



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

MEETING OF THE FULL COMMISSION NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

August 21, 2025 at 9:00 A.M.

NIRPC Lake Michigan Room, 6100 Southport Road, Portage

- 1.0 Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance – Wendy Mis, Munster Clerk-Treasurer, NIRPC Chair
- 2.0 New Appointments to the Commission - Dave Hollenbeck, Attorney
- 3.0 Roll Call – Candice Eklund, Executive Assistant
- 4.0 Public Comment on Current Agenda Items
The Chair will recognize audience members who have signed up to comment on agenda items below. Time is limited to 3 minutes per commenter.
- 5.0 Approval of the Minutes of the May 15, 2025, Full Commission Meeting (pp. 1-4)
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval
- 6.0 **LEADERSHIP** – Wendy Mis, Munster Clerk-Treasurer (pp. 5-7)
- 7.0 **TRANSPORTATION** – Kevin Breitzke, Porter County Surveyor (pp. 8-57)
 - 7.1 Resolution #25-15: Engage NWI Technical Amendment, *Stephen Hughes* (pp. 13-33)
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval
 - 7.2 Resolution #25-16: Metropolitan Transportation Plan Technical Amendment, *Scott Weber* (pp. 34-51)
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval
 - 7.3 Resolution #25-14: FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments 26-02.1, 26-02.2, and 26-02.5, *Stephen Hughes* (pp. 52-57).
[TIP Amendments Project List link](#)
ACTION REQUESTED: Approval
 - 7.4 INDOT - Matt Deitchley, La Porte District Deputy Commissioner
- 8.0 **ECONOMY & PLACE** – George Topoll, Union Township Trustee (pp. 58-59)
- 9.0 **ENVIRONMENT** – Bill Emerson, Lake County Surveyor (pp. 60-62)
- 10.0 Other Business
- 11.0 Announcements
- 12.0 Adjourn into Indiana Office of Technology workshop (p. 63). The next meeting on September 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., will be an Executive Board meeting.

NIRPC Full Commission Meeting
6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN
Minutes of the May 15, 2025 Full Commission Meeting

Call to Order

Chair Wendy Mis called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting was streamed live on YouTube.

New Appointments to the Commission

Dave Hollenbeck announced the appointment to the Commission of Lori Latham (City of Gary).

Roll Call—Taken by Candice Eklund. As a note, 26 commissioners were present during the roll call; 27 Commissioners are needed to fulfill a quorum of the Full Commission. The meeting of the Executive Board was then called to order at 9:09 a.m. Five additional Commissioners arrived after the roll call, allowing the meeting to convert to a meeting of the Full Commission.

Present

The 31 Commissioners present at the meeting are listed below:

- Kyle Allen, Lake County Commissioner
- Jenny Beier, Town of Schneider
- Thomas Black, Town of Highland
- Kevin Breitzke, Porter County Surveyor
- James Burge, Town of Porter
- Robert Carnahan, Town of Cedar Lake
- Daina Dumbrys, Town of Michiana Shores
- Denise Ebert, Town of Wanatah
- Bill Emerson, Lake County Surveyor
- Keesha Hardaway, Town of Merrillville
- Christian Hendron, Porter Township Trustee
- Vanessa Hernandez-Orange, City of East Chicago
- Lori Hunt, Town of Westville
- Peter Land, City of Crown Point
- Lori Latham, City of Gary
- John Matwyshyn, La Porte County Surveyor
- Jack McGraw – Town of Burns Harbor
- Wendy Mis, Town of Munster
- Edward Morales, Porter County Commissioner
- Randall Niemeyer, Lake County Council
- Courtney Parthun, City of La Porte
- David Phelps, Town of Beverly Shores
- Linda Pompeii, Town of Pottawattomie Park
- Warren Schacht, Town of Trail Creek
- Tom Schmitt, Town of Schererville
- Steve Spebar, City of Whiting
- Gerald Swets, Town of St. John
- Mary Tanis, Town of Dyer
- Jim Ton, Town of Chesterton
- George Topoll, Union Township
- Andy Vasquez, Porter County Council

A representative from INDOT was unable to attend.

Absent

The 19 Commissioners absent from the meeting are listed below:

- Duane Arndt, Town of Kingsford Heights
- Austin Bonta, City of Portage
- Bill Carroll, City of Lake Station
- Tim Clayton, Town of Winfield
- Jon Costas, City of Valparaiso
- Connie Gramarossa, La Porte County Commissioner
- Bonnie Hawksworth, Town of Dune Acres
- Josh Huddlestun, City of Hobart
- Justin Kiel, La Porte County Council
- Scott Kingan, Town of Ogden Dunes
- Colleen Lane, Town of Long Beach
- Tom McDermott, City of Hammond
- Angie Nelson Deutch, City of Michigan City
- Jim Pressel, Governor Appointee
- Lisa Rosenkranz, Town of LaCrosse
- Rick Ryfa, Town of Griffith
- Sharon Szwedo, Town of New Chicago
- CJ Wittmer, Town of Kouts
- John Yelkich, Town of Lowell

Hebron, Kingsbury, and The Pines have appointed no representatives to NIRPC.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Tom Vander Woude, Kathy Luther, Denarie Kane, Mitch Barloga, Scott Weber, Charles Bradsky, Meredith Stilwell, Flor Baum, Candice Eklund, and attorney Dave Hollenbeck.

Public Comment - There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the February 20, 2025, Full Commission meeting were approved on motion by Kevin Breitzke and seconded by Jim Ton.

Leadership – Wendy Mis, Munster Clerk-Treasurer

Ty Warner and Wendy Mis recognized Flor Baum's five-year milestone service at NIRPC.

Wendy Mis reported that the Leadership Committee met on May 13 and voted to recommend the two items below to the Commission for approval.

- **Resolution #25-07: Authorizing the Submittal of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) FY 2025 Partnership Planning Grant Application to Administer the Economic Development District.** Ty Warner added this annual resolution is required from the EDA each time this application is submitted. On motion by Gerald Swets and seconded by Jim Ton, the Full Commission approved Resolution #25-07.
- **Marquette Greenway Supplemental Agreement #2.** Mitch Barloga presented the second amendment to the Marquette Greenway Supplemental agreement, which increases the contract amount from \$764,600 to \$960,755. The adjustment reflects additional costs related to engineering, utility, and railroad coordination and right-of-way services in Michigan City. The Leadership Committee recommended proceeding with the amendment, contingent upon approval of a RAISE grant amendment from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and a Regional Economic Acceleration and Development Initiative (READI) grant amendment from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation. On motion by Bob Carnahan and seconded by James Burge, the Full Commission approved the second amendment to the Marquette Greenway Supplemental agreement contract.

Transportation – Kevin Breitzke, Porter County Surveyor

Kevin Breitzke reported the Transportation Committee met on May 6, 2025, and heard a presentation on INDOT's US 30 West PEL study for safety and mobility. The next Transportation Committee is scheduled for August 5, 2025.

The Transportation Committee recommended the four resolutions below to the Commission.

- **Resolution #25-08: FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).** Tom Vander Woude presented the FY 2026 UPWP, which is the required one-year update to the FY 2025-2026 UPWP. The UPWP is a federally required document by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) that outlines how NIRPC will allocate its federal funding. The UPWP serves three primary purposes: provides an approved work plan for NIRPC staff, outlines planning tasks for the upcoming fiscal year, and functions as a financial planning tool linking staff activities to funding sources.

Due to significant changes at the federal level, the USDOT has shifted its focus on many areas and advised NIRPC to remove all references to Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs). Additionally, references to rescinded Executive Orders are being removed, including the order related to Environmental Justice, which was previously a significant component of NIRPC's planning. Instead, NIRPC will now reference civil rights legislation in its planning. Additionally, references to climate change and greenhouse gas emissions will be removed from the UPWP. Lori Latham inquired whether these changes were required based on guidance from the Indiana Division of the FHWA and Region 5 of the FTA. Tom confirmed that NIRPC had received formal communications from USDOT stating that all contracts and grant agreements must comply with current federal standards. He added that NIRPC is also a council of governments that conducts activities using funding not documented in the UPWP. There will continue to be an environmental component to the work at NIRPC, but the work specifically focused on greenhouse gas and climate change will not be funded through the UPWP, though it can potentially be funded from other sources.

Ty added that these advisements are not unique to NIRPC and that NIRPC is in communication with other MPOs nationwide. Following a robust discussion, Randall Niemeyer stated that his experience on President Trump's DOT transition team was that their focus has not shifted from results, and that

the changes are more about terminology than substance. He said the Commission should remain focused on the objective because there have been many good projects that have had good results for the entire region. On motion by Jim Ton and seconded by Kyle Allen, the Full Commission approved resolution #25-08.

Tom Vander Woude briefly introduced the three resolutions below, requiring a vote today. Resolutions 25-09, approval of the Air Quality Conformity Report, which demonstrates that a proposed transportation plan will not cause or contribute to violations of air quality standards in a nonattainment or maintenance area; 25-10, MTP Amendment #2, which is the minimum 20-year plan for the improvement, maintenance, and operation of the transportation system; and 25-11, adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program, which is a 5-year plan for the use of federal transportation funds in the NIRPC metropolitan planning area. He stated that all three documents were made available for public review and comment during a formal public comment period in accordance with NIRPC's adopted Public Participation Plan, and NIRPC held three public meetings, one each in Lake County, Porter County, and La Porte County. He said that no public comments were received, but some agency comments were received and responded to, and that the details are listed in the individual public comment reports for each resolution.

- **Resolution #25-09: Air Quality Conformity Determination Report.** Scott Weber presented this report, which NIRPC is required to produce because the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has designated portions of NW Indiana as nonattainment for ozone. The Clean Air Act requires the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Metropolitan Transportation Plan to demonstrate this conformity. NIRPC collaborated with the Interagency Consultation Group to fulfill the Indiana conformity requirements. The report shows that implementing regionally significant, non-exempt projects does not cause or contribute to Ozone precursor emissions (NOx and VOC) at or above motor vehicle emissions budgets in State Implementation Plan (SIP). On motion by Mary Tanis and seconded by George Topoll, the Full Commission approved Resolution #25-09.
- **Resolution #25-10: NWI 2050+ Amendment #2.** Scott Weber presented the proposed amendment to NWI 2050+, NIRPC's long-range transportation plan, originally adopted in 2023. The amendment updates a section of the text to reference the just adopted Air Quality Conformity Determination Report, dated May 15, 2025, which is necessary to ensure consistency between the NWI 2050+ and the upcoming FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Since the new TIP includes regionally significant, non-exempt projects that are either new or have changed in scope from the current NWI 2050+ plan, the amendment must be adopted before TIP approval. On motion by Bob Carnahan and seconded by Jim Ton, the Full Commission approved Resolution #25-10.
- **Resolution #25-11: FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).** Charles Bradsky reported that this is NIRPC's short-range plan for programming federal highway and transit funds over the next five years. The presentation described the various project funding categories, the three urbanized areas, transit projects, and how the new TIP is fiscally constrained. On motion by Tom Schmitt and seconded by George Topoll, the Full Commission approved Resolution #25-11.

Economy & Place – George Topoll

George Topoll thanked NIRPC staff and all involved in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy process. The committee met on April 4th and offered suggestions after reviewing the draft CEDS, which was also posted for a 30-day public comment period. The public comments received are included in the CEDS appendix.

Resolution #25-06: 2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Annie Porter-Cruz, Community and Regional Development Specialist with the Purdue Center for Regional Development, presented on the CEDS document and discussed what is happening strategically across the Midwest and the Great Lakes states. There have been significant investments at the federal level in Indiana, Wisconsin, and Illinois to establish US National Centers of Excellence to increase national security. A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted, where they had four stakeholder collaborations and focused on Industry and Industry Clusters, Talent and Workforce, and Quality of Living.

The committee identified three core goals to be included in the CEDS, with metrics identified to track progress.

- Economic Diversification and Innovation
- Workforce Resiliency
- Quality of Place

The metrics align with NIRPC's capacity to generate and monitor relevant data, including indicators that track the health of targeted industrial clusters.

Denarie Kane reported on the public comments received during the public comment period, adding that the comments received did not result in significant changes to the CEDS document. On motion by George Topoll and seconded by Andy Vasquez, the Full Commission approved the CEDS as presented with the contingency that minor edits, as needed for clarity, may still be made before submission to the EDA for approval, but no substantive changes will be made.

ENVIRONMENT – Bill Emerson

Bill Emerson began by announcing that Reggie Korthals, Executive Director of the Indiana MS4 Partnership, will be retiring this year. Reggie was recently honored with an award recognizing her 17 years of dedicated service to the statewide organization. She described her work as an educator as a rewarding, enjoyable, and meaningful journey.

Bill Emerson reported the Environment Committee met on May 1st and heard updates from some of their local partners, including IDEM. The Environment Committee recommended the resolution below.

Resolution #25-12, Affirming NIRPC's Environmental Commitment and Planning for Grant Cancellations. The resolution acknowledges the federal EPA environmental grants that are being cancelled. There have been 400 grants cancelled as of May 1, 2025. NIRPC supports three initiatives: Transportation, Economic Development, and Environment. Mr. Emerson said the Commission has always supported the Environment Committee and the environment locally and feels the Commission should reaffirm its commitment at this time, especially in light of the current environmental regulations and funding. David Phelps asked if the 400 cancelled grants affect NIRPC. One is the Environmental Justice capacity building grant that allows NIRPC to build a re-grant program. On motion by Kevin Breitzke and seconded by Lori Latham, the Full Commission approved Resolution #25-12. The next meeting is scheduled on August 7 at 10:00 a.m.

Other Business

Robert Carnahan reported that it was National Police Week. It is celebrated on May 15 each year.

Announcements

Bob Carnahan relayed announcements of events in Cedar Lake.

Kevin Breitzke thanked NIRPC staff for the improved video and sound system recordings of their committee meetings on YouTube.

Ty Warner thanked the Commissioners for attending and approving the items requiring a vote. NIRPC staff work very hard to condense the meeting materials and presentations, but they do err on the side of transparency for clarification. Everything that was voted on today is a federal requirement in order for communities around the NIRPC table to receive federal funding for transportation projects and economic development funding through the EDA.

Hearing no other business, Wendy Mis adjourned the meeting at 10:53 a.m. The next meeting will be a full Commission meeting on August 21, 2025.

The livestream video recording for this meeting is available on NIRPC's YouTube Channel at [Full Commission Meeting 5-15-25 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-15-25)

NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

March 11, 2025 / NIRPC Dune Room – 8:30 a.m.

Members present

Denise Ebert, Wendy Mis, Gerald Swets

Staff and others present

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

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Wendy Mis called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

November 12, 2024, Leadership Committee meeting minutes were presented. On a motion by Gerald Swets, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the minutes were approved.

Approval of Minutes

December 5, 2024, Leadership Committee meeting minutes were presented. On a motion by Gerald Swets, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the minutes were approved.

Approval of Minutes

January 14, 2025, Leadership Committee meeting minutes were presented. On a motion by Gerald Swets, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the minutes were approved.

Review of Financial Status – October 2024 Budget vs Actual

Talaya Jones presented the October 2024 bank reconciliations for the NIRPC General Account, the CARES Revolving Loan Fund Account, the La Porte Revolving Loan Fund Account, and the Marquette Greenway Account.

She also provided the year-to-date financial reports for the General Fund as of October 2024, noting that the Marquette Greenway project is progressing slowly, with project management claims just beginning to be paid. Total expenditures for the period ending October 31, 2024, amounted to \$6,549,719 out of the \$17,774,554 budgeted. Total General Fund revenue for the period was \$2,421,991 out of the \$4,333,880 budgeted. Talaya reminded the Committee that NIRPC is reimbursed quarterly and noted that the RAISE project is still in the planning stage, with funds not expected to be collected by December 31, 2024.

Talaya then presented the year-to-date financial reports for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act as of October 2024. Total NIRPC CARES fund expenditures for the period ending October 31, 2024, were \$62,847 out of the \$644,000 budgeted. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$66,658 out of the \$78,000 budgeted.

Approval of Claims Registers – October 2024

Talaya presented the October 2024 General Fund claims totaling \$354,155.52 to the Committee. On a motion by Denise Ebert, seconded by Gerald Swets, and with no opposition, the General Fund register of claims for \$354,155.52 was approved.

Talaya then presented the October 2024 CARES claims totaling \$1,515.00 for approval. On a motion by Denise Ebert, seconded by Gerald Swets, and with no opposition, the CARES register of claims for \$1,515.00 was approved.

Finally, Talaya presented the October 2024 Marquette Greenway claims totaling \$83,250.00 for approval. On a motion by Gerald Swets, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the Marquette Greenway register of claims for \$83,250.00 was approved.

Review of Financial Status – November 2024 Budget vs Actual

Talaya Jones presented the November 2024 bank reconciliations for the NIRPC General Account, the CARES Revolving Loan Fund Account, the La Porte Revolving Loan Fund Account, and the Marquette

Greenway Account.

She also provided the year-to-date financial reports for the General Fund as of November 2024, noting that the Marquette Greenway project is progressing slowly, with project management claims just beginning to be paid. Total expenditures for the period ending November 30, 2024, amounted to \$8,278,556 out of the \$17,774,554 budgeted. Total General Fund revenue for the period was \$2,535,972 out of the \$4,333,880 budgeted.

Talaya then presented the year-to-date financial reports for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act as of November 2024. Total NIRPC CARES fund expenditures for the period ending November 30, 2024, were \$62,847 out of the \$644,000 budgeted. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$67,741 out of the \$78,000 budgeted.

Approval of Claims Registers – November 2024

Talaya presented the November 2024 General Fund claims totaling \$1,742,877.75 to the Committee. On a motion by Gerald Swets, second by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the General Fund register of claims for \$1,742,877.75 was approved.

Review of Financial Status – December 2024 Budget vs Actual

Talaya Jones presented the December 2024 bank reconciliations for the NIRPC General Account, the CARES Revolving Loan Fund Account, the La Porte Revolving Loan Fund Account, and the Marquette Greenway Account.

She also provided the year-to-date financial reports for the General Fund as of December 2024, noting that the Marquette Greenway project is progressing slowly, with project management claims just beginning to be paid. Total expenditures for the period ending December 31, 2024, amounted to \$8,647,181 out of the \$17,774,554 budgeted. Total General Fund revenue for the period was \$2,989,891 out of the \$4,333,880 budgeted. Ty mentioned that while NIRPC's local share is increasing from \$0.70 to \$0.86 per capita, the planning funds have been reduced due to a formula change.

Talaya then presented the year-to-date financial reports for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act as of December 2024. Total NIRPC CARES fund expenditures for the period ending December 31, 2024, were \$63,970 out of the \$644,000 budgeted. Total CARES revenue collected for the period was \$68,130 out of the \$78,000 budgeted.

Approval of Claims Registers – December 2024

Talaya presented the December 2024 General Fund claims totaling \$335,644.98 to the Committee. On a motion by Gerald Swets, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the General Fund register of claims for \$335,644.98 was approved.

Talaya then presented the December 2024 CARES claims totaling \$1,122.42 for approval. On a motion by Denise Ebert, seconded by Gerald Swets, and with no opposition, the CARES register of claims for \$1,122.42 was approved.

Finally, Talaya presented the December 2024 Marquette Greenway claims totaling \$15,250.00 for approval. On a motion by Gerald Swets, seconded by Denise Ebert, and with no opposition, the Marquette Greenway register of claims for \$15,250.00 was approved.

Legislative Initiatives

Ty presented a digital version of the Federal Legislative Concerns handout on NIRPC's website, which he typically shares with legislators during his visits to Washington, D.C., for the National Association for Regional Councils (NARC) conference. The ongoing issues of concern include:

- **Sustaining the Highway Trust Fund (HTF):** A sustainable funding source is needed for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which is up for renewal in the fall of 2026. The current \$0.18 per gallon gas tax, unchanged since 1993, only replenishes 30% of the fund. The HTF is a five-year bill, and the last renewal did not address the replenishment issue, instead using funds from other sources. A long-term solution is required, either by raising the federal gas tax or implementing road user charges or mileage-based user fees. NIRPC has not yet taken a position on this issue.

- **Clearing Blocked Railroad Crossings**
- **Designating the Calumet National Heritage Area:** NIRPC passed a resolution of support in September 2021.

New issues of concern include:

- **Appropriating Funding for the EDA:** Currently, \$70,000 in funding for the EDD requires a 60/40 match. There is a push to increase the funding to \$200,000 with no match required.
- **Protecting Existing Discretionary Funding:** This involves grants that have already been awarded and significant amounts of money already spent on planning and implementing these projects. This funding must be protected until the conclusion of these awarded projects.

In addition to the meeting packet, two handouts were provided: a list of the 2025 Legislative Session Bills of interest to NIRPC and NARC's Surface Transportation Reauthorization Priorities document. Ty noted that the Legislative Committee has been absorbed into the newly formed Leadership Committee, which now oversees legislative items.

NARC is urging Congress to incorporate the following principles in the next surface transportation bill:

1. Increase and enhance Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding.
2. Promote non-metropolitan transportation planning.
3. Support local decision-making through formula programs. NIRPC is primarily funded by formula grants.
4. Preserve discretionary grant funding.

Ty highlighted SB 103 regarding vehicle emissions, authored by Senator Niemeyer. If passed, this bill would direct the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to (1) study the environmental impact of exempting vehicles wholly owned by individuals aged 65 and older from motor vehicle testing and (2) determine whether the environmental rules board could exempt these vehicles from emissions testing while still meeting the national ambient air quality standards set forth under the federal Clean Air Act. NIRPC is required to calculate and demonstrate conformity, and so far, there has been no method found to correlate vehicle emissions with the age of the owner. If this requirement cannot be met, it could jeopardize transportation funding.

Personnel updates

Ty reported that NIRPC currently has a vacancy for the Traffic Counting Planner position. NIRPC holds a three-year contract with INDOT to conduct traffic counting. He noted that due to recent staff increases and the rehiring of Scott Weber, the budget for this position has been reduced.

Other Business

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is being brought to the May Full Commission meeting for approval. There will not be an Executive Board meeting in April, and the next Leadership Committee meeting will be on May 13. The Full Commission meeting will be on May 15.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 am.

Transportation Committee
NIRPC Lake Michigan Room
May 6, 2025
Minutes

Kevin Breitzke called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), Tom Schmitt (Schererville), Mark O'Dell (Chesterton), Dean Button (Hammond), Mary Tanis (Dyer), Bob Thompson (Valpo Transit), Kay Nelson (Forum), George Topoll (Union Township), David Wright (GPTC), and Martin Bobcek (Porter County) were present.

Doug Ross (Post Tribune), Jenny Monroe, Scott Sandstrom, Melody Panos (INDOT), Sandra Flum (INDOT), Chris Nugent, Ryan Lisek (DCI), Jenna Ambrosia (DCI), Jeff Huett, and Terry Martin were also present.

NIRPC staff present were Tom Vander Woude, Grace Benninger, Eman Ibrahim, Stephen Hughes, Charles Bradsky, Scott Weber, Jen Birchfield, Mitch Barloga, Meredith Stilwell, and Flor Baum.

On a motion by Dean Button, seconded by Mary Tanis, the committee approved the minutes from the March 4th meeting with a minor correction regarding the exclusion of bridge replacement projects from the 2026 - 2030 TIP due to insufficient funding.

There were no public comments.

Presentation

Scott Sandstrom, consultant study manager with CDM Smith, presented an update on the ProPEL US 30 West study in partnership with INDOT. The study covers segments of US 30 from SR 49 to Beech Road and US 31 from West County Road 700 N to the US 30/31 interchange. He emphasized the ongoing collaborative process, which has included over two years of public and stakeholder engagement to inform long-term transportation investments. The study is not intended to identify a single build alternative but rather a set of reasonable options for future project consideration. The current focus is on Level 3 screening, which includes an 8-step process to evaluate and refine alternatives. Fifteen planning segments were identified based on intersection function, traffic patterns, and land use. Several similar intersection types were prescreened, and non-critical improvements were removed from the Level 3 packages. Improvement packages were developed for each segment, balancing safety, mobility, and access, in alignment with INDOT's guidelines. Key considerations included access management, interchange spacing, and local transportation plans. Facility types under consideration range from major arterials to freeways. Evaluation of alternatives focused on conflict point reduction, travel time, and impacts to driveways and local access. The Draft Level 3 Alternatives Analysis was published in November, and public comments have been incorporated. The study is expected to conclude later this year. For more information, please visit www.propelus30.com.

Planning

Tom Vander Woude spoke on Resolution #25-08: FY26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which serves as NIRPC's core planning document, as required by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). The UPWP functions as the approved work plan for MPO staff and outlines planning tasks and financial allocations for the fiscal year spanning July 2025 to June 2026. It addresses key surface transportation challenges in Northwest Indiana and implements strategies from NIRPC's long-range plan while aligning with federal priorities.

The FY26 UPWP included several revisions from the prior year. Task budgets were updated to reflect actual available funding rather than estimates, and project timelines were adjusted to account for completed or expected work in FY25. Based on guidance from the Indiana Division of the Federal Highway Administration and Region 5 of the Federal Transit Administration, the document was revised to remove references to Planning Emphasis Areas (PEAs), rescinded Executive Orders, and climate change-specific tasks. The focus shifted toward established federal legislation and broader Air Quality analysis. Funding allocations were detailed in the document, with primary sources including Federal Metropolitan Planning (PL) and Section 5303 transit planning funds totaling \$2.4 million for FY25, with an 80/20 federal-local split. Additionally, "flex" funds from programs such as CMAQ, HSIP, and STBG were designated for special projects. Per IIJA/BIL requirements, 2.5% of planning funds—approximately \$57,000—were set aside for Complete Streets initiatives in FY26. These funds will support active transportation planning, including technical assistance, data collection, and public engagement. Additional UPWP-funded projects include the Marquette Greenway, which is supported by READI and RAISE grants, and road safety audits funded through HSIP. Local Planning Agency (LPA) assistance for special plans, such as corridor or complete streets planning, will also be managed through the UPWP, aligning with the goals of the NWI 2050 plan. The committee discussed the overall framework and adjustments within the UPWP, including the \$77,000 decrease in federal funding and the necessary reallocations. A discussion also took place regarding the allocation of 5307 transit funding among Illinois, Wisconsin, and various Chicago-area transit operators.

On motion by Dean Button, seconded by Kay Nelson, the Transportation Committee (TC) approved to recommend the approval of Res 25-08 to the Full Commission/Executive Board, including adjustments for a \$77,000 decrease in federal funding and the reallocation of funds to support complete streets and transit projects. The motion passed, confirming committee support for the revised UPWP.

Scott Weber spoke on Resolution #25-09: Adoption of Air Quality Conformity Determination Report. The committee discussed the Air Quality Conformity determination for the NWI 2050+ Amendment #2 and the Fiscal Year 2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), in response to the nonattainment designation for ozone in parts of Northwest Indiana. Specifically, five townships in Lake County and eight in Porter County were designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as nonattainment areas under the 2015 ozone standard. Additionally, all Lake and Porter counties remained maintenance areas under the 2008 standard, and LaPorte County under the 1997 standard. These designations required all new TIPs in the region to meet conformity requirements under Section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act. NIRPC collaborated with the Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) to fulfill these requirements, including INDOT, IDEM, FHWA, FTA, and the US EPA representatives. Together, they ensured that regionally significant, non-exempt transportation projects listed in the FY 2026–2030 TIP would not cause or contribute to ozone precursor emissions (NOx and VOC) above the limits set in Indiana's State Implementation Plan (SIP). NIRPC confirmed that the emissions projections for the required analysis years remained at or below SIP budgets.

Public engagement was conducted from March 22 to April 20, 2025, as NIRPC's Engage NWI policy required. Three public meetings were held—in Porter County, Merrillville, and Michigan City—resulting in no public comments but two formal comments from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). These comments requested the inclusion of project lengths in descriptions and confirmation that all listed projects appeared in the TIP. Both issues were addressed by NIRPC staff. Adopting this resolution was necessary for the FY 2026–2030 TIP to move forward. FHWA cannot issue the formal Conformity Determination Letter—estimated to take 35–40 days—until the NIRPC Commission adopts the resolution.

On motion by Kay Nelson, seconded by Tom Schmitt, the TC recommended the adoption of Res 25-09 to demonstrate Air Quality Conformity for the *NWI 2050+ Amendment #2* and the FY 2026–2030 TIP. A technical correction was noted for correction before the May 15th Commission meeting.

Scott Weber spoke on Resolution #25-10: Adoption of *NWI 2050+ Amendment No. 2*. The committee discussed the adoption of *NWI 2050+ Amendment #2*, emphasizing the need to meet Air Quality Conformity requirements and maintain consistency with federal regulations. As required by 23 CFR § 450.326, a Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) must align with its Long-Range Transportation Plan. Since NIRPC was adopting a new FY 2026–2030 TIP, it became necessary to amend the *NWI 2050+ Plan* to ensure consistency between the documents. This amendment served as a technical adjustment to clearly link the TIP to the plan by updating the Air Quality Conformity determination reference date to May 15, 2025. The amendment was prompted by the inclusion of new or significantly modified regionally significant, non-exempt projects in the TIP that were not previously reflected in the *NWI 2050+ Plan*. Before the TIP could be formally adopted, NIRPC was required to amend the long-range plan to maintain compliance with federal Air Quality standards.

Public engagement for Amendment #2 followed the Engage NWI policy and included a 30-day public comment period from March 22 to April 20, 2025. Three public meetings were held at the Porter County Government Center, the Merrillville Branch of the Lake County Public Library, and the Michigan City Public Library. No public comments were received that specifically addressed the amendment. The TIP document, which is updated every two years, outlines funded transportation projects and incorporates input from local agencies, stakeholders, and federal funding sources. It remained available for public review and reflected ongoing public participation efforts. This resolution is essential to move forward with the new FY 2026–2030 TIP, as the TIP could not take effect until the Federal Highway Administration issued a formal Conformity Determination Letter.

On motion by Dean Button, seconded by George Topoll, Res 25-10 was recommended for adoption by the NIRPC Full Commission/Executive Board on May 15, 2025.

Programming

Charles Bradsky and Stephen Hughes spoke on Resolution # 25-11: FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. The Transportation Committee discussed the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which serves as NIRPC’s short-range plan for allocating federal funds to surface transportation projects across Northwest Indiana. Updated every two years, the TIP outlined roadway and bridge rehabilitation investments, Air Quality improvement, Complete Streets, and multi-use trails while maintaining a balanced budget and avoiding federal debt. The TIP was developed in accordance with the federal Infrastructure Investment and JOBS Act (IIJA) and other applicable funding programs. Northwest Indiana included six urbanized areas as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. NIRPC managed federal aid for three: the Indiana portions of Chicago, Valparaiso–Shorewood Forest, and Michigan City–La Porte urban areas. INDOT managed federal aid for the smaller areas. The Lake of the Four Seasons urban area was recently reclassified by the Census Bureau, which impacted funding allocations. Despite this, transformational projects such as Kennedy Avenue, Willowcreek Road in Porter County, and Cline Avenue were approved to advance, despite funding limitations.

Transit projects in the TIP were funded through various FTA programs, including Section 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula), 5310 (Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities), 5337 (State of Good Repair), and 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities). Funding eligibility varied by location, with fixed guideway system operators such as NICTD being the only recipients eligible for 5337 funds. Projects included technology upgrades, substation repairs, vehicle leases and replacements, and maintenance initiatives to preserve systems in a state of good repair. Transit operators prioritized projects in the following order: operating assistance, preventive maintenance, and capital projects. FY 2029–2030 applications resulted in \$166 million in funding requests, while only \$80.8 million was available, underscoring a significant gap between need and resources. The committee emphasized the importance of preventive maintenance and noted the funding disparities during their discussion of project adjustments.

Public engagement followed NIRPC's *Engage NWI* Public Participation Plan. The TIP was made available for public review during a 30-day comment period from March 22 to April 20, 2025. Three in-person public meetings were held across Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties. Although seven people attended, no formal comments were submitted. The TIP document and project list were also promoted through NIRPC's website, press releases, and social media channels. The committee reviewed the public outreach process and noted the need for improved transparency and communication between NIRPC transit staff and transit operators, particularly regarding project details and opportunities for public input. Suggestions were made to enhance engagement through revised public participation strategies, such as distributing flyers with QR codes at transit locations and exceeding minimum requirements for public meetings.

As a result of this thorough and collaborative process, on motion by Dean Button, seconded by Mary Tanis, the committee passed a favorable recommendation of Res 25-11, supporting adoption of the FY 2026–2030 TIP. The resolution was scheduled to be presented to the NIRPC Commission for approval on May 15, 2025, with final approval by USDOT and INDOT expected by mid-summer.

Reports from Planning Partners

Ryan Lisek (DCI) announced that funding for DC fast-charging and level two charging stations will soon be available. Applications are due by June 30, and a road show will be scheduled from June 9 to 20 to promote the initiative. Air Quality Awareness Week and the Closing the Gap Tour are also scheduled for June.

Other Business, Staff Announcements, and Upcoming Meetings

Staff updates include progress on the Marquette Greenway project, successful workshops on the Sensible Tools Handbook+, and plans for future workshops to increase participation from local officials. A second round of road safety audits will be conducted this summer, focusing on high-crash locations, with funding requiring a local match of approximately \$1,700 per location, and a virtual transit operators meeting is scheduled for Thursday, the 8th, at 10 a.m. A new census data page on the website simplifies access to community snapshot data, aiding in planning and grant applications using the most recent available data.

Announcements

The committee made announcements, wishing Kay Nelson a happy birthday and expressing gratitude for her contribution to the Transportation Committee.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m. The next Transportation Committee meeting is slated for August 5, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in the NIRPC building.

References

1. [Meeting Agenda](#)



2. [YouTube Livestream](#)



3. [ProPEL US 30](#)



4. [Drive Clean Indiana](#)





MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Committee

From: Stephen Hughes, Public Transit and Engagement Planner

Date: August 5, 2025

Re: *Engage NWI* technical amendment

Action Requested: Recommendation to the Full Commission/Executive Board to approve a technical amendment to the Public Participation Plan, *Engage NWI*, by adopting Resolution 25-15

Background

On August 15, 2019, NIRPC adopted *Engage NWI* as the Public Participation Plan for the Commission. This document describes the public participation tasks associated with the Commission's various projects. Some of these tasks are required by statute, some are the Commission's good faith efforts to have meaningful public engagement with its work.

On June 20, 2024, the Commission adopted a new committee structure. The 2019 edition of *Engage NWI* references the former committee structure and any changes to the committee structure should be reflected in the document. Periodic adjustments to committees are anticipated in *Engage NWI* and are specifically identified as technical amendments (this is noted on page 10 of *Engage NWI*: *Any future changes to committee structure made by the Commission will be reflected in Engage NWI as a technical amendment*).

This technical amendment also addresses the change from Twitter to X and the associated change to how to find NIRPC on that platform. There are no other changes brought about by this technical amendment.

A technical amendment can be approved by the Commission without a public comment period or public open house.

Recommendation

NIRPC staff recommends that the Transportation Committee forward its favorable recommendation to the NIRPC Commission/Executive Board to adopt Res. 25-15 approving a technical amendment to the *Engage NWI* Public Participation Plan.



RESOLUTION 25-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING A TECHNICAL AMENDMENT UPDATING THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE IN THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN, ENGAGE NWI

August 21, 2025

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

WHEREAS, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as “the Commission” being designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Lake, Porter, and La Porte County Metropolitan Planning Area, has established a regional, comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) transportation planning process, to develop a 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 activities, including the utilization of a Public Participation Plan compliant with 23 CFR 450.316; and

WHEREAS, the Commission updated the structure of its committees on June 20, 2024, establishing four committees: Leadership, Transportation, Economy and Place, and Environment; and

WHEREAS, the Commission’s Public Participation Plan is *Engage NWI*, which was adopted on August 15, 2019; and

WHEREAS, *Engage NWI* states that any changes to committee structure made by the Commission will be reflected in *Engage NWI* as a technical amendment; and

WHEREAS, the amended *Engage NWI* reflects the revised committee structure and updates information for the social media of the Commission without making substantive changes to the content of the plan; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Committee has recommended that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission make these changes to *Engage NWI*.

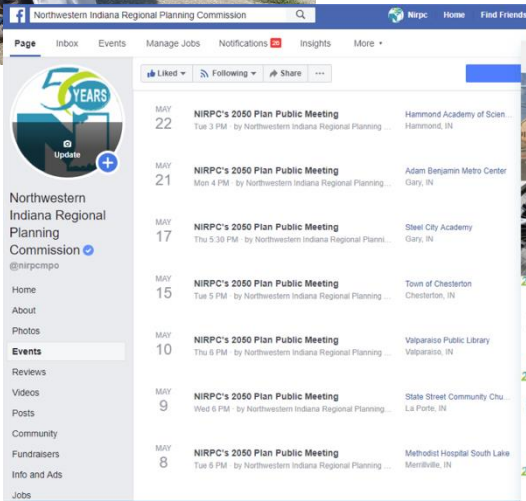
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission hereby adopts this technical amendment of *Engage NWI*.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this 21st day of August 2025.

Wendy Mis
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Denise Ebert
Secretary



Engage NWI

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission's Public Participation Plan – Adopted August 15, 2019 by Resolution 19-24
[Amended August 21, 2025 by Resolution 25-15](#)

This page intentionally left blank.

DRAFT

About Engage NWI

Engage NWI is the federally required “Public Participation Plan” that enables Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) staff to ensure that it is meeting all federal requirements for public participation, but more importantly, a guide that enables the public to engage with regional planning. **Engage NWI** promotes a meaningful exchange of ideas, identification of regional issues and solutions, as well as advancing initiatives to achieve the vision for Northwestern Indiana (NWI).

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Council of Governments (COG) for NWI, has the responsibility to conduct economic development, environmental, and transportation planning for Lake, LaPorte and Porter Counties. **Engage NWI** is required of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) to fulfill the regulations governing public participation (**23 CFR 450.316**).

Engage NWI is laid out in a question and answer format to assist NWI’s general public and stakeholders, and NIRPC’s regional planners to understand:

- ▶ How the general public and stakeholders can most effectively connect with regional planning – **Page 3**
- ▶ What is regional planning? **Page 4-5**
- ▶ When/where is the public engaged in regional planning? **Page 6-7**
- ▶ Why is public participation important to regional planning? **Page 7-8**
- ▶ Who is and should be involved in public participation? **Page 8-10**
- ▶ How is public participation conducted? **Page 11-13**
- ▶ The technical requirements of public participation **Page 14-16**

How to follow regional planning activities and find participation opportunities:

- ▶ **Website:** nirpc.org
 - ▶ Sign-up for emails and newsletters here
 - ▶ Follow our calendar for events and meetings
 - ▶ Find NIRPC’s latest plans and updates
- ▶ **YouTube:** youtube.com/user/NIRPCPlanning
 - ▶ For livestreamed Commission and Committee meetings if you cannot or do not want to attend in-person
- ▶ **Facebook:** facebook.com/nirpcmpo
 - ▶ Like NIRPC’s Facebook page to follow planning activities and learn about engagement opportunities.
- ▶ **TwitterX:** twitterx.com/NIRPC
 - ▶ Follow NIRPC’s ~~Twitter~~ feed to hear the latest news and learn about engagement opportunities.
- ▶ **Instagram:** instagram.com/regionMPO
 - ▶ Follow NIRPC’s Instagram page to see what is going on in the region and learn about NIRPC’s work.

- ▶ **LinkedIn:** [linkedin.com/company/nirpc](https://www.linkedin.com/company/nirpc)
 - ▶ Connect with NIRPC's LinkedIn page to learn about NIRPC's work and other planning partners.
- ▶ **RTIP:** <https://rtip.nirpc.org/>
 - ▶ The Regional Transportation Improvement Program is NIRPC's online database of funded transportation investments throughout the region. Amendments are posted on RTIP when available for public comment.
- ▶ **Direct mail:**
 - To be added to our direct mail list, please send a request for newsletters:
Public Participation Planner
6100 Southport Road
Portage, IN 46368





What is regional planning?

Regional planning in NWI is conducted by NIRPC regional planners. NIRPC is charged in state law to focus on economic development, the environment, and transportation planning. NIRPC provides a regional forum to discuss issues, opportunities, problems, challenges, and concerns of member communities, the general public, and stakeholders. Regional planners work planning initiatives each year that will hopefully advance NWI towards achieving the visions laid out in the adopted long-range plan of the Commission, the *NWI 2050+ Plan*.

It is important to note that while regional planners may provide guidance on best practices, policy, zoning, transportation investments, economic development, or the environment, they do not make or enforce local ordinances or policies, as NIRPC is not charged with this mandate, nor given authority to do so, in state or federal law. In order to affect change locally, participation efforts by the general public and stakeholders must be geared towards local, state or federal government. Regional planners often may not lobby under federal law, rather may only educate or guide elected officials.

For regional transportation planning, NIRPC must follow the federally required "3C" transportation planning process. The "3C" transportation planning process requires cooperation among all levels of government, comprehensive consideration of many planning factors, and be a continuously evaluated planning process. Planning is carried out following contemporary federal transportation planning requirements of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Environmental Justice Executive Order 12898, Persons with Limited English Proficiency Executive Order 13166, the Clean Air Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and their predecessor acts. *Engage NWI* reflects all such requirements, especially those of [23 CFR 450.316](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-450/subpart-316), the regulation that governs public participation.

Regional planners at NIRPC are responsible for the following:

-  Economic development, environmental, and transportation planning
-  Technical assistance on planning best practices, and governance
-  Providing a forum for regional issues identification and problem solving
-  Facilitation of the prioritization of transportation investments for NWI

Public participation and transit

Transit is an important travel option for many residents in the region, and many instances the only travel option for some residents. Transit in NWI consistently is rated by the public as a primary concern for our regional transportation system. The *NWI 2050 Plan* and the *2018 Coordinated Transit Plan* demonstrate those issues and concerns.

The Federal Transit Administration allows a transit operator to rely on the MPO's Public Participation Plan for the Transportation Improvement Program. For transit operators to be compliant with Federal "Program of Projects" requirements, transit operators may utilize the public participation efforts of regional planners. Projects need to be published in sufficient detail, and the users of these projects should be provided an opportunity to examine the proposed program and submit comments. Transit Operators therefore must assist NIRPC with public participation efforts, including advertising and inviting the public to engagement opportunities.

When/where is the public engaged in regional planning?

There are three core MPO planning documents out of which all other regional planning activities are derived:

- ▶ **Long-Range Plan (LRP)** – The LRP sets the vision for NWI and focuses on economic development, the environment, and transportation. The LRP is updated every four years and is amended from time to time. The development of the MTP takes approximately one to two years and engagement opportunities are provided throughout its development to shape the vision, goals, and priorities of the Plan.
- ▶ **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** – The TIP is updated every two years and amended four times per year. The TIP includes transportation

investments for the next five years made by communities, transit operators, and the Indiana Department of Transportation. The development of the TIP involves all the towns, cities, counties, and transit operators of NWI and must be consistent with the *NWI 2050 Plan*. Direct engagement with municipalities and transit operators is the most effective way for the public to influence the projects each applicant submits to NIRPC for funding.

- ▶ **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)** – The UPWP is updated every two years and amended in between generally once. The UPWP contains all the planning activities required by the Federal Highway and Transit Administrations in addition to planning activities identified by the *NWI 2050 Plan*. The planning tasks are conducted by the regional planners at NIRPC. Each UPWP task includes a public participation goal appropriate for the task: Inform, Consult, Involve, or Collaborate. **See page 12 for details on goals.**

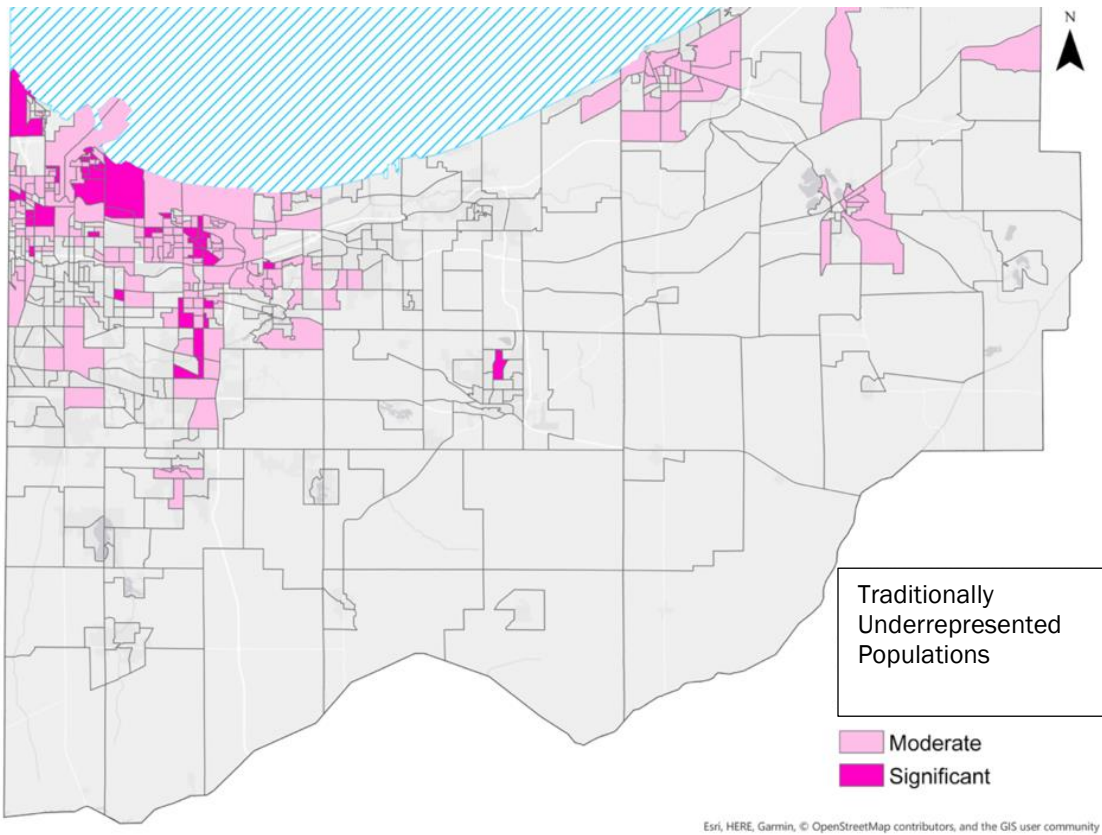
Understanding the core planning activities of NIRPC will help to connect interested individuals on when and where to engage in regional planning.

Engage NWI emphasizes that for effective regional planning, engagement should occur where people are, and early in the process. Input will be solicited from the general public and stakeholders when active engagement methods are utilized (described on Page 13), close to where the general public are already gathering and while plans are in development so that input can shape the outcome which is deliberated at the Commission. Every attempt will be made to hold active engagement activities throughout the region, balanced where transit is available and for the rest of the region, through a variety of creative means while plans are in development. The Commission will determine where and when to hold its meetings and those of its advisory and business committees.

Why is public participation critical to regional planning?

Engage NWI stresses the need for the general public and stakeholders to engage in regional planning to identify regional challenges, problems, and opportunities. Regional planners need to listen to voices of the general public and stakeholders to gain a diversity of input – especially from those traditionally underrepresented in planning processes – and hear potential solutions or to shape planning processes and achieve desired outcomes. The map on Page 9 represents the places in NWI that should be emphasized in engagement efforts. These places include higher than regionally average areas of minorities, low-income individuals, limited-English proficiency individuals, zero-car households, veterans, individuals over sixty-five years of age, and individuals with disabilities. Regional planners need input early in the process so that final plans can reflect a balance of priorities and interests heard from all over the NWI.

Engage NWI stresses the importance that additional effort be made to invite individuals that reside in such areas to participate in regional planning efforts to give voice to communities who have traditionally been under-represented.



Strategies to engage with emphasized places in NWI

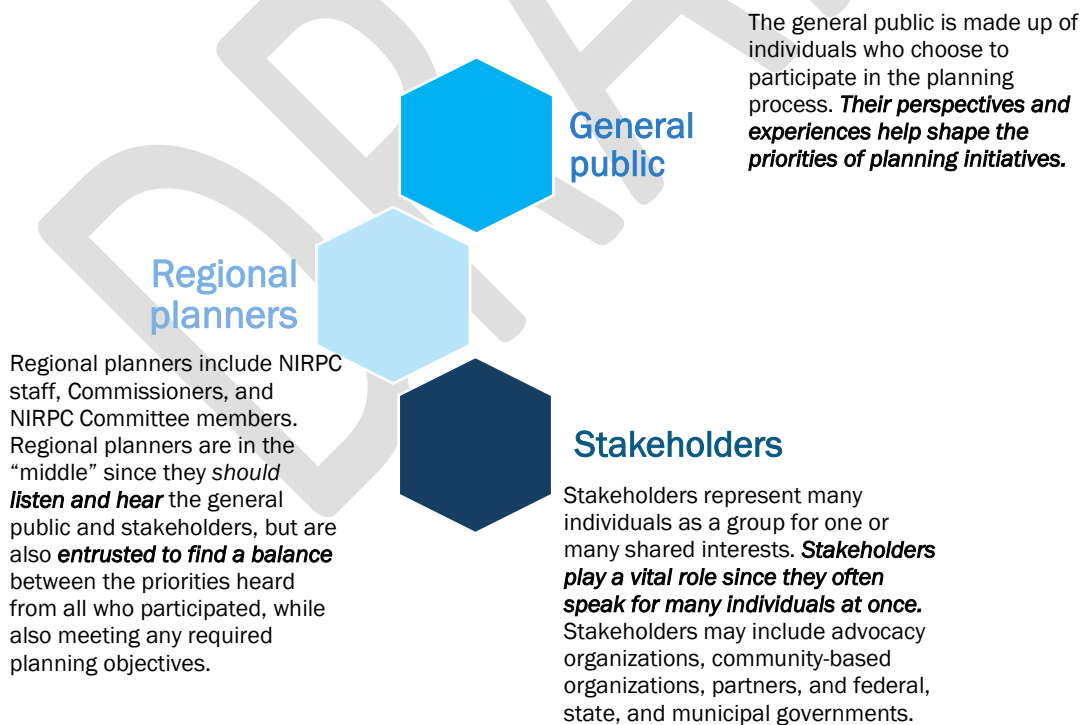
- ▶ **One-on-Ones** – depending on the planning activity, regional planners may make face-to-face contact with community-based organizations, neighborhood leaders, faith-based organizations, elected officials, and other important stakeholders that can connect regional planners to residents and businesses that have been underrepresented in regional planning activities. Such interactions are called “*Out and Abouts*” in *Engage NWI* and are described on Page 13.
- ▶ **Targeted formal engagement** – depending on the planning activity, regional planners may ensure that some of the formal meetings or “*Pop-Up Events*,” described on Page 13, are held in these emphasized places to make participation convenient, especially if community residents rely on limited public transit.

Who is and should be involved in public participation?

Engage NWI focuses upon “regional planners,” “the general public,” and “stakeholders” as three critical groups involved in public engagement. Each plays a unique and important role in the planning process. Regional planners at NIRPC seek to undertake various planning initiatives that need to be shaped by public input. The general public includes individuals and businesses that represent themselves in the planning process, while stakeholders represent “grouped” interests, needs, or desires in the outcome of a planning process. The perspectives, experience, and expertise from the general public, or stakeholders, is not only welcomed, but necessary in the planning process.

Shaped by their personal experiences, regional planners do not know and cannot see every detail of every issue in every community. Therefore, *Engage NWI* stresses the need for regional planners to listen to the general public and stakeholders as a duty, but also for the general public and stakeholders to share their perspectives, experiences, and expertise as regional citizens.

For *Engage NWI* to be effective, NIRPC, as the regional planners, will inform the general public and stakeholders of every opportunity to participate through the channels described on Page 3; however, the general public and stakeholders have the freedom to take advantage of the opportunity to play their part and actively engage in shaping their region.



About the regional planners - NIRPC

Regional planning and coordination came to Northwestern Indiana in 1965 when enabling legislation was passed by the Indiana General Assembly and signed into law by the Governor. The first state law called for a transportation planning commission, which was inspired by the 1962 Federal Highway Act. The state law has since been amended to create what is known today as the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, a three-county council of governments. In 2007, NIRPC's Executive Board membership expanded, and weighted voting added.

NIRPC's governing body is the Commission composed of 53 county, municipal, and some township elected officials and a Gubernatorial appointment. The Commission membership is established in state statute and is required to meet in full at least four times per year and at a minimum statutorily responsible for the hiring of the Executive Director, adopting bylaws, electing officers, and annual budget appropriations. A smaller Executive Board is annually elected by and from the full Commission membership and takes on the routine business of NIRPC. The Commission has established several committees to make advice and assist in conducting its business ~~along with lower topical committees focused on specific interests~~. Please check NIRPC.org for updates on the committee structure and membership.

All Commission and committee business related to transportation planning and investment decision-making must adhere to **Engage NWI**. Planning for economic development and the environment may adhere to **Engage NWI** or the specific requirements of grants funding those activities in question. Noticing for Commission and Committee meetings will follow Indiana Open Door Law.

Commission	Full Commission <i>Meets four times per year</i>
	Executive Board <i>Meets approximately six times per year</i>
Advisory Committees	Economy and Place
	Environment
	Leadership
	Transportation

Last revised ~~February 2018~~ August 2025 / Any future changes to committee structure made by the Commission will be reflected in **Engage NWI** as a technical amendment.

How is public participation conducted?

Engage NWI lays out on Page 12 the engagement goals, the promise made by *Engage NWI* associated with that goal, engagement methods associated with each goal, and the when the goal will be chosen for each planning task. Then all the technical requirements of *Engage NWI* are laid out (Page 14-16). Input from the general public and stakeholders early in the process is critical to shaping the final outcomes of each plan. With a diversity of perspectives in a region as large as NWI, it will be up to regional planners to find a balance between competing priorities and interests for the region. Before plan adoption by the Commission, the plan will be put out for a formal comment period, if required.

Techniques to invite participation

Engage NWI outlines methods to ensure regional planning is conducted with participation always at mind from the beginning of planning processes. Each planning task undertaken will identify a participation goal appropriate for that task (Page 12) and then planners will employ the methods that goal requires. It is expected that most tasks will be on the more participatory end of the spectrum.

However, no matter which type of participation goal that is required, participation will be possible in formats that are inclusive. All meeting locations will be compliant with the ADA and requests for reasonable accommodations taken upon request within 72 hours of a formal meeting to ensure participation those who may need alternate formats of materials – including language translation, foreign, American Sign Language, or braille.

Active participation methods				
Does the task require?	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
Engage NWI goal:	Provide public with objective information and assist their understanding of regional challenges, options, opportunities, or solutions.	Obtain feedback on regional planning tasks, analyses, or prior to policy making.	Work directly with public and stakeholders throughout planning process to ensure concerns and ideas are consistently understood and considered.	Partner with the public and stakeholders in every aspect of the planning process from project scoping through adoption of plans or policies.
Engage NWI promise	Keep general public and stakeholders informed.	Keep public informed, listen and acknowledge concerns and ideas, and provide public with report on how input shaped outcomes.	Work with public and stakeholders to ensure goals and ideas are directly reflected in planning work as much as possible and report on how input shaped outcomes.	Work with public and stakeholders to inform planning work from start at project scoping to understand issues, generate solutions, and incorporate feedback to shape outcomes.
Involvement methods / tools may include:	Website, social media, newsletters, multi-language publications, press releases, mailings, live streaming, white papers, or fact sheets.	Activities listed in "Inform" plus surveys, comment forms, webinars, or formal meetings	Activities listed in "Consult" plus focus groups, targeted outreach to meet people where they are such as "Out and Abouts," or "Pop-up Events"	Activities listed in "Involve" plus task forces, charrettes, keypad polling, and working groups
When goal will be selected:	The "Inform" level of participation will be used for technical documents, but the methods will be used frequently to communicate regularly with the public	The "Consult" level of participation will be used less frequently, but the methods will be used when needed	The "Involve" method will be used frequently and the methods as well	The "Collaborate" method will be used frequently with major planning processes

Examples of active engagement

Some types of active and in-person engagement will be conducted by employing the following:

- ▶ **“Out and Aabouts”** – regional planners meeting face-to-face to invite interest in planning activities, events or to solicit direct feedback
- ▶ **“Pop-up Events”** – regional planners sharing information / asking for feedback at other organization’s events
- ▶ **Formal meetings** – advertised open houses or public hearings – **timely notice per *Engage NWI* for all public meetings listed in the table to the right will be two weeks prior to the meeting.**
- ▶ **Task force / working groups** – invited and targeted participation of subject matter experts at the discretion of the NIRPC Executive Director

Effectiveness of methods and evaluation

From time to time the strategies and methods contained within *Engage NWI* will be reviewed for their effectiveness. The principal measure for effectiveness of *Engage NWI* will be:

- ▶ The frequency in which planning activities are conducted with the “Involve” or “Collaborate” goal of active participation methods described on Page 12 – should be at least 50% of activities; and
- ▶ How aggressively regional planners have made attempts to invite participation from the general public and stakeholders throughout the planning process. Opportunities include advertising, “*Out and Aabouts*,” “*Pop-Up Events*,” social media or newsletter content, etc.

A summary of public participation efforts by regional planners will be published in the “Performance Report” recommended in the *NWI 2050 Plan*.

Technical aspects of public participation:

Public comment periods and public meeting requirements Core planning documents	Minimum comment period by law	Engage NWI comment length policy	Engage NWI formal meeting policy
Long-range plan (<i>new adoption</i>)	Not specified in federal law	30 days	Required
Long-range plan <i>Policy/Project amendment</i>		21 days	Not required
Long-range plan <i>Modification / Technical amendment</i>		None	Not required
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (<i>new adoption</i>)		30 days	Required
TIP <i>amendment</i>		21 days	Not required
TIP <i>modification / technical amendment</i>		None	Not required
Air Quality Conformity		30 days	Required
Unified Planning Work Program (<i>new or amendment</i>)		None	Not required
Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan (<i>new or amendment</i>)		21 days	Not required
Public Participation Plan (<i>new or amendment</i>)	45 days	45 days	Not required
Other planning and policy documents			
Regional and sub-regional modal, corridor, development, or environment plans/policies	Not specified in federal law	21 days	Not required
Technical documents required to fulfill federal requirements		None	Not required

Amendment and modification procedures

Amendment:

- ▶ 1) any phase of any project is added or construction phase or transit project deleted;
- ▶ 2) any addition of funds over \$100,000;
- ▶ 3) change to an air quality non-exempt project;
- ▶ 4) project scope change that alters original intent of project;
- ▶ 5) change to policy or programming rules.
- ▶ Interagency Consultation Group review on *all* TIP amendments and a redetermination of fiscal constraint is required. **Twenty-one-day comment period required.**
- ▶ Must be approved by Commission or Executive Board. **Public comment opportunity is available at the meeting.**

Modification:

- ▶ 1) project moving year to year (but not out of the TIP, which is an amendment);
- ▶ 2) project fund source change;
- ▶ 3) project is split into multiple construction segments;
- ▶ 4) addition of funds under \$100,000 (TIP and UPWP); or
- ▶ 5) typographical changes.
- ▶ Modifications are made by NIRPC staff at the request of project sponsor subject to regulation and funding availability.
- ▶ A redetermination of fiscal constraint is required.

Technical Amendment:

- ▶ Changes to technical information that does impact policy or programmed projects, ie: performance targets, data updates, asset information.
- ▶ Must be approved by Commission or Executive Board. **Public comment opportunity is available at the meeting.**

Emergency Amendment:

- ▶ NIRPC Executive Director authorizes a TIP amendment without public process or Commission if:
 - ▶ 1) public well-being or safety is at risk; or
 - ▶ 2) lapse or loss of federal funds is at risk.
- ▶ A redetermination of fiscal constraint is required.

Path to address public comments

Comments received during a comment period will be reported to the Commission via a “Public Comment Report.” The Report will be made available on the NIRPC website and included with draft plans before adoption. The Report will constitute the formal response to comments and will contain the following: **1)** the original comment, as received; **2)** a recommendation by staff on how the final plan may address the substance of the comment; and **3)** a notation on whether or not the recommendation is a major or minor revision.

Any such recommendation to revise a draft plan that proposes: **1)** Policy revisions; **2)** Adds a project not previously subjected to public review; or **3)** deletes a project subjected to public review, will be considered a major revision and will trigger an additional public comment period. All other recommendations will be regarded as minor revisions representing comments that are more general. Advisory Committee(s) or the Commission will consider recommendations at their discretion.

Public Comment Period (per *Engage NWI* policy)

Recommended major revisions?

Recommended minor revisions?

The commission may accept or modify major revisions and start new full comment period

The Commission may reject major revisions and adopt the plan

The Commission may accept, reject, or modify minor revisions and adopt the plan

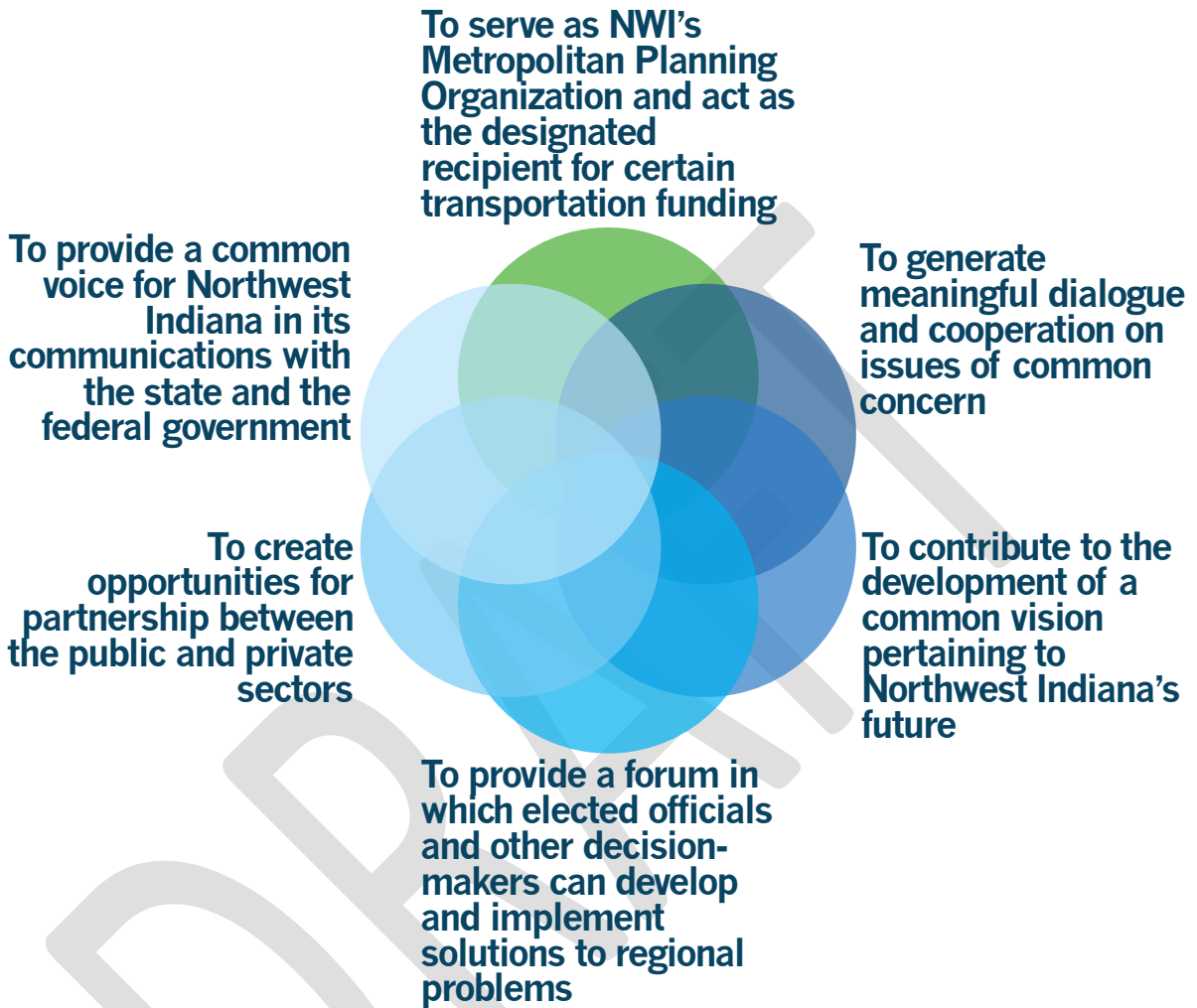
Second Public Comment Period (per *Engage NWI* policy)

The Commission may accept, reject, or modify major revisions and adopt the plan. *Public engagement ends.*

This page intentionally left blank.

DRAFT

NIRPC's Role in the Region



For more information:

Visit:

www.nirpc.org

Contact:

Public Participation Planner at comments@nirpc.org
or 219-763-6060

Request alternative formats of plans or meeting materials:

nirpc@nirpc.org or 219-763-6060



MEMORANDUM

To: Transportation Committee

From: Scott Weber, Planner - Data Analytics and Transportation Modeling

Date: August 5, 2025

Re: NWI 2050+ Financial Plan

Action Requested: Recommendation to adopt Resolution 25-16

NIRPC staff is requesting a recommendation to the NIRPC Executive Board to add a Financial Plan section to *NWI 2050+*. The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) requires that any Metropolitan Transportation Plan include a Financial Plan in 23 CFR 450.324 (f)(11). While USDOT already approved the Air Quality Conformity for *NWI 2050+* on April 17, 2024, showing how NIRPC meets the requirements of fiscal constraint and project financial details, USDOT staff has commented to NIRPC staff that it would be clearer if there was an explicit Financial Plan section in *NWI 2050+*. Therefore, NIRPC staff asks for the Transportation Committee's recommendation that the NIRPC Executive Board adopt Resolution 25-16, which adds a Financial Plan to *NWI 2050+*. The Financial Plan would be added as Technical Appendix 2 beginning on page 538 of *NWI 2050+*.

The Financial Plan lists the federal and state funding sources NIRPC has a role in administering to carry out its transportation planning and programming activities for both formula funds and discretionary grants. The Financial Plan divides the formula funding sources into highway (FHWA) and transit (FTA) sourced funds as listed below:

Formula Funds:

FHWA:

- Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ)
- Transportation Alternatives (TA)
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)
- Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT)
- Section 164 Penalty
- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) – INDOT Administered

FTA:

- 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants
- 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

- 5337 State of Good Repair Grants
- 5339 Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program

Discretionary Grants:

- Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD, formerly RAISE)
- Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program (RCE)
- National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program (MEGA)

The Financial Plan then lists the fiscal constraint tables for both FHWA and FTA funds broken down by Urbanized Area that can be found on pages 37 to 38 of [Invest NWI](#) (FY 2026-2030 TIP).

Next, the Financial Plan lists the *NWI 2050+* projects as found in Table 2.1.1 on pages 5 to 7 of the [Air Quality Conformity Determination Report](#). The Financial Plan adds more detail about the project types in response to FHWA comments but does not change any of the project scopes or costs (i.e. changes “SR 49 Consecutive Intersection Improvements” to “SR 49 Added Acceleration/Deceleration Lanes at 3 Consecutive Intersections”).

The Financial Plan demonstrates fiscal constraint for *NWI 2050+* in its entire time period from 2024 through 2050 by showing financial analysis tables of anticipated revenues and project expenses for both FHWA and FTA funds broken down by Urbanized Area. The tables separate out the short-medium term time period (2024-2033) from the long term time period (2034-2050) because USDOT regulations specify that there be more detail shown for, and more financial certainty about, the first 10 years of the plan than for the remainder of the plan. The financial analysis tables show that short-medium term local public agency highway projects and transit operator projects are at or below anticipated federal and state revenues, demonstrating fiscal constraint. The only area where there is a concern with demonstrating fiscal constraint is in the long-term time period regarding FHWA funds in the Michigan City Urbanized Area where the cost of the La Porte County North-South Connector would appear to exceed the projected formula funding revenues. However, the financial analysis shows that there are enough reserves available in the Northwest Indiana/Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA to potentially loan to the Michigan City UZA, plus that project is far enough out into the future that a commitment to aggressively pursuing discretionary grants and other funding opportunities is sufficient for NIRPC to recommend keeping it as a listed project in *NWI 2050+*.

Lastly, the Financial Plan performs a financial analysis of local project sponsors’ abilities to meet the 20 percent match requirements for highway funds. The analysis utilizes data from the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) and only factors in municipalities and counties within the 2020 Census-Adjusted Urbanized Area Boundaries since NIRPC only customarily awards Federal Aid funding to communities within the UZA. The findings of the analysis are summarized at the end of the Financial Plan and in the table below, demonstrating that the Financial Plan meets the requirements of 23 CFR 450.324 (f)(11) and leaves enough remaining transportation-related budgetary authority for local project sponsors to use on operations and maintenance of the transportation system.

Northwest Indiana/Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA	Michigan City UZA
---	-------------------

2022-2025 Average Total Budgetary Authority	\$881,189,362	\$134,406,821
2022-2025 Average Transportation Related Budgetary Authority	\$110,541,031	\$19,160,746
Transportation Related Budget Percentage of Total Budget	12.5%	14.3%
20% Local Match Required for 2022-2025 Average FHWA Appropriation	\$4,557,899	\$516,666
Amount of Transportation Budget Remaining After 20% Local Match	\$105,983,132	\$18,644,080



RESOLUTION 25-16

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ADDING A FINANCIAL PLAN TO *NWI 2050+*

August 21, 2025

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 La Porte County Metropolitan Planning 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, *NWI 2050+* is a product of a multi-modal, 3-C transportation planning process, compatible with regional goals and objectives and socio-economic and demographic factors; and

WHEREAS, *NWI 2050+* 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 U.S. Department of Transportation requires in Title 23 Part 450 Subpart C of the Code of Federal Regulations that a Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Metropolitan Transportation Plan include a Financial Plan; and

WHEREAS, the changes to *NWI 2050+* brought about by adding a Financial Plan fit the criteria of a technical amendment according to the *Engage NWI* plan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby adds a Financial Plan to *NWI 2050+* by making the following changes to *NWI 2050+* in a manner consistent with the definitions of a technical amendment as defined in *Engage NWI* and as shown on the attachment to this resolution.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this 21st day of August 2025.

Wendy Mis
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Denise Ebert
Secretary

Changes to *NWI 2050+*:

Add the following text to a new section *Technical Appendix 2: Financial Plan* beginning on page 538.

Federal regulations (23 CFR 450.324 (f)(11)) require *NWI 2050+* to include a financial plan that shows how all reasonably expected revenues will be adequate to fund programmed and expected expenditures for the full *NWI 2050+* time period, spanning from adoption in 2023 through 2050. The financial plan for the time period beyond 10 years of *NWI 2050+* adoption (2034-2050) may show less detail than for the first 10 years of adoption (2024-2033), provided it shows aggregate costs/bands of future revenue sources with a reasonable expectation of being available.

Funding Sources:

NIRPC is the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Lake, Porter, and La Porte Counties in Northwest Indiana that administers a performance-driven, outcome-based long-range transportation plan through a process that is continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive pursuant to 23 CFR 450 subpart c. In order to plan and program transportation projects, NIRPC accounts for both formula and discretionary funds. Formula funds are funds appropriated pursuant to federal or state legislation that are based at least in part on formulas that account for factors such as population, housing unit density, transportation network mileage, commute shares, transit ridership, etc. that NIRPC accesses through its agreements with INDOT. Discretionary funds are funds that are competitively awarded to NIRPC or one of its stakeholders. NIRPC also includes INDOT and air quality conformity non-exempt privately funded projects in its planning and programming processes, though NIRPC does not have a direct role in accounting for the sources of these funds.

Formula Funding Sources:

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Derived Formula Funds:

Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG):

STBG provides flexible funding for projects to preserve and improve the conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge and tunnel projects on any public road, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and transit capital projects, including intercity bus terminals. Projects awarded with STBG require a 20% match by the project sponsor for all project phases. All projects must be on the federal-aid network, except for multi-use off-road trails, but those do not allow motorized transportation. For more information on STBG funds, see <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/stbg.cfm>.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP):

HSIP provides funding to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The HSIP requires a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads that focuses on performance. Projects must also be consistent with the INDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Projects awarded with HSIP require a 10% match by the project sponsor for all project phases. Project applicants should reference high crash locations in Northwestern Indiana and also reference INDOT's SHSP at <https://www.in.gov/indot/files/shsp.pdf>. For more information, please visit Safe Streets & Roads for All: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A> and Vision Zero: <https://visionzeronetwork.org/>. There is also a set-aside from the HSIP apportionment for the Rail-Highway Crossing Program (Section 130). For more information on HSIP funds, see <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/hsip.cfm>.

Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ):

CMAQ provides a flexible funding source for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act. Funding is available to reduce congestion and improve air quality for areas that do not meet standards for ozone, carbon monoxide, or particulate matter. Projects or programs must demonstrate an air quality benefit. Projects awarded with CMAQ require a 20% match by the project sponsor for all project phases. CMAQ funds used to support transit operational costs are time limited and are meant to help start service and eventually cover costs without a CMAQ subsidy. For more information on CMAQ funds, see <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/cmaq.cfm>.

Transportation Alternatives (TA):

TA provides funding for all projects and activities that were previously eligible under TAP, encompassing a variety of smaller-scale transportation projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, safe routes to school projects, and vegetation management, and environmental mitigation related to stormwater and habitat connectivity. Projects awarded with TA require a 20% match by the project sponsor for all project phases. TA funds may be used off the federal-aid network for Safe Routes to School projects to improve connectivity to K-8 schools. For more information on TA funds, see <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/ta.cfm>.

Carbon Reduction Program (CRP):

CRP provides additional funding for projects and activities that are eligible under (FHWA) CMAQ, TA, & (FTA) 5339. Eligible carbon reduction activities include projects such as street lighting & signal modernization (to energy efficient LED), alternative fuel vehicles & infrastructure, non-motorized trail facilities, and projects to improve traffic flow, among others. For more information about CRP funds, see https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/crp_fact_sheet.cfm.

Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT):

PROTECT provides funding for all climate resilience projects that involve adapting existing transportation infrastructure or new construction to keep communities safe by bolstering infrastructure's ability to withstand extreme weather events and other physical hazards that are becoming more common and intense. Examples include green infrastructure or natural items that help buffer against weather events and improvements to infrastructure to assist under representative communities during natural disasters. For more information on PROTECT formula funds, see https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure-investment-and-jobs-act/protect_fact_sheet.cfm.

Section 164 Penalty:

Section 164 penalty funds are funds that are set aside from less restrictive funding programs (i.e., NHPP and STBG) and required to be spent on safety improvement projects that seek to reduce repeat intoxicated driver offender traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) INDOT-administered:

The NHPP is a program administered by INDOT to construct and improve roads and highways designated on the National Highway System (NHS), consisting of all Interstate Highways and other major highways that provide critical statewide connectivity. For more information on NHPP funds, see <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/specialfunding/nhpp/>.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Derived Formula Funds:

5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants:

5307 provides funding to public transit systems in Urbanized Areas (UZA) for public transportation capital, planning, job access and reverse commute projects, as well as operating expenses in certain circumstances. Projects awarded with 5307 for capital require a 20% match by the project sponsor. For operations there is a 50% match required, and operational funds are limited based on UZA population and number of vehicles operated. For vehicle-related equipment attributable to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act the match may be 10%. For more information on 5307 grants, see <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/urbanized-area-formula-grants-5307>.

5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities:

5310 provides formula funding for the purpose of assisting private nonprofit groups in meeting transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities. Use of the funds must be consistent with the Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. Projects awarded with 5310 for capital purposes require a 20% match by the project sponsor. For operations there is a 50% match required by the project sponsor. For more information on 5310 grants, see <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/enhanced-mobility-seniors-individuals-disabilities-section-5310>.

5337 State of Good Repair Grants:

5337 provides capital assistance for maintenance, replacement, and rehabilitation projects of existing high-intensity fixed guideway and motorbus systems to maintain a state of good repair. Additionally, SGR grants are eligible for developing and implementing Transit Asset Management plans. Projects awarded with 5337 require a 20% match by the project sponsor. For more information on 5337 grants, see <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/state-good-repair-grants-5337>.

5339 Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program:

5339 provides funding to states transit agencies through a statutory formula to replace, rehabilitate and purchase buses and related equipment and to construct bus-related facilities. Projects awarded with 5339 require a 20% match by the project sponsor. The Federal share may exceed 80 percent for certain projects related to the ADA, the Clean Air Act (CAA), and certain bicycle projects. For more information on 5339 grants, see <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/busprogram>.

Discretionary Grant Sources:

Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD):

BUILD discretionary grants, formerly RAISE, are grants competitively awarded for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact. The Marquette Greenway active transportation trail project received a RAISE award in FY 2022. For more information on BUILD grants, see <https://www.transportation.gov/BUILDgrants>.

Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program:

The Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program provides funding for projects that focus on improving safety and mobility of people and goods at locations where these are hampered by conflicts between highway and rail movements. The RCE Grant Program was first authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in 2021, and the Federal share may not exceed 80 percent of the total project cost. The Town of Schererville received an \$8.4 million RCE grant in FY 2022 for the Kennedy Ave phase one project that includes grade separated bridges on Kennedy Ave over the Canadian National and Norfolk Southern Railroads. The City of Hammond received two RCE grants, one in 2022 for just over \$7 million to construct the Governors Parkway Railroad Overpass Project, and one in 2023 for \$7.7 million to construct the Grand Avenue Pedestrian Bridge over the

Norfolk Southern Railroad. The City of Gary received a \$4.5 million RCE grant in FY 2022 for the Buffington Harbor Gateway Project. For more information on the RCE Grant Program, see <https://railroads.dot.gov/grants-loans/railroad-crossing-elimination-grant-program>.

National Infrastructure Project Assistance Program (MEGA):

The MEGA grant program supports large, complex projects that are difficult to fund by other means and likely to generate national or regional economic, mobility, or safety benefits. INDOT received a \$127 million MEGA grant award for the 80/94 FlexRoad project, a Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) project to add dynamic shoulder lanes, overhead lane management signs, variable speed limits, and ramp metering on I-80/94 between IL-394 and I-65.

Invest NWI (FY 2026-2030 TIP) Short Term Financial Plan:

Every two years, NIRPC adopts a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a detailed program of projects for the next five years covering all federal aid highway and transit projects, in addition to air quality conformity non-exempt regionally significant projects. NIRPC’s most recent TIP is *Invest NWI 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program*, adopted by the NIRPC Full Commission on May 15, 2025. This 2026-2030 TIP contains a detailed fiscally constrained list of projects programmed between State Fiscal Years 2026 and 2030. The fiscal constraint section of the 2026 to 2030 TIP shows detailed tables of expected revenues and expenses on these projects for FY 2026 to 2030 for both highway and transit projects. Those tables are shown below.

Table 1: Fiscal Constraint Table for FHWA Derived Funds for Northwest Indiana UZA and Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA, State FY 2026-2030

FHWA	Northwest Indiana UZA / Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA				
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030 - Illustrative
STBG Available	\$14,319,701	\$14,319,701	\$18,001,701	\$15,575,401	\$13,064,001
STBG Programmed	\$13,854,415	\$12,607,979	\$15,151,707	\$16,088,445	\$36,545,591
HSIP Available	\$2,190,886	\$2,190,886	\$2,190,886	\$2,190,886	\$2,190,886
HSIP Programmed	\$2,654,548	\$77,500	\$77,500	\$3,080,000	\$80,000
CMAQ Available	\$4,146,949	\$3,575,118	\$3,575,118	\$3,575,118	\$3,575,118
CMAQ Programmed	\$1,147,842	\$4,219,496	\$9,027,695	\$4,167,586	\$7,726,217
TA Available	\$2,053,116	\$2,053,116	\$2,053,116	\$2,053,116	\$2,053,116
TA Programmed	\$5,602,116	\$6,655,878	\$4,005,891	\$ -	\$ -
CRP Available	\$1,791,385	\$1,791,385	\$1,791,385	\$1,791,385	\$1,791,385
CRP Programmed	\$1,333,760	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
PROTECT Available	\$662,404	\$662,404	\$662,404	\$662,404	\$662,404
PROTECT Programmed	\$ -	\$634,480	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Available	\$25,164,441	\$24,592,610	\$28,274,610	\$25,848,310	\$23,336,910
Total Programmed	\$24,592,681	\$24,195,333	\$28,262,793	\$23,336,031	\$44,351,808
(+/-)	\$571,760	\$397,277	\$11,817	\$2,512,279	\$(21,014,898)

Table 2: Fiscal Constraint Table for FHWA Derived Funds for Michigan City UZA, State FY 2026-2030

FHWA	Michigan City UZA				
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030 - Illustrative
STBG					
Available	\$1,202,482	\$1,202,482	\$4,246,182	\$1,202,482	\$1,202,482
STBG					
Programmed	\$ -	\$2,426,977	\$3,576,735	\$2,832,368	\$3,673,636
HSIP					
Available	\$422,487	\$422,487	\$422,487	\$422,487	\$422,487
HSIP					
Programmed	\$330,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
CMAQ					
Available	\$689,302	\$689,302	\$689,302	\$689,302	\$689,302
CMAQ					
Programmed	\$2,476,301	\$ -	\$807,000	\$ -	\$ -
TA					
Available	\$237,740	\$237,740	\$237,740	\$237,740	\$237,740
TA					
Programmed	\$ -	\$400,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
CRP					
Available	\$207,433	\$207,433	\$207,433	\$207,433	\$207,433
CRP					
Programmed	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
PROTECT					
Available	\$76,833	\$76,833	\$76,833	\$76,833	\$76,833
PROTECT					
Programmed	\$ -	\$ -	\$240,000	\$ -	\$ -
Total					
Available	\$2,835,827	\$2,835,827	\$5,879,527	\$2,835,827	\$2,835,827
Total					
Programmed	\$2,806,301	\$2,826,977	\$4,623,735	\$2,832,368	\$3,673,636
(+/-)	\$29,526	\$8,850	\$1,255,792	\$3,459	\$(837,809)

Table 3: Fiscal Constraint Table for FTA Derived Funds for Northwest Indiana UZA, State FY 2026-2030

FTA	Northwest Indiana UZA				
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030 - Illustrative
5307					
Available	\$11,968,835	\$11,968,835	\$11,968,835	\$12,854,139	\$12,854,139
5307					
Programmed	\$5,699,024	\$11,910,175	\$11,895,630	\$9,701,495	\$9,983,881
5310					
Available	\$652,765	\$652,765	\$652,765	\$668,653	\$701,049
5310					
Programmed	\$485,395	\$647,193	\$647,193	\$666,329	\$471,130
5337					
Available	\$21,201,765	\$21,201,765	\$21,201,765	\$22,367,393	\$22,770,006
5337					
Programmed	\$21,012,542	\$19,380,545	\$20,420,959	\$22,367,393	\$20,620,387
5339					
Available	\$439,711	\$439,711	\$439,711	\$463,885	\$472,235
5339					
Programmed	\$210,380	\$330,000	\$240,000	\$44,800	\$ -
Total					
Available	\$34,263,076	\$34,263,076	\$34,263,076	\$36,354,070	\$36,797,429
(+/-)	\$6,855,735	\$1,995,163	\$1,059,294	\$3,574,053	\$5,722,031

Table 4: Fiscal Constraint Table for FTA Derived Funds for Michigan City UZA, State FY 2026-2030

FTA	Michigan City UZA				
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030 - Illustrative
5307 Available	\$2,681,653	\$2,729,923	\$2,779,061	\$2,829,084	\$2,880,008
5307 Programmed	\$2,392,120	\$2,536,871	\$2,631,763	\$2,760,949	\$2,843,552
(+/-)	\$289,533	\$193,052	\$147,298	\$68,135	\$36,456

Table 5: Fiscal Constraint Table for FTA Derived Funds for Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA, State FY 2026-2030

FTA	Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA				
	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030 - Illustrative
5307 Available	\$985,880	\$1,003,626	\$1,021,691	\$1,040,081	\$1,058,803
5307 Programmed	\$985,550	\$993,152	\$1,015,844	\$741,291	\$656,488
(+/-)	\$330	\$10,474	\$5,847	\$298,790	\$402,315

Cost Estimation Methodology for NWI 2050+ Project List:

Project costs for projects included in the *NWI 2050+* Project list were estimated using INDOT’s cost estimating procedure, which uses a Construction Estimating Software (CES) to estimate costs based on various project types. NIRPC uses INDOT’s Scheduling Project Management Software (SPMS) to apply the project type appropriate inflation factors in order to convert the project cost to Year-of-Expenditure (YOE). The project costs that appear in the *NWI 2050+* Project List section below reflect these inflation-converted YOE costs with the YOE identified.

NWI 2050+ Project List:

Invest NWI (the FY 2026-2030 TIP) contains a detailed project list for State Fiscal Years 2026 through 2030. The *Invest NWI* list includes all projects receiving federal funding (including INDOT-sponsored projects with funding sources not otherwise described above) as well as air quality conformity non-exempt projects receiving non-federal funding. *NWI 2050+* includes a project list for 2024-2050 for regionally significant and air quality conformity non-exempt projects. The original *NWI 2050+* project list can be found in the *Air Quality Conformity Determination Report Between NWI 2050+, the 2024 to 2028 Transportation Improvement Program, and the Indiana State Implementation Plan*, linked at <https://www.in.gov/nirpc/files/Resolution-24-02-Air-Quality-Conformity-Determination.pdf>. More details about the *NWI 2050+* project list are found in the tables below.

Table 6: *NWI 2050+* Project List for Projects Open-to-Traffic by Calendar Year 2025 (Already completed as of *NWI 2050+* Technical Amendment No. 3 Adoption August 20, 2025, and included only for Air Quality Conformity analysis)

Projects Complete by 2025	Beginning Point	End Point	Length (mi)	Sponsor	Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)	Non-Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)
US 41 Added Center Turn Lane	Standard Dr	US 231	1.57	INDOT	2019: \$3,991,200	2019: \$997,800

SR 49 Added Acceleration/Deceleration Lanes at 3 Consecutive Intersections	Porter Ave	Gateway Blvd	2.13	INDOT	2023: \$10,856,317	2023: \$2,714,079
US 20 Added Center Turn Lane	SR 39	Fail Rd	2.97	INDOT	2023: \$14,460,108	2023: \$3,615,027
109th Ave 2 Consecutive Dogbone Roundabouts and 1 Full Roundabout	SR 53	Iowa St	1.48	Crown Point/INDOT	2021: \$2,643,125	2021: \$7,576,875
Gostlin St/Sheffield Ave/Chicago St Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	Illinois State Line	US 41	1.08	Hammond	2020: \$9,400,000	2020: \$2,350,000
45th St Added Center Turn Lane	Colfax St	Chase St	1.96	Lake County	2020: \$9,928,142	2020: \$2,482,036
Mississippi St Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	93rd Ave	101st Ave	1.00	Merrillville	2020: \$3,612,000	2020: \$903,250
45th St Grade Separation and Realignment	0.3 miles West of Calumet Ave	Southwood Dr	0.81	Munster	2019: \$16,800,000	2019: \$4,843,293
93rd Ave Added Center Turn Lane	White Oak Ave	US 41	1.00	St. John	\$0	2024: \$3,487,347
109th Ave Added Center Turn Lane	Calumet Ave	US 41	2.00	St. John	\$0	2024: \$3,812,928
Calumet Ave Added Center Turn Lane	101st Ave	109th Ave	1.00	St. John	\$0	2024: \$3,398,710
Vale Park Rd Extension	Winter Park Dr	Windsor Tr	0.75	Valparaiso	\$0	2020: \$4,480,000
South Shore Line Double Track New Construction	Tennessee St	Michigan Blvd	24.75	NICTD	\$0	2022: \$388,603,154

Table 7: NWI 2050+ Project List for Projects Open-to-Traffic by Calendar Year 2030

Projects Complete by 2030	Beginning Point	End Point	Length (mi)	Sponsor	Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)	Non-Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)
US 41 Added Center Turn Lane	US 231	135th Pl	3.33	INDOT	2028: \$36,877,815	2028: \$9,219,454
US 20 Added Center Turn Lane	Fail Rd	300 E	2.07	INDOT	2026: \$8,788,489	2026: \$2,197,122
Willowcreek Rd Extension New Roadway	700 N	SR 130	1.57	Porter County	2025: \$4,617,000	2025: \$1,188,000
85th Ave Added Center Turn Lane	US 41	Parrish Ave	1.04	St. John	\$0	2028: \$5,828,139
93rd Ave Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	Calumet Ave	Cline Ave	4.08	St. John	\$0	2028: \$36,217,098
109th Ave Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	Calumet Ave	US 41	2.00	St. John	\$0	2028: \$10,220,018
Calumet Ave Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	101st Ave	109th Ave	1.00	St. John	\$0	2028: \$9,906,218
Cline Ave Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	101st Ave	109th Ave	1.00	St. John	\$0	2028: \$4,513,833
White Oak Ave Added Center Turn Lane	93rd Ave	101st Ave	1.00	St. John	\$0	2028: \$7,051,199
Kennedy Ave Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4, and New Bridge and Roadway S of Junction Ave	Main St	US 30	2.46	Schererville	2030: \$24,000,000	2030: \$22,000,000
Vale Park Rd Added Center Turn Lane	Calumet Ave	Silhavy Rd	1.00	Valparaiso	2027: \$3,423,275	2027: \$855,819
Monon Corridor (formerly West Lake Corridor) commuter rail service New Construction	Hammond Gateway Station	Main St - Munster/Dyer	7.82	NICTD	\$0	2022: \$768,335,733

I-80/I94 Transportation Systems Management and Operations project Dynamic Shoulder Lane	IN-IL State Line	I-65	14.07	INDOT	2026: \$214,068,849	2026: \$24,362,331
--	---------------------	------	-------	-------	------------------------	-----------------------

Table 8: NWI 2050+ Project List for Projects Open-to-Traffic by Calendar Year 2035

Projects Complete by 2035	Beginning Point	End Point	Length (mi)	Sponsor	Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)	Non-Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)
Cline Ave New Roadway	93rd Ave	101st Ave	1.00	St. John	2031: \$8,100,000	2031: \$2,025,000
SR 53 Added Travel Lanes, 2 to 4	93rd Ave	US 231	3.35	INDOT	2031: \$4,637,600	2031: \$1,159,400

Table 9: NWI 2050+ Project List for Projects Open-to-Traffic by Calendar Year 2040

Projects Complete by 2040	Beginning Point	End Point	Length (mi)	Sponsor	Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)	Non-Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)
Main St New Roadway	Burnham Ave (Illinois)	Columbia Ave/Sheffield Ave	1.09	Munster	2040: \$2,848,472	2040: \$712,118
Willowcreek Rd New Roadway	SR 130	US 30	2.21	Porter County	2040: \$31,920,000	2040: \$7,980,000
Division Rd Added Center Turn Lane	Sturdy Rd	375 E	2.40	Valparaiso	2038: \$2,868,640	2040: \$717,160
LaPorte County North-South Connector	SR 39	US 35	6.95	LaPorte County	2035: \$104,000,000	2035: \$26,000,000

Table 10: NWI 2050+ Project List for Projects Open-to-Traffic by Calendar Year 2050

Projects Complete by 2050	Beginning Point	End Point	Length (mi)	Sponsor	Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)	Non-Federal Estimated Cost (YOE)
Division Rd Added Center Turn Lane	SR 2	Sturdy Rd	3.81	Valparaiso / Porter County	2048: \$6,151,100	2048: \$1,537,775

NWI 2050+ Anticipated Revenues and Project Expenses for Included Projects:

The NWI 2050+ Financial Plan includes estimates of anticipated revenues and project expenses for both short-medium term (2024-2033) and long-term (2034-2050) time periods. NWI 2050+ only includes regionally significant projects that can be represented in NIRPC's travel demand model as is

consistent with 23 CFR 450.324. INDOT is not required to develop a project-based long-range plan, so the only project INDOT has submitted to NIRPC in the long-term time period is the SR 53 added travel lanes project between 93rd Ave and US 231. The following tables show the anticipated revenues and project expenses for the funding sources and projects described above broken down by highway (FHWA) and transit (FTA) funding sources and Urbanized Area (UZA) for the short-term and long-term time periods. The anticipated revenues apply a conservative 2.0 percent rate of inflation for years beyond the latest publicized appropriation amounts, consistent with the FY 2026-2030 TIP. The costs are summaries of the projects in *Invest NWI* plus the projects in Tables 6 through 10 above.

Table 11: Financial Analysis of FHWA Funds for the Combined Northwest Indiana UZA and Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA

Federal/State Revenues	2024-2033 Total	2034-2050 Total
STBG	\$146,743,308	\$282,988,591
HSIP	\$24,145,022	\$47,458,335
CMAQ	\$35,056,112	\$77,443,166
TA	\$20,946,664	\$44,474,002
CRP	\$18,276,384	\$38,804,461
PROTECT	\$6,757,256	\$14,348,803
Total Revenues	\$251,924,746	\$505,517,358
Federal/State Expenses		
Local Project Cost	\$200,384,851	\$43,788,212
INDOT Project Cost	\$218,706,449	-
Total Project Cost	\$419,091,300	\$43,788,212

Table 12: Financial Analysis of FHWA Funds for the Michigan City UZA

Federal/State Revenues	2024-2033 Total	2034-2050 Total
STBG	\$15,310,603	\$26,047,815
HSIP	\$4,280,749	\$9,151,791
CMAQ	\$6,926,022	\$14,931,459
TA	\$2,408,563	\$5,149,855
CRP	\$2,101,521	\$4,493,353
PROTECT	\$707,416	\$1,664,334
Total Revenues	\$31,734,873	\$61,438,608
Federal/State Expenses		
Local Project Cost	\$22,426,803	\$104,000,000
INDOT Project Cost	\$45,666,304	-
Total Project Cost	\$68,093,107	\$104,000,000

Table 13: Financial Analysis of FTA Funds for the Northwest Indiana UZA

Federal/State Revenues	2024-2033 Total	2034-2050 Total
5307	\$134,983,011	\$278,442,621
5310	\$6,934,284	\$15,185,920
5337	\$230,454,675	\$493,237,248
5339	\$4,794,746	\$10,229,417
Total Revenues	\$377,166,716	\$797,095,206
Federal/State Expenses		
Total Project Cost	\$243,093,291	-

Table 14: Financial Analysis of FTA Funds for the Michigan City UZA

Federal/State Revenues	2024-2033 Total	2034-2050 Total
5307	\$25,570,537	\$62,385,896
Total Revenues	\$25,570,537	\$62,385,896
Federal/State Expenses		
Total Project Cost	\$15,845,807	-

Table 15: Financial Analysis of FTA Funds for the Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA

Federal/State Revenues	2024-2033 Total	2034-2050 Total
5307	\$10,845,502	\$22,935,483
Total Revenues	\$10,845,502	\$22,935,483
Federal/State Expenses		
Total Project Cost	\$6,822,578	-

Tables 11 through 15 above demonstrate Fiscal Constraint requirements for *NWI 2050+* by showing that the local project costs are at or below the anticipated future revenues for the short-medium term projects in all cases. INDOT projects do not have to meet Fiscal Constraint requirements in the context of *NWI 2050+* since NIRPC does not account for all anticipated INDOT revenues, and INDOT must demonstrate Fiscal Constraint for its entire Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) in a separate process. There are no long-term transit projects included in *NWI 2050+* as shown in Tables 13 through 15, so Fiscal Constraint is demonstrated for FTA funds. Table 12 shows that Fiscal Constraint may be in danger of not being met for FHWA funds in the Michigan City UZA in the long-term. However, this is due to one project, the \$104 million La Porte County North-South Connector, that is seeking discretionary and other state funding sources with enough time to identify whether the project will successfully secure the needed funding. Additionally, the combined Chicago and Valparaiso-Shorewood urban area shows a surplus of approximately \$461 million during the 2034-2050 period, so the overall MPA program is fiscally constrained.

Local Funding Sources and Ability to Match Federal Funds and Operate and Maintain Federal Aid System:

Local project sponsors have a variety of revenue sources to provide local match for projects in *NWI 2050+* and to operate and maintain the existing transportation system. These include:

Motor Vehicle Highway (MVH)

This accounts for the construction and maintenance of streets, alleys and the operations of street maintenance activities of the public works department. Resources are derived from state motor vehicle (gasoline tax) distributions. It also includes the purchase of materials, labor and/or equipment required in the maintenance and construction of roads and bridges.

Local Road and Street (LRS)

This accounts for the operation and maintenance of the local and county road and street systems. Resources are derived from state gasoline tax distributions. These funds are used for engineering, construction or reconstruction of roads, streets, or bridges.

Cumulative Capital Improvement Funds (CCI)

The money from this fund may be used for road construction or improvement, acquisition of land or right-of-way for streets, roads, alleys, sidewalks, thoroughfares, and maintenance. CCI is collected from the state cigarette tax.

Cumulative Capital Development Funds (CCD)

This fund provides money for any purpose for which property taxes may be imposed.

Cumulative Bridge Fund

This source of revenue provides funds for the cost of construction, maintenance, and repair of county highway bridges, approaches, and grade separations. County Commissioners may levy a tax in compliance with IC 6-1.1- 41 in assessed valuation of all taxable personal and real property within the county.

Major Bridge Fund

This fund provides funding for the construction of major bridges or county that is a member of a commuter transportation district established under IC 8-5-15:

- (A) making grants to a commuter transportation system (as defined in IC 8-5-15-1) only for the benefit of the commuter transportation system (as defined in IC 8-5-15-1);
- (B) making debt service payments for revenue bonds issued under IC 8-5-15-5.4 for a railroad project of a commuter transportation system (as defined in IC 8-5-15-1); and
- (C) making grants to the northwest Indiana regional development authority established by IC 36-7.5-2-1 for the benefit of a commuter transportation system (as defined in IC 8-5-15-1), if the northwest Indiana regional development authority has issued bonds for a railroad project of a commuter transportation system (as defined in IC 8-5-15-1).

Community Crossings Matching Grants (CCMG)

This state program provides funding to Local Public Agencies for various road maintenance and preservation activities. Chapter 9 of NWI 2050+ provides additional details about CCMG.

These long-standing funds have been used by local project sponsors to address the local match requirements and operations and maintenance needs of the existing transportation system. While minor adjustments to these programs are possible, it is reasonable to expect that they will continue to be available through the plan horizon year of 2050.

Table 16: Financial Analysis of Local Project Sponsors' Ability to Match FHWA Funds by Urbanized Area

	Northwest Indiana/Valparaiso & Shorewood Forest UZA	Michigan City UZA
2022-2025 Average Total Budgetary Authority	\$881,189,362	\$134,406,821
2022-2025 Average Transportation Related Budgetary Authority	\$110,541,031	\$19,160,746
Transportation Related Budget Percentage of Total Budget	12.5%	14.3%
20% Local Match Required for 2022-2025 Average FHWA Appropriation	\$4,557,899	\$516,666
Amount of Transportation Budget Remaining After 20% Local Match	\$105,983,132	\$18,644,080

Sources: Indiana Department of Local Government Finance (DLGF) 2022-2025 County Budget Orders, NIRPC 2022-2025 Fiscal Constraint Tables. Note, only municipalities within the 2020 Census-Adjusted Urbanized Area Boundaries are included in the analysis since NIRPC only customarily programs Federal Aid funds to communities within the UZA boundaries.

As is shown in the financial analysis in Table 16 above, local project sponsors have sufficient budgetary resources to match the Federal Aid funding requirements for FHWA sourced funds and have a significant amount of remaining transportation-eligible funding for operations and maintenance needs. It is therefore fiscally reasonable to conclude that NWI 2050+ satisfies the financial reasonableness requirements in 23 CFR 450.324 (f)(11).



Public Comment Report

Amendments #26-02.1 and 26-02.2; and 26-02.5 to the FY 2026 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

Transportation Committee

August 5, 2025

Amendments #26-02.1, 26-02.2, and 26-02.5 of the FY 2026 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program was released for a 21-day public comment period which began on July 1, 2025, and ended on July 22, 2025.

- 26-02.1 contains highway projects using FHWA (highway) funds and that are exempt from the Air Quality Conformity process (101 projects).
- 26-02.2 contains highway projects using FHWA (highway) funds and that are not exempt from the Air Quality Conformity process (5 projects).
- 26-02.5 contains transit projects using only FTA (transit) funds and that are exempt from the Air Quality Conformity process (114 projects).

The amendments were made available for viewing at www.nirpc.org and press releases with links were posted on several social media sites.

No comments have been received.

NIRPC staff also sent the amendments to the Interagency Consultation Group (ICG) on June 24, 2025. There were no questions or comments concerning the list of projects on any of the amendments.

Concurrence was given for these projects on this amendment by members of the ICG on July 1, 2025.



MEMORANDUM

To: Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

From: Charles Bradsky, Transportation Projects Manager

Date: August 14, 2025

Re: TIP Amendments #26-02.1; 26-02.2; 26-02.5

Action Requested: Adoption of Resolution 25-14 approving Amendments #26-02.1; 26-02.2; 26-02.5 to the FY 2026 - FY 2030 Transportation Improvement Program

The NIRPC Executive Board adopted *NWI 2050+ Plan* and the Fiscal Years 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on May 15, 2025. INDOT and USDOT are expecting to approve both the MTP and the TIP by August 21, 2025.

Since the adoption of the FY 2026-2030 TIP, project sponsors have proposed new projects and changes to existing projects, which must be reflected in NIRPC's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Changes in the TIP are the first step in this process. This resolution contains three TIP amendments addressing three types of projects: Air Quality Exempt, Air Quality Non-Exempt, and Transit. Each of these project types is reviewed differently by INDOT, FHWA, and FTA so dividing them into separate amendments will allow each to be approved in the quickest, most efficient manner. The three amendments are:

- 26-02.1 is for highway projects using FHWA (highway) funds that are exempt from the Air Quality Conformity process (101 projects).
- 26-02.2 is for highway projects using FHWA (highway) funds that are not exempt from the Air Quality Conformity process (5 projects).
- 26-02.5 is for transit projects only using FTA (transit) funds and that are exempt from the Air Quality Conformity process (114 projects).

Amendments #26.02.1 and 26-02.2 contain:

For INDOT – 68 Projects:

- 2 Right of Way Acquisition Projects (new projects)
- 19 Bridge Projects,
 - 13 Bridge Deck Overlays
 - 4 New Projects
 - 9 Projects adding a significant amount of funds or added phase
 - 1 Superstructure Rehabilitations (adding a significant amount of funds)
 - 5 Bridge Maintenance Projects (painting or other minor maintenance)
 - 4 New Projects

- 1 Project adding a phase
- 2 ADA sidewalk construction
 - 1 Project adding a phase
 - 1 project adding a significant amount of funds
- 13 Pavement/Roadway Rehabilitation Projects
 - 6 New Projects
 - 4 Projects adding a significant amount of funds
 - 3 Projects adding a phase
- 2 Added Turn Lane Project (added adding funds or changing fiscal years)
- 3 Corridor Improvement Projects (new projects)
- 4 Safety Projects
 - 3 Traffic Signal Modernization (new projects)
 - 1 Sign Replacement/Repair (new project)
- 14 Intersection Modifications with no or limited amount of added turn lanes
 - 8 New Projects
 - 2 Projects adding a significant amount of funds
 - 4 Projects adding a phase
- 7 Small Structure Repair/Lining/Replacements (new projects)
- 2 Other Type Projects
 - 1 Study Project (increasing funding)
 - 1 Non-Roadway Project - MSC wall repair (new project)

For locally sponsored projects – 38 Projects for the municipalities of Cedar Lake (5), Dyer (1), East Chicago (3), Gary (1), Griffith (1), Hammond (4), Hobart (1), La Porte (4), Lake County (4), Lake Station (1), Merrillville (3), Michigan City (1), Munster (1), Portage (1), Porter County (1), St. John (1), Schererville (1), Valparaiso (4):

- 3 Complete Streets Projects (new projects)
- 4 Trail Projects (carrying over from previous TIP)
- 1 Trail Bridge Project (carrying over from previous TIP)
- 3 Bridge Replacements Projects (new projects)
- 1 Small Structure Replacement (carry over from previous TIP)
- 10 Safety Projects
 - 5 Sign Replacement Projects (new projects)
 - 1 Emergency Vehicle Preemption (carry over project)
 - 2 Pavement Markings (new projects)
 - 2 New Signal (new project)
- 3 Intersection Modification (Roundabout) Projects (carry over from previous TIP)
- 5 Pavement Rehabilitation/Reconstruction Projects
 - 4 New or carry-over project
 - 1 Project revising scope
- 2 New Road Project (new projects)
- 1 Roadway Expansion Project (increasing funds)
- 5 Other type projects (new projects)
 - 2 Study Projects
 - 2 Zero/Low Emission Vehicle Purchase
 - 1 Non-Roadway (Landscaping) Project

Amendment 26-02.5 contains 114 projects for transit operators in NWI:

- 6 Projects for Operating Assistance/Complementary Paratransit (corrected funding amounts)
- 44 Projects for Operating Assistance

- 2 New projects
- 28 projects Correcting Funding Amounts
- 14 Projects with Technical Corrections
- 7 Planning/Oversight Projects
 - 2 Projects Increasing Funding
 - 5 Projects with Technical Corrections
- 25 Preventative Maintenance Projects
 - 9 Projects increasing Funding
 - 2 New projects
 - 14 Projects with Technical Corrections
- 32 Capital Projects
 - 18 Vehicle Replacements
 - 2 New Projects
 - 10 Projects revising Funding Amounts
 - 6 Projects with Technical Corrections
 - 1 Rail Car Rebuilds (Technical Correction)
 - 13 Other Capital Projects
 - 11 Projects with Technical Corrections
 - 2 Projects with increased funding



RESOLUTION 25-14

**A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
AMENDING THE FY 2026 – 2030 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FOR LAKE, PORTER, AND LA PORTE COUNTIES, INDIANA
AMENDMENTS NO. 26-02.1, 26-02.2, and 26-02.5**

August 21, 2025

WHEREAS, Northwest Indiana’s citizens require a safe, efficient, and 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 La Porte County Metropolitan Planning 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 2026 – 2030 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 develop *NWI 2050+*; and

WHEREAS, the FY 2026 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program implements *NWI 2050+*, is fiscally constrained, and is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality; and

WHEREAS, the FY 2026 – 2030 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 2026 – 2030 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 2026 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program brought about by this amendment were made available for public comment in the manner prescribed by the 2019 Public Participation Plan, *ENGAGE NWI*; with no comments received; and

WHEREAS, on August 5, 2025, the Transportation Committee recommended that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission make these changes to the FY 2026 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby amends the FY 2026 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program by adding new projects and making other changes as shown on the attachment to this resolution.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this twenty first day of August, 2025.

Wendy Mis
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Denise Ebert
Secretary

Economy & Place Committee

NIRPC Lake Michigan Room

YouTube Recording:

<https://youtube.com/live/BtzJ61M8Ing?feature=share>

April 4, 2025

Minutes

Committee members present: George Topoll (Union Township), Lois Whittaker (BCCNWI), Gary Johnson (Society of Innovators), Jen Trowbridge (CoAction), Joe Wszolek (NIRA), and John Matwyszyn (La Porte County Surveyor).

Staff and others present: Annie Cruz-Porter and Hyewon Shin (PCRD consultants), Dean Button, Don Babcock, A. J. Bytner, Kelly Anthony, Doug Ross, Eman Ibrahim, Denarie Kane, Candice Eklund, and Meredith Stilwell.

Chairman George Topoll called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions.

The January 29, 2025, minutes were approved on motion by Joe Wszolek and seconded by Lois Whitaker.

It was noted that there were no public comments.

Annie Cruz-Porter presented and led the discussion on the draft Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document. The document's sections include *About the Region*, *The Economic Framework in the United States*, *Planning Context and CEDS Structure*, *Economic Performance Indicators*, *Qualitative Input and Engagement*, *Goals*, and *Evaluation Framework*.

The CEDS is designed to guide economic development efforts across the NIRPC region over the next five years. This CEDS has three goals: Economic Diversification and Innovation, Workforce Resilience, and Quality of Place. Annie illustrated each goal and its objectives.

Discussions were held with suggestions for possible changes to the draft CEDS. Topics included information regarding the threat to the steel industry, semi-conductors, the pushback in some communities regarding certain industries (data centers), setting the stage for what is happening elsewhere in Indiana, and in the larger Chicagoland area, with new or expanded industry sector initiatives, and tying in northwest Indiana's desire to be a part of these in-state or larger regional initiatives, if feasible. It was noted that the CEDS is not intended to address issues associated with specific sites for certain types of development that may face potential opposition when a project is seeking approval to become a reality. However, it can include points about the fact that northwest Indiana is on the cusp of change and provide information to help people understand the change. Other topics of discussion included the addition of the Society of Innovators in building key support systems necessary for talented and ambitious entrepreneurs, the utilization of the Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) tool related to workforce development efforts, replacing the term affordable for a certain type of housing with a different term, and the lack of coordination for transit services. Denarie clarified to the group that the CEDS is focused more on the broader economic development objectives, and the drill-down on certain topics such as transportation or transit is in the *NWI 2050+*.

Annie then introduced the evaluation framework and noted that it is different from how things have been evaluated in the past. The proposed evaluation is predicated on having cross-sector partnerships and a stakeholder engagement focus to achieve the goals. Regional development and engagement, workforce development, and governance and management measurable metrics were

presented. Denarie stated this is a much different CEDS approach than was taken when the current CEDS was developed. A key challenge will be identifying all of the industries in the ecosystems to be developed and finding the appropriate company contact. Furthermore, there must be a strong effort made to convince these companies of the value in participating in building their industry specific ecosystem. The attempt is to build on what NIRPC can capture and what outputs NIRPC sees from the activities. Historically, since NIRPC has become an Economic Development District (EDD), one of the primary tasks has been building awareness of available grant opportunities, especially those from EDA. To date, the grant applicants have prepared their own applications, but NIRPC has helped to explain the eligibility requirements needed to compete for EDA funding and also the various grant programs. NIRPC has assisted in communication with the EDA's economic development representative so he or she can help applicants develop a competitive application. This type of service from the EDD will continue.

The draft CEDS will be posted online, and a link will be provided for comments. The final CEDS will be ready by the NIRPC Full Commission meeting on May 15. Denarie and Annie will have weekly calls to evaluate the comments and discuss any minor adjustments to be made to the document during the 30-day comment period. A resolution for a favorable recommendation of the CEDS document to the NIRPC board was presented for approval. Jen Trowbridge motioned, and Lois Whitaker seconded, to approve the resolution to recommend the CEDS document to the NIRPC Board for approval. After discussing the inability to know what comments might be received and what changes would then need to be made to the document, the motion was amended to include the comments from today's meeting and the 30-day comment period. Jen Trowbridge amended her motion to approve the draft CEDS with today's meeting comments incorporated, and then, after the public comment period is over, if there is anything significant or if there are significant changes that must be made, the Economy & Place Committee will reconvene for a final vote. With second by Joe Wszolek, and no opposition, the motion passed.

A motion was requested for approval to post the CEDS for public comment. On motion by Joe Wszolek, seconded by Lois Whitaker, and with no opposition, the motion passed.

The next Economy & Place Committee meeting is slated for Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:42 p.m.

Environment Committee
Lake Michigan Room
May 1, 2025
Minutes

Bill Emerson called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bill Emerson, Mallorie Medellin (IDEM), Joe Exl (LMCP), Katherine Balkema (LMCP), Thomas Black (Highland), Kathy Sipple (Earth Charter), Ryan Lisek (DCI), Lori Hunt (Westville), Reggie Korthals (MS4), George Topoll (Union Township), Katie Hobgood, Linda Pompeii (Potawattomie Park), Jenna Ambriosa (DCI), Connie Wachala (HNS), Jenny Dimitroff (TPSC), Victoria Wittig (NWI UWFP), Rahim Evans (IDEM), Michele Munday Pariso (IDEM), and Beth Shrader were in attendance.

NIRPC staff present were Kathy Luther, Jen Birchfield, Tom Vander Woude, Meredith Stilwell, and Flor Baum.

The February 27, 2025 meeting minutes were approved on motion by Reggie Korthals and seconded by Tim Kingsland.

Environmental Project Updates

This spring, NIRPC successfully distributed 289 trees through its Community Tree Program and initiated an invasive tree replacement effort, with plans for another tree distribution in the fall. Additionally, two workshops were conducted focusing on planning tools and green infrastructure. These sessions aim to build capacity and understanding, particularly among nonprofessional members of community boards, with more workshops planned for future scheduling near. The committee discussed the need for an additional event designed for municipal sustainability, to help clarify their roles and promote collaboration. It was suggested that the event be held in the evening to accommodate the schedules of volunteer members. Furthermore, the committee explored the idea of developing a "road show" to present sustainability topics to various community groups, allowing the content to be customized based on each group's specific interests and needs.

Partners for Clean Air Update

Mallorie Medellin (IDEM) gave an informational presentation on "What is PCA and why everybody should be a Partner." Mallorie is a senior manager at IDEM's Northwest regional office, overseeing the compliance and technical assistance program, which provides free environmental compliance counseling. PCA, established in the mid-90s as a voluntary partnership under the Clean Air Act, aims to educate businesses, government entities, and communities about environmental actions they can take to improve air quality. It currently operates across various regions. Efforts to improve air quality in Northwest Indiana focus on engaging diverse stakeholders in concrete actions like energy conservation, emissions reduction, and organizational policies. Energy conservation and emissions reduction can be achieved through simple actions like switching to LED lights and implementing organizational policies such as remote work and carpooling, alongside larger initiatives like sustainability plans and carbon neutrality pledges. The organization offers scholarships for high school seniors pursuing education in clean air and public health, focusing on expanding support for trade school students, and has awarded over \$32,500 to date. There is a focus on promoting air quality improvement actions, educating members on opportunities to reduce emissions, and disseminating ozone action day alerts to encourage behaviors that mitigate ozone levels. Efforts are underway to promote energy conservation, air quality education, and community

engagement through various outreach events and partnerships, particularly focusing on middle school science projects and local initiatives. A grant program is being developed to support teachers and community groups in environmental initiatives, alongside efforts to engage schools through citizen science and an anti-idling campaign, while fostering partnerships and educational opportunities within the community.

Mallorie emphasized the importance of community engagement and education in environmental initiatives, particularly regarding air quality and ozone action days, while expressing a desire to revitalize membership and outreach efforts. Efforts are underway to improve air and water sustainability through industry collaboration, focusing on reducing emissions and promoting environmentally friendly practices. Mallorie spoke on the importance of cooperation between environmental organizations, community groups, and researchers to address sustainability challenges, highlighting legal limitations on remote meeting participation. Challenges in managing environmental impacts from contractors and vehicle emissions testing, particularly affecting low-income individuals, were discussed, highlighting the need for better communication and support. The discussion highlighted the need for financial support for low-income individuals facing environmental challenges and emphasized the importance of collective action alongside industry particularly in addressing air quality issues. Community members can engage in advocacy regarding consent decrees and industry impacts by monitoring case dockets and participating in public comment opportunities when available. You can sign up for updates on environmental issues, receiving numerous daily notifications about changes and opportunities for public comment.

New Business

Bill Emerson spoke on Resolution 25-12: A Resolution supporting NWI Environmental Initiatives. The committee discussed funding challenges due to recent EPA grant cancellations, which may impact their environmental initiatives and ongoing projects. The committee aims to reaffirm its commitment to enhancing environmental quality in Indiana through various initiatives, including air quality improvement and environmental justice, and plans to present this resolution for endorsement at the next commission meeting on May 15th. Upcoming brownfield grants will be announced soon, while existing funding sources for climate planning and environmental justice initiatives remain stable. The discussion emphasizes the importance of addressing air quality and greenhouse gas reduction commitments without specifically mentioning electric vehicles, while also noting changes in project language and community benefits due to political shifts. On motion by Reggie Korthals, seconded by George Topoll, the Environment Committee approved recommending Res 25-12 to the Commission, clarifying their status as subgrantees of EPA grants.

Reports from Planning Partners

Ryan Lisek (DCI) reported on Green Fleets. New funding for electric vehicle charging stations and ongoing projects to reduce emissions were discussed, alongside upcoming events and initiatives promoting clean energy in Northwest Indiana.

Katherine Balkema reported on the Lake Michigan Coastal Program. The 2026 budget will mirror 2025, but specific details and federal grant information remain uncertain, with an application deadline in early October. The Great Lakes coastal resiliency study is progressing, and stakeholder input will be crucial. Meanwhile, the draft 309 document for coastal program enhancement, focusing on coastal hazards, has been submitted for review.

Announcement

Announcements were made.

Adjournment

The Next Environment Committee meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. in the NIRPC building. Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

References

1. EC Meeting Agenda



2. YouTube Meeting Recording



3. Partners for Clean Air





Indiana Office of Technology
Powering a State that Works

REGIONAL CYBERCONNECT

NIRPC



WHO ARE WE?

The Indiana Office of Technology was created in 2005 as part of an effort to consolidate IT organizations across Indiana state government. Our mission is to provide cost-effective, secure, consistent, reliable enterprise-technology services and products to our partner agencies so they can better serve Hoosier taxpayers.

WHAT IS A CYBERCONNECT?

Cyberconnects are our medium for meeting and working with Indiana’s local governments. They are your opportunity to have your voice heard and to hear about technology solutions provided or negotiated for local governments by the state.

WHEN AND WHERE?

August 21, 2025 - 9:30 a.m. (following the Commission meeting)

Northwestern Indiana Planning Commission

6100 Southport Rd., Portage, IN 46368



Receive vital updates on state services and legislation effecting local governments.



Meet your advocate for state technology resources.



Ask questions and participate in a dialogue between IOT and local representatives to let us know what is important to you.



Assist us in targeting region-specific issues and providing assistance and resources that you need.



EMAIL
IOTLOCALGOVERNMENTPROGRAM@IOT.IN.GOV