



## RESOLUTION 21-08

### A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION DETERMINING ADHERENCE OF *NWI 2050* AMENDMENT #2 AND 2022-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM TO *MOVE NWI* CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS

April 15, 2021

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

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

**WHEREAS**, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as "the Commission," is designated as a Transportation Management Area (TMA) according to the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) by being a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) with a Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) of over 200,000 population in Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission performs the above activities to satisfy requirements of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 (PL 114-94), 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 *NWI 2050* Plan and 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program are products of a multi-modal, 3-C transportation planning process, compatible with regional goals and objectives and socio-economic and demographic factors; and

**WHEREAS**, *MOVE NWI* is a product of a multi-modal, 3-C transportation planning process, compatible with regional goals and objectives and socioeconomic and demographic factors used to inform *NWI 2050*, as amended, and the 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program; and

**WHEREAS**, *MOVE NWI* is an implementation of the *NWI 2050* Plan, as amended, and satisfies Title 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 450.322 requiring a TMA to apply a Congestion Management Process for any project(s) adding capacity to the transportation network; and

**WHEREAS**, the determination of adherence of the *NWI 2050 Plan*, as amended, and 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program to *MOVE NWI* fit the criteria of a technical document required to fulfill federal requirements according to the *Engage NWI* plan; and

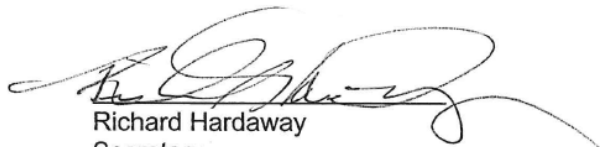
**WHEREAS**, the Technical Policy Committee (TPC) has recommended that the *NWI 2050 Plan*, as amended, and 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program be determined to adhere to the *MOVE NWI* Congestion Management Process.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby determines that the *NWI 2050 Plan Amendment #2* and 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program adhere to the *MOVE NWI* Congestion Management Process and as shown on the attachment to this resolution.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this fifteenth day of April, 2021.

  
George H. Topoll  
Chairperson

ATTEST:

  
Richard Hardaway  
Secretary

## **MOVE NWI (Congestion Management Process) Adherence for NWI 2050 Amendment #2 and FY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program**

### **Background:**

In accordance with *MOVE NWI*, the federally required Congestion Management Process for the Northwestern Indiana Transportation Management Area (TMA), NIRPC is required to demonstrate that projects included in *NWI 2050 Amendment #2* and the *FY 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)* subject to *MOVE NWI* adherence as defined in the Evaluating Projects section of *MOVE NWI* adhere to *MOVE NWI*. NIRPC staff determined that there are only two projects in *NWI 2050 Amendment #2* and the *FY 2022-2026 TIP* that meet the criteria and need to demonstrate *MOVE NWI* adherence: the Town of St. John's Cline Ave gap project and Porter County's Willowcreek Rd extension project Phases 3 and 4. This analysis documents *MOVE NWI* adherence for these two projects.

### **Project Evaluation:**

#### **Town of St. John Cline Ave Gap Project:**

The Town of St. John's Cline Ave gap project is a project that would construct a new road segment between 93rd Ave and 101st Ave in the Town of St. John near its boundaries with unincorporated Lake County and the Town of Schererville. The project was identified in the *Northwest Indiana Regional Corridors Study* published by NIRPC in 2016 as a corridor of regional significance. Figure 1 below shows a map of the project.

**Figure 1: Town of St. John's Cline Ave Gap Project Map**



This project has not yet been included in the fiscally constrained *NWI 2050* plan nor in any Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Therefore, before including the project in any Metropolitan Transportation Plan or TIP, as a new roadway it is required to demonstrate adherence to *MOVE NWI* according to the Evaluating Projects section under the New Roadways Program. Table 19 in *MOVE NWI* lists the 15-step process for determining *MOVE NWI* adherence for the New Roadways Program. Step 11 states that if NIRPC runs the Travel Demand Model and determines that vehicle hours traveled (VHT) are projected to be reduced by 5% or more on road segments within 2 miles of the project area, then the project is found to adhere to *MOVE NWI*

regardless of the outcome of the other steps. NIRPC staff ran the Travel Demand Model, looking closely at the results of the prevailing traffic pattern of using 93rd Ave and 101st Ave in order to access Blaine St being allowed to stay on Cline Ave instead as a result of this project. Blaine St is clearly within 2 miles of the project area, so a Travel Demand Model analysis of its traffic patterns as well as the improvements on 93rd Ave and 101st Ave to access Blaine St is clearly within the scope of *MOVE NWI*. Table 1 below summarizes the results of this analysis.

**Table 1: Travel Demand Model Analysis of Town of St. John Cline Ave Gap Project Area**

Scenario	No-Build Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) on Blaine St and 93rd/101st Ave between Cline Ave and Blaine St	No-Build Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) on Blaine St and 93rd/101st Ave between Cline Ave and Blaine St	Percent Reduction in Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) Resulting from Project
2030 Cline Ave Gap Project (93rd Ave to 101st Ave)	296.95	278.10	6.3%

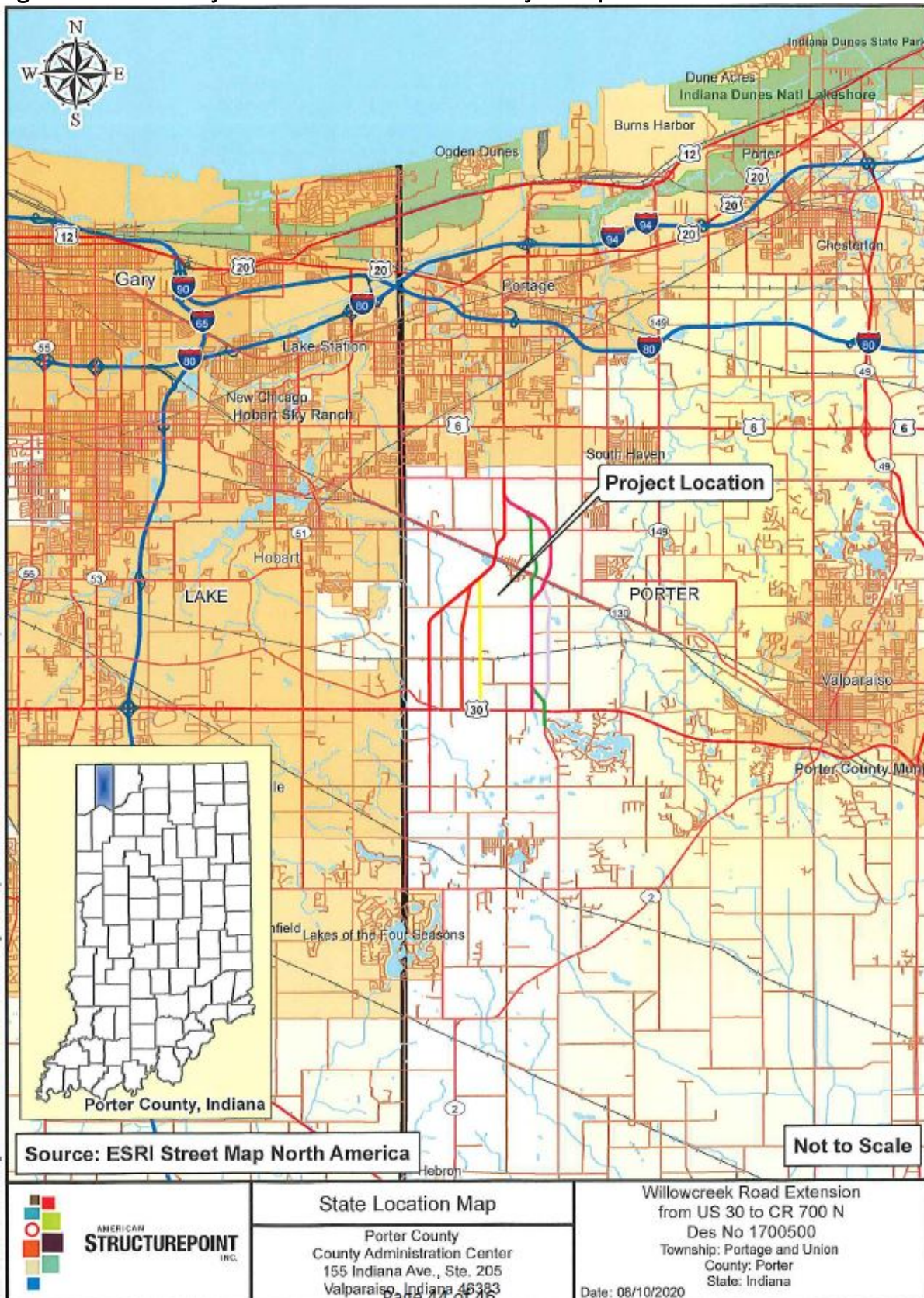
Since the Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) reduction according to Table 1 above is greater than 5%, the Town of St. John’s Cline Ave Gap project is found to adhere to *MOVE NWI*.

*Porter County Willowcreek Rd Extension Project:*

The Porter County Willowcreek Rd extension project is a project that consists of 4 phases. Phases 1 and 2 involve the portion from 700 N (northern terminus) to SR 130 (southern terminus). These 2 phases are already included in the fiscally constrained *NWI 2050* plan, and funding for them has been partially included in the Fiscal Year 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program. Phases 3 and 4 involve the bridge over the Norfolk Southern Railroad Right-of-Way and the segment from SR 130 (northern terminus) to US 30 (southern terminus). See Figure 2 below for a map of the project area.



Figure 2: Porter County's Willowcreek Rd Extension Project Map



These phases have heretofore not been included in the fiscally constrained NWI 2050 plan, nor has funding for them been included in any TIP. As such, MOVE NWI adherence is required per the Evaluating Projects section under the New Roadways Program. Table 19 in MOVE NWI lists the 15-step process for determining

MOVE NWI adherence for the New Roadways Program. Step 11 states that if NIRPC runs the Travel Demand Model and determines that vehicle hours traveled (VHT) are projected to be reduced by 5% or more on road segments within 2 miles of the project area, then the project is found to adhere to MOVE NWI regardless of the outcome of the other steps. The *Northwest Indiana Regional Corridors Study* published by NIRPC in 2016 clearly shows in Appendix B on page 56 shows that VHT are projected to be reduced by 219.78% on corridors within 5 miles of the alignment and 79.74% on 475 W (between SR 130 and US 30) alone, a corridor clearly within 2 miles of the Willowcreek Rd Phase 4 alignment, regardless of which alternative is chosen. Table 2 below shows the Travel Demand Model analysis for the Willowcreek Rd corridor during the Regional Corridors Study analysis when NIRPC staff looked at corridors within 2 miles of the alignment as now prescribed in MOVE NWI.

**Table 2: Travel Demand Model Analysis for Willowcreek Rd Extension Project from *Northwest Regional Corridors Study***

Willowcreek Rd (700 N to US 30)						
Congested Corridor	Beginning Point	End Point	LOS	Before VHT	After VHT	Pct. Change VHT
475 W	SR-130	US-30	F	1383.6	280.3	-79.74%
450 W	600 N	SR-130	E	711.8	184	-74.15%
SR-130	County Line Rd	250 W	E	3010.4	2355.7	-21.75%
SR-49	I-94	US-30	D	7981.4	6791	-14.91%
I-65	I-80/94	US-30	C	15107.7	13679.3	-9.45%
I-94	Toll Rd	US-20	F	13751.4	13457.1	-2.14%
						<b>-202.51%</b>

It is clear from Table 2 above that the Vehicles Hours Traveled (VHT) reductions as a result of the Porter County Willowcreek Rd Extension project well exceed 5%. Thus, Porter County’s Willowcreek Rd extension project is demonstrated to adhere to MOVE NWI.

**Conclusion:**

The Project Evaluation section above demonstrates that both the Town of St. John’s Cline Ave gap project and Porter County’s Willowcreek Rd extension project phases 3&4 adhere to MOVE NWI according to a travel demand model analysis. Thus, NIRPC staff recommends a finding of adherence to MOVE NWI to be determined by the NIRPC Executive Board/Full Commission after recommendations by the Surface Transportation Committee and Technical Planning Committees.