

Resolution 15-22

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHWESTERN INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION TO THE REGIONAL CITIES INITIATIVE

August 20, 2015

WHEREAS, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as "The Commission," is the Federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as well as the official Council of Governments for the Lake, Porter and LaPorte County area, comprised of these three counties and forty-one (41) municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission sees itself as a partner with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA), the Northwest Indiana Forum, and One Region; and

WHEREAS, these entities have come together collaboratively under the State of Indiana's Regional Cities Initiative to make application for enhancing service along the South Shore Line for the benefit of Northwestern Indiana and its residents, businesses, and industry; and

WHEREAS, such award under the Regional Cities Initiative could provide substantial funding for service improvements and double-tracking of the South Shore Line through NIRPC's service area; and

WHEREAS, such improvements would provide competitive commuter rail service that would be catalytic to plans for Transit Oriented Development (TOD) along this commuter rail line, making these plans feasible and marketable; and

WHEREAS, such TOD development is strongly supported by the *2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan* as critical for the revitalization of the region's urbanized areas and livable centers, as incentivized through existing NIRPC programs such as the *Creating Livable Communities* program; and

WHEREAS, given the region's housing affordability, access to good schools, and favorable tax climate, a successful and competitive commuter rail system is also essential to grow economic opportunity in northwestern Indiana communities;

WHEREAS, the Commission as a regional policy body and as staff is strongly committed to the successful implementation of commuter rail in Northwest Indiana, one of the key economic development and quality of life assets for the region and the State of Indiana as the state's only commuter rail service, helping to drive the future of the region and connecting Indiana to the Chicago market; and

WHEREAS, the Commission adopted resolution #14-32 on October 16, 2014, "In Support of Increased Investment in Commuter Rail Connecting Chicago to Northwest Indiana"; and

WHEREAS, this opportunity for funding through the Regional Cities Initiative would provide for substantial investment in commuter rail connecting Chicago to Northwest Indiana;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission supports an application to the State of Indiana under the Regional Cities Initiative for purposes of enhancing commuter rail in Northwest Indiana.

Duly adopted by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission this 20th day of August, 2015.



Blair Milo
Chairperson



Robert J. Schaefer
Secretary