

Appendix A: Visions, Goals & Objectives

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2040 CRP Vision Statement

Stretching from the treasured shores of Lake Michigan to the historic banks of the Kankakee River and committed to an ethic of sustainability:

- *A vibrant region* – Our economy is thriving, our people are well educated, growth is planned, and natural and rural areas are valued and protected;
- *A revitalized region* – Urban areas are renewed and our environment is clean;
- *An accessible region* – Our people are connected to each other and to equal opportunities for working, playing, living and learning;
- *A united region* – Celebrating our diversity, we work together as a community across racial, ethnic, political and cultural lines for the good of the region.



2040 CRP Goals

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – thriving economy

Goal: A globally competitive, diversified economy that protects and enhances our natural environment

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – well-educated people

Goal: Expanded access to knowledge and educational opportunities

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – protected natural and rural areas

Goal: Managed growth that protects farmland, environmentally sensitive areas and important ecosystems

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – planned growth

Goal: Livable urban, suburban and rural centers

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – renewed urban areas

Goal: Revitalized urban core cities

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – clean environment

Goal: Improved air quality

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – clean environment

Goal: Reduced flooding and improved water quality

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – clean environment

Goal: Clean land

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: A safe and secure transportation system

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: Increased mobility, accessibility and transportation options for people and freight

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: Adequate transportation funding and efficient use of resources

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: A transportation system that supports the health of all people and places

Vision Theme: United Region – working together, good of the region

Goal: Environmental justice: shared benefits and burdens

Vision Theme: United Region – working together, good of the region

Goal: Efficient and coordinated local government

2040 CRP Goals & Objectives:

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – thriving economy

Goal: A globally competitive, diversified economy that protects and enhances our natural environment

Objectives:

- Maximize technology, productivity and efficiency of existing core industries
- Create diverse, emerging and sustainable industries
- Strengthen public/private partnerships resulting in increased regional investment
- Redevelop urban core areas
- Utilization/expansion of transportation and other infrastructure advantages
- Promote growth that protects and enhances the environmental assets of Northwest Indiana
- Improve the workforce of the Region to accommodate growth in emerging industries
- Improve overall quality of life to attract businesses and residents

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – well-educated people

Goal: Expanded access to knowledge and educational opportunities

Objectives:

- Develop a transportation system that provides safe and reliable access to educational facilities
- Maintain strategic partnerships with educational institutions
- Provide critical information to the public to enable meaningful public participation
- Educate leaders about best practices in urban and regional planning and public policy
- Improve infrastructure connectivity and access to the technology that supports distance education



Vision Theme: Vibrant Region – protected natural and rural areas

Goal: Managed growth that protects farmland, environmentally sensitive areas and important ecosystems

Objectives:

- Promote the development and preservation of regional greenways and blueways (water trails) and establish linkages between them
- Encourage the concentration of development around existing infrastructure
- Encourage redevelopment of infill sites within established centers
- Promote compact development and smart growth through techniques such as transit-oriented development, traditional neighborhood development and conservation design
- Foster the development of local food systems and a local food economy
- Preserve prime agricultural land and rural landscapes
- Encourage and plan for the protection and responsible use of shoreline areas
- Improve access to major regional parks and preserved open lands, including the Indiana Dunes

Vision Theme: Vibrant Region: – planned growth

Goal: Livable urban, suburban and rural centers

Objectives:

- Encourage the compact mixing of uses
- Encourage a diverse mix of housing types and affordability levels near job centers and transit routes
- Facilitate the remediation and redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized land including brownfields and grayfields
- Promote a safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle environment
- Expand access to public transit and promote transit-supportive land use patterns
- Promote community green infrastructure and access to public open space
- Promote the preservation of historic and cultural resources
- Promote the integration of Context Sensitive Solutions into transportation planning and projects

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – renewed urban areas

Goal: Revitalized urban core

Objectives:

- Rebuild and improve existing infrastructure systems including public transportation
- Improve the connectivity of and provide access to high-tech infrastructure, including broadband, fiber and other technologies, to promote innovation and investment
- Foster the development of livable, mixed use downtowns
- Promote adaptive reuse, infill development and the remediation and re-use of underutilized properties, particularly brownfields
- Facilitate the rehabilitation of neighborhoods and maintenance of high quality and affordable housing
- Promote the preservation of historic and cultural resources
- Expand visual and physical access to Lake Michigan and other open space
- Partner to protect threatened natural remnants
- Enhance community design and aesthetics

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – clean environment

Goal: Improved air quality

Objectives:

- Achieve national ambient air quality standards for all pollutants, including carbon monoxide, ozone and particulates
- Reduce air toxics, greenhouse gases and other harmful emissions
- Improve the aesthetics – noise, odor, discoloration – of air
- Reduce the disproportionate impact of industrial and transportation emissions on environmental justice populations
- Coordinate land use and transportation policies to reduce motor vehicle trips



Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – clean environment

Goal: Reduced flooding risks and improved water quality

Objectives:

- Achieve water quality standards and designated uses of our lakes and streams
- Complete, improve, and implement watershed management plans
- Promote stormwater best management practices, including the development of green infrastructure and the reduction of impervious surfaces
- Facilitate regional planning for adequate collection and treatment of wastewater and the elimination of the inappropriate use of septic systems
- Promote the upgrading of aging water infrastructure
- Facilitate the development of a regional stormwater strategy
- Facilitate regional planning for water supply and demand
- Preserve floodplains and wetlands

Vision Theme: Revitalized Region – clean environment

Goal: Clean land

Objectives:

- Maximize the number of brownfields returned to productive use
- Facilitate a regional solid waste and landfill strategy
- Promote the acquisition and protection of greenspace
- Mitigate transportation and land use impacts



Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: A safe and secure transportation system

Objectives:

- Reduce the number and severity of motor vehicle collisions
- Improve the safety of non-motorized transportation through education, enforcement, engineering, design and construction
- Reduce flooding of roadways
- Reduce emergency response times
- Support the development of regional preparedness and evacuation planning
- Improve the safety and security of transit facilities, including stations, stops and vehicles
- Utilize technology, including Intelligent Transportation Systems and other strategies, to improve transportation safety

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: Increased mobility, accessibility and transportation options for people and freight

Objectives:

- Integrate local, regional and national transportation systems to facilitate movement of people and freight between modes
- Improve freight facilities connecting the region to national and global markets
- Reduce congestion on major freight and passenger routes
- Improve the internal connectivity of the transportation network
- Enhance connectivity between housing, jobs, services and educational facilities
- Improve system accessibility for people with special transportation needs, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, the young and low-income populations
- Increase access to and improve the reliability of public mass transit
- Improve the non-motorized transportation network by building Complete Streets that accommodate bicycles, pedestrians and transit users
- Enhance navigability through improved wayfinding and signage
- Encourage land use policy that supports access for disabled persons, efficient mass transit, and non-motorized travel

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: Adequate transportation funding and efficient use of resources

Objectives:

- Increase the level of federal and state funding flowing into the region and improve the ability to provide local matching funds
- Protect previous investments through maintenance and improvements to existing transportation infrastructure, operations and services
- Devote sufficient resources to address reconstruction and maintenance needs
- Utilize the Congestion Management Process to optimize the efficiency of the existing system
- Prioritize transportation investments that support land use and economic development goals
- Encourage investments that consider long range impacts of changing transportation systems and anticipate future technologies

Vision Theme: Accessible Region – connected people and opportunities

Goal: A transportation system that supports the health of all people and places

Objectives:

- Improve the integration of environmental planning activities into transportation planning
- Reduce the levels and impacts of pollution (including air, noise, and vibration) caused by transportation, particularly freight, especially in environmental justice communities
- Improve the non-motorized transportation network by building Complete Streets that accommodate bicycles, pedestrians and transit users
- Expand environmental mitigation efforts
- Conduct outreach to determine the negative impacts of transportation investments and to ensure environmental justice
- Promote energy efficiency and alternative energy

Vision Theme: United Region – working together, good of the region

Goal: Environmental justice: shared benefits and burdens

Objectives:

- Increase outreach in environmental justice communities and improve the public involvement process to eliminate barriers and engage minority, disabled, elderly and low-income populations in regional decision-making
- Improve capacity to identify residential, employment and transportation patterns of low-income and minority populations so that their needs may be identified and addressed, and the impacts of transportation can be fairly distributed
- Avoid disproportionately high and/or adverse impacts on minority, disabled, elderly and/or low-income populations.
- Minimize and/or mitigate unavoidable impacts on low-income and/or minority populations by providing offsetting initiatives and enhancement measures to benefit affected communities and neighborhoods
- Increase awareness and understanding of environmental justice issues among decision makers
- Mitigate displacement of local residents and the loss of property investments when redeveloping the urban core

Vision Theme: United Region – working together, good of the region

Goal: Efficient and coordinated local government

Objectives:

- Facilitate the consolidation of redundant local government services
- Promote coordination of land use and corridor planning across jurisdictional boundaries
- Foster better communication, cooperation and coordination to better leverage resources
- Promote the sharing of benefits, burdens and costs among governments



Broadway Rapid Transit

The concept of a rapid-transit line on a dedicated right-of-way in the Broadway corridor has been submitted for the plan by the Duneland Sierra Club and the Gary Public Transportation Corp. This project would help to focus transit-oriented development and stimulate economic growth in some of the most disadvantaged communities in the region.

Access to health care and education facilities and external destinations via high-speed rail and the South Shore Commuter line would be significantly enhanced. The line also would connect several trails, parks and employment centers.

As modeled (travel demand forecast model), the line would reduce regional vehicle miles of travel by 32,798 vehicle miles per day, reduce volatile organic compound emissions by 6,560 grams per day, reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by 6,396 grams per day and reduce fine particle emissions from mobile sources by 426 grams per day.

The estimates for the cost of construction range from \$80 million to \$150 million. The project would require funding through the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program, which is a highly competitive grant process. In order to compete successfully, the project would need to demonstrate a high benefit-to-cost ratio. In addition, the project would need a reliable source of revenue to cover the operating expenses. For these reasons, the project is included on the "Illustrative List" of projects that would be implemented if the need and benefit was identified, and if the finances necessary to build and operate it were to materialize.



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For Northwest Indiana

Enhancing Access to Chicago

Convenience, reliability and safety are the standards that must be met as the region pursues new modal initiatives to enhance access to Chicago's Loop, improve overall quality of life and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels. The West Lake Corridor commuter rail expansion project represents an opportunity to aggressively pursue these objectives with new service along the CSX and former Monon rail corridor to Munster/Dyer, and eventually to Lowell. As the population continues shifting to the south and east, re-establishing passenger rail service to Valparaiso along the Chicago, Fort Wayne and Eastern corridor also may become feasible.

Enhancing our access to Chicago will have a profound, long-term impact on our regional economy, improving our ability to compete for high-paying Chicago-based jobs and making Northwest Indiana communities more attractive places to live and work. Expanding commuter rail recognizes the changing population patterns in Northwest Indiana and the importance of shaping the direction of that growth through careful infrastructure planning and investment.

West Lake would mark the first expansion of commuter rail in the region in over a century, not only bringing jobs, but a marked departure in the way rail stations are planned and built. Stations will become more than hubs for rail/passenger interface, they will transform communities beyond the immediate vicinity of the project. While adequate parking will continue to be an important element of station design, the footprint it occupies should be significantly more compact. Stations will incorporate sustainable designs that blend with the surrounding community and incorporate amenities and services that add value to neighborhoods.



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For Northwest Indiana

2010 Ped and Pedal Plan

Over the last 20 years, the United States has seen a dramatic increase in the levels of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. This is coupled by an extreme spike in oil prices that significantly dent household discretionary budgets. With these factors in mind, a renewed appreciation of non-motorized travel has emerged that focuses on the development of facilities that cater to safe and convenient access by bicycle or foot.

As part of these efforts to promote and expand these, NIRPC published the 2010 Ped & Pedal Plan. This plan update builds upon the work that was previously done in the 2005 Ped & Pedal Plan and the 1994 Regional Bikeways Plan. The 1994 plan was significant because it represented the first in-depth analysis on developing a vast network of bicycle-friendly trails and roadways in Northwest Indiana. The 2005 plan carried the work done in that plan even further and expanded upon it by adding a pedestrian element.

Ped & Pedal seeks to educate the many benefits of non-motorized facility development in a community and region, which include the following:

- a) **Traffic Reduction:** With more travelers opting to use trails, this directly leads to fewer automobiles on the road, aiding the flow of traffic.
- b) **Air Quality:** Fewer cars equate to less pollution from auto exhausts and less idling at traffic signals or avoiding traffic jams.
- c) **Health:** Where more people opt to travel by bike or foot, this lends significantly to better health, helping to stem the current obesity epidemic that our country faces.
- d) **Economic Development:** Trails have proven to be a highly desirable amenity to any community, usually spearheading new business of all varieties along their route. Proximity to trails also been shown to increase property value.
- e) **Quality of Life:** With all the above mentioned, a greater quality of life is the end result, making a community more livable, and thus able to retain residents and businesses – and attract new ones.

A major element of the plan is the Priority Regional Trails and Corridors Map, which outlines a bold vision of over 500 miles of off-road trails in the NIRPC region. The 29 identified corridors are divided into four priorities, and these are then used to rank projects for requested federal funding.

The map serves as a milestone document towards the creation of a vast network of off-road trails which serve as non-motorized highways. These routes extend several miles through a number of downtowns, and serve to link together these communities, which in turn help link local residents and visitors to employment, recreation and shopping opportunities.



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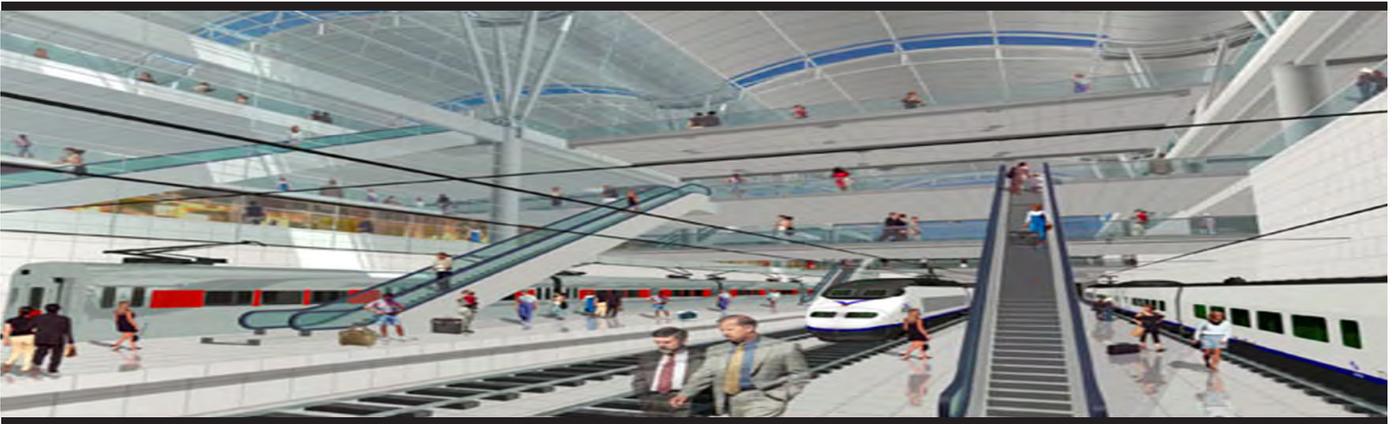
Multimodal Transportation Facility at the Gary-Chicago International Airport

The year is 2030. Three of your friends are coming into town, Sheila from Detroit, Joe from Chicago, and Ted from Philadelphia. None of your friends own a car, and they will all arrive by different modes of transportation. You *do* own a car, and will pick up each friend where and when they arrive. A question: *How many trips will you have to make to pick up your friends?*

Answer: one. Your friends will be arriving at the Gary-Chicago Airport Intermodal Terminal. Joe will be arriving by South Shore train at 11:30. Sheila's 220-mile-per-hour high speed train will arrive at 11:42. While the three of you wait for Ted's flight to land at 12:55, you can grab a bite to eat or grab a cup of coffee at one of the many restaurants within the terminal.

If this sounds too good to be true, it's not. Facilities that bring together multiple modes of transportation – airplanes, commuter and high-speed trains, automobiles, busses, and even bikes – have already proven successful in Europe and other parts of the world. A facility at the Gary-Chicago Airport is currently under study, and there are many reasons to believe it could become a reality, *if we are bold enough to see it through*:

- Ground has recently been broken on an expansion of the runway at the Gary-Chicago Airport, which could provide new passenger service in the future (*see the Gary-Chicago Airport section*).
- A Gary terminal has been identified as a stop on two potential high-speed rail corridors, Chicago-Detroit/Cleveland and Chicago-Cincinnati, by the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI) and the Midwest High Speed Rail Association (MHRSA).
- NICTD's South Shore Line already runs near the airport, and could be rerouted to serve the facility.



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Freight Strategy: Support Development of Intermodal and Multimodal Freight Facilities

As both highways and rails become more congested, it will become increasingly important to use our transportation network as efficiently as possible. Intermodal and multimodal freight facilities, including transload facilities, where cargo is transferred between modes, maximize the efficiency and utility of each mode of transportation. Increased intermodal activity has the potential to take trucks off the roads, improve highway safety and reduce the environmental impacts of goods movement.

There is strong consensus at the local, regional and state levels that the development of multimodal freight hubs offers the potential for significant economic development. This is supported by local governments and by the State of Indiana through the Indiana Economic Development Corporation, INDOT and educational facilities such as Ivy Tech. The recently completed Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy identifies the transportation, distribution and logistics sector as a growth cluster.

The 2040 CRP supports the initiatives to develop intermodal and multimodal hubs throughout Northwest Indiana. These include the development of the Gary/Chicago International Airport Zone and the Porter County Regional Airport Zone; the development of Kingsbury Industrial Park as a multimodal center; improvements to the Gibson Yard in Hammond, including maintaining the height and width of the Indianapolis Boulevard Bridge; and improvements to the Port of Indiana-Burns Harbor.



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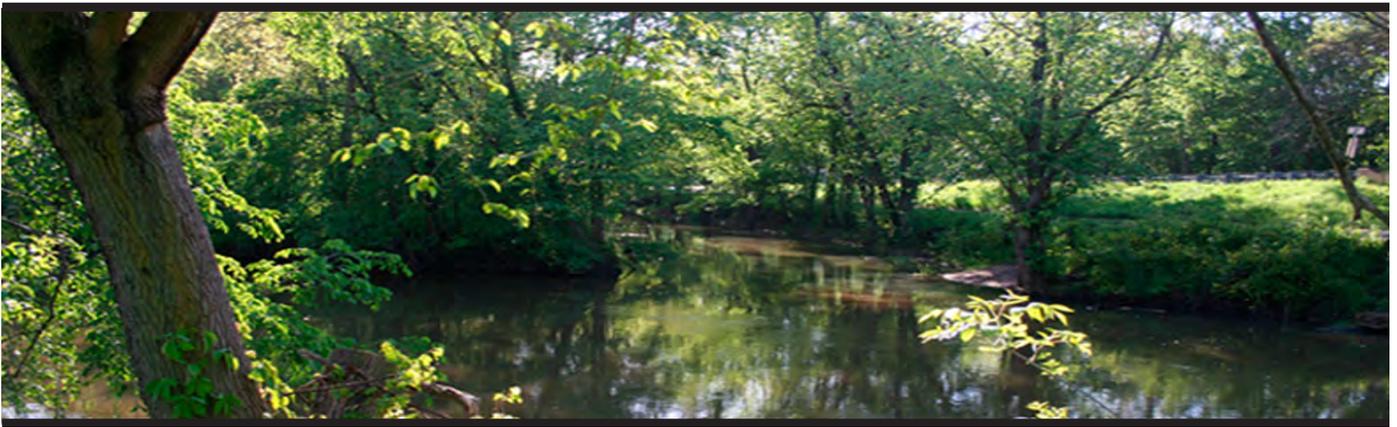
For Northwest Indiana

Restoration of Portions of the Grand Marsh of the Kankakee

In 1983, landowners, conservationists and political leaders in the Kankakee Basin agreed to work toward a Kankakee watershed that would be compatible with agriculture and environmental protection. County governments and the Kankakee River Basin Commission have worked on structural protection to provide safety from devastating floods. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has assisted in flood protection and wetland restoration.

A coalition of conservationists have joined in an effort to reestablish portions of the Grand Kankakee Marsh using local donations and grant funds from the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. This effort is known as the Indiana Grand Kankakee Marsh Restoration Project and is conducted through a committee of volunteer participants: governmental units, nonprofit organizations and private organizations. The vision of a restored Kankakee Marsh would provide 30,000 restored wetland acres, protection for more than 1 million acres of farmland and recreation of national importance.

The Kankakee Basin could again become the giant wet prairie environment that supported water fowl, fish, plants and native animals. Coordinating with landowners would allow the restoration to work in harmony with the agricultural uses for which the Basin has become known. A vibrant Grand Kankakee Marsh, working in tandem with the agricultural economy, would contribute to the long-lasting environmental benefit for Northwest Indiana.



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For Northwest Indiana

Gary/Chicago International Airport Development

Northwest Indiana's largest and busiest commercial airport, the Gary/Chicago International Airport (GCIA), is realizing its vision to grow its core aviation businesses and expand its role as the Chicago metropolitan region's third airport. The airport's strategy is outlined in the GCIA Strategic Business Plan issued in April 2010 in partnership with the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA). The two-pronged strategy is to increase commercial airport operations and capitalize on collateral land development both on and off airport property.

Critical to increasing airport operations, the GCIA Runway Extension Project is under way. To extend primary runway 12-30, operations for three major railroads must be realigned. Then, two sets of railroad tracks must be grade separated from Airport Road to improve safety and reduce delays. GCIA already has acquired property, completed the Cline Avenue access ramp reconstruction and relocated fuel storage tanks and high-voltage power lines. Other improvements include navigational aid relocation, wetland and environmental mitigation and runway remarking.

With a scheduled completion date of 2013, this project will satisfy the FAA mandate to improve runway safety. The estimated cost of approximately \$130 million is being funded primarily with FAA and RDA funds, along with Passenger Facility Charges from the Chicago Airport System.

The state of Indiana, RDA and the city of Gary are cooperating to redevelop on- and off-airport land assets. These sites have strategic advantages, such as:

- GCIA's close location to one of the most important industrial complexes in the U.S., with steel plants, oil refineries, rail yards, harbors, trucking companies and other industries.
- Northwest Indiana's relatively low business operating costs for trucking, utilities and real estate.
- Excellent highway, freight rail and Great Lakes shipping access from these sites.

The partners are targeting business development in the logistics sector, as well as supply and support for the nearby industries. The bold vision is for GCIA to become a more powerful regional economic engine.



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Greenways and Blueways Regional Trail Network

Northwest Indiana is in the midst of becoming a premiere location in the development of routes that accommodate nonmotorized traffic. In the form of land- and water-based facilities, the region continues to work to connect communities within its borders. We are on the cusp of linking to several adjacent locations, especially in Illinois and Michigan. This, along with the passage of Complete Streets Guidelines by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC), amply demonstrates that the region thoroughly recognizes the value of creating opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

Regarding efforts to promote and expand the opportunities available to bicyclists and pedestrians, NIRPC has published the 2010 Ped and Pedal Plan. This document outlines a comprehensive vision of tying together all parts of the Calumet region via a series of off-road trails. These routes take advantage of a number of linear corridors, including abandoned railroads, utility corridors and waterways. In all, more than 500 miles of off-road trails have been identified, and as of 2011, more than 80 miles have been constructed with another 60 miles funded for imminent development.

In 2007, NIRPC released the first regional water trail strategy, the Greenways and Blueways Plan. This document outlined, in detail, 15 potential water trails, or blueways, in the NIRPC region. These range from well-established routes along Lake Michigan and the Kankakee River to a number of modest routes in Lowell, Crown Point and Michigan City.

Trails have become an enormously popular amenity in communities nationwide. Their locations have a direct impact on the health of a population base, including economic benefits such as increased property values and business relocation/retention. In addition, the environment also benefits from connected habitats for wildlife and improved air quality overall. These linear systems connect communities as nonmotorized superhighways, providing a clean and affordable means of alternative transportation.



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For Northwest Indiana

The Great Konomick Blueway and Greenway

Like the shores of Lake Michigan, the Calumet River has a unique place in Northwest Indiana's natural and cultural history. In its currently engineered form, it exists as two rivers: the Grand Calumet in North Lake County connecting Gary, Hammond and East Chicago, our region's urban core; and the Little Calumet River, which traverses our entire region from LaPorte County to the state line and connects us to our neighboring communities in Illinois. It has offered uses as diverse as transportation, recreation and waste disposal to our communities. Its shape, character and direction have been modified to suit our needs, and its floods have caused human and economic public disasters. It also presents an exciting opportunity for the future.

Within its many segments, the Calumet River system contains the seeds of a potentially awesome connected greenway for humans and nature. In the Grand Calumet, many decades of work under the IDEM-led Remedial Action Plan have begun to remove contaminated sediments from miles of river bottom and many acres of critical habitats have been preserved and restored. At the Little Calumet River, the Indiana Flood Control and Recreation Project on the West Branch of that river is nearing completion of its construction phase after decades of effort. This project created 16.8 miles of hiking/biking trails and a 2000-acre river recreation corridor. On the East Branch of the Little Calumet River, 16 miles of the waterway remain unchanneled, much of it within the boundaries of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, connecting this potential wildlife corridor to this terrific resource.

The Grand Calumet River and both branches of the Little Calumet River have been identified as potential water trails and greenways in the NIRPC Greenways and Blueways Plan. They also are highlighted as key connecting corridors in the Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision. The NIRPC Ped and Pedal Plan also highlights high-priority and State Visionary Trails in these corridors, many of which already are completed or funded. The Marquette Greenway Trail, the Little Calumet River Trail Corridor and portions of the Prairie Duneland Trail Corridor interconnect these waters.

Many different stakeholders, communities and parties are involved in a multitude of projects on and in these water bodies. Many years ago, a consortium of stakeholders began discussion of a Great Konomick to pull together the efforts on the many reaches of this river system. A more expansive and coordinated regional vision of a Great Konomick Blueway and Greenway could support these efforts by helping to leverage their energy and increase the visibility and likelihood of success for all and provide the central spine of the Green Infrastructure Network for Northwest Indiana.



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For Northwest Indiana

The Marquette Plan for Lakefront Reinvestment

In 1985, Indiana's 1st District Congressman, Pete Visclosky, recognized an opportunity for reclaiming large portions of the Lake Michigan shoreline in Northwest Indiana for public purposes in what was referred to as the Marquette Project.

From the congressman's vision came the Marquette Plan, which was completed in two phases in 2005 and 2008. The plan is guided by three core principles for reinvestment in the shoreline areas: 1. Recapture at least 75% of Northwest Indiana's 45 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline for public access and use; 2. Establish a minimum setback of at least 200 feet from the water's edge for any future development; and 3. Create a continuous trail network with linkages to the lakefront throughout Northwest Indiana.

The plan envisions a large number of short- and long-term projects that would contribute to the attainment of the long-term vision for the lakeshore. Two projects already have been completed: the Portage Lakefront Park and Riverwalk (2008) and the Lake Michigan Water Trail (2009). Seven projects currently are funded and under way from Hammond to Long Beach.

The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority, the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission entered into a cooperation agreement in 2009 to coordinate the activities of their respective organizations and champion the implementation efforts that would lead to the attainment of this exciting vision for one of the region's most significant assets.



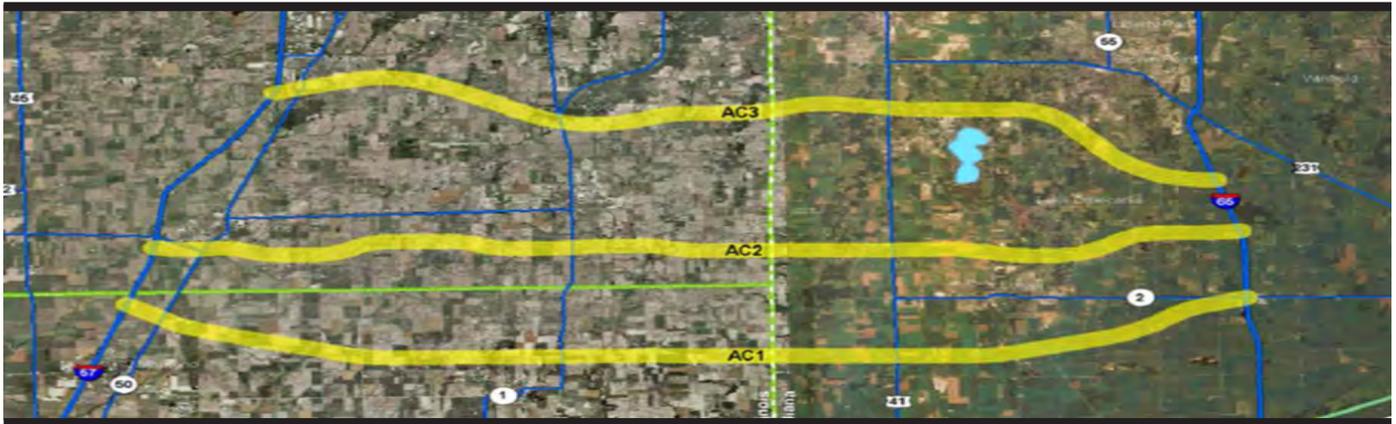
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Illiana Expressway

The Illiana Expressway Corridor has been a component of long-range plans for the region since the early 1900s. The road was first envisioned by Chicago architect and planner Daniel Burnham as a link in an outer ring of highways encircling the Chicago region. Also known as the South Suburban Expressway, the corridor has shifted southward over the years as the Chicago metropolitan area has expanded and available right-of-way has become more limited. Traffic volumes have increased on competing routes, resulting in congestion and delay that impact not only passenger travel, but also result in significant economic impacts to industries that depend on the ability to move freight within and through the region. This proposed facility would be approximately 35 to 40 miles in length, connecting Interstate 55 in Illinois with Interstate 65 in Indiana.

In 2009, a feasibility study on this proposal was completed by Cambridge Systematics for three potential alignments of the segment between I-65 and Interstate 57. The study established the purpose and need and estimated the costs, proceeds and preliminary impacts. In 2010, the Illinois Department of Transportation, in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Transportation, hired Parsons Brinkerhoff to study the environmental impacts. The study would include detailed alternatives analysis and complete the National Environmental Policy Act, clearing the way for federal funding for land acquisition. There is no assurance that it would be built. This project appears on the “Illustrative List” of projects that are not in the fiscally constrained plan.



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For Northwest Indiana

NWI SOS: MOP UP

Northwest Indiana Sustainable On-site Sewage Maintenance, Operation Planning and Upgrade Program

IDEM currently lists 294 miles of streams in Northwest Indiana included as impaired for recreational use due to excessive *E. coli*, an indicator of the potential presence of unhealthy bacteria from human or animal waste. Each year *E. coli* levels result in swimming advisories and closures at beaches along the Lake Michigan shoreline and at many beautiful inland lakes. This ongoing problem reduces the economic benefits and recreational opportunities these waters provide to our communities

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies conducted in our region for IDEM report that human sources of *E. coli* include, but are not limited to, illegal discharges, Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) and failed septic systems. Federal and state programs exist to regulate the illegal discharges and the Combined Sewer Overflows. Unfortunately, there are no federal or state programs to force or fund the environmentally protective operation and maintenance of existing septic systems. Yet the IDEM studies showed that unhealthy levels of *E. coli* are found in both dry weather and in areas where there are no CSOs, clearly pointing to failed septic systems as a problem source in our region.

NIRPC proposes the implementation of SOS-MOP UP. There are tools available through ISDH, IDNR, IDEM and others to help communities and homeowners address failed septic system problems, however there is often limited capacity locally to fully take advantage of these tools. SOS-MOP UP would utilize NIRPC's strengths in maintaining regional databases, providing technical planning support to communities, and developing shared services agreements to build this capacity in our region.

Tools:

- iTOSS: a statewide, web-based septic system tracking database known as iTOSS for use by local health departments. Designed by ISDH and the IDNR Coastal Program, this helps communities create system inventories.
- ISDH Model Ordinance: Added to provide for operation and maintenance of onsite sewage systems (OSS) under the provisions of this ordinance:
 - A.) To protect the public health by providing an operation and maintenance program for OSS in the county and measures to prevent failing or malfunctioning systems
 - B.) To provide for regular OSS inspection and maintenance, including septic tank cleaning, and repairs
 - C.) To provide for the implementation, administration and enforcement of this ordinance by the (Insert County Name Here) County Board of Health (Board), to prescribe the duties of the local health department and to provide penalties for violation of this ordinance.
 - D.) To provide information regarding the location, status and condition of existing OSS.
- Formation of County On-site Septic Wastewater Management Districts under IC 36-11-2.



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For Northwest Indiana

The Marquette Greenway

Stretching from the steel mills to the sand dunes and through historic neighborhoods, it has been the desire of many in the South Shore region to utilize an uninterrupted trail connecting the Illinois, Indiana and Michigan and provide access to numerous points of interest along Lake Michigan. The cities of Chicago, Hammond, East Chicago, Gary, Portage and Michigan City, including the counties of Porter and LaPorte, and the National Park Service, have been working individually for years on developing local segments of this overall vision. During this period of development, many of these trail segments were approved for development, with several more proposed. With these initiatives under way, coupled with the need to establish a true east-west connection along the lakefront, NIRPC has begun to bring all of these visions to the forefront as a unified piece known as the Marquette Greenway.

In all, the route will traverse through 15 communities for approximately 50 miles from Calumet Park in Chicago to the heart of New Buffalo, Mich. – directly touching a population of 120,000 people, but connecting to millions more. In between, roughly 20 individual trail segments will be unified under this route. NIRPC is working directly with all communities along the proposed route, including stakeholders directly adjacent in Illinois and Michigan. The main push at present involves securing the necessary funding for each entity to complete its segment.

In October 2009, NIRPC, along with the Burnham Centennial and the Indiana Planning Association – Indiana Chapter, released *The Marquette Greenway - National Lakeshore Connector Route Proposal* poster plan. This document outlines the proposed route of the entire corridor, as well as specifically details the gap connecting the east and west landholdings of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.



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Transit-Oriented Development Along the South Shore Line

Given the loss of population in the urbanized areas of Northwest Indiana recently exposed in the 2010 Census results, it may seem as if there is no hope of fulfilling the vision of the 2040 CRP. Bold new initiatives will be needed to bring the urban cities back to centers of people, jobs, housing and services. Transit-oriented development adjacent to the South Shore commuter rail holds abundant potential for achieving the rebirth of the urban core.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is typically defined as more compact development within easy walking distance of train stations (usually a half-mile) that contains a mix of uses such as housing, jobs, shops, restaurants and entertainment. It helps to create the livable, sustainable communities people in Northwest Indiana said they wanted throughout the course of creating the 2040 CRP.

The South Shore already has stations in each of the urban centers of Gary, Hammond, East Chicago and Michigan City. Each of these has open or reclaimable spaces for development to create new city centers offering the amenities, housing choices, employment opportunities and transit options that are critical to recreating the vibrant city centers of the past. Each of the urban areas also already has fixed-route bus transit that can contribute to creating truly multimodal transit centers. When a regional transit system is created, whether it is bus rapid transit, street cars or light rail, the TOD centers will be natural destinations for connections among all of the region's communities.

Embracing TOD along the South Shore line takes maximum advantage of existing public infrastructure; offers advantages to all income groups with a mix of housing styles, sizes and price range; promotes a healthier community by encouraging walking and biking; and helps create the sense of place that defines our hometowns.



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Northwest Indiana Sustainable Success Support Center (3SC)

Many of the communities, industries and institutions in our region are implementing incredibly innovative sustainability initiatives. Facilities as diverse as U.S. Steel, Valparaiso University, the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and the many cities and towns that have taken the Indiana Department of Environmental Management CLEAN Community Challenge, have taken creative approaches to energy and water conservation, pollution prevention and waste management. These initiatives benefit their proprietors in many ways, such as reducing costs, increasing productivity and conserving resources. Replicating these types of projects and programs throughout our region would dramatically improve our quality of life and our economic competitiveness. Unfortunately, many smaller communities and businesses lack the staff, funding or technical resources to identify, plan and implement financially beneficial sustainability improvements. Northwest Indiana needs an ongoing, coordinated effort to create and maintain a Sustainable Success Support Center. This concept is modeled after the Mid-America Regional Council's Academy for Sustainable Communities (), but taken a step further to ultimately provide sustainable project planning services.

NIRPC already has many of the pieces necessary to create such a center. We have a start on building a sustainable communities toolbox for this in the "Sensible Tools Handbook." NIRPC also has initiated a Local Government Assistance Program that is considering a Shared Services Agreement to join ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability. The 3SC would build on these beginnings and go beyond. It could create and facilitate mentorships between communities, facilities or businesses. We could engage our regional colleges and universities, through partnerships such as GLISTEN and NICE, to identify students or classes that could work with businesses and communities to understand existing success stories in the region and create sustainability plans and projects for those without the resources to do so.



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