



NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Together We Make The Difference

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RESOLUTION 12-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION SUPPORTING THE CURRENT POPULATION THRESHOLD FOR FEDERAL DESIGNATION OF METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS

WHEREAS, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as "the Commission", being designated since November, 1975 as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Northwest Indiana, has established a regional, comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation planning process fostering communication among local elected officials, transportation advocates, citizens, business, and others within our region to facilitate federal funding for communities, counties, and transit operators, and to provide technical assistance and expertise to regional transportation interests; and

WHEREAS, regional planning at every level, large and small, urban and rural, is an important part of creating accountable and transparent transportation investments and is a goal that the Commission strongly supports; and

WHEREAS, one of the most important policy decisions in the next federal surface transportation authorization is the explicit inclusion of local elected officials, as the closest unit of government to the people, to represent their communities in transportation planning and investment decisions; and

WHEREAS, continuing regional partnerships is critical to ensuring local implementation of federal transportation vision and priorities and furthering the local-state-federal partnership, and regional planning, both urban and rural, must remain a core component of national, state and local transportation policy and programs; and

WHEREAS, transportation infrastructure needs extend beyond jurisdictional boundaries and population levels where aging and deteriorating bridges, highways, railroads, ports, and public transit are in dire need of maintenance and improvement across urban, suburban, and rural America; and

WHEREAS, for nearly 50 years MPOs have directed federal infrastructure investments in metropolitan areas with 50,000 or greater population because MPOs, Councils of Governments (COGs) and Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) perform comprehensive planning with

substantial public input that maintains a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system to support national, regional and local economies; and

WHEREAS, increasing the MPO threshold from 50,000 to 200,000 eliminates the inclusion of countless local elected officials and other stakeholders across the country in the regional planning process and reduces the ability of communities to be involved to identify, plan and make improvements through sound transportation investments; and

WHEREAS, the current designation of MPOs at 50,000 population or greater allows continuation of the progress realized since the inception of MPOs to address issues of job access, congestion, safety, air quality, modal connections and livability through a transparent process with local elected officials as a cornerstone, tying investments to community and citizen needs; and

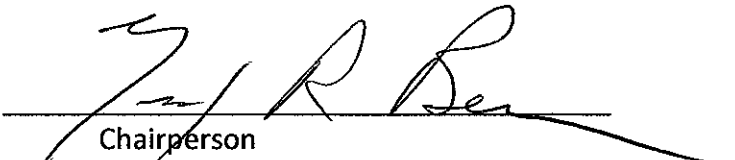
WHEREAS, our nation is best served when the needs and considerations of local communities are maximized across all governments, large and small, urban and rural, because the absolute inclusion and leadership of local elected officials, building on their understanding of local needs, opportunities, and obligations, as well as their "on-the-ground" perspective, should be the forefront of transportation decisions.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission reaffirms the role of the local elected officials, the closest unit of government to the people, as an integral regional partner in maintaining and improving the national surface transportation network; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission wishes to maintain the three-county nature of regional transportation planning in Northwest Indiana, and on behalf of numerous smaller MPOs, COGs and RPOs, expresses its support for maintaining the current population threshold for existing federally required metropolitan area transportation planning in any new legislation for Federal surface transportation authorization; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission is authorized to transmit copies of this resolution to Indiana's U.S. Congressional delegation, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and the National Association of Regional Councils.

Duly adopted by the Commission on January 19, 2012.


Chairperson

ATTEST:


Secretary