

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

NIRPC Auditorium

February 14, 2012

DRAFT MINUTES

### **Members Present**

Nancy Adams, Roosevelt Allen, Jr., Art Biciunas, Tim Brown, AJ Bytnar, Joe Crnkovich, Stan Dobosz, Stan Dostatni, Jeff Huet, Bruce Lindner, Tris Miles, AJ Monroe, Mark O'Dell, Don Parker, Shawn Pettit, Craig Phillips, Jim Pinkerton, John Pugh, Claudia Taylor, Mary Jane Thomas, Bob Thompson, Jim Ton, Richard Wotkun, David Wright

Reggie Arkell, Teri Dixon, Jerry Halperin, Joyce Newland (via conference phone)

### **Guests**

Heather Augustyn, Marcia Blansett, Glen Campbell, Carol Carlson, Susan Carr, Dennis Cobb, Ken Dallmeyer, Craig Hendrix, Pete Kohut, Jim Nowacki, Ray Riddell, Jeff Schultz, Lisa Shrader, Bruce Spires, Stu Summers, Eric Wilson, Eric Wolverton

### **NIRPC Staff**

Mitch Barloga, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Allen Hammond, Eman Ibrahim, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne, Tom Vander Woude

#### **1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements**

- Chairman Stan Dobosz, NIRPC Commissioner and Griffith Town Councilman, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Jim Ton made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6 meeting; seconded by Jeff Huet. Motion carried.

#### **2. Planning**

- Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric reported on the process. Travel time data is collected during AM and PM peaks and off-peak periods, with five runs in each direction for each corridor to determine congestion. Stephen showed the data from the loggers which is illustrated in Google Earth. Staff then extrapolates the data to identify congestion. An inventory of the runs was provided to the committee. We still need volunteers to use the loggers and collect the data. This is the first step to determine the need for added capacity. INDOT is working with Bluetooth readers to monitor traffic. Municipalities who have road projects in mind should monitor the routes with similar methods to determine if there are any traffic issues.
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture – Kevin Garcia presented. The current architecture was adopted in 2005 and is in need of an update. ITS improves safety and efficiency of the surface transportation system. Trafficwise.com is INDOT's real-time traffic website. The architecture allows integration of various ITS components. The staff asked for committee input to the list of stakeholders. Two suggestions offered were city engineering departments and school districts. Contact Kevin at [kgarcia@nirpc.org](mailto:kgarcia@nirpc.org) with any additional stakeholder suggestions.

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- Railroad Vision Working Group – Tom Vander Woude reported that rail representatives recommended 15 grade separations for improvements. The next meeting is February 24 at 9:00 a.m. Better data is needed. We have some from INDOT and we will try to get updated traffic and train counts from local municipalities. An engineering professor at Purdue Calumet, Dr. Rescot, has a student who will assist in data collection and processing, and three senior engineering students will assist in a potential design project. Possible projects include the Arcelor-Mittal East Gate and some grade separations. Tom will meet with Dr. Rescot on Friday.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plans – Allen Hammond reported that out of 27 Local Public Agencies (LPAs), 26 are required to have a transition plan and one is not but will be doing one for possible future use. Communities without a transition plan by December 31, 2012 can potentially face a cut off of their federal funding for 2013. A federal mandate for monitoring and oversight of ADA transition plan has been reported. It was noted that Congress could change that. Communities should be notified again in writing, especially due to the recent municipal elections.
- 2016 Network – Bill Brown referred to the chart of capacity expansion projects with regard to the air quality conformity process. The conformity includes a regional emissions analysis for milestone years and compares the emissions for mobile sources in the region with the motor vehicle emission budgets as established in the state implementation plan. In transitioning to the new software, we are now modifying the first analysis year from 2016 to 2015 and we need to identify those projects which will not be done and open to traffic by the beginning of 2015. Contact Bill by the end of this week if you think your project will not be open to traffic by 2015 and we will move it into the 2020 timeframe. There will be no penalty or loss of funding.

### **3. Programming**

- Resolution 12-05, Amendment 10 of the FY2012-2015 TIP – Gary Evers said the amendment is for added phases to projects for a Cedar Lake Safe Routes to Schools project, improvements to a project for Whiting and construction and fixtures for the Oak Savanna Trail for Lake County Parks, bringing them into the TIP. Shawn Pettit motioned to recommend Amendment 10 to the NIRPC commission for approval; seconded by Jim Ton. Motion carried.
- Quarterly Project Tracking – Gary Evers said about 50% of the LPAs turned in their reports for the quarter; some are missing one or more reports. All demo projects have been exempted until the June 30 cycle. This quarter we got 49 reports. We have 123 construction projects in the TIP. Quarterly reports must be turned in. Following TPC next month, Gary will talk with LPAs about reporting requirements and development of a change order process for federal aid projects.
- Certification of FTA Section 5310 Projects – Gary reported for Belinda Petroskey, presenting a finding of consistency with the consolidated human services transportation plan. Congress required that there be a consolidated planning effort in urbanized areas to look at the needs for sections 5316 - JARC, 5317 - New Freedom, 5310 - Capital Equipment to Not-for-Profits serving the elderly and people with disabilities and 5307 which is a transit program. Our plan was adopted in 2009 and we have 5310 applications submitted by Swanson Center in LaPorte County, Parents and Friends Inc. in LaPorte County, Council on Aging in LaPorte and Opportunity Enterprises in Valparaiso. The program requires we enter a finding of consistency with our own plan.

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With the consent of the TPC, John Swanson will execute the letters to make the certification. Motion to approve the letters was made by Shawn Pettit and a second by Don Parker; motion carried.

- FY 2012-2013 Unified Planning Work Program Amendment – Eman Ibrahim said the third amendment is to include Gary Public Transportation Corporation's planning elements for federal funding of \$80,000 with a local match of \$20,000 by GPTC. David Wright described the project, including management and operations of route planning, facilities planning, regional planning, grant management and reporting, performance of outreach including marketing, promotions, schedules and maps, advancing the NIRPC Bus Rapid Transit project including transit-oriented development elements of the University Park project, a re-designed website, mapping using GIS, grant completion for shelter replacement and Metro Center improvements. Motion to approve Amendment 3 to the 2012-2013 UPWP was made by Shawn Pettit and seconded by Jim Ton; motion carried.

#### 4. INDOT –

- Lisa Shrader reported on the Letting lists for December through March. The lighting maintenance contract was re-let on February 8. The February 8 results will be official in a couple of days.
- Jim Pinkerton reported that the Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge demolition will be done by the first week of March with construction being completed this summer.
- The Cline Avenue ramp construction from EB SR-912 to Riley Road will take place this summer. The demo of the elevated portion from Michigan to Riley Road is scheduled for end of February or March. Discussions are still being held with American Bridge; no updates since the Governor's media address a couple of weeks ago.
- Illiana Corridor – The public hearing is on February 22 from 5 pm to 8 pm at Crown Point High School on the preliminary preferred route.

#### 5. Transit Operators Reports

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that December ridership was up 3% over January 2011 with more mid-day rides. The signal project is 60% complete between Michigan City and South Bend. The catenary work is done between Gary and Michigan City and NICTD will apply for a TIGER IV grant to rebuild the overhead wire between Michigan City and South Bend. It is a \$22 million project. Trains are scheduled to begin using the Kensington bypass tomorrow. The Kensington stop will then be eliminated. The auto show is this week and trains are stopping at the McCormick Place station every day this week. Contract bids are out to complete the bridge painting and RFPs for engineering a high level platform at the Dune Park Station and studies on bridges over Trail Creek in Michigan City and Lake Park Avenue in Hudson Lake. The Michigan City study is underway. Bill asked Joe to present at a future TPC meeting. John Pugh added a public workshop at City Hall will be held on February 23 at 6:30 p.m.
- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that service changes went into effect on January 30. We are looking at a significant increase in ridership of about 800-900 per day which is a 20% increase on the Broadway corridor which has become the second highest route for ridership. Marketing will be concentrated on the Griffith and Black Oak areas and we will be finalizing the construction timeline for the University Park project.
- **RBA** – Tim Brown referred to the 2010 and 2011 report for all transit. The RBA saw a 50% increase in ridership from the prior year. Some service has been restored on the Green and Red Lines beginning January 4 and data will be reported next month. The

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rehab of bus shelters is about 50% complete. RBA is holding public hearings in April and May and face a shutdown on June 30 due to lack of funding. The RBA has the ridership needs but lack a permanent source of funding for transit. State Sen. Earline Rogers, D-Gary, has prepared legislation to direct existing funding currently used for low-income homestead tax credits to the RBA which will benefit the same target group of elderly and people with disabilities. About \$9.4 million in casino funds are dedicated to the program every year.

**6. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update.**

No reports.

**7. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority**

No reports.

**8. Planning Neighbors: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and Southwestern Michigan Commission**

No reports.

**9. Other Business, Public Comment and Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC**

- Public Comment: Jim Nowacki commented that we have a reliable transportation corporation and funding in place with the GPTC and we should capitalize on their staff and infrastructure already in place. Tim Brown commented that the RBA has had a 128% increase in their transit ridership since taking over Hammond Transit and a 50% increase in one year in their fixed route service which shows it is a reliable and useful service. The RBA has been involved in three joint meetings with the GPTC in Gary. Commissioner Allen added we can attach Senator Rogers' proposed casino revenue bill to some legislation before June 30, the \$9.4 million in casino funds could be split between the RBA (which needs about \$6 million) and GPTC (\$3.4 million).
- Staff Announcements:
  - Mitch Barloga announced the Ped Pedal and Paddle Cornucopia will be held on April 26 at Lost March in Hammond from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided.
  - The Land Use Committee meeting on March 14 will be a two to three hour retreat.
  - Tom VanderWoude announced the Annual Rail Summit will be held at 11:15 a.m. on March 16 at Sand Creek Country Club. Information is in the packet.
- Upcoming Meetings:
  - NIRPC Executive Board – Thursday, February 16 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.
  - The Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee will meet on Thursday, February 23 at 1:30 p.m. at NIRPC.
  - NWI Rail VISION Working Group – Friday, February 24 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.
  - Environmental Management Policy Committee – Thursday, March 1 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.
  - Land Use Committee retreat – Wednesday, March 14 at 10:00 a.m.
  - NWI Rail Summit – Friday, March 16 at 11:15 a.m. at Sand Creek Country Club.
  - Local Government Assistance Advisory Committee – Wednesday, March 28 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.
  - The *Pathway to 2040* Implementation Committee will meet on Wednesday, April 18 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

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**10. Next Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 13, 2012 at NIRPC.

Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Thorne  
NIRPC Planning Secretary  
2/15/12