NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
FULL COMMISSION/EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
Thursday, March 17, 2016, 9:00 A.M.
Construction Advancement Foundation Training Center
6050 Southport Road, Portage, Indiana

AGENDA

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance – Jim Ton, Chair

II. Approval of Minutes of February 18, 2016 Full Commission Meeting Pages 1-5

III. Presentation: Bikes on Trains – Mike Noland and John Parsons, Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

IV. Report of the Chair – Jim Ton
   • NIRPC Committees

V. Report of the Executive Director – Ty Warner

VI. Finance & Personnel Committee – Diane Noll Pages 6-12
   • Kankakee River Basin Commission Contract Pages 10-12

VII. Environmental Management Policy Committee – Geof Benson Pages 13-17
   • Deep River Watershed Plan Report

VIII. Transportation Policy Committee – Dave Decker Pages 18-21
   • Action on Amendment #16 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program
   • Public Comment Period Announcement Page 22

IX. INDOT, Rick Powers, La Porte District Director

X. Other Business

XI. Public Comment

XII. Announcements

XIII. Adjournment

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program.
Chairperson Blair Milo called the meeting of the Full Commission to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Executive Board members present included Anthony Copeland, Dave Decker, Michael Griffin, Blair Milo, Greg Stinson and Jim Ton.


Guests present included Susan Orona, Justin Mount, Deb Backhus, Kevin Kirkham, Matt Deitchley, Lyndsay Quist, Val Gomez, Jeff Huet, Dean Button, Michael Kuss, Colin Highlands, Rick Powers, Julia Surber, Carl Lisek, Rebecca “Sis” Williams, Jill Murr, Christin Lazarus, Mark Bouman, David Wright, Jim Nowacki, Ebony Tillman, Dorreen Carey and Andrew Steele.

Staff present included Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Kathy Luther, Angie Hayes, Eman Ibrahim, Gary Evers, Mitch Barloga, Belinda Petroskey, Kelly Wenger, James Winters, Sarah Geinosky, Scott Weber, Stephen Sostaric and Mary Thorne.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the December 17, 2015 meeting of the Executive Board were approved by a vote, after a motion by Michael Griffin and a second by Kyle W. Allen, Sr.

Report of the Chair – Blair Milo:
- **Norman E. Tufford Award**: Ty Warner presented the Norman E. Tufford Award posthumously to former NIRPC Board member and 2015 Treasurer, Roosevelt Allen, Jr. Accepting the award were Cousin Kyle W. Allen, Jr., Sister Valerie Broadnax and Aunt Mary Ann Guyton. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Mr. Allen. A copy of an entry into the Congressional Record was provided wherein Rep. Pete Visclosky paid tribute to Mr. Allen for his lifetime of service to Northwest Indiana.
- Brian Snedecor announced that the Nominating Committee based their recommendations on attendance, sub-committee involvement, leadership, interest in service and engagement in NIRPC. The Committee’s recommendations for the slate of Officers and Executive Board members for 2016 are:
Chairman                Jim Ton  
Vice-Chair              Michael Griffin  
Treasurer               Diane Noll  
Secretary               Geof Benson  

Executive Board Members are:
Lake County             Anthony Copeland  
Lake County             Tom McDermott  
La Porte County          Blair Milo, Immediate Past Chair  
La Porte County          Dave Decker  
Porter County            Kevin Breitzke  
Porter County            Greg Stinson  
Governor’s Appointee     Ed Soliday  

On a motion by Brian Snedecor and a second by Jon Costas, the Full Commission voted to approve the slate of officers and Executive Board as recommended by the Nominating Committee.

- **Exchange of Gavel:** Ty Warner thanked Blair Milo for her service to the Commission and accomplishing her goal of recreating the new committee structure and said he looked forward to her continued involvement. Blair Milo turned the gavel over to the new Chair, Jim Ton, who said he appreciated the opportunity to be involved in NIRPC.

- **Schedule of NIRPC Meetings:** Jim Ton referred to the schedule of meetings for 2016 shown in the packet, explaining that there are 53 Commissioners and, as required by NIRPC’s enabling legislation, four meetings of the Full Commission are required to conduct certain business such as election of officers, budget approval and the adoption and amendment of bylaws, rules, and procedures for the operation of the Commission. Commissioners are expected to attend these four meetings. Also, while not required, all Commissioners are free to attend any of the Executive Board meetings.

- **Committee Assignments:** Jim Ton explained the assignments of participation in the committees. The new committee structure was shown in the materials. Commissioners will receive an electronic transmission asking to respond to the assignments they would like to have. At least two committee selections are required. Commissioners will be asked to provide their preferences, as first choices may not be able to be accommodated.

**Presentation:** Mark Bouman, Chicago region program director for The Field Museum, presented an update on the feasibility study for a National Heritage Area. The Calumet Heritage Partnership is continuing work on a feasibility study. The heritage area must be designated by the U.S. Congress. The area would be anchored by the Pullman National Monument on the west and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore on the east. This is a big year as the National Park Service is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year; the National Lakeshore is celebrating its 50th; the state of Indiana is celebrating its bicentennial and NIRPC is celebrating its 50th. Friday, the Pullman National Monument is celebrating its first anniversary of when President Barack Obama signed the declaration creating the monument. There are 49 National Heritage Areas nation-wide. The Calumet Heritage Partnership will solicit public comment on the heritage area project in May. Ty Warner said The Field Museum is a great partner for Northwest Indiana.
Report of the Executive Director:
- Ty Warner reported that NIRPC has begun its “soft launch” of its 50th Anniversary. A 50th Anniversary logo is on nameplates, stationery, etc. and the packet cover shows the NIRPC office locations since 1966. Steve Strains is assembling a history of the agency.
- Ty Warner welcomed the new Commissioners and provided them with a welcome packet. Staff is available to answer any questions any Commissioner may have.
- Ty Warner, Blair Milo, Geof Benson and Dave Shafer attended the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) Conference in Washington D.C. The main platform was on transportation funding. Three of four of NIRPC’s transportation positions were addressed in the FAST Act (Fixing America’s Surface Transportation). The FAST Act creates a sustainable financing source for the next five years but funding sources after the five-year period need to be identified.
- Ty Warner welcomed Susan Orona, the new representative from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region 5 office in Chicago.
- Kathy Luther received an award from South Shore Clean Cities (SSCC) for Empowering Women Woman of the Year for 2015 at the SSCC annual meeting on Tuesday, February 16.
- The NIRPC 2015 Year in Review was provided, reflecting the accomplishments of the agency over the past year.

Finance & Personnel Committee:
- Diane Noll, Treasurer, reported that the committee met this morning. Items were reviewed and approved. A budget amendment adds new revenue, which is a reimbursement from the old postage meter in the amount of $1,490 as recommended by the Finance & Personnel Committee. Geof Benson made a motion seconded by Michael Griffin. Greg Stinson said the amendment needs to be amended with the new revenue number. Geof Benson amended his motion and Michael Griffin amended his second. The Commission voted to approve the budget amendment pending the amended revenue number.
- Diane Noll described the budget amendment which transfers funds in the amount of $2,730 from Capital Outlays to Contractual to cover a program change for the Surface Transportation Program (STP) funded Trail Projects as recommended by the Finance & Personnel Committee. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Richard Hardaway, the Commission voted to approve the budget amendment as presented.
- Diane Noll described the contract between NIRPC and South Shore Clean Cities for the provision of professional education and training services as recommended by the Finance & Personnel Committee. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Richard Hardaway, the Commission voted to approve the contract between NIRPC and South Shore Clean Cities.

Environmental Management Policy Committee:
Geof Benson reported that the minutes of the January 7 meeting were in the packet. The committee heard a presentation on NIPSCO Pipeline upgrade projects in Northwest Indiana and a presentation on Urban Waters Five Star Program Grants.

Presentation: Kevin Kirkham and Deb Backhus presented on the NIPSCO Public Electric Vehicle Charging Station Program incentives made available for a limited time. He explained the charging stations, cost credits and other parts of the program, as well as the eligibility and requirements.
Transportation Policy Committee:

- Dave Decker reported that the committee met on February 9 and heard a presentation from Craig Phillips on Michigan City’s US Hwy 421/S Franklin Street “South Gateway” Corridor Plan. The plan was produced to enhance development opportunities near the I-94 interchange.

- Eman Ibraheem presented Resolution 16-01, Amendment #5 to the FY 2016 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which is a safety planning study for the area surrounding I-65 and US 30 in Hobart and Merrillville. The project funding of $300,000 is 100% federally funded through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a second by Brian Snedecor, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-01, FY 2016 UPWP Amendment #5. Brian Snedecor thanked NIRPC for this insight and vision to undertake this study.

- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-02, Amendment #10 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program adding 9 new INDOT projects and project phases for surface reinforcement treatments in Hebron, Crown Point and Merrillville, installation of pavement markings and signs throughout the LaPorte District and repair of damaged overhead sign structures on the Borman near Munster. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Michael Griffin, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-02, Amendment #10 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-03, Amendment #11 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for two sign replacement projects in Griffith, one sign replacement project in Merrillville, two sidewalk projects in Cedar Lake and a reconstruction phase on SR 152 in East Chicago using relinquishment funds from Dickey Road. On a motion and a second by Karen Freeman-Wilson, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-03, Amendment #11 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Belinda Petroskey presented Resolution 16-04, Amendment #12 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for transit, adding a vehicle replacement project for Michigan City and modifying existing transit projects for NIRPC, Opportunity Enterprises, Porter County Aging & Community Services, South Lake County Community Services and East Chicago Transit. Total new funds are $234,980 at an 80/20 federal/local match. On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Sylvia Graham, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-04, Amendment #12 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-05, Amendment #13 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for 18 Local Public Agency (LPA) projects in Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Geof Benson, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-05, Amendment #13 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-06 Amendment #14 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for 16 INDOT projects in Lake and Porter Counties. On a motion by Kevin Breitzke and a seconded by Tom McDermott, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-06, Amendment #14 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-07, Amendment #15 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for 13 INDOT project phases in Lake County relating to the I-65 added travel lanes from US 30 to SR 2. On a motion by Dave Shafer and a second by Michael Griffin, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-07, Amendment #15 to the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program.
• Gary Evers presented Resolution 16-08, the selection of new federal aid projects for FY 2016-2021, which are at high crash locations in Lake County, Crown Point, Porter County and Valparaiso. On a motion by Greg Stinson and a second by Kevin Breitkke, the Commission voted to adopt Resolution 16-08, the selection of new federal aid projects for FY 2016-2021.
• Dave Decker said the Transportation Policy Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 8 at 9 a.m. at the Construction Advancement Foundation Training Center location.

Indiana Department of Transportation: Rick Powers said he was pleased about the widening of I-65. With the good weather, the district has done great work for preservation of infrastructure. INDOT is in good shape this year and is hiring CDL-licensed drivers. Tom McDermott thanked INDOT for their work with the cable strip barriers along I-65, noting to the new Commission members that this is an example of the cooperation between NIRPC and INDOT, and that Commission members can help make a difference. Jim Ton added that INDOT has been very responsive in addressing issues in the Chesterton area.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:
Jim Nowacki, Gary resident, thanked Commissioners for their service to the region. He commented on some engineering issues with the road and sidewalk work that was previously done on the US 12/20 corridor.

Announcements:
• Tom McDermott extended an invitation to attend 219 Day at the Hammond Civic Center on 2/19/2016.
• Dennis Rittenmeyer shared a flyer on the Shared Ethics Advisory Commission’s annual summit which will take place at Avalon Manor on March 3 from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Jim Ton thanked the Commissioners for attending this important meeting. Hearing no other business, on a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Kyle Allen, Jr., Jim Ton adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Mary Thorne at the phone or email below should you wish to receive a copy of it. DVD recordings will be available once they are received by NIRPC from the videographer.

For requests for alternate formats, please contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 131 or at mthorne@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

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FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Meeting Agenda
Thursday
March 17, 2016
8:00 a.m.
Construction Advancement Foundation
Portage, Indiana

1. Call to Order
2. Meeting Minutes of February 18, 2016
3. Review of Financial Status
4. Approval of Claims Register
5. Kankakee River Basin Commission Contract
6. Accounting Software Update
7. Building Status Update
8. Other Business
9. Adjournment

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Requests for alternate formats please contact Angie Hayes at (219) 763-6060 extension 104 or ahayes@nirpc.org. Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.
NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

FINANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

February 18, 2016
NIRPC Offices
Portage, Indiana

Members Present
Geof Benson
Dave Decker
Richard Hardaway
Diane Noll
Greg Stinson
Jim Ton

Staff and Others Present
Ty Warner
Angie Hayes
Kelly Wenger
David Hollenbeck
Will Farrellbegg

Members Absent
Roosevelt Allen, Jr.
John Bayler
Jeff Dekker
David Uran

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Jim Ton who then handed the meeting over to Diane Noll.

Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Dave Decker, seconded by Richard Hardaway, the Committee approved the minutes of the December 10, 2015 meeting.

Review of Financial Status

Angie Hayes presented the financial report. At this time there are no cash issues to report. NIRPC is taking the rent and utilities abatement from the City of Portage as previously guided by the Committee. The Budget to Actual with Cash Variance and the Budget to Actual Expenditure reports were presented to the Committee. The total expenditures of the period ending December 31, 2015 are at 76.43%.

Approval of Claims Register

Kelly Wenger presented the claims register to the Committee for approval. Upon a motion by Geof Benson, seconded by Greg Stinson, the Committee approved the claims register.
Employee Handbook

Ty Warner presented the updated employee handbook to the Committee for approval. NIRPC hired an employment attorney in 2015 to review the employee handbook and provide updates in the first draft. The employee handbook was then reviewed by the NIRPC human resource consultant who reviewed the employee handbook and added additional policies. The employee handbook was reviewed by the Committee and upon a motion by Jim Ton, seconded by Greg Stinson, the Committee approved the updated employee handbook effective immediately.

2015 Equipment Disposal

Angie Hayes presented the 2015 Equipment Disposal to the Committee. In 2012 NIRPC transferred four bus shelters previously used by the Regional Bus Authority over to the City of Michigan City. As these shelters have met useful life, staff would like to remove the bus shelters from the Capital Asset and Inventory lists effective December 31, 2015. Upon a motion by Geof Benson, seconded by Jim Ton, the Committee approved the disposal of the bus shelters effective December 31, 2015.

2016 Budget Amendments

Angie Hayes presented two budget amendments to the Committee. The first budget amendment added new revenue of $1,490.00 from the postage machine refund into the communication budget for allocated functions. Upon a motion by Geof Benson, seconded by Richard Hardaway, the Committee recommended the budget amendment for approval by the Full Commission. The second budget amendment transferred $2,730.00 from capital outlays into contractual to cover a program change for the STP funded trail projects. Upon a motion by Geof Benson, seconded by Dave Decker, the Committee recommended the budget amendment for approval by the Full Commission.

South Shore Clean Cities Contract

Angie Hayes presented the 2016 South Shore Clean Cities Contract to the Committee. The South Shore Clean Cities Contract provides air quality outreach and education in 2016. Upon a motion by Geof Benson, seconded by Greg Stinson, the Committee recommended the contract for approval by the Full Commission.

Accounting Software Update

Angie Hayes updated the Committee on the status of the Accufund Accounting Software. The accounts payable and accounts receivable modules are now available for staff use. The payroll module will be utilized starting in April. Angie Hayes requested the Committee approve staff to fully utilize the accounts payable module which would include electronic signatures printing directly on checks. The security and controls over this module have been thoroughly tested and staff are confident the proper controls are in place to make this a secure option. Upon a motion by Geof Benson, seconded by Richard Hardaway, the Committee approved NIRPC to fully utilize the Accufund accounts payable module to print signatures directly on checks.
Other Business

Angie Hayes informed the Committee that the State of Indiana changed the mileage reimbursement rate effective February 22nd to $0.36 per mile.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:38 a.m.
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION FOR THE PROVISIONS OF GENERAL SERVICES

BY AGREEMENT MADE AND ENTERED INTO, on the date hereinafter written, by and between the NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION, hereinafter referred to as "NIRPC" and the KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION, hereinafter referred to as "KRBC" under the terms and conditions hereinafter set forth, the following is hereby agreed:

A. NIRPC shall provide the KRBC services and assistance as is required by the KRBC to carry out its purposes under its enabling statute. NIRPC shall assign Jody Melton to service in the capacity as Director of the Kankakee River Basin Commission. NIRPC shall be compensated seven thousand seven hundred thirty-six dollars ($7,736) per month for services provided by this staff member. This amount is intended to cover salary and fringe benefit costs. Should the need arise to replace this staff member during the course of this Agreement; it will be done with the mutual consent of both parties to this Agreement. Should the Director of the KRBC receive a salary increase during the course of the Agreement, the amount charged will be increased on a basis equivalent to such an increase.

B. In conjunction with the above designated staff, NIRPC shall provide adequate office space and furnishings for their use and make available use of all common facilities within the overall NIRPC offices such as conference and meeting rooms, hallways, restrooms, etc.; the provision of basic utilities such as gas, electric and water; and the provision of reception services including the answering of telephones and greeting of visitors. For these services the KRBC shall pay NIRPC four hundred twenty dollars ($420) per month.

C. NIRPC shall provide the following financial management assistance to the KRBC and shall be compensated for such service by the KRBC at the rate of seven hundred twenty-five dollars ($725) per month:

1. Aid the KRBC in preparation of its budget, and provide accounting services for the receipt, investment and disbursement of its funds, all in accordance with applicable State Board of Accounts guidelines, statute, and guidelines set out by the Commission herein or otherwise.

2. Deposit KRBC funds in the name of the KRBC and in depositories designated by the KRBC.
3. Disburse KRBC funds only upon authorization to do so by the KRBC and presentation of a State Board of Accounts standard claim form signed by at least two (2) Commission members and approved by the KRBC. Checks shall be drawn from an account in the KRBC’s name and shall be signed by two authorized officials.

D. NIRPC shall provide for telephone service and equipment to the KRBC at an amount not to exceed $50 per month.

E. NIRPC shall make available to the KRBC the use of its postage machine. Actual postage cost shall be billed to the KRBC.

F. NIRPC shall make available the use of its copy machines. Use of this equipment will be billed at the rate of $5.00 per month plus $.06 per black & white copies and $.20 per copy for color copies.

G. KRBC agrees not to install within the NIRPC offices telephone, copier or facsimile equipment. Any furniture or other equipment installed shall be located within the spaces designated for the exclusive use of the KRBC.

H. NIRPC shall make available the use of its graphics and printing equipment and personnel. Graphics and printing time charges will be billed at an actual cost basis. No charge will be made for bond paper or miscellaneous printing supplies. However, special order items will be billed as material costs. Such items include, but are not limited to, metal plates, envelopes, binders, labels and other specialty items for printing and graphic work.

I. NIRPC may make available additional space or other services to the KRBC on a direct charge basis. NIRPC shall bill the KRBC for such services on a basis that is mutually agreed to by the parties. NIRPC has provided in its 2016 calendar year budget $20,000.00 to be used as local share usage for the purposes of the Kankakee River Basin Commission.

J. NIRPC shall provide itemized monthly billings for services performed. Payment shall be due within thirty (30) days after billing.

K. This agreement may be amended by mutual agreement of the parties. Amendments shall be in writing.

L. This agreement shall be effective January 1, 2016 and terminate December 31, 2016. However, either party may terminate the agreement at an earlier date by providing a written notice of intent at least sixty (60) days prior to an effective termination date, which shall coincide with the last day of a calendar month.
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POLICY COMMITTEE
Construction Advancement Foundation
February 4, 2016

Members/Guests: Geof Benson, Lara Gonzalez, Susan Mihalo, Jennifer Gadzala, Sarah Weaver, Carl Lisek, Vince Epps, Brenda Scott Henry, Daniel Goldfarb, Kevin Breitzke, Dan Plath, Kay Nelson, Deb Backhus, Laurie Keagle

NIRPC Staff: Kathy Luther, Meredith Stilwell

Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance
Chairman Benson called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.

Approval of January 7, 2016 EMPC Minutes
On motion by Deb Backhus and second by Brenda Scott Henry, the January 7, 2016 EMPC meeting minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Presentations:

a. G & B 2020 Survey Data Analysis & Goal Review From Existing Plans – Kathy Luther

The Ped and Pedal and the Greenways and Blueways Plans are in the process of being updated and combined into one plan known as the Greenways + Blueways 2020 Plan. Results from public surveys completed in regard to the update reflected the primary motivation for visiting natural areas or parks is to enjoy nature and outdoors, with exercise and fitness ranking second. When asked for the top three natural areas or parks and the length of time it took to get there, most respondents indicated it took 0-15 minutes and when rating what is most important when thinking about the activities and places enjoyed, the quality of the scenery; water and natural areas all ranked high. The main take away from the survey was ease of access and distance and quality were most important to those responding about the region’s natural areas and parks.

The Ped, Pedal and Paddle Committee conducted a workshop to assess and update goals and objectives for the bicycle and pedestrian access sections at their January meeting. Establishing why the plans are together is important, including reasons such as when trails are installed, natural areas should be paid attention to for a more pleasant experience and establishing blueway access points when natural areas are being planted so they do not have to be destroyed at a later date. Kathy questioned the Committee regarding their thoughts on if the Greenways + Blueways 2020 Plan needed its own goals and if so how should they be created or could they be borrowed and incorporated from the many other environmental plans already created. She noted that in reviewing other plans, there are not many measurable goals and questioned if there was a need for those types of goals in this plan. Goals from a few different plans were presented. Plans that were suggested to look at that were not included in the list of relevant plans were pipeline management plans and the Remedial Action Plan. Common themes from the plans included riparian buffers; wetland preservation and restoration; and the restoring of hydrology/hydrologic function and linkages with riparian buffers rising to the top of most plans.

After discussion it was determined that the goals for this new plan couldn’t just be pulled from other plans. It was also noted that communities need more information from city officials before decisions can be made. Next steps include doing more analysis with a possible concentrated goals workshop scheduled.
Round Robin – Big 2016 Projects

As part of the EMPC’s role in coordination, various regional partners can possibly help each other out with projects. Kathy indicated she would like to give opportunity for organizations to make others aware of their projects and how regional partners can help. These updates will possibly be an annual or bi-annual feature of the EMPC.

- Wildlife Habitat Council: Daniel Goldfarb reported the Council is continuing focus on engaging companies, corporations and industrial sites to be proactive about managing habitats. If companies do not have greenspace, they are encouraged to form partnerships with the immediate community, adjacent landowners or others working nearby to help. Work is continuing to obtain a DNR Coastal grant to promote programs on industrial sites relative to invasive species control. There is already a project with ArcelorMittal and East Chicago so other companies can see what is being done. An invasive species control day platform was held at Exxon Mobile in Hammond. Work is being done with ArcelorMittal Burns Harbor on restoration/reformation work.

- South Shore Clean Cities (SSCC): Carl Lisek reported SSCC is working with the Northern Indiana Green Fleet program to try to identify all the greenhouse gas emissions with all the green fleet markers. There are currently eight green fleet markers communities and four private sector groups with hopes for expansion. Port of Indiana is looking at ways, such as electric cranes, etc. to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions will be part of the Program. SSCC is coordinating with six clean cities coalitions across the area on a biofuels corridor project. A prior project took biofuels from Gary to the Gulf of Mexico and this new project will run east/west on I-94. Work will be done with partners around 94 to apply for funding for fueling infrastructure and clean vehicles. SSCC is collaborating with CMAP to have an electric vehicle corridor from Chicago and Wisconsin into northern Indiana. A new grant is coming out and SSCC and will hopefully collaborate with NIPSCO to extend electric charging stations across northern Indiana. Work is also being done with Ivy Tech for grant opportunities and curriculums for local training courses for mechanics to work on alternative fuel vehicles. SSCC has started a northwest Indiana U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) to try to incorporate LEED building standards and different types of green initiatives.

- The Nature Conservancy (TNC): Susan MiHalo reported TNC will help the EPA, US fish and wildlife, IDEM and IDNR to delist beneficial use impairments for wildlife and wildlife habitat in the Grand Cal area of concern by 2020, following the IDEM remedial action plan. An $830k grant was received to restore and maintain about 580 acres, primarily dune and swale in TNC, Shirley Heinze and IDNR properties, using roving crews that move from site to site as the seasons progress over the next two years. If GLRI funding is available in fall 2017, another $1.2m will be received for three additional years to include wetlands between Kennedy and Cline Avenues that Cardno is currently maintaining. Between what Cardno is maintaining and what TNC is working on in this area is about 320 acres of restored habitat.

- Indiana Coastal Property Management Area: Susan MiHalo reported they will be working with the Indiana coastal Cooperative Weed Management Area (ICCWMA) members to develop an early detection network in northwest Indiana. Anyone can become involved as a citizen scientist. A similar type of effort exists in northeast Illinois called the New Invaders Watch Program and this project is being modeled after several successful programs of this type that exist across the country. The goal is to recruit 15 people who pledge to monitor and report out, positively or negatively, on certain areas in northwest Indiana four to six times over a growing season. Land stewards and staff will also be involved in this program. Work is also been being done with the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore train on the trail program to get people to walk the trails and help maintain them. Beach community residents are being involved in this effort and is linked to the Save the Dunes project to develop a
citizen's action guide for the Dunes. There will also be training with the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association. The regional species list has been narrowed down to 27 or 28 and working with the ICCWMA members will be narrowed down to a regional list of 10 species to be aware of that are coming this way. There will be training on those 10 species, but those willing to walk on trails will be trained on species relative to the specific trail they are monitoring. Training opportunities will be available. The goal is to have 85 new reports entered into edmaps.org.

- Field Museum: Lara Gonzalez reported the Museum is working with the Calumet Heritage Partnership in an attempt to create a National Heritage Area for the Calumet region. A heritage area is defined by the National Park Service as an area or region that is designated by Congress for natural, cultural, and historical resources that come together to have a cohesive, nationally important landscape. This creates a platform to facilitate the goals that other region partners are already accomplishing. The feasibility study is currently in process with the final round of public comment meetings being held May 3rd and 4th. Input is being sought from local recreational and environmental organizations on the assets to highlight in the feasibility study process. The study will be completed and submitted in the summer and hopefully submitted to Congress in the fall legislation. Support and getting word out is needed for this proposed National Heritage Area.

- Town of Chesterton: Jennifer Gadzala reported that the Town has committed to help implement some of the plans within the Little Calumet East Branch Watershed Management Plan. Work is continuing with the Septic Systems Coordination Word Group to help facilitate ideas culminating from the Group. The Town continues to help support the Westchester Bird Sanctuary on 11th Street. This piece of land is large and in need of a lot of invasive work.

- Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve: Jennifer Gadzala reported that a lot of invasive work has been accomplished in identifying problem areas and plants in the Preserve. The new stewardship manager is working on a plan to provide enhancements to the native plants and trees to bring it back to its glory within the next 10 years. Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy is hosting a master naturalist program this spring.

- Porter County: Kevin Breitzke reported the County is implementing a stormwater fee and are close to making the transition from the old regulated drain assessments, which will be suspended. This will result in approximately five to eight times as much money being available for stormwater quantity and quality projects. Part of the impetus was support for the MS4 program which was previously being supported with about $10k - $20k per year and was raised around eight to ten times that amount about three years ago. With regulated drainage assessments by statute, money couldn't really be invested for storm water quality. All of unincorporated Porter County will be paying a fee with the exception of the Conservancy Districts who choose to continue on with their mission for stormwater quality.

- Dunes Learning Center: Geoff Benson reported regional help is needed for the Canoemobile which will start around September 19th and run for about three or four weeks. Regional partners are needed to do land-based activities. The Canoemobile will be on Lake George in Hobart, Marquette Park in Gary, and Wolf Lake in Hammond.

- Save the Dunes: Sarah Weaver reported on two new projects. The first is the 2016 Dunes Blowout, which is a performing arts festival being held at West Beach in September. Volunteers are being sought for assistance to get underserved children and adults to the event as well as wayfinding and docents for the event. The second is the Dunes Residential Guide project which is currently in development. The guide is being developed to help people who live in near-shore dunes communities plant native plants and remove some invasive plants. As part of the development process, the residents of those communities are being asked what they want and need, and what would help them. Save the Dunes is looking for different community events to attend and also need help with outreach.
• City of Gary: Deb Backhus reported the City is developing green infrastructure for stormwater management. There are two large green infrastructure installations currently happening particularly in the north side development region. The goal is not only water quality improvements through stormwater management, but revitalization of blighted areas to turn them into beautiful community spaces.

• NIPSCO: Dan Plath reported NIPSCO is getting close to completing a conservation framework for all of NISOURCE’s properties. The plan is being designed by the Wildlife Habitat Council out of Baltimore. This effort dovetails with the 2020 Plan and the Greenways Plan and the idea is for properties that NIPSCO/NISOURCE owns to complement natural areas where NIPSCO will make more concentrated efforts in eradicating invasives and promoting biodiversity. There will be a stakeholder meeting in the near future. NIPSCO is starting a new environmental impact grant. $50k will be set aside each year with awards of $500 to $5,000 targeting restoration or environmental education. It will be an online grant process. It does not appear that there will be a match requirement and the money will be distributed the week of Earth Day. In addition, the all-volunteer, NIPSCO employee, Environmental Action Team would like to help with the restoration and education projects.

• Northwestern Indiana Paddling Association (NWIPA): Dan Plath reported NWIPA has been working for the last year and a half on the national water trail designation for the Kankakee River and have been informed the application was one of the strongest and the designation is very close. Pictures and stories of restoration work in the Kankakee Basin are being sought. In partnership with the Gary Park’s Department, there is an application going out shortly for installation of an ADA launch this year in the lagoons at Marquette Park. In partnership with the City of Hobart, two ADA launches are slated for installation. This year on Deep River and next year on Lake George. Using a Chi-Cal grant with Shirley Heinze, Save the Dunes and the National Lakeshore an ADA launch will be installed on the Little Cal wetlands across from Brummit School in Chesterton as well as a public access point at the Nature Preserve near St. Pats. NWIPA will be convening a group to reopen the river from the Little Cal wetlands to the national lakeshore border. A decision from the national lakeshore environmental assessment should be coming in by April. Shirley Heinze has spearheaded an effort to have the Little Cal designated as a conservation corridor. Around $1m has been set aside for land acquisition. NWIPA would like to see a concerted effort to get the properties along the corridor before the money goes away.

• Kay Nelson reported a letter was issued to President Obama from the Chicago Waterways System Advisory Committee in mid-January outlining suggestions for continued efforts by the Corps of Engineers on the aquatic nuisance species issue. Kay also reported February 3rd was the official day for bills to swap houses and there was a number of bills that did go to opposing homes. House Bill 1082, environmental rules and standards, passed. Senate Bill 255, underground storage tanks, passed. Senate Bill 256, legitimate use of solid waste and waste tires, passed. Senate Bill 257, distressed water and wastewater utilities, passed. Senate Bill 347, waste resources, passed. Senate Bill 366, solid waste management districts, passed.

NIRPC Business:

a. Environmental Department Project Updates and Plans for 2016

A handout was provided to those in attendance detailing the 2016 work plan for NIRPC's environmental department. The MS4 program will not be continued in 2016 due to lack of funding so water education will be through the watershed and Urban Waters grants. Activities related to the air program include the Green Fleets and Diesel Retrofits programs; CMAQ programming support; and public education through various outlets, some of which include
media, Partners for Clean Air, and gas can exchanges. 2016 water related undertakings include the Portage Burns Waterway Initiative; Urban Waters Small Grant; Deep River Dam Feasibility Study and participation in regional collaborations. Other environmental activities will be focused on green infrastructure and conservation planning; brownfields, including the Northwest Indiana Brownfield Coalition; energy and climate; as well as support for transportation planning. The Solar project is wrapping up with seven new solar installations and several communities agreeing to adopt best practices. Kathy reported she was asked by Purdue Climate Change Research Institute to serve on the statewide steering committee for a statewide climate impact assessment and volunteered the EMPC for a pilot stakeholder workshop. This listening session workshop on what climate impacts the EMPC is concerned about in this region will most likely take place after the March EMPC meeting. NIRPC’s transportation department has been working on a transportation corridor project looking at areas where new roads are needed. Joe Exl will be doing the preliminary NEPA analysis of environmental factors in these corridors. More roads could result in environmental mitigation projects, but the order of things is avoid, minimize, mitigate.

**Public Comment:** Carl Lisek announced that Hobart, Hammond, East Chicago, Michigan City, Valparaiso and South Bend will be receiving grant award announcements at the South Shore Clean Cities annual meeting on February 16. On May 19, Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana will be hosting Midwest Clean Drives at Northern Illinois University. SSCC also received a Midwest Drives grant which is a free lease program with 42 vehicles available for anyone interested in driving an alternative fuel or hybrid vehicle for 30 days. He also announced that he is looking for a truck to take donated water to Flint Michigan.

**Announcements:** Announcements will be forwarded to the Committee by email.

Meeting adjourned at 10:51 a.m.
RESOLUTION 16-09

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION AMENDING THE 2016-2019 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR LAKE, PORTER, AND LAPORTE COUNTIES, INDIANA

AMENDMENT NO. 16

March 17, 2016

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 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 FY 2016-2019 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 form the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP); and

WHEREAS, the FY 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program is an implementation of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP); is fiscally constrained, and is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality; and
WHEREAS, the FY 2016-2019 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 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program brought about by this amendment were reviewed by the Air Quality Conformity Task Force’s Interagency Consultation Group (ICG).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission hereby amends the 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program by adding the new projects and making other changes as shown on the attachment to this resolution.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this seventeenth day of March, 2016.

________________________
James G. Ton
Chairperson

ATTEST:

________________________
Geof R. Benson
Secretary
## 2016-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for Lake, Porter, and LaPorte Counties, Indiana
### Amendment #16  March 2016

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<th>DES</th>
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<th>Project</th>
<th>Action Requested</th>
<th>Federal Funds</th>
<th>Phase</th>
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<th>Funds Total</th>
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<td>1400604</td>
<td>INDOT</td>
<td>Install Train-activated gates at various highway rail crossing locations on NICTD in La Porte and Porter Counties.</td>
<td>Add New Phase</td>
<td>HSIP</td>
<td>PE</td>
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<td>Add New Phase</td>
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<td>1500170</td>
<td>INDOT</td>
<td>Upgrade CN Rail Crossing 283306K. (LaPorte CR 200S, near Mill Creek).</td>
<td>Add New Phase</td>
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<td>Upgrade CN Rail Crossing 283242B. (Porter CR 150W, located W of Valparaiso).</td>
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NIRPC to Hold 30-Day Public Comment Period on I-65 Added Travel Lanes

INDOT proposes building an additional lane in each direction between US 30 & SR 10

March 15, 2016

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) will hold a 30-day public comment period on a proposal from the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to build additional travel lanes on I-65 between US 30 and State Road 10. The public comment period will commence on March 16, 2016 and end on April 15, 2016. Public comment will be gathered on Amendment #2 to the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan Companion Update, Amendment #17 to the 2017-2019 Transportation Improvement Program, and a new Air Quality Conformity Analysis which includes this project.

As part of the public comment period, a public meeting will be held as follows:

- March 31, 2016: Lowell Public Library, 1505 E Commercial Avenue, Lowell, IN, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Comments can also be submitted until April 15, 2016 in the following ways:

- Email: comments@nirpc.org
- Phone: 219-763-6060, ext. 160
- United States Postal Service: NIRPC, 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN 46368

All comments received during the 30-day public comment period will be compiled into a public comment report and responded to. This report will be made available to the public and distributed to the relevant NIRPC committees prior to any action on these items.

Information on this project is posted on NIRPC’s website at www.nirpc.org. Requests for alternative formats may be directed to Mary Thorne by calling 219-763-6060, ext. 131, or by email at mthorne@nirpc.org. TTY users may use the Relay Indiana service by calling 711.