

Meeting Report

Public Meeting on 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan Update, 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program, and Air Quality Conformity

March 31, 2015

East Chicago Public Library, 2:00-5:00

As part of the 30-day comment period for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP) Update, 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and air quality conformity, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) hosted seven meetings throughout the month of March. All meeting locations except one were accessible by fixed route public transportation, and all were accessible by demand response public transportation.

Prior to the public comment period, notice was given to NIRPC's stakeholders and the local media that the public comment period was to commence, and the list of meetings was included. The information was also posted on the NIRPC website. Fliers were provided to transit operators for posting on their vehicles, meeting locations were provided with fliers, PSAs were sent to local broadcast media, and NIRPC social media outlets were used to provide further notice.

A presentation was created for the series of meetings. The presentation was given at each meeting, with questions, comments, and discussion encouraged throughout the meeting. Comment cards were provided as well as information on how to provide comments after the meeting. This information was also provided at the end of the presentation. Attendees were informed that their comments would be included in a comment report that would include staff responses at the end of the process and that the report would be publicly available.

Of the eight meeting participants, none filled out the participant survey.

Summary of comments received:

- Sidewalks, lighting, safety, and existing business districts should be the focus of planning in Gary
- There needs to be better opportunities for lakefront access in the urban core.
- Question regarding current plans and status for the Willowcreek extension
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should be the core of any planning effort
- Outreach should be more tailored for different communities, including engaging younger generations.

Issues identified and recommendations provided:

- **Issue:** Basic services/features are an important component in revitalizing a city.
 - **Recommendation:** Focus on basics such as sidewalks, lighting, and safety.
- **Issue:** Accessibility of places throughout the region
 - **Recommendation:** The ADA should be the core of any planning effort
- **Issue:** Community outreach difficulties
 - **Recommendation:** Tailor outreach efforts for different communities and begin civic involvement at younger ages.