

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION TO BE FOCUS OF MEETINGS AT WICKER PARK

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) in cooperation with Everybody Counts, is hosting two meetings about public transportation in northwest Indiana at the Wicker Park Social Center on October 29, 2014.

The first session is from 1:00 pm to 3:30 pm. The second session is from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm and will be a repeat of the first session. The Wicker Park Social Center is located in Wicker Park at 2215 Ridge Road in Highland.

The purpose of the meetings is twofold. The first purpose is to present current information on existing public transportation, including fixed route bus, train, demand response and paratransit. Information on who operates public transit, how it is funded, and where it is currently offered will be discussed by NIRPC staff.

The second purpose of the meetings is to gather public opinion on the performance of existing transit services and the needs for future public transportation services. The regional planners want to hear from the public how the existing services are meeting transit needs, where people would like to see public transit offered, and how public transit might be paid for.

All are welcome and encouraged to participate, especially current and former users of public transit, those who would like to have access to transit, members of the disability community, the elderly, members of minority populations and low-income persons.

The Wicker Park facility is accessible and designated parking is available. Accommodations to be provided include American Sign Language interpreters and Real Time Captioning. Requests for additional reasonable accommodations may be made to NIRPC staff Allen Hammond at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Mr. Hammond may be reached by email at ahammond@nirpc.org, or by phone: (219) 763-6060, ext. 141, or Relay Indiana at 711. The meetings will also be videotaped and transcribed. The videotape and transcript will be available on the NIRPC website within 30 days following the meeting.

Public transit to the Wicker Park Social Center is available from the following public transit providers. Please call specific transit operator for reservation and rate information.

FROM LAKE COUNTY

North Township Trustee Dial-A-Ride – Serves all Hammond, East Chicago, Whiting, Munster and Highland. Reservations required at least 24 hours in advance. Service ends at 4:00 pm. Call (219) 932-2530.

Gary Public Transportation Corporation –Regional service from Crown Point, Hobart, and Merrillville via Broadway Express (#17/18), and from Griffith via Burr Street and Lake Ridge (#23); transfer to Lakeshore Connection (#12) at Metro Center and then Lakeshore South (#24) in Hammond. Lakeshore South serves southern Hammond, Highland, and Munster and Wicker Park Social Center. Please contact GPTC at (219) 885-7555, ext. 204 for more information. Complementary paratransit service is

available within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the GPTC routes. To arrange a ride, please call (219) 981-9696. NOTE: You must be certified by GPTC to use the complementary paratransit service. Please contact GPTC at 981-9696 for more information on becoming a certified paratransit rider.

East Chicago Public Transit – Take the Griffith Plaza bus to the Pay 4 Less food store and transfer to the GPTC Lakeshore South route #24 that serves Wicker Park. Please contact East Chicago Public Transit at (219) 391-8465 if you have any questions.

South Lake County Community Services – Serves all of south Lake County including Griffith, Hobart, Merrillville, Crown Point, Cedar Lake, Lowell, and all of St. John Township. Call (219) 663-0627 to arrange ride to Wicker Park. Reservations required at least 24 hours in advance. Service ends at 4:00 pm.

FROM PORTER COUNTY

Opportunity Enterprises – Serves all of Porter County, Lake Station, Hobart and Merrillville and will provide service to Highland for the afternoon meeting. Reservations required at least 24 hours in advance. Service ends at 4:00 pm. Call (219) 464-9621 for reservations.

Porter County Aging and Community Services – Serves all of Porter County and will coordinate with Opportunity Enterprises to provide service to Highland for the afternoon meeting. Reservations required at least 24 hours in advance. Service ends at 6:00 pm. Call (219) 464-9736 for reservations.

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.

NIRPC is the Metropolitan Planning Organization and regional council of local governments for the three counties of Northwest Indiana. NIRPC provides the forum for local elected officials, regional, leadership, and citizens to address regional issues relating to transportation, the environment and community and economic development. NIRPC seeks to develop consensus solutions with the broadest participation.