO planning regulations also call for the MPO's coordination with the statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation processes.

Coordination with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) takes place in two ways:

1. INDOT representatives participate monthly in the NIRPC Transportation Policy Committee (TPC) meetings. INDOT, as well as the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) are also members of the TPC. These members, in addition to other stakeholders, serve as an on-going opportunity for bi-state, federal, state and local officials to coordinate and cooperate.
2. For public review and comment on state transportation plans, NIRPC works cooperatively with INDOT in publicizing the State's public planning meetings. Prior to these meetings, INDOT district staff meets with MPO staff to review projects proposed in Northwest Indiana. Issues are resolved informally, if possible. If not, the MPO submits formal written comments when the annual meeting takes place. The INDOT process provides for responses to comments within thirty days.

Chapter Three: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Revisions Amendments and Administrative Modifications

Introduction

A Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a short-term (four-year) list of federally funded surface transportation investment projects in a metropolitan planning area. Surface transportation projects include those for public transit, local and state highways and bicycle/pedestrian projects.

A TIP must also include all regionally significant surface transportation projects, including those funded without federal funds. All local preservation and maintenance projects listed in a TIP must be consistent with the current regional transportation plan, which currently is the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. All capacity-increasing projects (such as added travel lane projects or regionally significant new roadways) must be specifically identified in both the regional transportation plan and its accompanying Air Quality Conformity Determination.

Local preservation and maintenance projects included in the TIP are prioritized and selected in accordance with guidance from the regional transportation plan. Both the plan and TIP must conform to the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality.

NIRPC's Board adopts a new TIP every other year. In between, revisions are made to the TIP by way of amendments. The purpose of this section of the Public Participation Plan is to identify the various types of TIP revisions that are typically encountered and describe the process through which these changes will be made to the TIP. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Planning Regulations that govern the development of Transportation Improvement Programs (23 CFR Part 450) require that these amendment processes and procedures be included in this Public Participation Plan.

Terms and Definitions

TIP Amendment A TIP amendment is a change to the TIP that is subjected to a public comment period, reviewed by the Transportation Policy Committee, and formally adopted by the NIRPC Board.

Administrative Modification An administrative modification revises a project already in the TIP. Changes made in this manner are not subjected to a public comment period, not reviewed by the Transportation Policy Committee, and not formally adopted by the NIRPC Board.

Project Phases Each highway construction project typically has three phases, Preliminary Engineering (PE), Right of Way (RW), and Construction (CN). Additionally, some project sponsors may break a lengthy roadway improvement project into multiple segments, also referred to as phases.

Conformity Determination Regulations of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that implement the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 require that a formal, ongoing process be established to ensure that the Regional Transportation Plan and TIP conform to the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality. Each transportation Plan (or amendment thereto) and each new TIP must be supported by an updated Conformity Determination. The Conformity Determination will identify all Regionally Significant, Non-Exempt projects that add capacity-to the transportation network. Capacity-increasing projects that are not in the Conformity Determination may not be included in a TIP.

Interagency Consultation Group The Indiana Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) consists of representatives from EPA, Federal Highway Administration, (FHWA), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). The ICG must review each TIP amendment prior to adoption to verify the air quality status of each project included in the amendment. The amendment may not take effect without this clearance.

TIP Amendments

There are three types of amendments: Minor Standard Amendments, Major Standard Amendments, and Emergency Amendments. Each are described as follows:

Minor Standard Amendments Minor amendments add new or delete existing air quality-exempt projects, add federal funds to air quality-exempt projects already in the TIP that are funded entirely with non-federal funds, make changes in project termini (increases in length up to one-half mile) for air quality-exempt projects, minor changes in design concept or scope (with no additional travel lanes) for air quality-exempt projects).

Minor standard amendments require ICG review, a public review and comment period of one calendar week (or five business days) prior to final action by the NIRPC Board, and re-determination of fiscal constraint.

Major Standard Amendments Major amendments make changes (increases in length of over one-half mile) in project termini (the starting and ending point of the project) for air quality-exempt projects, major changes in design concept or scope (with no additional travel lanes) for air quality-exempt projects, or involve the addition of a new phase to any air quality non-exempt project already in the Conformity Determination and TIP.

Major standard amendments require ICG review (and a conformity consultation call when the amendment involves a non-exempt project), a public review and comment period of 30 calendar days prior to final action by the NIRPC Board, and re-determination of fiscal constraint.

Amendments that add new air quality non-exempt projects to the TIP will be processed only when the project is listed in the then-current Conformity Determination.

Emergency Administrative Amendments In rare instances NIRPC's Executive Director may make a TIP amendment via a letter to INDOT. These amendments will only be made after the Executive Director, upon the recommendation of the NIRPC Transportation Projects Manager (and others, if necessary), concludes that a delay in adding the project to the TIP through the standard amendment process would either: 1) adversely affect public well-being or safety, or 2) result in the lapse or loss of federal funds to the region. The Executive Director has the discretion to make or not make the amendment.

This process may not be used to make changes either to air quality non-exempt projects or to "regionally significant¹" transportation projects. Emergency amendments will be submitted to the ICG for review on the date they are issued. The NIRPC staff that manages the TIP must re-determine fiscal constraint prior to referring the amendment to the Executive Director for concurrence.

¹ See page 38 in Appendix A for definition of regionally significant.

Administrative Modifications

Changes to air quality exempt, non-Regionally Significant projects already in the TIP may be made by way of an administrative modification. The correction of typographical and other errors will be made in this manner, along with changes in the year, federal funding type, level of funding (total or federal) and/or descriptive information. Division of one listed project into two (or more) or consolidation of multiple projects into a single project may also be performed administratively. Once these changes are made, NIRPC will inform INDOT and the project sponsor via e-mail.

Administrative modifications that involve increases in federal funds require a re-determination of fiscal constraint for the affected federal fund type.

Other Provisions

Publication of Current List of Projects NIRPC will post a copy of the most current list of projects (as amended) on its website, along with each individual amendment following its adoption. Administrative modifications will be highlighted on the current list of projects in the TIP that is posted on NIRPC's website. Each batch of administrative modifications processed will be posted on NIRPC's website.

Interagency Consultation Group Review All TIP amendments will be submitted to the Indiana Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) for review at least seven calendar days prior to NIRPC Board action. The ICG will determine the status of each item in the amendment pursuant to the Federal Clean Air Act and its implementing regulations. Projects may be removed from the amendment pursuant to ICG guidance.

NIRPC will also use the Public Participation Plan as a way to increase public and stakeholder awareness about the federal and state dollars that NIRPC allocates to transportation projects.

Chapter Four: Purpose, Mission, Goals and Objectives

From May to August 2012, a Public Participation Task Force was convened and drafted the mission statement, purpose, goals and objectives of the Public Participation Plan, which NIRPC will incorporate into its programs. NIRPC will continue its commitment to broad-based citizen participation in all major regional planning activities. In addition, to ensure the continued relevance of the Public Participation Plan, it will be reviewed and modified, as needed, every four years.

Public Participation Mission Statement

The NIRPC Public Participation mission is to engage residents of Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties in a meaningful exchange of ideas to move toward solutions for the diverse needs of the region's present and future transportation, economic and environmental planning and programming.

Purpose of the Public Participation Plan

The Plan outlines goals and objectives for public participation in the Commission's transportation, economic development and environmental plans and programs. It identifies public involvement activities that NIRPC will use to achieve the Plan's goals.

Public Participation Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: To develop strategic outreach plans which assure outreach to all of the public, with specific attention given to individuals and groups who have been traditionally underserved and underrepresented in the regional planning process.

Objective 1.1 Increase the participation of individuals in the regional planning process, with specific attention given to minorities, low-income persons, people with disabilities, the young, the elderly, and non-English speaking communities.

Objective 1.2 Build a communications network with organizations within the region.

Goal 2: To create a public involvement environment that is welcoming, open, accessible, easily understood, participatory, and inclusive.

Objective 2.1 Interact with the public in a manner that demonstrates active listening, mutual respect, understanding, acceptance, and responsiveness.

Objective 2.2 Build consensus and trust.

Objective 2.3 Communicate in alternative and/or bilingual formats as necessary to facilitate full participation of all residents.

Goal 3: To foster continuous dialogue with the public.

Objective 3.1 Develop relationships with the public using appropriate communications techniques.

Objective 3.2 Use tools such as the NIRPC website, social media, online surveys, and crowdsourcing applications to engage the public.

Goal 4: To ensure decision makers are informed of public input.

Objective 4.1 Provide detailed and objective information that clearly defines the issue at hand

Objective 4.2 Provide timely information and opportunities for public dialogue in advance of key decision points

Objective 4.3 Provide feedback to the public on how their input was used by decision makers.

Goal 5: To continuously evaluate the public participation process.

Objective 5.1 Provide a means for residents' feedback on the public participation process.

Objective 5.2 Establish internal and external evaluation processes.

Objective 5.3 Evaluate actual performance in a timely manner and take corrective action as needed.

Objective 5.4 Communicate results of the evaluation process to participants and decision makers to demonstrate accountability

Chapter Five: Public Involvement Techniques

This section contains a menu of public involvement techniques used by NIRPC. Included in this menu are descriptions and activities associated with each technique. Depending on the purpose of our outreach efforts, NIRPC will use the most appropriate and effective techniques to engage the public. The tools are grouped into categories based on increasing levels of public control over NIRPC's planning outcomes. Following the table is an explanation with examples.

	(Lower)	<u>Level of Control</u>		(Higher)
	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information and to assist in their understanding of planning problems, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions.	To obtain public feedback on our planning work, analyses, outreach efforts, and decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the planning process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in every aspect of our planning process, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions.
NIRPC's Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influences our decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your goals and aspirations are directly reflected in our planning work as much as possible, and to provide feedback on how public input influences our decisions.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions to our planning issues, and incorporate your advice and recommendations into our decisions as much as possible.
Public Involvement Techniques	Website, Facebook, Twitter, Newsletters, Press Releases, Legal Advertisements, Direct Mailings, Fact Sheets, Display Advertisements	Facebook, Twitter, Surveys, Comment Forms, Public Meetings	Open Houses, Group Meetings, Webinars, Surveys	Task Forces, Working Groups, Youth Outreach, Small and Large Group Meetings

Figure E: Public Participation Matrix

Source: NIRPC, adapted from International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Public Participation Spectrum

Techniques to *Inform the Public*

Goal: To provide the public with balanced and objective information, and to assist in their understanding of planning problems, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions.

NIRPC Website

Description: The website contains information about NIRPC's major planning activities. Agency work products, such as the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Ped, Pedal & Paddle Plan, the agency's Unified Planning Work Program, and extensive demographics data are available here. Links to local, state and federal sites are provided. At least a two-month calendar of public meetings and events is easily accessible and up-to-date.

Outcomes: The website is used by the public as an informational and educational tool. It is especially useful when it is kept up-to-date, which NIRPC strives to do.

Newsletters

Description: Newsletters are produced on an on-going basis and for special projects and planning activities. The agency newsletter, *the regional view*, is prepared quarterly and circulated electronically and in print. Project specific newsletters, such as the Watershed Management Plan newsletter, are produced on an as-needed basis.

Outcomes: Newsletters inform and educate the public about NIRPC and major planning projects.

Press Releases

Description: Formal press releases are distributed to local media including newspapers, radio stations, local cable and public TV. They will announce upcoming special events and to provide information on specific issues that are introduced to the Commission.

Outcomes: Announcements are made to inform the public of special events, such as federal planning certification reviews, major plan adoptions, and opportunities for public engagement.

Legal Advertisements

Description: Legal notices announce pending major actions and public hearings. They advertise requests for proposals, requests for qualifications, and bids. Legal notices also announce opportunities for public review and comment.

Outcomes: Legal notices are made of proposed major plan actions, MPO formal hearings, and other special activities.

Direct Mailings

Description: Direct mailings are used routinely to announce upcoming meetings. Letters or flyers may also be used to announce special meetings, such as public meetings on long-range plans, or meetings on highway projects that will have a major impact on the region.

Outcomes: Announcements are made for meeting notices, notices of public comment opportunities, open houses, and other major activities that NIRPC or its stakeholders sponsor.

Display Ads, Announcements, and Flyers

Description: Display ads, announcements and flyers are used to promote meetings and activities that are not regularly scheduled, such as open houses. They are published in local newspapers and/or posted at meeting sites such as libraries and municipal offices.

Outcomes: Announcements and flyers are made to advertise and inform the public of project or plan-specific meetings, workshops, open houses and formal public hearings.

Fact Sheets and General Information Documents

Description: Fact sheets and general information documents are brief statements of facts or brief descriptions of, a program or project that provides information to the public. They are circulated electronically, and as requested by mail.

Outcomes: Fact sheets and general information documents are made to provide information on current and forthcoming planning projects.

Comment Forms

Description: Comment forms provide a method for the public to express their opinions on plans or projects. They are made available at open houses, formal public hearings, and on the website, and may be included in newsletters. Information for accessing comment forms will be included on the website and as part of newsletters or a separate insert.

Outcomes: Comment forms and comment cards are provided at public workshops, open houses, public hearings and other meetings. Comment cards are included in newsletters.

Techniques to *Consult* with the Public

Goal: To obtain public feedback on NIRPC's planning work, analyses, outreach efforts, and decisions.

Facebook

Description: NIRPC posts upcoming events and links to other web sites and articles on its various Facebook pages. Facebook will serve as a source for discussion about topics that affect the region. NIRPC currently has several Facebook pages: the *Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission*, *INVolve Northwest Indiana*, *Splash*, the *Northwest Indiana Watersheds* and the *Northwest Indiana Greenways and Blueways Plan*.

Outcomes: Share information about meetings and events at NIRPC and throughout the region in a manner beyond the traditional NIRPC communications listed in this chapter. Information is shared about meetings and events at NIRPC

and at our partner agencies in the region. Discussions of important regional issues are conducted on our Facebook pages. Comments and feedback on NIRPC's programs and planning activities are sought and received via Facebook.

Twitter

Description: Soon after the adoption of the Public Participation Plan, NIRPC will begin using Twitter to share information about our events, meetings, plans, and programs, and will also use Twitter to re-tweet information, events, and articles from other sources in the region that are regional in scope and related to NIRPC's mission.

Outcomes: NIRPC shares news and information about events, meetings, programs, and plans for NIRPC and other regional agencies. NIRPC solicits feedback from our stakeholders and the public on our programs and planning projects.

Surveys

Description: Paper and electronic surveys are used when very specific input from the public is needed. Surveys ask specific questions related to planning projects and initiatives. They can be conducted via the NIRPC website, Facebook or through web-based tools such as Survey Monkey, and can be distributed at meetings, special activities, or through the mail.

Outcomes: Public comments are obtained for such efforts as origin-destination studies, corridor studies, public transit analyses (not route analyses), and other planning studies.

Techniques to *Involve the Public*

Goal: To work directly with the public throughout the planning process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Open Houses

Description: Open houses are informal public meetings, where project team members interact with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. The open houses are intended to provide information and to solicit public comment on a proposed plan or activity in the early stages of its development.

Outcomes: The public is invited to review plan development. The public is informed and educated on planning issues.

Small and Large Group Meetings

Description: These are targeted meetings held with a specific group of stakeholders, such as municipal and county planners, economic development specialists, youth groups, or neighborhood organizations. In larger group meetings where discussions take place in smaller groups, diversity will be encouraged. In designing an agenda for a meeting, consideration will be given to identifying start and end times, purpose, goals, and expected outcomes. NIRPC will also determine whether it is necessary to bring people together to achieve the purpose and goals or identify another way(s) to get the information to people and receive feedback.

Outcomes: Early plan development or preliminary study coordination.

Webinars

Description: Webinars are virtual meetings where participants join via telephone or online through chat windows. These meetings are low-cost, and require either telephone or internet service. Webinars allow for online sharing of content, and provide people with an opportunity to participate in meetings from home, work, or any location that is convenient for their needs.

Outcomes: Issues are discussed related to planning. Feedback is provided on plans and topics. Documents, photos, and web pages that articulate planning initiatives and projects are shared online.

Public Hearings

Description: Public hearings are legally advertised meetings in which a structured, formal procedure is used to take public comment. The proceedings are recorded and transcribed for the record.

Outcomes: Federally required hearings are conducted on certain public transit activities. Voluntary hearings are conducted when a formal record of public comment is desired.

Techniques to *Collaborate with the Public*

Goal: To partner with the public in every aspect of our planning process, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions.

Youth Outreach and Inclusion

Description: These are special activities geared toward educating and involving young people in the regional planning process. This could include hosting events at K-12 schools throughout the region and collaborating with various organizations within Northwest Indiana. This could also include engagements at the six colleges and universities that are located in the region: Ivy Tech Community College, Indiana University Northwest, Purdue University Calumet; Valparaiso University; Calumet College of St. Joseph and Purdue University-North Central.

Outcomes: NIRPC staff will take opportunities to attend county fairs, speak at K-12 schools and universities, hold workshops for youth, and provide interactive technology and promotional items to inform and engage youth.

Task Forces and Working Groups

Description: These special committees are created to address a particular subject or activity. They have a definite starting and ending point. Membership on a task force or working group is always open to the public.

Outcomes: Plans, small-area studies, and other planning studies are conducted.

Alternate Formats

Description: Alternate formats are used to accommodate residents who have difficulty in accessing news from NIRPC through traditional means. Examples include large print documents, compact discs (CDs), bilingual documents, or signers at public meetings or hearings. Where meetings are concerned, requests for alternate formats or assisted listening accommodations must be made at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. NIRPC is committed to using the language found on the inside cover (page 2) of this document, and as it relates to TTY users.

Outcomes: Documents in alternate formats are made available upon request.

Chapter Six: Evaluation of the Public Participation Process

The Meeting Report

The meeting report should be designed with outcomes in mind, based on the results of the meeting or workshop. Within one month of the conclusion of a public meeting, a report should be posted on the website and sent to all of the people who were invited and attended the workshop, and interested parties. This report should present the workshop goals, agenda and meeting design, as well as the following items:

- The outreach approach, collaboration with partners, and presentations
- Engagement process
- Highlights of prioritized voting
- Analysis of demographic responses (“Who’s-in-the-room”) and participants’ priorities
- Final actions that should be taken to address the issues discussed at the meeting.

NIRPC strives to evaluate its public process internally and externally. Externally, participants in NIRPC workshops will be asked evaluative questions using keypad polling, paper evaluation forms, or other means to gather feedback for NIRPC’s use in future meetings. Participants will also be informed of how to convey additional feedback should they have comments at a later date.

Internally, NIRPC will evaluate the methods it uses to engage the public, from what techniques were used, what stakeholders attended, and how the participants were informed of the results after the meeting or workshop was concluded. The form for NIRPC staff members to fill out after an event follows on page 32.

Evaluation of the Public Involvement Process

Public Outreach Form for NIRPC staff

Plan or Project: _____

Evaluator(s): _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Location: _____

Number of Participants: _____

Demographics

Race

Caucasian: _____ African-American: _____ Hispanic/Latino: _____

Asian/Island Pacific: _____ Native American: _____ Other: _____

Age

Younger than 25 years old: _____ 25-34: _____ 35-44: _____ 45-54: _____

55-64: _____ 65 years or older: _____

What types of stakeholders were represented at this meeting?

What type(s) of outreach activities/techniques were used?

How far in advance of key decision-making points did NIRPC seek public input and disseminate information? Was citizen feedback actively solicited throughout the project and/or planning period? If so, was it used in the evaluation?

How was public participation incorporated into the decision-making process?
Is there evidence of the degree to which public input influenced the process and changed the product?

How were residents informed of the results of the public participation process?

How did the incorporation of the Public Participation Plan into the plan/project improve stakeholder input?

What techniques that were not used for this meeting should be used for future meetings?

Conclusion

NIRPC's Public Participation Plan represents the course of action that the organization is committed to following in order to achieve outstanding public participation in its planning endeavors. This includes the planning areas of environment, economic development, land use and transportation. NIRPC encourages Northwest Indiana residents and stakeholders to take an active role in moving the region toward a vibrant, revitalized, accessible and united future. Whether people have been a consistent participant in regional forums or are new to the process, everyone's contribution is valuable for the dialogue on successful implementation of the regional vision, goals and plans to continue.

This Public Participation Plan and other plans and information about NIRPC, may be found on the NIRPC web site at <http://www.nirpc.org/>. The reader can discover how he or she can play a vital role in creating our tomorrow... today.

Appendices

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Following is a list of terms and abbreviations commonly used in regional planning and MPO documents, including the Public Involvement Plan.

Comprehensive Planning

A planning process that determines a community's or region's goals and aspirations that typically addresses land use, transportation, utilities, recreation, housing, and economic development. Comprehensive plans usually include large geographical areas, a broad range of topics, and cover a long-term time horizon.

Contiguous Area

Land area immediately adjacent to and influenced by a defined planning area.

Coordination

The comparison of the transportation plans, programs, and schedules of one agency with related plans, programs and schedules of other agencies or entities and the adjustment of plans, programs and schedules to achieve general consistency.

Cooperation

The interaction of parties involved in carrying out the planning and/or project development process to achieve a common goal or objective.

Council of Governments (COG)

A cooperative association of local governments that addresses regional issues. COGs are associations that represent member local governments, mainly cities and counties, that seek to provide cooperative planning, coordination, and technical assistance on issues of mutual concern that cross jurisdictional lines. In this sense, COGs serve to develop consensus on many issues that need to be addressed in a subregional or regional context.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. It will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

FHWA

The Federal Highway Administration

FTA

The Federal Transit Administration

IDEM

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management

INDOT

The Indiana Department of Transportation

Interagency Consultation Group (ICG)

ICG includes members of the staffs of the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, Indiana Department of Transportation, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission. The group is responsible for coordination of activities related to air quality conformity, including the establishment of motor vehicle emissions budgets, regional emissions analyses and the determination of exemption status for transportation projects. All transportation projects must be cleared through this process before being included in the Transportation Improvement Program.

Keypad Polling

Wireless technology used in community meetings to prioritize actions and recommendations for decision making in the planning process. Keypads, which are about the size of a credit card, and/ or personal smartphone devices are used to select multiple choice answers based on the ideas and opinions of the

participants. Keypad polling allows for voting to take place and display the results immediately.

Meaningful Dialogue

An exchange of ideas or opinions meant to help shape public policy or form consensus. It includes sharing and listening by all parties.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

The organization designated by the Governor to be responsible for developing transportation plans and programs for urbanized areas of 50,000 or more. It is the forum for cooperative transportation decision making. NIRPC was designated the MPO for Lake and Porter Counties in 1975. LaPorte County joined NIRPC in 1979 and was added to the Metropolitan Area Boundary in 1994.

Metropolitan Area Boundary

At a minimum, the existing urban area, non-attainment area (see definition below) and contiguous area expected to become urban in the next 20 years. The metropolitan area boundary for Northwest Indiana includes the entire Counties of Lake, Porter and LaPorte and defines the area within which NIRPC conducts the transportation planning process.

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)

This law was enacted in 2012, and will fund surface transportation programs at over \$105 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014. MAP-21 creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian programs and policies established by the Federal Government. MAP-21 supersedes The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which was enacted in 2005.

Non-attainment Area

Geographic areas designated by the USEPA for failure to meet the national ambient air quality standards defined in the Clean Air Act, as amended.

Paratransit

Paratransit is an alternative mode of flexible passenger transportation that does not follow fixed routes or schedules. Typically, minibuses are used to provide paratransit service, but a shared taxi is also an important provider.

Public Hearing

A formal meeting at which the agency receives public comments or testimony on a particular proposed action in an open setting. It is an opportunity for members of the public to voice its opinions and provide input to a board or other body on a particular issue or topic. A transcript of the testimony received at a public hearing is prepared. Often, all comments received prior to the public hearing and for a set amount of time after are made part of the hearing's permanent record.

Public Participation

Actively engaging residents in regional public policy formation by allowing and inviting residents to discuss and provide suggestions on projects and initiatives of local and regional significance.

Public Meeting

An open forum in which all are welcome.

Regional Planning

Public sector activities encompassing economic, social, environmental and physical elements to develop and implement appropriate public policy in an area covering more than one jurisdiction.

Regionally Significant Project

A transportation project that is on a facility, which serves regional transportation needs and would normally be included in the modeling of a metropolitan area's transportation network, including at a minimum all principle arterial highways and all fixed guide way transit facilities that offer an alternative to regional highway travel. Examples include roads that provide access to and from the area outside the region; major activity centers in the region; major planned developments such as new rental malls, sports complexes, etc.; or transportation terminals as well as most terminals themselves.

Social Equity

Social equality is a social state of affairs in which all people within a specific society or isolated group have the same status in certain respects. At the very least, social equality includes equal rights under the law. It also includes equal opportunities and obligations. It is the overall fairness of a society in its divisions of rewards and burdens.

Stakeholder

Individuals and organizations involved in or affected by the transportation planning process. A widely used term that notates a public agency, private organization or the traveling public with a vested interest, or a "stake" in one or more transportation elements in the planning process. Include federal/ state/ local officials, MPOs, transit operators, freight companies, shippers, and the public.

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act

This is a Federal law providing that no person, irrespective of race, color, or national origin, shall be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

A staged, multi-year multi-modal program of transportation projects in the MPO planning area that is consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan.

Transportation Plan (Long and short term)

A plan that identifies facilities that should function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system. It gives emphasis to those facilities that serve important national and regional transportation functions, and includes a financial plan that demonstrates how the plan can be implemented. A metropolitan area transportation plan must have at least a 20-year planning horizon.

Urbanized Area

A geographic area with a population of at least 50,000 as designated by the Census for areas with an overall density of 1,000 people per square mile. The urbanized area of Northwest Indiana as defined by the federal Census is approximately the northern half of Lake County, the northern third of Porter

County, and a section of LaPorte County, which includes the cities of Michigan City and LaPorte.

USEPA

The United States Environmental Protection Agency

USDOT

The United States Department of Transportation

Appendix B

Public Participation and the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP)

The 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP) relied on an unprecedented level of public involvement to develop a vision that was representative of the entire region (see the following section for this regional vision). An Outreach Subcommittee advised the 2040 CRP Steering Committee to make sure that the process was inclusive. In the end, NIRPC engaged more than 2,300 residents to gather input, build consensus around goals and objectives for the 2040 CRP, and ensure that the recommendations of the plan are realistic and can be implemented.

Vision and Values Statement for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan

IN*Vision* Northwest Indiana - Stretching from the treasured shores of Lake Michigan to the historic banks of the Kankakee River and committed to an ethic of sustainability:

A revitalized region

Urban areas are renewed, and our environment is clean.

A vibrant region

Our economy is thriving; our people are well educated; our growth is planned; 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.

Drawing on the IN*Vision* Northwest Indiana themes of an accessible and united region, NIRPC will make participation in the planning process more accessible to all of our region's residents. To read the entire Comprehensive Regional Plan, as

well as the Executive Summary and other plans that NIRPC has created, please visit NIRPC's web site at www.nirpc.org.

Appendix C

A Commitment to Environmental Justice

On Feb. 11, 1994, President Bill Clinton issued an Executive Order on Federal Actions to address environmental justice (EJ) in minority populations and low-income populations. It directed every federal agency to make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing the effects of all programs, policies, and activities on "minority populations and low income populations." The order was designed to focus Federal attention on the environmental and human health conditions in minority communities and low-income communities with the goal of achieving environmental justice. The order promotes nondiscrimination in Federal programs substantially affecting human health and the environment, and provides minority and low-income communities' access to public information on, and an opportunity for public participation in, matters relating to human health or the environment.

Northwest Indiana will focus on revitalization of the region's "urban core" communities, which include Gary, Hammond, East Chicago and Michigan City, to make efficient use of resources and to capitalize on existing infrastructure and assets. The application of environmental justice in these communities also demonstrates NIRPC's commitment to shared benefits and burdens in the decision making process of NIRPC's work. NIRPC also understand that the growth and revitalization of these communities are not only critical to these individual cities, but are essential to the continued success of Northwest Indiana as envisioned in the 2040 CRP.

Properly implemented, EJ principles and procedures improve all levels of transportation decision making. A comprehensive approach will:

- Result in better transportation decisions that meet the needs of all people.
- Design transportation facilities that respect context and integrate with existing communities.

- Enhance the public-involvement process, strengthen community-based partnerships, and provide minority populations and low-income populations with opportunities to learn about and improve the quality and usefulness of transportation in their lives.
- Improve data collection, monitoring, and analysis tools that assess the needs of, and analyze the potential impacts on, minority populations and low-income populations.
- Partner with other public and private programs to leverage transportation agency resources to achieve a common level of accessibility for communities.
- Avoid disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority populations and low-income populations.
- Minimize and/ or mitigate unavoidable impacts by identifying concerns early in the planning phase and providing offsetting initiatives and enhancement measures to benefit affected communities and neighborhoods.

As part of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP), NIRPC conducted an analysis of transportation projects in the plan, and measured the benefits and burdens that these projects would bring to environmental justice communities. While limited in scope, the outcome of the analysis showed that environmental justice communities either would benefit, or at very least not be burdened, by the transportation projects in the 2040 CRP.

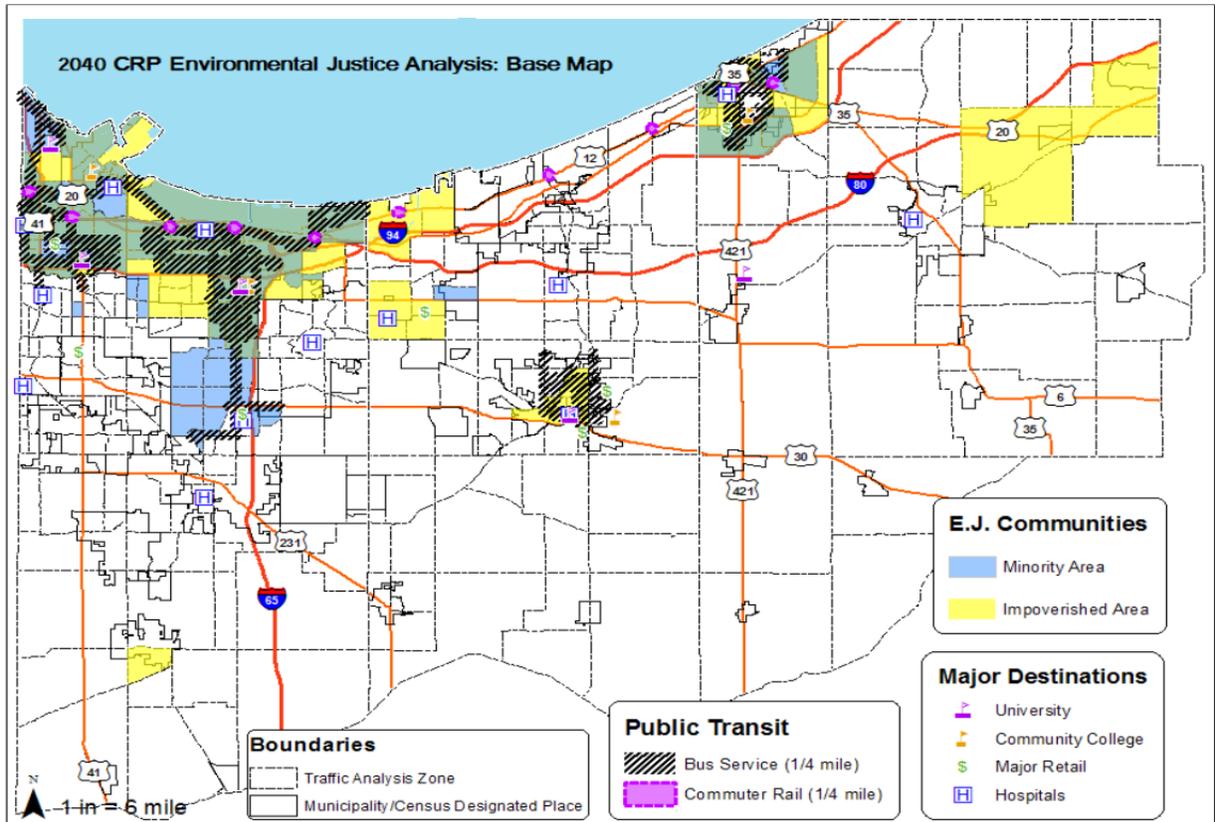


Figure E: 2040 CRP Environmental Justice Analysis. Source: NIRPC

The Environmental Justice Analysis is based on assumptions for population and employment that are grounded in the Growth and Revitalization Vision for Northwest Indiana – the preferred scenario for the CRP. The Vision calls for the revitalization of the urban core, the development of “livable centers” throughout the region, and in general an end to sprawling land use patterns. This analysis is dependent on breaking with the status quo and implementing the recommendations of the CRP. NIRPC is committed to the results coming from a broader outreach strategy.

Appendix D

23 CFR §450.316 Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation

This is an excerpt from the current federal transportation planning regulation requiring the development of a public participation plan.

(a) The MPO shall develop and use a documented participation plan that defines a process for providing citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of public transportation employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties with reasonable opportunities to be involved in the metropolitan transportation planning process.

(1) The participation plan shall be developed by the MPO in consultation with all interested parties and shall, at a minimum, describe explicit procedures, strategies, and desired outcomes for:

- (i) Providing adequate public notice of public participation activities and time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (ii) Providing timely notice and reasonable access to information about transportation issues and processes;
- (iii) Employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs;
- (iv) Making public information (technical information and meeting notices) available in electronically accessible formats and means, such as the World Wide Web;
- (v) Holding any public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times;
- (vi) Demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input received during the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP;
- (vii) Seeking out and considering the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services;
- (viii) Providing an additional opportunity for public comment, if the final metropolitan transportation plan or TIP differs significantly from the version that was made available for public comment by the MPO and raises new material issues which

interested parties could not reasonably have foreseen from the public involvement efforts;

- (ix) Coordinating with the statewide transportation planning public involvement and consultation processes under subpart B of this part; and
- (x) Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the procedures and strategies contained in the participation plan to ensure a full and open participation process.

(2) When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft metropolitan transportation plan and TIP (including the financial plans) as a result of the participation process in this section or the interagency consultation process required under the EPA transportation conformity regulations (40 CFR part 93), a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made as part of the final metropolitan transportation plan and TIP.

(3) A minimum public comment period of 45 calendar days shall be provided before the initial or revised participation plan is adopted by the MPO. Copies of the approved participation plan shall be provided to the FHWA and the FTA for informational purposes and shall be posted on the World Wide Web, to the maximum extent practicable.

(b) In developing metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, the MPO should consult with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities within the MPA that are affected by transportation (including State and local planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight movements) or coordinate its planning process (to the maximum extent practicable) with such planning activities. In addition, metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs shall be developed with due consideration of other related planning activities within the metropolitan area, and the process shall provide for the design and delivery of transportation services within the area that are provided by:

(1) Recipients of assistance under title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53;

(2) Governmental agencies and non-profit organizations (including representatives of the agencies and organizations) that receive Federal assistance from a source other than the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide non-emergency transportation services; and

(3) Recipients of assistance under 23 U.S.C. 204.

(c) When the MPA includes Indian Tribal lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Indian Tribal government(s) in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(d) When the MPA includes Federal public lands, the MPO shall appropriately involve the Federal land management agencies in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP.

(e) MPOs shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process(es) that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies, as

defined in paragraphs (b), (c), and (d) of this section, which may be included in the agreement(s) developed under § 450.314.

Source: United States Department of Transportation, 72 FR 7261, Feb. 14, 2007

Appendix E

Resources

Easter Seals Project ACTION (ESPA)

The mission of ESPA is to promote universal access to transportation for people with disabilities under federal law and beyond by partnering with transportation providers, the disability community and others through the provision of training, technical assistance, applied research, outreach and communication. The primary values of their work are partnership, coalition building, coordination, inclusion, independence and the importance of access to transportation choices for people with disabilities. ACTION stands for Accessible Community Transportation In Our Nation.

www.projectaction.org

International Association for Public Participation

IAP2 is an international organization advancing the practice of public participation. Its mission is to advance and extend the practice of public participation.

www.iap2.org

Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)

<http://www.dot.gov/map21>

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

www.nirpc.org

United States Department of Justice

1. *ADA Checklist for Polling Places*

<http://www.ada.gov/votingck.htm>

2. *A federal resource document for businesses on how to hold accessible events*

<http://www.ada.gov/business/accessiblemtg>

United States Department of Transportation

Informing People through Outreach and Organization, Section 1.A.B: Involving Persons with Disabilities

http://www.planning.dot.gov/PublicInvolvement/pi_documents/1a-b.asp

Appendix F

Essential Accessibility Features for NIRPC Meetings

As NIRPC staff identifies potential locations for meetings at NIRPC and for public meetings outside of the NIRPC office, staff will review those locations for basic, essential accessibility features to assure that the locations are useable for people with disabilities. Any location that does not meet the basic, essential accessibility features will not be used by NIRPC to host its public meetings. The essential features that NIRPC will require include:

1. Current **parking** spaces that are at least 8' wide with at least 5' aisles next to them, or the ability to block off temporary spaces for the meeting.
2. A **walkway** with a stable and firm surface at least 36" wide from the accessible parking to the accessible entrance to the building.
3. If the accessible **route** is different from the primary route to and through the building, have the ability to post signs with the wheelchair symbol that show the route.
4. A **doorway** of the accessible entrance into the building at least 32" wide with a door that has a lever, push plate or automatic door, or with a person to assist people to enter.
5. An **elevator** or lift to the floor where the meeting is located if the meeting is not on the ground floor.
6. **Tables** where the top is between 28" to 34" with clearance around the table for a wheelchair to move, and where a wheelchair can pull under the edge of the table.
7. Wide, accessible **path** to the restrooms or to an accessible restroom.
8. A **toilet stall** or single occupancy **restroom** wide enough that a wheelchair can enter and close the door behind with interior space to turn around. This is an accessible stall or room size of at least 60" wide and 56" deep with a door that opens out. Rear and side grab bars are present.
9. The ability for a wheelchair to roll under the **sink** or to the side of the sink.

Appendix G

Consent Decree: Sections II-G-1-7 (pages 24-26)

The following is an excerpt from a consent decree that details the resolution of a federal class action lawsuit filed by eight persons against NIRPC in 1998. The consent decree details the actions that NIRPC and its sub-recipient public transit operators will follow to maintain compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. Affected public operators are those that receive their Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding through NIRPC. Included are: East Chicago Public Transit, Southlake County Community Services, North Township Dial-a-Ride, Porter County Aging and Community Services, Opportunity Enterprises, the City of Valparaiso (V-Line and Chicago DASH), and the City of LaPorte (TransPorte).

G. TRANSPORTATION PLANNING/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

1. NIRPC understands and agrees that as the MPO for Northwestern Indiana, it must make efforts in planning mass transportation services to ensure those services can be used by individuals with disabilities as provided in 49 U.S.C. § 5301.
2. Moreover, NIRPC understands and agrees that pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 5303, before approving any long-range transportation plan, NIRPC must provide the public with an opportunity to comment on the plan.
3. All public meetings or public hearings held by NIRPC for the purpose of receiving public comment on the regional transportation plan or the Transportation Improvement Program (including the Program of Projects) shall be held in compliance with the ADA and the following guidelines:
 - a. Public meetings and hearings will be held at accessible facilities;
 - b. Should multiple public hearings or meetings be held on any given topic, at least one of those meetings or hearings will be held at a location in Lake County to

which and at a time of day when transportation for persons with disabilities is available;

- c. Should a single public hearing or meeting be held on any given topic, that meeting or hearing must be held at a location in Lake County to which and at a time of day when Demand Response Services for persons with disabilities are available;
 - d. Notice of all meetings and hearings will be posted at the NIRPC office at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting and/or hearing;
 - e. When the law requires that legal notices be posted in newspapers, those notices shall be supplemented by press releases and public service announcements which summarize the information being posted;
 - f. Announcements or press releases will be sent to appropriate newspapers, radio stations and television stations in Northwestern Indiana at least thirty (30) days prior to a hearing and/or meeting, and copies of those announcements or press releases shall be mailed to those individuals and entities identified on the mailing list described in Section II.E.14.a. of this Consent Decree;
 - g. Provide auxiliary aids and services to ensure effective communications at meetings and hearings upon request.
4. When legally-noticed public hearings are held, written responses to questions and/or comments posed at a public hearing shall be prepared within sixty (60) days and made available to the public on request.
 5. NIRPC agrees that it shall continue to seek to improve its Public Participation Plan. To that end, NIRPC agrees that

for those provisions of its Public Participation Plan that relate to persons with disabilities, NIRPC, through a team consisting of not more than two representatives of NIRPC and not more than two representatives of Everybody Counts, shall develop and recommend that portion of the Public Participation Plan that relates to participation for persons with disabilities to the full NIRPC Commission. NIRPC and the plaintiffs agree to identify their representatives for this team within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this Consent Decree.

6. In the event that a regional council on accessible transportation is formed in conjunction with any Consent Decree entered into by any NIRPC subgrantee defendant or any voluntary agreement between subgrantee operator defendants and plaintiffs, NIRPC agrees to recognize, acknowledge, and participate in the regional council in accordance with this Section.
7. NIRPC agrees that its Executive Director shall appoint one staff member to serve as an ex-officio (non-voting member) of the regional council.

Public Participation Plan 2013 Adoption Resolution

First Regular Session 118th General Assembly (2013)

PRINTING CODE. Amendments: Whenever an existing statute (or a section of the Indiana Constitution) is being amended, the text of the existing provision will appear in this style type, additions will appear in **this style type**, and deletions will appear in ~~this style type~~.

Additions: Whenever a new statutory provision is being enacted (or a new constitutional provision adopted), the text of the new provision will appear in **this style type**. Also, the word **NEW** will appear in that style type in the introductory clause of each SECTION that adds a new provision to the Indiana Code or the Indiana Constitution.

Conflict reconciliation: Text in a statute in *this style type* or ~~this style type~~ reconciles conflicts between statutes enacted by the 2012 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

HOUSE ENROLLED ACT No. 1067

AN ACT to amend the Indiana Code concerning local government.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

SOURCE: IC 36-9-42.2; (13)HE1067.1.1. -->

SECTION 1. IC 36-9-42.2 IS ADDED TO THE INDIANA CODE AS A NEW CHAPTER TO READ AS FOLLOWS [EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2013]:

Chapter 42.2. Federal Fund Exchange Program

Sec. 1. As used in this chapter, "department" refers to the Indiana department of transportation established by IC 8-23-2-1.

Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "eligible entity" means a county or municipality that receives, directly or indirectly, federal funds.

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "federal funds" means funds received by an eligible entity through the federal surface transportation program.

Sec. 4. As used in this chapter, "program" refers to the federal fund exchange program established by section 5 of this chapter.

Sec. 5. The federal fund exchange program is established to provide eligible entities and the department with greater flexibility in funding transportation projects. The department shall administer the program.

Sec. 6. The department shall determine the amount of state funds available for the program. In making the determination, the department shall consider the following:

(1) Whether adequate state funds are available to fund the program without putting at risk other transportation

activities or projects needing state funds.

(2) Whether the department can readily and effectively use federal funds received through the program.

Sec. 7. An eligible entity is eligible to participate in the program upon entering into an exchange agreement with the department. The department shall consider the following before entering into an exchange agreement with an eligible entity:

(1) The amount of federal funds the eligible entity wants to exchange and the proposed exchange rate.

(2) A brief description of each project the eligible entity wants to fund, including the estimated cost of the project.

(3) The benefit to a project described in subdivision (2) from the removal of federal funding, due to the project's size, type, location, or other features.

(4) The availability of state funds.

Subject to section 7.5 of this chapter, an eligible entity may enter into an exchange agreement with respect to a project at any time during the project development process.

Sec. 7.5. (a) The department may enter into an exchange agreement only if the exchange agreement is first approved by the office of management and budget and the attorney general.

(b) The executive of an eligible entity may enter into an exchange agreement on behalf of the eligible entity. However, the executive of an eligible entity may enter into an exchange agreement only if the exchange agreement is first approved by the fiscal body of the eligible entity.

Sec. 8. An exchange agreement must provide the following:

(1) The eligible entity may exchange only federal funds for state funds.

(2) The eligible entity may use state funds only for a capital project that will fulfill the purpose of the original federal project award and that is approved by the department.

(3) If the eligible entity uses state funds to replace local funds in order to use the local funds for purposes unrelated to transportation, the eligible entity:

(A) must repay the state funds to the department; and

(B) may not participate in the program during the succeeding fiscal year.

(4) An exchange rate of not less than seventy-five cents (\$0.75) of state funds for each one dollar (\$1) of federal funds.

(5) The eligible entity agrees to provide local matching funds equal to not less than ten percent (10%) of the estimated

project cost.

(6) The department will disburse the state funds to the eligible entity on a reimbursement basis.

Sec. 9. Not later than November 1 of each year, the department shall submit a report on the program to the general assembly in an electronic format under IC 5-14-6. A report submitted under this section must include:

(1) a summary of the exchange agreements entered into during the previous state fiscal year; and

(2) a status report on the implementation of projects funded through the program.

Sec. 10. An eligible entity that participates in the program shall comply with applicable public purchasing laws and competitive bidding requirements with respect to projects funded through the program.

Sec. 11. The department may adopt rules under IC 4-22-2 to implement this chapter.

HEA 1067 _ Concur

Figure

Graphic file number 0 named seal1001.pcx with height 58 p and width 72 p Left aligned

**Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)
INDOT - LaPorte District Letting**

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION **Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission**
Driving Indiana's Economic Growth

OFFICIAL TABULATION OF BIDS RECEIVED

Total Letting Cost:

\$1,630,129.49

LAPORTE DISTRICT

FOR THE LETTINGS IN APRIL 2013

R-31373	0300603	Description: Route: Location: County:	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities Local Orchard Pedestrian Way, Franklin/Waverly Extension Porter	Letting Date: 4/3/2013	LPA SOLD
		CONTRACTOR: RIETH-RILEY CONSTRUCTION	Address Goshen, IN	Phone 574-875-5183	AMOUNT OF BID \$1,030,327.67
R-34124	1005387	Description: Route: Location: County:	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities Local Dunes Kankakee Trail parallel with SR 49 from Dunes State Park to US 20 Porter	Letting Date: 4/3/2013	LPA SOLD
		CONTRACTOR: WALSH & KELLY, INC.	Address Griffith, IN	Phone 219-924-5900	AMOUNT OF BID \$485,455.89
R-35513	1297903	Description: Route: Location: County:	Institution & Park Road Maintenance Indiana Dunes State Park Indiana Dunes State Park Porter	Letting Date: 4/3/2013	SOLD
		CONTRACTOR: RIETH-RILEY CONSTRUCTION	Address Goshen, IN	Phone 574-875-5183	AMOUNT OF BID \$46,869.55
R-35514	1297907 1297905	Description: Route: Location: County:	Institution & Park Road Maintenance Lowell State Police Post Lowell State Police Post, Resurface parking area by the garage LaSalle Fish & Wildlife Area, Resurface entrance road and office parking lots Lake/Newton	Letting Date: 4/3/2013	SOLD
		CONTRACTOR: WALSH & KELLY, INC.	Address Griffith, IN	Phone 219-924-5900	AMOUNT OF BID \$49,937.78
R-35515	1297904 1297906	Description: Route: Location: County:	Institution & Park Road Maintenance Park Road Lake Michigan Fisheries, Crack Sealing upper and lower parking lots Mixsawbah State Fish Hatchery, Crack Sealing service/parking area LaPorte	Letting Date: 4/3/2013	APPARENT LOW BIDDER
		CONTRACTOR: RIETH-RILEY CONSTRUCTION	Address Goshen, IN	Phone 574-875-5183	AMOUNT OF BID \$17,538.60

INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Driving Indiana's Economic Growth

LAPORTE DISTRICT

FOR THE LETTINGS IN MAY 2013

R-29082	0100512	Description: Route: Location: County:	Small Structure Replacement U 6 4.02 miles E of E jct of US 35 LaPorte	Letting Date: 5/1/2013	
R-31407	9980090	Description: Route: Location: County:	Intersection Improvement Local 45th Avenue Road Reconstruction Phase 2A, Chase to Cleveland. Lake	Letting Date: 5/1/2013	LPA

**Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC)
INDOT - LaPorte District Letting**

R-31458	0400640	Description: Route: Location: County:	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities Local Along Sheffield Avenue from I-90 to Calumet Avenue Lake	Letting Date: 5/1/2013 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">LPA</div>
R-34435	1006777	Description: Route: Location: County:	PCCP Patching I-80 On I-80 from the Illinois State Line to SR 912 Lake	Letting Date: 5/1/2013
NO PROJECTS IN THE JUNE LETTING				
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION <i>Driving Indiana's Economic Growth</i>				
LAPORTE DISTRICT FOR THE LETTINGS IN JULY 2013				
R-29555	0200984	Description: Route: Location: County:	Enhancement Local City of Hobart Lake George/Oak Savannah Bike/Ped Trail Lake	Letting Date: 7/10/2013 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">LPA</div>
R-32731	0400634	Description: Route: Location: County:	Small Structure Replacement SR 8 Over Township Ditch, 0.5 mile W of SR 49 Lake	Letting Date: 7/10/2013
R-34781	1172418	Description: Route: Location: County:	Bike/Pedestrian Facilities Local Lakefront Bike/Ped within Whiting Park Lake	Letting Date: 7/10/2013 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">LPA</div>
R-35343	1297635 1297636	Description: Route: Location: County:	Concrete Pavement Restoration I-65 & US 6 Ramp from I-65 NB to I-80/94 WB From I-94 to 1 mile East of I-94 Lake	Letting Date: 7/10/2013
T-35288	1172185	Description: Route: Location: County:	Raised Pavement Markings, Refurbished I-65 I-65 from US 30 to US 20 Lake	Letting Date: 7/10/2013
M-35818	1382321	Description: Route: Location: County:	Wedge & Level Various Various Locations throughout the LaPorte District Lake, Porter, LaPorte	Letting Date: 7/10/2013