



6100 Southport Road  
Portage, Indiana 46368  
(219) 763-6060  
www.nirpc.org

**NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

February 15, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.

NIRPC Lake Michigan Room, 6100 Southport Road, Portage

Annotated Agenda

- 1.0 Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance – Tom Dermody
- 2.0 New Appointments to the Commission - Attorney Dave Hollenbeck
- 3.0 Roll Call - Candice Eklund
- 4.0 Public Comment on Current Agenda Items  
*Members of the audience who have signed up to comment on agenda items will be recognized by the Chair. Time is limited to 3 minutes per commenter.*
- 5.0 Approval of the Minutes of the January 18, 2024, Full Commission Meeting (pp. 1-4)  
***ACTION REQUESTED: Approval***
- 6.0 Report of the Chair – Tom Dermody
- 7.0 Report of the Executive Director – Ty Warner
- 8.0 Environmental Management Policy Committee – Bill Emerson (pp. 5-6)
- 9.0 Finance and Personnel Committee (F&P) – Wendy Mis (pp. 7-8)
  - 9.1 NIRPC Building Lease
- 10.0 Technical Planning Committee (TPC) - Kevin Breitzke (pp. 9-22)
  - 10.1 Public Comment Report on Air Quality Conformity Determination for NWI 2050+ and FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Scott Weber (p. 12)  
***ACTION REQUESTED: Informational***
  - 10.2 Resolution #24-02: [Air Quality Conformity Determination](#), Scott Weber (pp. 13-16)  
***ACTION REQUESTED: Adoption***
  - 10.3 Public Comment Report on FY 2022-2026 and 2024-2028 TIP Amendment #24-01, Charles Bradsky (pp. 17-18)  
***ACTION REQUESTED: Informational***
  - 10.4 Resolution #24-03: [FY 2024-2028 TIP Amendment #24-01](#), Charles Bradsky (pp. 19-22)  
***ACTION REQUESTED: Approval***
- 12.0 INDOT, Matt Deitchley, La Porte District Deputy Commissioner
- 13.0 Other Business
- 14.0 Announcements
- 15.0 Adjournment  
The next meeting on March 21, 2024, will be an Executive Board meeting.

**NIRPC Full Commission Meeting**  
6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN  
January 18, 2024 Minutes

**Call to Order**

Immediate Past Chair, Richard Hardaway, called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was streamed live on YouTube.

**New Appointments to the Commission**

Dave Hollenbeck announced the appointments to the Commission of Jenny Beier (Schneider), Mayor Austin Bonta (Portage), Bonnie Hawksworth (Dune Acres), Mayor Josh Huddlestun (Hobart), Kurt Jordan (Burns Harbor), Mary Tanis (Dyer), Andy Vasquez (Porter County Council), and CJ Wittmer (Kouts).

**Roll call** - Taken by Candice Eklund

**Present**

The 27 Commissioners present at the meeting included Kyle Allen (Lake County Commissioner), Jenny Beier (Schneider), Austin Bonta (Portage), Kevin Breitzke (Porter County Surveyor), Bob Carnahan (Cedar Lake), Don Craft (Porter), Tom Dermody (La Porte), Daina Dumbrys (Michiana Shores), Denise Ebert (Wanatah), Bill Emerson (Lake County Surveyor), Bonnie Hawksworth (Dune Acres), Justin Kiel (LaPorte County Council), Peter Land (Crown Point), Lori Mercer (Westville), Edward Morales (Porter Township), Randall Neimeyer (Lake County Council), Barb Regnitz (Porter County Commissioner), Lisa Rosenkranz (La Crosse), Tom Schmitt (Schererville), Gerald Swets (St. John), Sharon Szwedo (New Chicago), Jim Ton (Chesterton), George Topoll (Union Township), Andy Vasquez (Porter County Council), CJ Wittmer (Kouts), and John Yelkich (Lowell). Also present was Matt Deitchley representing INDOT.

The 17 Commissioners absent included Duane Arndt (Kingsford Heights), Thomas Black (Highland), Bill Carroll (Lake Station), Tim Clayton (Winfield), Anthony Copeland (East Chicago), Connie Gramarossa (LaPorte County Council), Tony Hendricks (LaPorte County Surveyor), Josh Huddlestun (Hobart), Ellen Hundt (Beverly Shores), Scott Kingan (Ogden Dunes), Tom McDermott (Hammond), Wendy Mis (Munster), Jim Pressel (Governor Appointee), Regina Ruddell (Pottawattomie Park), Rick Ryfa (Griffith), Steve Spebar (Whiting), and Mary Tanis (Dyer).

Gary, Hebron, Kingsbury, Long Beach, Merrillville, Michigan City, The Pines, Trail Creek, and Valparaiso have appointed no representatives to NIRPC.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Tom Vander Woude, Kathy Luther, Charles Bradsky, Lisa Todd, Scott Weber, Denarie Kane, Kevin Polette, Candice Eklund, and attorney Dave Hollenbeck.

**Presentation of Norman E. Tufford Award – Ty Warner**

The Norman Tufford Award “for exceptional dedication and service to NIRPC” was presented to David Hollenbeck, who has served as legal counsel to the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission since 1984. Mr. Hollenbeck has worked with all four NIRPC Executive Directors and has been involved in every significant regional project. Mr. Warner congratulated Mr. Hollenbeck and expressed the Commission’s sincere thanks for his service to NIRPC and the region.

Mr. Hollenbeck said it was a privilege to have had this opportunity of influence in NWI. He reiterated he’s worked with all four of NIRPC Executive Directors; Norm Tufford, Jim Ranfranz, John Swanson, and Ty Warner. He added it has been a pleasure and an honor to have been a small part of this organization over the last 40+ years.

A picture was taken of former NIRPC Chairmen, who joined Attorney David Hollenbeck as he received NIRPC’s Norman Tufford Award, including Michael Griffin (Highland), Jim Ton (Chesterton), Leigh Morris (La Porte), Kevin Breitzke (Porter County Surveyor, Richard Hardaway (Merrillville), Justin Kiel (La Porte County Council), former NIRPC Executive Director John Swanson, George Topoll (Union Township), and NIRPC Executive Director, Ty Warner.

**Public Comment** – There were no public comments.

### **Officers and Executive Board for 2024 – Tom Dermody**

To celebrate his service as 2023 Chair, Ty Warner presented Richard Hardaway with the gavel plaque and thanked him for his service as Chairperson last year and for always being available and responsive. Richard Hardaway turned the gavel over to newly elected Chair, Tom Dermody. Mayor Dermody was thankful and said it was an honor to serve with Richard to get things done and he looks forward to that continuation.

Tom Dermody presented the recommendations of the Nominating Committee for 2024. No additional nominations were made. On motion by Gerald Swets and seconded by Kyle Allen, the Full Commission voted to adopt the 2024 slate as presented.

Elected as Chair for 2024 was Tom Dermody, Mayor of La Porte. Wendy Mis, Clerk-Treasurer was elected as Vice Chair and Justin Kiel, La Porte County Council, was elected as Secretary. Warner stated Wendy Mis has agreed to continue the function of Treasurer until the position is formally filled.

Members elected to the Executive Board included Tom Schmitt (Schererville) and Bill Emerson (County Surveyor), representing Lake County; Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Rosenkranz (La Crosse) and Clerk-Treasurer Denise Ebert (Wanatah), representing LaPorte County; and Kevin Breitzke (County Surveyor) and Councilman James Ton (Chesterton), representing Porter County. The continued appointment of Representative Jim Pressel as the Governor's appointee to the Executive Board is assumed.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the December 7, 2023 Full Commission meeting were approved on motion by Bob Carnahan and seconded by Kevin Breitzke.

### **Report of the Executive Director – Ty Warner**

Ty Warner briefly discussed the 2024 Commission meeting schedule and thanked the City of Portage for supplying a police officer to be at the meeting to ensure a safe and secure environment for the elected officials. In an effort to support small businesses in NWI and provide good exposure, NIRPC is reaching out to some local roasters about providing coffee at the Full Commission meetings. The coffee today was graciously provided by Yaggy Road Roasting Co. in Valparaiso.

Mayor Tom Dermody, Wendy Mis, Justin Kiel, and Ty Warner will travel to Washington, D.C. next month for the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) conference. They will provide a report at the February meeting.

Resolution 23-16, approved last month, is in support of NIRPC's local appropriations adjustment. In order to operate, NIRPC receives local appropriations from each of the three counties that supplies the local share. There are additional federal funds NIRPC should be able to access but cannot because NIRPC is limited by how much local share it receives. NIRPC is the closest it has ever been to finally getting the appropriation adjusted. House Bill No. 1251, its Fiscal Impact Statement, and Resolution 23-16 documents were distributed at the meeting. Representative Hal Slager filed the House Bill and has requested support from the counties to know they are aware of and supportive of the impact on their future budgeting. The increase in the per capita appropriation would not go into effect until 2025. La Porte County had their organizational meeting this month and supported the request, but scheduling issues have made it difficult to get on the agendas of Lake and Porter Counties.

Warner recognized perfect attendance at all of the Commission meetings in 2023. Those acknowledged were Bob Carnahan, Don Craft, Denise Ebert, Bill Emerson, Richard Hardaway, Ellen Hundt, Jane Jordan, Justin Kiel, Sue Lynch, Wendy Mis, Tom Schmitt, Jim Ton, and George Topoll. Mr. Warner also recognized Thomas Black, Daina Dumbrys, Jack Jeralds, and Edward Morales for attending all of the Full Commission meetings.

### **Finance & Personnel Committee (F & P) – Tom Dermody**

Tom Dermody reported the F & P Committee met this morning to review the financial reports, bank reconciliations, and claims registers for November 2023. The F&P Committee brought the action item below to the Full Commission for approval to execute the contract for the Marquette Greenway project for Butler, Fairman and Seufert, Inc. (BFS).

1. Marquette Greenway Project Contract: Charles Bradsky presented stating while the content, terms, and amounts remain the same as what was in the packet, INDOT requires the contract be entered in their

template because they are the pass-thru on this contract. This was an unforeseen occurrence that was brought to NIRPC's attention yesterday and BFS immediately updated the contract with INDOT's template. A deep dive into the updated contract has not been completed but is believed the monetary amount and overall scope will remain the same. The contract stemmed from FHWA requesting NIRPC hire a consultant to be the project manager since NIRPC does not handle, nor is equipped, to plan and execute infrastructure projects. Since the contract was updated last night, Dave Hollenbeck stated he has not reviewed the new contract in its new form. On motion by Justin Kiel and seconded by Bill Emerson, the Full Commission approved the contract contingent on the approval of NIRPC's attorney and INDOT.

2. NIRPC Building Lease: Dave Hollenbeck presented stating the lease expired on December 31, 2023. A 30-day extension on the current lease has been secured and he feels confident the details can be worked out towards the end of January. On motion by Barb Regnitz and seconded by Kevin Breitzke, the Full Commission delegated the aspects of the lease that need attention to Tom Dermody, Ty Warner, and Dave Hollenbeck.

#### **Technical Planning Committee (TPC) – Kevin Breitzke**

Kevin Breitzke reported the TPC met on January 9, 2024 and heard a presentation on the Land Use and Housing chapter of *NWI 2050+*. The TPC brought the action item below to the Full Commission for approval. The next TPC meeting is scheduled for February 26, 2024.

- Resolution #24-01: Scott Weber presented the Safety Performance Measure Targets for 2024. These targets are federally required to be included in NIRPC's core planning documents; *NWI 2050+* and the 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program. The TPC recommended NIRPC adopting INDOT's statewide safety performance measure targets. On motion by Jim Ton and Seconded by Justin Kiel, the Full Commission approved Resolution #24-01.

#### **Economic Development District Report – Denarie Kane**

Ms. Kane reported she will be learning about the "Make My Move" business program to gain knowledge about financial participation available to communities from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC). This program is designed to attract remote workers as new residents and is an action item in NIRPC's *Economic Recovery and Resilience Plan*. Ms. Kane continues to have ongoing discussions with the new Economic Development Representative for Indiana, Ellen Heinze, about potential EDA grant applications. Mr. Warner stated he also met with Ms. Heinz recently while in Indianapolis. Ms. Kane will be attending 10 sessions on revolving loan programs, which she feels will be beneficial when the *Recover NWI* loan program is available again.

NIRPC serves as an Economic Support Organization, so Ms. Kane is participating in monthly calls with the IEDC on entrepreneurship support topics and programs. IEDC has opened applications for technical assistance for small businesses through their INTAP program and launched an online entrepreneurship website. It was suggested communities alert their Chambers of Commerce and businesses to both resources. It was noted the READI 2.0 applications are due to the Northwest Indiana Forum tomorrow.

#### **INDOT – Matt Deitchley**

Matt Deitchley stated he appreciates the partnership with communities in snow operations. INDOT has been working 24/7 with snow removal efforts since last week. To view live snowplow camera's and see road conditions visit, [511in.org](http://511in.org)

The first call for Community Crossings applications for 2024 is open and will close on January 31, 2024. Matt discussed the new pilot program which will include the maximum award being increased to \$1.5 million from \$1 million for this calendar year.

#### **Other Business**

Kathy Luthy reported there are two opportunities for energy projects for communities or government facilities. The first is for the Office of Energy Development for projects costing between \$100,000-\$200,000 and would be for fleet electrification and energy efficiency. Secondly, IDEM is applying to a federal Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG). Cities and towns can apply to IDEM for projects including fleet electrification, energy efficiency, and solar. The application is to include detailed costs and benefits and is due at the end of February. If successful, IDEM will submit to the EPA April 1<sup>st</sup> with the projects starting in October. No match required for inclusion in state application for federal funds.

## **Announcements**

Bob Carnahan relayed announcements of various events in Cedar Lake, including they have a new Town Manager, Jeff Bunge, who started earlier this month.

Reggie Korthals announced there will be an MS4 certification training program for all contractors and developers on March 8, 2024 from 7:00 am – 12:30 pm at the Gary Career Center.

Hearing no other business, Tom Dermody adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m. The next meeting on February 15 will be Executive Board meeting.

*The livestream video recording for this meeting is available on NIRPC's YouTube Channel at [Full Commission Meeting 1-18-24 \(youtube.com\)](#)*

## Environmental Management Policy Committee

Lake Michigan Room

November 2, 2023

[Environmental Management Policy Committee Meeting 11-2-23 \(youtube.com\)](#)

### Minutes

Bill Emerson called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance were Bill Emerson (Lake County), Reggie Korthals (MS4), Robert Forester (Kouts), Jan Bapst, Joe Exl (DNR), Susan MiHalo (Nature Conservancy) Bonnnie Hawksworth (Dune Acres), Tim Kingsland, Daniel Goldfarb, Danielle Hayes (DCI) and George Topoll (Union Township).

NIRPC staff present were Kathy Luther, Jennifer Birchfield, Tom Vander Woude, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

The meeting minutes of August 3, 2023 were approved on motion by Tim Kingsland and second by Susan MiHalo.

### Public Comments

No public comments were submitted.

### NIRPC 2023 Grant Applications Updates

Kathy Luther and Jen Birchfield spoke on the 2023 grant application updates. NIRPC's environmental department has submitted, and has partnered on other, grant applications throughout 2023. Getting a response from federal agencies has been a slow process. NIRPC staff applied for the Inflation Reduction Act through the US Forest Service for Urban Community Forestry. The focus is on disadvantaged communities. The application was submitted through the Communitree program with the intent to fund professional arborist services at a 0% match for Gary, Hammond, East Chicago, Whiting, and New Chicago. This selection process took Census track information and the fact that these communities do not have a municipal arborist/forester on staff. NIRPC did not get funded for this round as the approval process was geared to directly award municipalities. NIRPC will strongly consider as a takeaway from this round for competitive grants, obtaining letters of support from congress. Several communities shared their experiences with grant applications. The committee had an open discussion about various grant application experiences and outcomes. The EMPC discussed having a workshop, within NIRPC's capacity, to assist communities with the grant application processes. However, granting categories vary and will need to be considered as not all communities would be applying for the same type of grant.

### NIRPC Projects Status Update

NIRPC staff are starting the Climate Pollution Reduction Planning Grant with the Chicago Mayor's Caucus (CMC) and CMAQ. Lake and Porter County, part of the Chiago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), received \$1M with zero match to do a carbon pollution reduction plan, with the first year focusing on doing a priority action plan, followed by long-term action plan. This will be built off the CMC that already has a regional climate plan. \$25K has been received to date. Jen Birchfield spoke on the Coastal Watershed Hazards Resiliency Needs Assessment Update. NIRPC has been contracted by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Coastal Program (DNR) to develop a Coastal Natural Hazards Resiliency Assessment Tool that is live on the NIRPC website. NIRPC has reached out to the watershed communities to complete the Hazards Assessment. Listening sessions and in-person guidance have been conducted. Assessments are being accepted by coastal and watershed communities. Kathy spoke on the Air Quality Conformity update. The state has requested a change in the implementation plan budget for Air Quality Conformity. For NIRPC's transportation

plan to meet conformity standards, the state has adjusted the safety margins. An approved plan is slated for the spring of 2024. Jen spoke on Communitree updates. The last round of funding is completed. Final reporting will be submitted to the US Forest Service. Participating communities are asked to inventory trees. NIRPC has submitted a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative US Forest Service Grant to continue the Communitree passthrough grants program with a proposal to plan 1,500 trees.

**Announcements**

Announcements were made.

**Reports from Planning Partners**

For more information on events and programs with Drive Clean Indiana, please visit <https://drivecleanindiana.org/>.

The next EMPC meeting is slated for February 2, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the NIRPC offices.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING  
COMMISSION FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE  
December 7, 2023 / NIRPC Dune Room – 8:00 a.m.

Members present

Bob Carnahan, Don Craft, Jane Jordan, Justin Kiel, Wendy Mis, George Topoll

Staff and others present

Ty Warner, Talaya Jones, Darin Sherman, Lisa Todd, Meredith Stilwell, David Hollenbeck

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Mis called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Due to lack of quorum at the beginning of the meeting, the approval of minutes was postponed until quorum was reached.

Review of Financial Status – October 2023 Budget vs Actual

Talaya Jones presented the October 2023 bank reconciliations for the NIRPC general account, the CARES Revolving Loan Fund account, and the Revolving Loan Fund Account.

Talaya presented the October 2023 general fund financial reports. Total expenditures for the period ending October 30, 2023, were \$4,878,929 of the \$16,169,219 budgeted. Talaya stated that NIRPC finally received the 2023 utility invoices from the City of Portage for January through September but are still waiting on October's. The Utility line item was budgeted for both 2022 and 2023, but NIRPC will only be paying 2023's invoices. She also noted that the Transit Operating Fund budget line includes every open grant. Total general fund revenue for the period was \$1,924,445 of the \$4,434,925 budgeted. Talaya said that NIRPC is waiting for a \$490k reimbursement. In addition, federal monies for the RAISE and READI grants have not yet been collected due to not having executed contracts from the federal government. Ty noted that NIRPC is not the only agency that is awaiting executed contracts from the federal government.

Talaya presented the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Securities (CARES) Act financial reports, year to date October 2023. Total NIRPC CARES fund expenditures for the period ending October 30, 2023, was \$23,508 of the \$162,250 budgeted. Talaya pointed out the \$80k Capital Outlays line item for Furniture and Equipment was budgeted for Laptops and software purchases, those items will now be purchased in 2024. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$23,574 of the \$150,368 budgeted. It was noted that the budgeted reimbursement collection for the laptops and software purchases haven't been collected because the purchases have not yet been made.

Approval of Minutes

Quorum was reached and the minutes of the October 19, 2023 meeting were presented. On motion by Don Clark, second by George Topoll and no opposition, the minutes were approved.

Approval of Claims Registers – October 2023

Talaya presented the October 2023 General Fund claims register totaling \$904,370.00 to the Committee for approval. On motion by Don Craft, second by George Topoll and no opposition, the General Fund register of claims in the amount of \$338,614.94 was approved.

NIRPC Resolution 23-15 – NIRPC CY 2024 Budget

Talaya presented the CY 2024 budget to the committee for recommendation for approval to the NIRPC Full Commission. Ty gave kudos to Talaya for being able to pull the budget together amidst multiple challenges and uncertainties. It was noted that lease numbers were received, but no lease yet. Revenues were increased due to anticipated increased interest income due to the Marquette Greenway project, 100% ARPA funds, and anticipated revenue from a traffic counting contract NIRPC has entered with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). The Salary expenditures budget has decreased due to an adjustment according to being fully staffed. While health insurance costs are projected to decrease, the Health Insurance line item has increased as a cushion while waiting on official numbers. Since lease numbers have been received, the Occupancy category budget has decreased, but is still in



question at this point. The Equipment Service/Maintenance category has decreased but is up in the air since NIRPC will be entering into a new IT lease in 2024. Increases are built into the 2024 budget, but it is unclear what they will be. The Departmental category budget has decreased, but there are still some missing pieces in that budget category. The Contractual category has increased due to the reallocation of some expenses to 2024 in hopes that the Marquette Greenway project will start. The Furniture and Fixtures has decreased. The NWI Forum is planning to pay to enhance technology in the Lake Michigan conference room and CARES funding is projected to be used to complete a security system. Total General Fund revenue and expenses for CY 2024 are budgeted at \$4,333,880.

Transit Capital Projects Fund Appropriations budget for 2024 is \$4,495,525. Transit Operating Projects Fund Appropriations budget for 2024 is \$8,673,149 and the Revolving Loan Fund Appropriations budget for 2024 is \$272,000. The 2024 total budget is \$17,774,555. On motion by George Topoll, second by Bob Carnahan and no opposition, Resolution 23-15 to adopt the NIRPC CY 2024 budget was recommended to the NIRPC Full Commission for approval.

#### Second Addendum to Executive Director Employment Agreement

Attorney Hollenbeck presented the second addendum to Ty Warner's Executive Director Employment Agreement to the Committee for recommendation for approval by the NIRPC Full Commission. This addendum is for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3-year arrangement. Dave and NIRPC Chair, Richard Hardaway, sat with Ty to review his performance goals and challenges. The addendum establishes a 4% salary increase for 2024 and that amount has already been built into the salary category for the 2024 budget. Staff increases were questioned and the amounts for that are still to be determined. On motion by George Topoll, second by Bob Carnahan and no opposition, the second addendum to the Executive Director employment agreement was recommended to the NIRPC Full Commission for approval.

#### NIRPC Resolution 23-16 Local Appropriation Adjustment

Ty Warner presented Resolution 23-16 which follows a 2019 resolution and brings current the ask to increase county appropriations to right size to current dollar value and index thereafter. The 70 cents per capita established in 1992 is worth 30 cents or less today and is not sustainable. NIRPC is not asking for more money, just to bring the appropriations to current value. It is not a state budget issue, but a county budget issue and Ty noted that the Legislation could make the change, but they don't want to approve it if the Counties are against it. A discussion was held regarding possible pushback from the Counties and how to present the increase to them. On motion by Justin Kiel, second by Bob Carnahan and no opposition, Resolution 23-16 to request that the Indiana General Assembly adjust its local appropriation from 1992 dollars to current dollars was recommended to the NIRPC Full Commission for approval.

#### NIRPC Building Lease

Attorney Hollenbeck asked that the requested action to recommend the lease for approval be taken off the agenda. He and Ty have been in talks with Portage, but it has not evolved as hoped. Discussion was held regarding changes from the old lease to the new lease, including that it would be a 5-year lease instead of a 10-year lease. Talaya has reviewed the projected lease numbers, and they are within comfort level of the budget. Due to a few sticking points the lease could not be presented in final form. The focus is to get things done by the end of the calendar year and to bring the lease to the January meeting for approval. Attorney Hollenbeck felt only a verbal commitment would be needed from the Full Commission and he would ask for approval to enter an extension until the new completed lease could be presented for approval.

#### Personnel updates

None

#### Other Business

None

The next Finance & Personnel Committee meeting is scheduled for January 18, 2024.

#### Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 a.m.

**Technical Planning Committee**  
NIRPC Lake Michigan Room  
YouTube Recording:  
[Technical Planning Committee Meeting 7/11/23 - YouTube](#)  
January 9, 2024  
**Minutes**

Kevin Breitzke called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

In attendance were Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), George Topoll (Union Township), Beth Shrader (Valpo Transit), Dean Button (Hammond), and David Wright (GPTC).

Also in attendance were Jeff Huet (Schererville), Tom Schmitt (Schererville), Chris Murphy, Bob Thompson, Eric Wolverton, Alex Olesker, Elizabeth (last name unknown), and Terry (last name unknown).

NIRPC staff present were Tom Vander Woude, Eman Ibrahim, Mitch Barloga, Scott Weber, Grace Benninger, Jen Birchfield, Charles Bradsky, Kathy Luther, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

On motion by Dean Button, second by Beth Shrader, the Technical Planning Committee (TPC) approved the minutes of January 9, 2024 as presented.

There were no public comments.

**Planning**

Eman Ibrahim presented on the Final Draft of NWI 2050+ Land Use and Housing Chapters. The Land Use & Housing elements focus on existing land use patterns, population trends, and communities planning efforts. The Land Use & Housing elements also looks at the future population for NWI and the overall development that helps the region attain that future in an equitable and environmentally sustainable way. Goals were identified.

- A plan for the needed infrastructure to support walking, bicycling, and transit of historic downtowns and older retail corridors with non-motorized patterns.
- Identify regional approaches that address shared economic and social resilience and preparedness challenges, environmental protection and restoration, workforce development, and housing markets.
- Identify key arterial roadways, including state highways and other arterials that can be reimaged to enhance the livability of NWI communities.
- Identify key arterial roadways, including state highways and other arterials that can be reimaged to enhance the livability of NWI communities.
- Plan for the 15-minute-city. It envisions a city developed of districts in which people can perform six essential functions (living, working, commerce, health, education, and entertainment) within a 15-minute walk or bike ride from their homes.
- Identify key places and corridors that need to be examined in more detail to focus resources on.

Population changes were presented from 1980 to 2020 which showed overall growth in the three county areas to be very slow. A scenario comparison for land consumption was discussed. The desired scenario is 4-5 housing units per acre, meaning smaller lot housing is the most likely the direction of the housing market. There is less dependence on multi-family or very high-density solutions. Additionally, there is less conversion of new lands to urban uses and maintains open spaces in a 4-5 housing units per acre scenario.

Six overall development frameworks were identified.

- Traditional development, which is older and established around urban grides. Infill supports development, revitalization, and reinvestment.

- Suburban development with city services focuses on areas that generally grew from 1960 – present. Subdivision, single-family residential, older subdivisions requiring conservation strategies, and infill of subdivisions and higher-density development in are typically included in this development.
- Future urban development includes areas around existing development that permit incremental extensions of urban services.
- Community edge/large lot development areas concentrate on a large lot or rural residential pattern that is strongly established. New, low-density developments should be focused on available infill sites, rather than expanding into predominantly rural counties.
- The areas of Conservation development are more rural and with some topographic constraints that should use conservation techniques, clustering large lots to preserve environmentally sensitive areas as open space.
- A development, or agriculture interface covers areas south of a line that should be maintained for primary agricultural use, except contiguous to rural towns and centers.

Regional policy for traditional centers should reinforce the character and investment. Central city areas within a 15-minutes of walking or biking improve active transportation access and help to increase population. It was determined that NIRPC staff will request RDG to provide names of corridors on the map. Community corridors regional policy is moving toward urbanism that satisfies transportation and development goals. Land Use and Housing environmental corridors were identified in the W. Branch of the Little Calumet River, the Hoosier Prairie, Hobart Branch, and Deep River. The Moraine and the E. Branch of the Little Calumet River were also identified as environmental corridors. For more information, please contact Eman Ibrahim at [eibrahim@nirpc.org](mailto:eibrahim@nirpc.org).

Scott Weber presented on Resolution 24-01, Adopting Safety Performance Measure Targets (SPMT) for 2024. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 requires NIRPC to set annual performance measure targets for safety within 180 days of the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) SPMTs for the same measures. INDOT staff set SPMTs for 2024 through a collaborative process with NIPRC in August of 2023. The NW/2050+ and FY 2024–2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) must be amended to reflect the established annual SPMTs. Performance Measures were presented and attached to Res 24-01. A part of the established SPMTs are as follows:

- Number of fatalities; No more than 926 in 2024 statewide.
- Number of serious injuries; No more than 3,281 in 2024 statewide.
- Non-motorized serious injuries and fatalities; No more than 402 in 2024 statewide.
- Carbon Monoxide (CO) reduction from Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)- funded projects (kg/day); No more than 330.00 by 2023 and 520.00 by 2025 statewide.
- Truck Travel Time Reliability Index (TTTRI); No higher than 1.32 by 2023 and no higher than 1.30 by 2025 statewide.

Changes to the 2024-2028 TIP are as follows:

- Number of fatalities was changed from, “no more than 894.2 in 2023,” to, “no more than 926 in 2024.”
- Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was changed from, “no more than 1.088 in 2023,” to, “no more than 1.10 in 2024.”
- Number of serious injuries was changed from, “no more than 3,348.1 in 2023,” to, “no more than 3,281 in 2024.”
- Rate of serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was changed from, “no more than 4.068 in 2023,” to, “no more than 4.05 in 2024.”

- Number of nonmotorized serious injuries and fatalities was changed from, “no more than 399.6 in 2023,” to, “no more than 402 in 2024.”

For more information, please contact Scott at [sweber@nirpc.org](mailto:sweber@nirpc.org).

On motion by Dean Button, second by George Topoll, the TPC approved to recommend Res 24-01 to the Commission.

**Programming**

Nothing to report.

**Reports from Planning Partners**

Nothing to report.

**Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

The next TPC meeting is slated for March 5, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the NIRPC building.



6100 Southport Road  
Portage, Indiana 46368  
(219) 763-6060  
[www.nirpc.org](http://www.nirpc.org)

**Public Comment Report**  
**Air Quality Conformity Determination Report for *NWI 2050+***  
**and 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**  
**Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission**  
**Technical Planning Committee Meeting**  
**February 6, 2024**

The Air Quality Conformity Determination Report for *NWI 2050+* and the 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program was released for a 30-day public comment period which began on January 5, 2024 and ended February 4, 2024. The document was made available at [www.nirpc.org](http://www.nirpc.org). No comments from the public were received during this comment period on the document. NIRPC has not received technical comments from INDOT or FHWA for this document.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Technical Planning Committee

**From:** Scott Weber, Transportation Planner/Analyst

**Date:** January 30, 2024

**Re:** Air Quality Conformity Determination Report

**Action Requested:** Recommendation to adopt Resolution 24-02 contingent upon EPA not receiving adverse comments to 2008 Ozone State Implementation Plan amendment.

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The NIRPC Executive Board adopted *NWI 2050+* and the Fiscal Years 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program on July 20, 2023. Before the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) can officially approve these core documents for use in administering federal aid funding, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) must approve the Air Quality Conformity Determination, because portions of our region are designated non-attainment for ozone under the Clean Air Act by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). Staff requests that the committee forward to the Executive Board its favorable recommendation to adopt Resolution 24-02 approving the Air Quality Conformity Determination Report for *NWI 2050+* and the Fiscal Years 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (FY 2024-2028 TIP). Staff requests that the motion be contingent upon US EPA not receiving any adverse comments to the 2008 Ozone State Implementation Plan amendment published on page 3571 of the 89th volume of the *Federal Register*, currently under a public comment period through February 20, 2024, with an effective date of March 19, 2024.

The Air Quality Conformity Determination Report contained in Resolution 24-02 shows that *NWI 2050+* and the FY 2024-2028 TIP comply with the Clean Air Act Section 176(c), stipulating that implementing the non-exempt, regionally significant projects conforms to the US EPA-approved Indiana State Implementation Plan (SIP). This means that implementing the non-exempt, regionally significant projects will not cause or contribute to exceedances of the ozone precursors (NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC) as regulated in the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets in the SIP. NIRPC staff's work in modeling the on-road mobile source NO<sub>x</sub> and VOC emissions projected to result from implementing the non-exempt, regionally significant projects in *NWI 2050+* and the FY 2024-2028 TIP is overseen by NIRPC's Interagency Consultation Group on Air Quality (ICG). The ICG consists of NIRPC, INDOT, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), US EPA, FHWA, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The ICG has been involved in overseeing and reviewing drafts of the Air Quality Determination Report since March 2023.

The Air Quality Conformity Determination Report was published and made available for comment for a 30-day public comment period from January 5, 2024, through February 4, 2024. This was in accordance with *Engage NWI*, NIRPC's Public Participation Plan. A public meeting was held on January 30, 2024. As of the date of this memo, there were no comments received.

The following table summarizes the model results of on-road mobile source emissions expected to result from implementing *NWI 2050+* and the FY 2024-2028 TIP compared with the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets in the Indiana SIP in the required model years. These Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets were amended in the *Federal Register* with an effective date of March 19, 2024, pending no adverse comments received by February 20, 2024.

<b>Year:</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>2050</b>
<b>NOx Budget</b>	28.41	28.41	28.41	16.68	16.68	6.53	6.10	6.10	6.10
<b>NOx Emissions</b>	24.70	18.77	9.99	9.16	7.51	5.44	5.08	4.75	4.89
<b>VOC Budget</b>	11.02	11.02	11.02	6.85	6.85	2.47	2.90	2.90	2.90
<b>VOC Emission</b>	9.58	8.03	3.50	3.29	3.72	2.06	2.42	2.25	2.13

As shown in the above table, which is also found in Table 5.9 on p. 15 of the Air Quality Conformity Determination Report, on-road mobile source ozone precursor emissions of NOx and VOC expected to result from implementing *NWI 2050+* and the FY 2024-2028 TIP are at or below the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets in the Indiana SIP. Therefore, NIRPC staff recommends the Technical Planning Committee forward its favorable recommendation of Resolution 24-02 to the NIRPC Executive Board.



## RESOLUTION 24-02

### A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MAKING THE AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY DETERMINATION FOR *NWI 2050+* AND THE 2024 TO 2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM WITH RESPECT TO OZONE

February 15, 2024

**WHEREAS**, Northwest Indiana’s citizens require a safe, efficient, effective, resource-conserving regional transportation system that maintains and enhances regional mobility and contributes to improving the quality of life in Northwest Indiana; and

**WHEREAS**, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as “the Commission”, being designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Lake, Porter and LaPorte County area, has established a regional, comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) transportation planning process to develop the unified planning work program, a transportation plan, and a transportation improvement program to facilitate federal funding for communities, counties, and transit operators, and to provide technical assistance and expertise to regional transportation interests; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission performs the above activities to satisfy requirements of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (PL 117-58, applicable portions of all prior federal transportation program authorizing legislation, as well as other federal, state, and local laws mandating or authorizing transportation planning activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the implementation of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 has established National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone; and

**WHEREAS**, Lake and Porter Counties have been designated as a nonattainment area with respect to the 2008 “8-hour” standard for ozone; Portions of Lake and Porter Counties have been designated as a nonattainment area with respect to the 2015 “8-hour” standard for ozone; and LaPorte County has been designated as a maintenance area with respect to the 1997 “8-hour” standard for ozone; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s Transportation Conformity Rule in 40 CFR Parts 51 and 93 requires all Transportation Conformity non-exempt and regionally significant projects included in a Metropolitan Planning Organization’s transportation improvement program to be referenced to that Metropolitan Planning Organization’s transportation plan; and

**WHEREAS**, *NWI 2050+* is the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s transportation plan and the 2024 to 2028 Transportation Improvement Program is the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s transportation improvement program; and



**WHEREAS**, the Commission's Interagency Consultation Group on Air Quality comprised of the Commission, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and the Indiana Department of Transportation reviewed the Air Quality Conformity Determination Report and recommended its adoption by the Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission has solicited public comment on the Air Quality Conformity Determination Report between January 8, 2024 and February 7, 2024; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission's Technical Planning Committee recommended Resolution 24-02 to the Commission for adoption;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby adopts the Air Quality Conformity Determination for *NWI 2050+* and the 2024 to 2028 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment with respect to ozone.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this fifteenth day of February, 2024.

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Thomas Dermody  
Chairperson

ATTEST:

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Justin Kiel  
Secretary



**Public Comment Report**  
**Amendment #24 - 01 to the FY 2024-2028**  
**Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**  
**Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission**  
**Technical Planning Committee**  
**February 6, 2024**

Amendment # 24-01 of the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program was released for a 21-day public comment period which began on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 and ended on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. The amendments are made available for viewing at [www.nirpc.org](http://www.nirpc.org) and press releases with links were posted on several social media sites. No comments were received during this period.

NIRPC staff also sent the amendment to the Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and did receive comment from Erica Tait of FHWA. The comment and the response from NIRPC are:

FHWA has reviewed the amendment draft, and we have some comments/ questions, which I've listed below:

- (FHWA) For the road reconstruction projects that are being added (for example, des#2300726), can you confirm that there are no added capacity components?
  - (NIRPC) The projects labeled as Road Reconstruction that are sponsored by an LPA, do not have any expansion elements to them. The scope of work for des # 23000726 is only a 0.2 mile stretch of a Minor Arterial that is being *reduced* in capacity from 4 lanes to 3 (road diet). That said, the change is still reflected in our travel demand model, but since it is a reduction in capacity, it should be exempt from Conformity.
- (FHWA) For the Borman project (des# 1901643), are the project cost total and description elements, correct? Does the project extend into Illinois? If so, do the project limits in the TIP reflect that? Some recent information we've received shows the latest cost estimate for the project to be \$227M.
  - (NIRPC) We do not know the details of the project and only discovered the project when it was announced to be the recipient of a MEGA award and was entered into this Amendment. We are deferring this comment to INDOT and their Project Manager for his comments.
- (FHWA) For the bridge replacement projects that are being added (for example, des#23000894, 2300895), can you confirm that there are no added capacity components?
  - (NIRPC) We received a comment from INDOT that their projects are actually Bridge Rehabilitation projects. We have corrected these errors in our Amendment. For des # 2101129 (Lake County) and des # 2301255 (LaPorte County), NIRPC can confirm that there is no added capacity in these projects.

- (FHWA) Regarding the Willowcreek Road project (des# 1700500 and 2301188), should the project limits/description for the study/NEPA (1700500) match the project limits for the project being constructed (2301188)?
  - (NIRPC) The Project Title for 1700500 is Willowcreek Road Extension Corridor Study (with NEPA) at Willowcreek Road and has in its description “CR 700N to US 30...”. 2301188 has a description “Willowcreek Road extension, Phase 2, from CR 650 W to 1,200' north of SR 130.” Thus, it is a component of the corridor, and the entire corridor is in NIRPC’s LRTP (NWI 2050+). We confirm that it does fall within these limits.

Approval and Approval by Concurrence was given for these projects on this amendment by members of the ICG on January 18, 2024.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Technical Planning Committee

**From:** Charles Bradsky, Transportation Projects Manager

**Date:** January 30, 2024

**Re:** TIP Amendments

**Action Requested:** Recommendation to adopt Resolution 24-03, Amendment 24-01, contingent upon official approval of the FY 2024-2028 TIP by INDOT and USDOT

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The NIRPC Executive Board adopted *NWI 2050+* and the Fiscal Years 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on July 20, 2023. Official approval of these documents by INDOT and USDOT has been on hold pending Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval of the Air Quality Conformity Determination, which is required because portions of our region are designated non-attainment for ozone under the Clean Air Act by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). Staff expects that approval of the Air Quality Conformity Determination will take place in March when the Indiana Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets become effective.

Since the adoption of the FY 2024-2028 TIP, project sponsors have proposed new projects and changes to existing projects, which must be reflected in the TIP. Because these changes are time sensitive, FHWA has advised NIRPC that although the FY 2024-2028 TIP has not received official approval, NIRPC may begin the process of amending it contingent on that approval. This will allow the amendment to take effect as quickly as possible. Therefore, staff requests that the committee forward to the Executive Board its favorable recommendation to adopt Resolution 24-03 approving Amendment 24-01, contingent upon official approval of the FY 2024-2028 TIP by INDOT and USDOT.

The following is a summary of the projects in the TIP Amendment 24-01, which includes 52 projects which are either new or modifications for fiscal years 2024 through 2028 (and beyond):

- INDOT projects include:
  - 10 new projects,
    - 8 Bridge Rehabilitation
    - 1 Pavement Rehabilitation
    - 1 Planning
  - 16 projects with significant increase in funding,
    - 1 intersection Improvement
    - 1 Bridge Replacement
    - 9 Bridge Rehabilitation
    - 3 Pavement Rehabilitation
    - 1 Small Structure Replacement
    - 1 Sign Replacement

- 2 projects with added phases,
  - 1 Pavement Rehabilitation
  - 1 Small Structure Replacement
- 3 Non-exempt projects with changes
  - 2 Intersection Improvement
  - 1 Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) (80/94 FlexRoad, MEGA project).
- For locally sponsored projects:
  - 11 new projects for the municipalities of East Chicago, Hammond, Hobart, La Porte, Merrillville (2), Michigan City, the counties of La Porte and Porter, and for NIRPC
    - 2 Intersection Improvement
    - 1 Pavement Rehabilitation
    - 3 Planning
    - 1 Bridge Replacement
    - 1 New Bridge
    - 3 Other Types
  - 4 substantial changes in funding for projects in Chesterton, Michigan City, Schererville, and Porter County.
    - 1 ITS
    - 1 Trail
    - 1 Planning
    - 1 Roadway Expansion
  - 5 projects with added phases in Gary (2), Michigan City, Valparaiso, & Lake County,
    - 2 Intersection Improvement
    - 1 Pavement Rehabilitation
    - 1 Bridge Replacement
    - 1 Complete Streets
  - One project that has been eliminated in Gary.



## RESOLUTION 24-03

### A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION AMENDING THE FY 2024-2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR LAKE, PORTER, AND LAPORTE COUNTIES, INDIANA AMENDMENT NO. 24-01 February 15, 2024

**WHEREAS**, Northwest Indiana’s citizens require a safe, efficient, effective, resource-conserving regional transportation system that maintains and enhances regional mobility and contributes to improving the quality of life in Northwest Indiana; and

**WHEREAS**, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as “the Commission”, being designated the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Lake, Porter and LaPorte County area, has established a regional, comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) transportation planning process to develop the unified planning work program, a transportation plan, and a transportation improvement program to facilitate federal funding for communities, counties, and transit operators, and to provide technical assistance and expertise to regional transportation interests; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission performs the above activities to satisfy requirements of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (PL 117-58), applicable portions of all prior federal transportation program authorizing legislation, as well as other federal, state, and local laws mandating or authorizing transportation planning activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program is a product of a multi-modal, 3-C transportation planning process, compatible with regional goals and objectives and socio-economic and demographic factors used to form *NWI 2050+*; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program is an implementation of *NWI 2050+*, is fiscally constrained, and is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program is developed by the Commission in coordination and cooperation with local elected and appointed highway and transit officials, special interest and service organizations, including users of public transit, the Indiana Department of Transportation, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Federal Transit Administration, and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency; and

**WHEREAS**, the changes to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program brought about by this amendment were reviewed by the Air Quality Conformity Task Force’s Interagency Consultation Group (ICG); and

**WHEREAS**, the changes to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program brought about by this amendment were subjected to public comment in the manner prescribed by the 2019 Public Participation Plan, *ENGAGE NWI*; and

**WHEREAS**, the Technical Policy Committee (TPC) has recommended that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission make these changes to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby amends the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program, adding the new projects and making other changes as shown on the attachment to this resolution.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this fifteenth day of February 2024.

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Thomas Dermody  
Chairperson

ATTEST:

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Justin Kiel  
Secretary