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ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
November 7, 2024 at **10:00 a.m.**
Agenda

- 1.0 Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- 2.0 Introductions
- 3.0 Meeting Minutes – August 1, 2024 (pp. 1 – 3)
ACTION REQUESTED – Approval
- 4.0 Public Comments
This is an opportunity for members of the audience to comment on the agenda items. The time available to speak will be limited to 3 minutes. Commenters must indicate their wish to comment on the sign-in sheet.
- 5.0 Lake Michigan Coastal Program 309 Enhancement Plan (pp. 4 - 6)
Presentation by Jenny Orsburn, Program Manager
Action Requested- Survey Discussion and Input
- 6:0 Project and Program Updates
 - 6.1 Transportation Project Applications for Environment Committee Review
Presentation by NIRPC staff:
Action Requested- Review and Discuss
- 7.0 Announcements
- 8.0 The next Environment Committee meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2025 at 10:00 am.
- 9.0 Adjournment

The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities based on 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.

Environmental Management Policy Committee
Lake Michigan Room
August 1, 2024
Minutes

Bill Emerson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bill Emerson, Joe Exl (LMCP), Silvia Lombardo, Nicole Messacar (IDEM), Phil Gralik (BF&S), Reggie Korthals (MS4 Partnership), Andy Vasquez (Porter County), Bonnie Hawksworth (Dune Acres), Kay Nelson (Forum), Kathy Sipple (Earth Charter IN), Nancy Moldenhauer (Michigan City), and Ryan Lisek (DCI) were in attendance.

NIRPC staff present were Kathy Luther, Tom Vander Woude, Grace Beninger, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

The meeting minutes of February 1, 2024, were approved on motion by Reggie Korthals and second by Andy Vazques.

Public Comments

No public comments were submitted.

NIRPC Committee Restructuring

Kathy Luther spoke on the 2024 committee restructuring. The current committee will be put into NIRPC's statutory areas. Streamlining the committees aligns with the focus of the *NWI 2050+* Plan.

- The Technical Planning Committee (TPC), the Transportation Resource & Oversight Committee (TROC), the Surface Transportation Committee (STC), and the Ped Pedal & Paddle Committee (3PC) will be placed into the Transportation Committee.
- Freight, local government assistance, the Economic Development District, and the Land Use Committee will be placed into the Economic Development Committee.
- The Environmental Management & Policy Committee (EMPC) will become the Environment Committee. Commissioner assignments are slated to change by the end of the year, but the goals and procedures will remain the same.

Goals were presented, including educating the public and holding discussions on environmental issues in the Region. The decline in attendance was discussed. Other goals set for the Environment Committee included forming coalitions and providing a vision for area-wide sustainable development.

Coastal Hazards Resilience Needs Assessment Report

Jen Birchfield reported on the Coastal Hazards Resilience Needs assessment. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) was contracted by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan Coastal Program (LMCP) to develop a coastal resiliency community self-assessment tool for Northwest Indiana coastal local government authorities (LGAs) and to support LGAs in completing the self-assessment. The assessment aided in identifying potential impacts of hazards and having the watershed communities consider planning and actions to increase resiliency. The assessment is not intended to rank communities against each other. The assessment results will assist the Lake Michigan Coastal Program in developing and delivering technical resources communities need to reduce or prevent natural hazard risks. Part one of the assessment identified the dangers in helping LGAs prioritize hazard issues such as coastal flooding, riverine flooding, coastal erosion, fluvial erosion, lake level change, and coastal storms. Part two focused on resilient practices to help identify joint planning and mitigation actions that LGAs can

implement to address coastal watershed hazard issues. The summary details were presented. Some findings included the following:

- Most LGAs perceive a low or moderate probability of riverine flooding, yet most also commented on flooding concerns and planning and actions to alleviate flooding.
- Many LGAs reported working closely with partners and agencies, such as the Little Calumet River Basin Development Commission (LCRBDC), FEMA, Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), and County Surveyors.
- LGAs tend to indirectly address resiliency in their plans without explicitly addressing “community resilience” or “climate mitigation” in those terms.
- Roughly half of the LGAs consider projected precipitation increases in their stormwater management plans and manage infrastructure for future climate risks. Most lack flood management plans.
- Most LGAs lack a formal plan for managing access to public beaches and rivers during high lake levels or shoreline erosion. However, many take actions that are not formally documented in a plan.

Climate Action Planning Update – Chicago MSA Comprehensive Climate Action Plan Process

Kathy Luther spoke on the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) update for the Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). NIRPC is working with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) as the coordinating regional agency. CMAP works on behalf of 7 counties, 284 municipalities, and nearly 8.6 million residents in Illinois. Like NIRPC, the agency’s plans prioritize and distribute transportation funds to communities.

The goal of the CCAP is to achieve a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 and net zero by 2050. The CCAP is required to be comprehensive, quantifiable, and equitable. It must address all significant GHG sources. The CAP is required to include reduction estimates, implementation targets, and air quality benefits. It must identify and engage impacted communities and address workforce needs to ensure equitable access to opportunities. Stakeholder engagement, modeling, and data analysis will continue throughout 2024. The first phase of research and policy development is focused on understanding the emissions sectors and guiding the development of reduction strategies. Research and feedback received will be entered into a plan development due to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) by July 28, 2025.

NIRPC Fall Notice of Funding Opportunity

Two Environment NOFA working groups were held on March 6 and June 6. Key points were presented and included the following:

- Outreach should be done to resiliency committees and MS4 operators and consultants who tend to develop their projects.
- Projects must be in a plan for a path to additional funding.
- NIRPC could promote through PROTECT and contract for developing resiliency implementation plans or regional plans, including evacuation plans and natural infrastructure. However, a match would be required.
- NIRPC should engage with the County MHMP efforts.
- Federal Highway defines resiliency as with respect to a project as “a project with the ability to anticipate, prepare for, or adapt to conditions or withstand, respond to, or recover rapidly from disruptions, including the ability to:
 - Resist hazards or withstand impacts from weather events and natural disasters.

- Reduce the magnitude or duration of impacts of a disruptive weather event or natural disaster.
- Have absorptive capacity, adaptive capacity, and recoverability to decrease project vulnerability to weather events or other natural disasters.
- The consideration of incorporating natural infrastructure.

Announcements

Announcements were made.

Reports from Planning Partners

For more information on events and programs with Drive Clean Indiana, please visit <https://drivecleanindiana.org/>.

The next EMPC meeting is slated for November 7, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the NIRPC offices.

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.



Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program Enhancement Program Assessment

About the Enhancement Program

The Coastal Zone Enhancement Program encourages state and territorial coastal management programs to strengthen and improve their federally approved coastal management programs in one or more of nine areas. These “enhancement areas” include wetlands, coastal hazards, public access, marine debris, cumulative and secondary impacts, special area management plans, ocean and Great Lakes resources, energy and government facility siting, and aquaculture. The enhancement program was established under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), as amended.

Every five years, states and territories are encouraged to conduct self-assessments of their coastal management programs to determine problems and enhancement opportunities within each of the nine enhancement areas—and to assess the effectiveness of existing management efforts to address identified problems. Each coastal management program identifies high priority management issues as well as important needs and information gaps the program must fill to address these issues.

We are seeking input on which areas the LMCP should focus on for the Program Enhancement. Please choose your top **three** enhancement areas. For each choice, please identify what you feel are the greatest problems, stressors, hazards, or threats regarding each of your choices. Also identify what are the greatest opportunities to more effectively address the problems.

Program Enhancement Areas:

Wetlands

Protection, restoration, or enhancement of the existing coastal wetlands base, or creation of new coastal wetlands. Note: For the purposes of this assessment, wetlands are “those areas that are inundated or saturated at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstance do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions” This enhancement area is National Priority determined by NOAA Office of Coastal Management, this enhancement area will be included in the assessment.

Stressors: Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities: Click or tap here to enter text.

Coastal Hazards

Prevent or significantly reduce threats to life and property by eliminating development and redevelopment in high-hazard areas, managing development in other hazard areas, and anticipating and managing the effects of potential sea level rise and Great Lakes level change. Note: For purposes of the Hazards assessment, coastal hazards include the following traditional hazards and those identified in the CZMA: flooding, coastal storms (including associated storm surge), geological hazards (e.g. tsunamis, earthquakes), shoreline erosion (including bluff and dune erosion), Great Lakes level change, land subsidence, and saltwater intrusion. This enhancement area is National Priority determined by NOAA Office of Coastal Management; this enhancement area will be included in the assessment.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Public Access

Attain increased opportunities for public access, taking into account current and future public access needs, to coastal areas of recreational, historical, aesthetic, ecological, or cultural value.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Marine Debris

Reducing marine debris entering the nation’s coastal and ocean environment by managing uses and activities that contribute to the entry of such debris.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Cumulative and Secondary Impacts

Development and adoption of procedures to assess, consider, and control cumulative and secondary impacts of coastal growth and development, including the collective effect on various uses or activities on coastal resources, such as coastal wetlands and fishery resources.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Special Area Management Planning

Preparing and implementing special area management plans for important coastal areas.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Ocean and Great Lakes Resources

Planning for the use of ocean and Great Lakes resources.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Energy and Government Facility Siting

Adoption of procedures and enforceable policies to help facilitate the siting of energy facilities and Government facilities and energy-related activities and Government activities which may be of greater than local significance.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Aquaculture

Adoption of procedures and policies to evaluate and facilitate the siting of public and private aquaculture facilities in the coastal zone, which will enable states to formulate, administer, and implement strategic plans for marine aquaculture.

Stressors:Click or tap here to enter text.

Opportunities:Click or tap here to enter text.

Contact Information

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Organization: Click or tap here to enter text.

Email Address: Click or tap here to enter text.