

# the regional view

the newsletter of the northwestern indiana regional planning commission

Fall 2014 Issue

## COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE SPECIAL EDITION

# CRP Update Process Begins

By: Steve Strains

The 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP) for Northwest Indiana was adopted by the NIRPC Commission in June, 2011. This award-winning plan sets the vision for a more vibrant, revitalized, accessible, and united region. So far, implementation has taken place by way of




federally funded surface transportation projects that have been selected in keeping with the CRP goals and objectives. In addition, key CRP strategies are being applied through the Creating Livable Communities Program that emphasizes expanded, vital and invigorated downtowns and neighborhood centers.

Planning is a continuous process, therefore plans, as appropriate as they are, need to be updated periodically. With the passage of time conditions change, priorities shift, new information is developed, and fresh data is analyzed. Also contributing to the timing of a plan's reexamination and potential revision are the federal transportation planning regulations for metropolitan areas, which require that a plan be up-

dated or replaced every four years. As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Lake, Porter, LaPorte County area, NIRPC is charged with keeping the region's plan current.

Within its vision which sets a bold, yet reasonable course toward the future,

the 2040 CRP will undergo a review with some revisions during the coming months. That analysis will culminate in an expected adoption by NIRPC in May, 2015. The work done between now and then will concentrate on, but not be limited to, the transportation portion of the plan – highway, non-motorized and especially public transportation.

Public engagement in the planning process is essential and welcome. Besides regular NIRPC committees, a series of public meetings is scheduled for people to provide ideas and suggestions for the plan update. 

*Steve Strains is NIRPC's Deputy Director and Director of Planning.*

## 2014 NIRPC Executive Board

Chair.....**Brian Snedecor**  
*Mayor of Hobart*

Vice-Chair.....**Blair Milo**  
*Mayor of LaPorte*

Treasurer.....**Jim Ton**  
*Chesterton Town Council*

Secretary.....**Roosevelt Allen, Jr.**  
*Lake County Commission*

Executive Board.....**Anthony Copeland**  
*Mayor of East Chicago*

Executive Board.....**Tom Schmitt**  
*Schererville Town Council*

Executive Board.....**Nancy Adams**  
*Porter County Commission*

Executive Board.....**Don Ensign**  
*Hebron Town Council*

Executive Board.....**Rich Murphy**  
*Michigan City City Council*

Executive Board.....**Dave Decker**  
*La Porte County Commission*

Executive Board.....**Ed Soliday**  
*Indiana State Representative*

Executive Director.....**Ty Warner**  
*NIRPC*

Requests for alternate formats, please contact Stephen Sostaric at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 155 or at [ssostaric@nirpc.org](mailto:ssostaric@nirpc.org). Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333.

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.

## And the winner is...

NIRPC is proud of the multiple awards given to the 2040 CRP. Since 2009, the plan and its related activities have garnered seven national and state honors.



### **American Planning Association:**

*2013 Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan: A Vision for Northwest Indiana*



### **National Association of Regional Councils:**

*2010 Achievement Award for the Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana*

*2012 Achievement Award for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan: A Vision for Northwest Indiana*



### **American Planning Association – Indiana Chapter:**

*Hoosier Planning Award Outstanding Community Initiative 2010 for the Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana*

*Hoosier Planning Award Outstanding Plan 2012 for the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan: A Vision for Northwest Indiana*

*Hoosier Planning Award Outstanding Best Practice 2014 for the Creating Livable Communities (CLC) Program*



### **2009 Indiana MPO Conference:**

*Outstanding Public Involvement for the Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana*

# Let's Talk...Planning

In anticipation of updating the 2040 CRP, NIRPC will host a series of public meetings on specific subject areas throughout the region in the months of September and October. These meetings will provide the public an opportunity to provide input into the plan update process.

The meetings to be held will cover three major subject areas: motorized surface transportation, public transit, and the environment. The dates, times, and locations are as follows:

## Motorized Surface Transportation

- Thursday, September 18, 2014, 1:00 pm-3:00 pm & 4:00 pm-6:00 pm, Michigan City City Hall, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City
- Wednesday, October 1, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm & 5:00 pm-7:00 pm, Merrillville Town Hall, 7820 Broadway, Merrillville
- Tuesday, October 21, 2014, 1:00 pm-3:00 pm & 4:00 pm-6:00 pm, Munster Town Hall, 1005 Ridge Road, Munster
- Wednesday October 22, 2014, 1:00 pm-3:00 pm & 4:00 pm-6:00 pm, Valparaiso Public Library, 103 Jefferson Street, Valparaiso

## Public Transit


- Monday, September 22, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, Dyer-Schererville Public Library, 1001 W. Lincoln Highway, Schererville
- Wednesday, September 24, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, East Chicago Public Library Main Branch, 2401 E. Columbus Drive, East Chicago
- Monday, October 6, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, Crown Point Public Library, 122 N. Main Street, Crown Point
- Tuesday, October 7, 2014, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm, Adam Benjamin Metro Center, 100 W. 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Gary

- Tuesday, October 14, 2014, 5:30 pm-7:30 pm, Portage City Hall, 6070 Central Avenue, Portage
- Wednesday, October 15, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, Valparaiso City Hall, 166 Lincolnway, Valparaiso
- Thursday, October 16, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, La Porte City Hall, 801 Michigan Avenue, La Porte
- Thursday, October 16, 2014, 5:00 pm-7:00 pm, Michigan City City Hall, 100 East Michigan Boulevard, Michigan City
- Thursday, October 23, 2014, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm, Hammond Public Library, 564 State Street, Hammond

## Environment

- Tuesday, September 16, 2014, 2:00 pm-4:00 pm, Room 002 of the Library-Student-Faculty Building at Purdue University North Central, US 421, Westville
- Wednesday, October 29, 2014, 1:00 pm-3:00 pm & 4:00 pm-6:00 pm, Merrillville Town Hall, 7820 Broadway, Merrillville

The public is invited to attend any and all of these public meetings and provide input as NIRPC starts the process of updating its CRP. Comments may also be submitted to [comments@nirpc.org](mailto:comments@nirpc.org), or by calling NIRPC at 219-763-6060 ext. 160, or by mailing NIRPC at 6100 Southport Road, Portage, IN 46368. TTY users may call Relay Indiana at 711. Additional information, including the current 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan, may be found at [www.nirpc.org](http://www.nirpc.org).

Requests for information in alternate format may be directed to Mary Thorne at [mthorne@nirpc.org](mailto:mthorne@nirpc.org), or by calling NIRPC at 219-763-6060, ext. 131 at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting you plan to attend. 

# Other Happenings Around NIRPC

While the update of NIRPC's 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan is the main topic of this issue of *the regional view*, it's not the only thing going on. Here's a heads-up for a couple of big activities also happening this fall.

## **Public Meetings on Public Transportation**

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.

## **Comment Period for Public Participation Plan**

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) is conducting a 45-day comment and review period and will hold one public meeting on the draft 2014 Public Participation Plan. The comment and review period will run from Monday, September 15, 2014 to Wednesday, October 31, 2014.

The public meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2014 at the downtown branch of the Hammond Public Library, 654 State Street, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm.

As always, be sure to visit [www.nirpc.org](http://www.nirpc.org) for the latest information on these and other events.

---

## 25 Years of Service Recognized



At the July 17, 2014 meeting of the NIRPC Commission, NIRPC's Transportation Data Specialist Terrell Waddell was recognized for his 25 years of service to NIRPC and presented with a certificate to commemorate the occasion. Terrell is an integral part of NIRPC's transportation data collection, performing traffic counts throughout the region. Congratulations and thank you, Terrell!