

Technical Planning Committee
NIRPC Lake Michigan Room
YouTube Recording:

https://www.youtube.com/live/YZ37O9FNXMM?si=iCwK_E_chmJbOu0r

April 9, 2024

Minutes

Kevin Breitzke called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Kevin Breitzke (Porter County), Max Rehlander (Valparaiso), Ryan Lisek (DCI), Lisa Shrader (INDOT), George Topoll (Union Township), Beth Shrader (Valpo Transit), Beth West (TransPorte), Dean Button (Hammond), Mark O'Dell (Chesterton), and David Wright (GPTC) were in attendance.

Steve King, Jake Dammarell, Jeff Huet (Schererville), Tom Schmitt (Schererville), Brian Snedecor, Julie Ritzler, and Alex Olesker were also in attendance.

NIRPC staff present were Tom Vander Woude, Mitch Barloga, Scott Weber, Grace Benninger, Stephen Hughes, Kevin Polette, and Flor Baum.

On a motion by Dean Button, second by Mark O'Dell, the Technical Planning Committee (TPC) approved the February 6, 2024, minutes, as presented.

There were no public comments.

Planning

Stephen Hughes presented on the *NWI 2050+* Transit chapter. The Transit profile describes all Lake, Porter, and La Porte Counties' public transit operators. Different variables were considered to come up with the Transit Demand Index (TDI), which includes population density, job density, poverty level, minority population, disabled population, population over 65, and those without vehicle access. The highest TDI demand response for the public is within La Porte and the northwest portion of Lake County. This is critical to represent how NWI is doing in terms of preparing public transit. Service efficiencies were also identified for effectiveness, including gaps, overlaps, and transit-accessible areas in the region. NIRPC staff developed a Grid System proposal map for NWI, with 10 new regional routes connecting Lake, Porter, and LaPorte counties. The Hub System Proposal, coming out of 2050+, gives nine new routes with timed transfers. The preferred system is cost-effective, flexible, and reaches more locations. The committee discussed how 2050+ would phase out the projects for the proposed grid and buses, starting with the communities with the greatest need (from north to south).

Tom Vander Woude spoke on Resolution #24-05: Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Approval. The UPWP is a federally and state-approved work plan for MPO staff to plan tasks over a fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). The UPWP is also a financial document linking staff activities to funding sources. NIRPC staff has provided a budget summary to INDOT and FHWA for sections 100 – 600 that incorporate local, state, and national priorities into the core duties of the MPO. A summary of FY-25 PL funding shows that nearly the entire budget is used for staff and overhead. \$5K has been set aside for the Sensible Tools Handbook+ workshops, and \$314K has been set aside for LPA Planning Assistance. A summary for FY-25 Flex Funding shows that NIRPC plans to flex Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funds to cover the Air Quality Education program, Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds to cover R-TIP software costs, and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds to cover a Road Safety Audits consultant contract.

On motion by Dean Button, seconded by George Topoll, the TPC approved recommending Res 24-05 to the Commission.

Programming

Nothing to report.

Staff Updates and Reports from Planning Partners

Staff updates and announcements were made. Drive Clean Indiana shared updates. For more information, visit www.drivecleanindiana.org.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

The next TPC meeting is slated for June 4, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in the NIRPC building.