

Technical Planning Committee Meeting

NIRPC Lake Michigan Room
6100 Southport Road, Portage

August 16, 2016

MINUTES

Members Present

Dave Shafer, Kevin Breitzke, Geof Benson, George Topoll, Michael Noland, Margot Sabato, Taylor Wegrzyn, Mark O'Dell, Tom MacLennan, Robin Barzoni-Tillman, Daryl Lampkins, Rebecca Williams, Beth Shrader, Kay Nelson, Julie Ritzler, Susan Orona and William Emerson, Jr.

Guests

Mark Gordish, David Wright, Joe Crnkovich, Claudia Taylor, Jerry Siska, H. Dean Johnson, Phil Gralik, Ismail Attallah, Kaitlyn McClain, James Mandon, Jake Dammarell, Michael Jabo, Dennis Cobb, Karie Koehneke, Eric Wolverton, Jill Murr, Deb Backhus, Chris Moore, and Andrew Steele.

NIRPC Staff

Ty Warner, Steve Strains, Mitch Barloga, Gary Evers, Eman Ibrahim, Sarah Geinosky, Scott Weber, James Winters, Gabrielle Biciunas, Belinda Petroskey, Amanda Pollard and Mary Thorne.

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- a) Kevin Breitzke, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- b) The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available for attendees to complete.
- c) On a motion by Geof Benson and a second by Mark O'Dell, the minutes of the July 12, 2016 Transportation Policy Committee meeting were approved as presented.

2. Presentation

Ty Warner presented on the MPO Coordination Rulemaking that would require single transportation plans for federally defined urban areas, including the Chicago urbanized area. Lake and Porter County are a part, as is the Chicago Metropolitan Area for Planning (CMAP). Also, most of the Michigan City-LaPorte urban area is part of NIRPC but the area extends into southwest Michigan, which is part of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission's territory. The new rule would require a single Transportation Improvement Program — the list of projects that will receive federal funding — for the entire urban area. It would also require a jointly established set of performance targets for the entire urbanized area, according to the Federal Register. If enacted by the Department of Transportation, the rule would be phased in over two years. The rule would offer two options when multiple MPOs exist within one urban area. One alternative would be for the MPOs to merge. Or, they could jointly create the planning products necessary for federally funded local projects. NIRPC and CMAP Ty Warner and CMAP's executive director, Joseph Szabo, have written a letter to the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration requesting

a 60-day extension of the comment period. An extension has also been requested by the Illinois and Indiana Representatives and Senators, as well as Indiana's other MPOs.

3. Implementation Planning

- a) Eman Ibrahim and Gabrielle Biciunas presented an update and overview of the Creating Livable Communities (CLC) program. Livable Centers cluster many different land uses in a compact area and gives people the opportunity to accomplish various activities without using a vehicle. The project team met with 19 cities and towns and the transit operators in the three-county NIRPC region to work on defining livable neighborhood centers. A small communities Workshop was held to define livable centers boundaries for the remaining 22 communities. The funding program supports community-based transportation and land use projects that bring vitality to downtown areas, neighborhoods, station areas, commercial cores, and transit corridors. NIRPC awarded grants totaling \$402,500 of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding to seven communities. The total funding with the local match is \$495,500. These communities receiving grants were: Chesterton, Crown Point, East Chicago, Gary, Highland, Porter and Winfield. Projects for each community were highlighted. The next round will be for STP Group II projects in LaPorte County.

- b) Mitch Barloga overviewed a new opportunity for a "B-List" solicitation showing suggested projects which was provided in the materials. INDOT has a policy of spending down all monies by the state fiscal year end of June 30. We need to have the projects in by April 30. Existing TIP Projects get moved around and leave funding gaps. If the monies are unspent we lose it. The "B-List" has been created for a quick fill of that funding gap. Mitch described the types of projects and provided a list for planning or capital assistance, transit operating assistance of non-construction projects and construction projects with a cost of \$800,000 federal or less. Restrictions include no freight railroads or bridge replacement, Project Engineering (PE) is required on all construction projects, minimal Right of Way, and on-system pavement projects. Approval of PE funds guarantees funding for the balance of the project. Staff will prepare the application package and scoring. The Transportation Resource & Oversight Committee (TROC) will review the applications on September 8 and 12. This committee will review the packet and the solicitation launches on September 13. Applications are due September 30. The topical committees will validate the rankings on October 5. This committee will review the rankings on vote on October 11 with approval by the Commission on October 20. Discussion of the process followed. Steve Strains commended planning staff for pulling this together to insure we do not lose any funding.

- c) Amanda Pollard a schedule of quarterly tracking meetings. It is important to not only attend the meeting but also to turn in your quarterly reports. They were due July 21. Get them in to her before your tracking meeting date. Gary Evers added that any deficiency in either of these two requirements will result in project suspension. We are currently looking at about 110 projects.

4. Transportation Programming.

There were no actions brought to this committee today.

5. Topical Committee Reports

- a) Environmental Management Policy Committee – Geof Benson said the committee will meet on September 1 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.
- b) Ped Pedal & Paddle Committee – Mitch Barloga said this committee will meet on August 25 at 1:30 p.m. and hope to have a draft of the Greenways & Blueways Plan available. Greenway & Blueway maps are available.
- c) Transit Operators Roundtable – Belinda Petroskey said the roundtable met after the July TPC meeting to constrain FY 2016 TIP projects and discussed the need for all designated recipients to be on the TPC, which has happened. The committee will meet immediately after this meeting.
- d) Land Use Committee – Eman Ibrahim said the next meeting will be on September 17 at 10 a.m.
- e) Rail Vision Workgroup/Freight – James Winters said the committee meeting times and dates will be determined. Contact him if you would like to participate on the committee.
- f) Surface Transportation Committee – Scott Weber said the first meeting was held on August 2, and will meet bimonthly as needed. Membership is unconstrained. Planners and engineers are encouraged to sign up for the committee. Proxies are allowed. The next meeting will be on October 4 at 9 a.m.
- g) The first meeting of the Transportation Resource Oversight Committee Group I for Lake and Porter County will be held on September 8 at 2 p.m. LPAs requesting road safety funding at 100% federal will meet at NIRPC at 1 p.m.
- h) The first meeting of the Transportation Resource Oversight Committee Group II for LaPorte County will meet on September 12.

6. Planning Partners – No reports were given.

7. Public Comment on Agenda Items – There were no requests for public comment.

8. Emerging Trends – Mitch Barloga showed a video short on the benefits of autonomous cars.

9. Other Business, Staff Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

a) Staff Announcements –

- Gabrielle Biciunas provided a reminder about the upcoming Title VI workshop on August 30 for cities, towns and counties. It is a requirement to have a Title VI Plan in order to receive federal funding.
- Scott Weber announced the United Way Day of Caring will be Friday August 12. NIRPC is hosting a Body Wash Drive for Sojourner House and volunteer work opportunity at Coffee Creek Watershed Preserve from 9 a.m. to noon. A sign-up sheet was available. Strack & VanTil's, Ultra and Town & Country are offering a "round up" to the nearest dollar to benefit our local military heroes.
- David Wright announced that shopping today at Whole Foods in Schererville will benefit the Dunes Learning Center in Lake County.
- Ty Warner thanked staff for their work in creating the B-List.

b) Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC –

- The schedule of meetings was provided in the agenda.

The next meeting of the Technical Planning Committee will be on September 13, 2016 at 9 a.m. in the NIRPC Lake Michigan Room.

On a motion by George Topoll and a second by David Wright, Kevin Breitzke adjourned the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Mary Thorne at the phone number or email below should you wish to receive a copy or a portion of it.

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