

Christopher D. Atkins
 Indiana Distressed Unit Appeals Board
 General Counsel and Policy Director
 Office of Management and Budget

Mr. Atkins:

The Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) is writing to express our commitment to the city of Gary's long-term economic stabilization. Since 1934, the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC) has been dedicated to shaping a more sustainable and prosperous greater Chicago region. As an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, MPC serves communities and residents by developing, promoting and implementing solutions for sound regional growth. As you are reviewing Gary's DUAB appeal, we hope to demonstrate that there is opportunity to advance revenue-generating investments in Gary and attract public, private, and philanthropic support toward that end.

MPC considers Northwest Indiana a vital part of metropolitan Chicago. Over the past year, we have formalized our partnership with the region through the Gary and Region Investment Project (GRIP), a partnership with The Times Media Company. GRIP's goal is to prioritize projects that will have the most significant impact on improving local and regional quality of life and economic competitiveness; and to move them toward on-the-ground implementation by identifying and securing partnerships, private investment, public funding, and policy change.

MPC has a long track record of success both in supporting local redevelopment projects and advancing policy change. We have a board of approximately 60 business and civic leaders and engage more than 300 through various projects and committees. During its 76-year history, MPC has been involved in a number of initiatives that have benefited the region's communities and residents.

Significant achievements include:

- Guided the creation of the Regional Transportation Authority in the 1960s and played a key role in its restructuring in 1983 and again in 2008.
- Along with the Urban Land Institute, assisted the Village of Riverdale in restoring an historic and highly disinvested residential neighborhood called Pacesetter which has now completed Phase I of development (2003-2008).

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- Helped the City of Joliet create a Quality of Life Plan, which led to the creation of the Unity CDC to oversee its implementation (2007).
- Assisted the South Suburban Housing Collaborative and West Cook County Housing Collaborative in their successful efforts to secure more than \$12 million in federal funding to address foreclosures and spur redevelopment at the regional scale (2009-2010).

GRIP will be directly supporting projects in Gary and promoting Gary and Northwest Indiana's urban core as deserving of federal and national philanthropic investment. Specifically, through our policy advocacy and direct technical assistance, MPC will be promoting and supporting four key projects:

- The Gary/Chicago International Airport
- Gary's Broadway Corridor development from Downtown to I-80/94
- Gary/East Chicago Shoreline Redevelopment
- Marquette Park and Lake Street Transit-Oriented Development

GRIP's aim of targeted reinvestment in existing assets is aligning with the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission's 2040 Regional Comprehensive Plan, which calls for sustainable growth within Northwest Indiana's urban communities; the work of the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority, which is leading the charge to implement the Marquette Plan, transit-oriented development, and the Gary/Chicago International Airport through strategic reinvestment near transit, lakefront, and job corridors in Northwest Indiana; and Urban Land Institute-Chicago's Lakefront Heritage Corridor initiative.

MPC is happy to serve as a resource in any way appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Trotter', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joanna Trotter
Community Development Director