

Public Participation Plan 2014

Hammond Public Library
October 28, 2014

Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission



Importance of the Public Participation Plan (PPP)

- PPP was last updated in 2007; this new one in preparation for 3 years is an improvement
- Provides a more detailed plan for reaching out and involving people in the regional planning process
- New plan includes updated outreach techniques, monitoring, and essential accessibility features for NIRPC public meetings
- PPP will guide how NIRPC shares information about its projects and plans in the future



Timeline

- **January - March 2012**
 - Development of the PPP begins
 - Presentation to NIRPC subcommittees
- **April - June 2012**
 - Public Participation Task Force formed and met to develop goals and objectives
- **August - October 2012**
 - A new Plan is drafted
 - Plan recommended to the TPC for the opening of the Public Comment Period on October 10



Timeline (continued)

- **December 2012**
 - Public Comment Period extended until February, 2013
- **March, April 2013**
 - Four public meetings held to present PPP and hear comments
- **May - December 2013**
 - The Commission did not act on TPC recommendation
 - Ad hoc committee of Commissioners held five meetings with Everybody Counts
 - TPC tabled action
- **2014**
 - Further discussion and revisions via Settlement Agreement followed by another comment period



Increased Access to NIRPC Meetings

- Due to the lack of public transportation to get across county lines in general, and across most municipal boundaries in particular, access to the NIRPC office via public transit is limited.
 - **Web-Casting Meetings** - NIRPC will use its best efforts to provide real-time meeting access through equipment, staffing and internet capacity.
 - **Variable Meeting Locations** - NIRPC will consider rotating meetings of the Transportation Policy Committee when significant transportation planning decisions are on the agenda.



NIRPC's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- **More open process for the public to comment on TIP projects**
 - Minimum 5-day comment period for Minor Standard Amendments
 - Minimum 30-day comment period for Major Standard Amendments
 - Administrative Modifications
 - Emergency Administrative Amendments
 - Allows NIRPC Executive Director make a TIP Amendment via letter to INDOT



MPO Public Participation Process

Public Comment Period Length by Document Type		
Document Type	Minimum Review Period	
	Required by Federal Regulation	Per NIRPC Policy
MPO Planning Documents Required by Federal Statute & Regulation		
Long-Range Transportation Plan	Not Specified	30
Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendments	Not Specified	30
Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	Not Specified	30
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)	Not Specified	30
Major TIP Amendments	Not Specified	30
Minor TIP Amendments	Not Specified	7
Air Quality Conformity Determination	Not Specified	30
Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)	Not Specified	30
UPWP Amendments	Not Specified	7
Public Participation Plans (PPP)	45	45
PPP Amendments	45	45
Other Plans and Documents of Regional Significance		
Corridor, Neighborhood, or Sub-Area Transportation Plans	Not Specified	30
Other Regional Plans	Not Specified	30
Comprehensive Regional Development Plan or Updates	Not Specified	30
Comprehensive Regional Environmental Plans/Updates	Not Specified	30
Comprehensive Regional Economic Development Plans or Updates	Not Specified	30
Other Significant Documents, Policies, Guidance, and Standards	Not Specified	30

Figure C: Document Comment Requirements



NIRPC's Public Participation Matrix

	(Lower)	Level of Participation		(Higher)
	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information and to assist in their understanding of planning problems, alternatives, opportunities, and solutions.	To obtain public feedback on our planning work, analyses, outreach efforts, and decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the planning process to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in every aspect of our planning process, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions.
NIRPC's Promise to the Public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influences our decisions.	We will work with you to ensure that your goals and aspirations are directly reflected in our planning work as much as possible, and to provide feedback on how public input influences our decisions.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions to our planning issues, and incorporate your advice and recommendations into our decisions as much as possible.
Public Involvement Techniques	Website, Facebook, Twitter, Newsletters, Press Releases, Legal Advertisements, Direct Mailings, Fact Sheets, Display Advertisements	Facebook, Twitter, Surveys, Comment Forms, Public Meetings	Open Houses, Group Meetings, Webinars, Surveys	Task Forces, Working Groups, Youth Outreach, Small and Large Group Meetings
When These Techniques Will Be Used	On a regular and frequent basis as reminders and to give people easy access to important information.	When NIRPC needs feedback on its planning activities.	To solicit public comment and opinion about issues and events.	To prepare for a major planning process



Outreach Methodologies

- Website
- Newsletters
- Press Releases
- Legal Notices
- Email & Direct Mailings
- Display Ads, Announcements, & Flyers
- Fact Sheets & General Information Documents
- Comment Forms
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Surveys
- Open Houses
- Public Meetings
- Public Hearings
- Webinars
- Public Outreach & Inclusion
- Task Forces, Steering Committees, & Working Groups
- Alternate Formats



Access to and Evaluation of the Public Participation Process

- Staff will use Essential Accessibility Features for NIRPC Meetings to identify places for meetings to accommodate participants from the disability community
- Staff will generate the following items after an event
 - Meeting Report Describing Results
 - Comments from Public about Outreach and Conduct of the Meeting



Disposition of Comments Received	
Comment Type	Action Required
All Comments	Prepare a written Public Comment Summary Report that is reviewed by the cognizant NIRPC Policy Committee and adopted by the NIRPC Board. Include the Report in the subject Document.
Non-Significant Comments	
No Change in Document Text Required	List the comment in the summary report.
Require Change in Document Text	Make the change to the document. In the Public Comment Summary Report, identify the change and the rationale for making the change.
Significant Comments	
Require Change in Document Text	In the summary report, identify the change, present an analysis of the issue (including the rationale for making the change), and identify any follow-up actions needed that are external to the document.
	Make the change to the document. Repeat the process (i.e., begin a new public comment period on the revised document). Prepare a new Public Comment Summary Report.

Figure D: Disposition of Comments Received



Appendices

- **Appendix A**
 - Glossary of Terms And Abbreviations
- **Appendix B**
 - Public Participation and the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP)
 - Vision and Values Statement for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan
- **Appendix C**
 - Commitment to Environmental Justice
- **Appendix D**
 - 23 CFR §450.316 Interested Parties, Participation, and Consultation. This is an excerpt from the current federal transportation planning regulation requiring the development of a public participation plan.



Appendices (continued)

- **Appendix E : Resources**
 - Easter Seals Project ACTION
 - International Association for Public Participation
 - Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (Current Federal Surface Transportation Act)
 - U.S. Department of Justice
 - U.S. Department of Transportation



Appendices (continued)

- **Appendix F: Essential Accessibility Features for NIRPC Meetings**
 - Hold meetings in only accessible locations
- **Appendix G : Outreach Evaluation Form for Participants**
 - To gain feedback on outreach from participants
- **Appendix H : Outreach Evaluation Form for NIRPC Staff**
 - For staff to evaluate outreach activities
- **Appendix I : 2012 Public Participation Task Force Members**



Improved 2014 Participation Plan over 2007

1. Specified comment periods for plans & especially programs/ projects
2. Eventual increased remote access to meetings
3. Varied meeting locations
4. Essential accessibility features for meetings
5. New social media communication
6. Enhanced information on interactive website



Improved 2014 Plan (continued)

7. Public participation techniques to:

Inform; Consult; Involve; Collaborate

8. Useful references in appendix

9. Collect information & analyze meeting outcomes

10. Re-emergence of NIRPC newsletter

- Full-time NIRPC staff assigned for public involvement & communications



Questions and Comments

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How to Comment After Today

Comment Period Ends October 31

By email: comments@nirpc.org

By telephone: **(219)763-6060, ext. 160**

By US Postal Service:
**6100 Southport Rd.
Portage, Indiana 46368**



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