

Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

Lake Michigan Room

May 5, 2026

10:00 a.m.

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The Transportation Committee meeting was called to order at 10:00 am, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the April 7, 2026, meeting were presented. Hearing no additions, corrections, or comments, a motion was made by Dean Button and seconded by Mark O'Dell to approve the minutes. The motion carried.

The voting members in attendance were Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), Jim Biggs (Porter County), Martin Bobcek (Porter County), Dean Button (Hammond), Jeff Huet (Schererville), Mark O'Dell (Chesterton), and Kay Nelson (NWI Forum).

Staff in attendance were Tom Vander Woude, Charles Bradsky, Candice Eklund, Ann Weitgenant, Scott Weber, and Grace Benninger.

Also in attendance were Alex Olesker (BF&S), Beth Shrader (SEH), Terry Martin (Carrier & Gable), Jake Dammarell (BF&S), Ryan Lisek (Drive Clean Indiana)

2. Public Comment on Agenda Items

No public comments were offered on agenda items.

3. Planning

3.1. 2027 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Scott Weber presented information on the first phase of the 2027 Metropolitan Transportation Plan update, including updated performance measures related to freight, roads, transit, and safety. Freight-related employment increased between 2019 and 2024, while freight volumes by weight and value were generally flat. Truck-related crash concentrations were noted primarily along major interstates, especially I-80/94 west of I-65, and truck travel time reliability concerns were identified on I-80/94 west of I-65 and I-94 approaching Michigan.

The presentation also reviewed freight rail incidents, blocked crossings, commute trends, commute mode share, community crossings funding, pavement condition, bridge condition, mean speeds, and crash patterns. Committee discussion included a question about bridges

on the National Highway System shown in poor condition; staff indicated they would research whether projects were already programmed to address those locations.

Transit-related measures showed increased population served within one-quarter mile of fixed-route transit stops from 2014 to 2024. The presentation noted expanded transit coverage, including improvements associated with the GPTC system, and increased service to traditionally underrepresented populations. Employment near fixed-route transit also generally increased over the same period.

Tom Vander Woude presented active transportation performance metrics, noting growth in off-road paved trail mileage from 13 miles in 1990 to 210 miles today, increased trail use at counted locations, growth in marked bike-lane mileage, and increased population access within one-quarter mile of trails and bicycle facilities. Tom also noted that trail-related injuries and fatalities have decreased as the network has expanded, while adult physical inactivity remains an area of concern. A question was raised about whether bike-lane mileage included shared roadway markings; staff said they would follow up.

The measures will be compiled for use during summer public engagement and stakeholder meetings.

Action: Received for information.

4. Programming

4.1. Public Comment Report for the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 26-06.1

Charles Bradsky reported that no public comments were received on the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 26-06.1 or on related amendments or projects. No comments were received from the Interagency Consultation Group.

Action: Received for information.

4.2. Resolution #26-08: FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 26-06.1

Charles Bradsky presented Resolution #26-08 for FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment 26-06.1 and requested a favorable recommendation to the Executive Board and Full Commission. The amendment included 17 projects. Staff noted that a Cedar Lake project was being removed because the community planned to return federal funds and complete the project with local funding due to federal-process requirements and related costs.

Committee discussion included a question regarding INDOT's deletion of a pavement-marking project and whether the work would still be completed. Staff stated they would contact INDOT for clarification and suggested INDOT may be able to address the issue at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Dean Button and seconded by Mark O'Dell to recommend Resolution #26-08 to the Executive Board and Full Commission. The motion carried unanimously.

4.3. FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Modification #26-23

Charles Bradsky presented Administrative Modification #26-23 for information. The report included minor project changes such as funding increases, schedule changes, and project phase adjustments for INDOT and local projects. Staff noted examples involving East Chicago, Gary, Hammond, Munster, and Porter County. The full project-change details are included in the electronic agenda packet posted on the website.

Action: Received for information.

5. Reports from Planning Partners

5.1. Drive Clean Indiana

Ryan Lisek, with Drive Clean Indiana, reported that Tesla wall-charger donations were still available but nearing full allocation, and GM Level 2 fleet chargers were also available. Upcoming grant funding related to clean diesel replacement vehicles was expected from IDEM. Drive Clean Indiana also provided updates on charging infrastructure activity in Northwest Indiana and noted there were no major updates on INDOT's National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure funding program.

Upcoming events mentioned included a sustainable communities meeting at NIRPC on June 6 from 9:00 a.m. to noon, Crossroads Clean Energy webinars on May 13 and June 17, the Clean Air Golf Outing on August 25, and the Drive Clean Indiana Clean Technology Conference at Blue Chip on November 18.

6. Other Business, Staff Announcements, and Upcoming Meetings

6.1. Acceptance of Committee Appointments

The committee recognized the appointment of Michelle Pariso to serve as the NWI Forum representative on the Transportation Committee, Environmental Committee, NWI Truck Parking Study, and Economy and Place Committee.

The committee also recognized Kay Nelson's service and contributions to NIRPC committees over many years, including transportation, environmental, and economy-related work. Members and staff expressed appreciation for her participation, questions, and contributions to regional discussions.

6.2. Staff Updates and Announcements

Staff announced that the road safety audit contract was approved and that Corradino Group would proceed as consultant for the 2026 road safety audits. Staff will contact communities

with high-crash locations and invite them to identify locations for potential audits. Locations will be prioritized based on crash-cost index scores.

Staff also announced that the request for proposals for the Safe Streets and Roads for All regional safety action plan was issued on April 23 and closes on May 28. The project is being developed in partnership with Lake County, Porter County, and La Porte County, with a planned project kickoff in midsummer.

6.3. Upcoming NIRPC Meetings

- Environment Committee – May 7, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.
- NIRPC Executive Board – May 21, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
- TROC Lake & Porter – May 26, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
- TROC La Porte – May 26, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.
- NIRPC Executive Board – June 18, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.
- Economy & Place Committee – July 8, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.
- NIRPC Full Commission – July 16, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

7. Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next Transportation Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 4, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the NIRPC offices. Staff noted that the committee planned to take the summer off unless a need arose to schedule an additional meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:03 am.