

Project Overview

The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District's (NICTD) existing South Shore Line (SSL) provides a vital transportation link that connects Northwest Indiana to Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. NICTD is proposing the West Lake Corridor Project as a southern branch extension of the SSL route to reach high-growth areas in Lake County, Indiana. The project would expand NICTD's service coverage, improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County.

The **West Lake Corridor Project** would be an approximate **8-mile southern extension** of existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. Trains on the new branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north. The proposed project would provide **new transit service between Dyer, Indiana and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago, Illinois**, a total distance of approximately 29 miles.

What is the EIS Process?


An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was prepared for the Project, with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as the Federal Lead Agency and NICTD as the Local Project Sponsor responsible for implementing the Project. This study initiates the federal environmental review process for the West Lake Corridor Project in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as provisions of US DOT's Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act).

The purpose of the environmental review process is to promote informed decision-making by considering the potential environmental and social impacts of the Project. The FTA and NICTD will engage regulatory agencies with a defined interest in the Project and the public who could potentially be affected by the Project. The environmental review process is structured to encourage participation between government officials, agencies, private businesses, and citizens.



Key Milestones

- EIS Process: 2014 to 2017
- Engineering and Construction: 2017 to 2022
- Project Completion: 2022



Project Cost


Current estimate for the project, with the addition of the Gateway Station in North Hammond, is \$615M. Capital costs will be updated as the project and design are further refined.




Approximate length:
8 Miles dedicated guideway



4 Stations




Operating Schedule:
12 trips to/from Millennium Station (weekday peak),
12 trips connecting to South Shore Line (SSL) Trains at Hammond Gateway (weekday off-peak), and
20 trips connecting to SSL Trains at Hammond Gateway Station



Parking:

Each proposed station concept design includes a parking lot and a pick-up/drop-off area.



Travel Time:
47 Minutes Munster/Dyer Main Street to Millennium
14 Minutes Munster/Dyer Main Street to Gateway



Maintenance & Storage:

Combined and separate facilities were considered in Hammond and near the Munster/Dyer border.

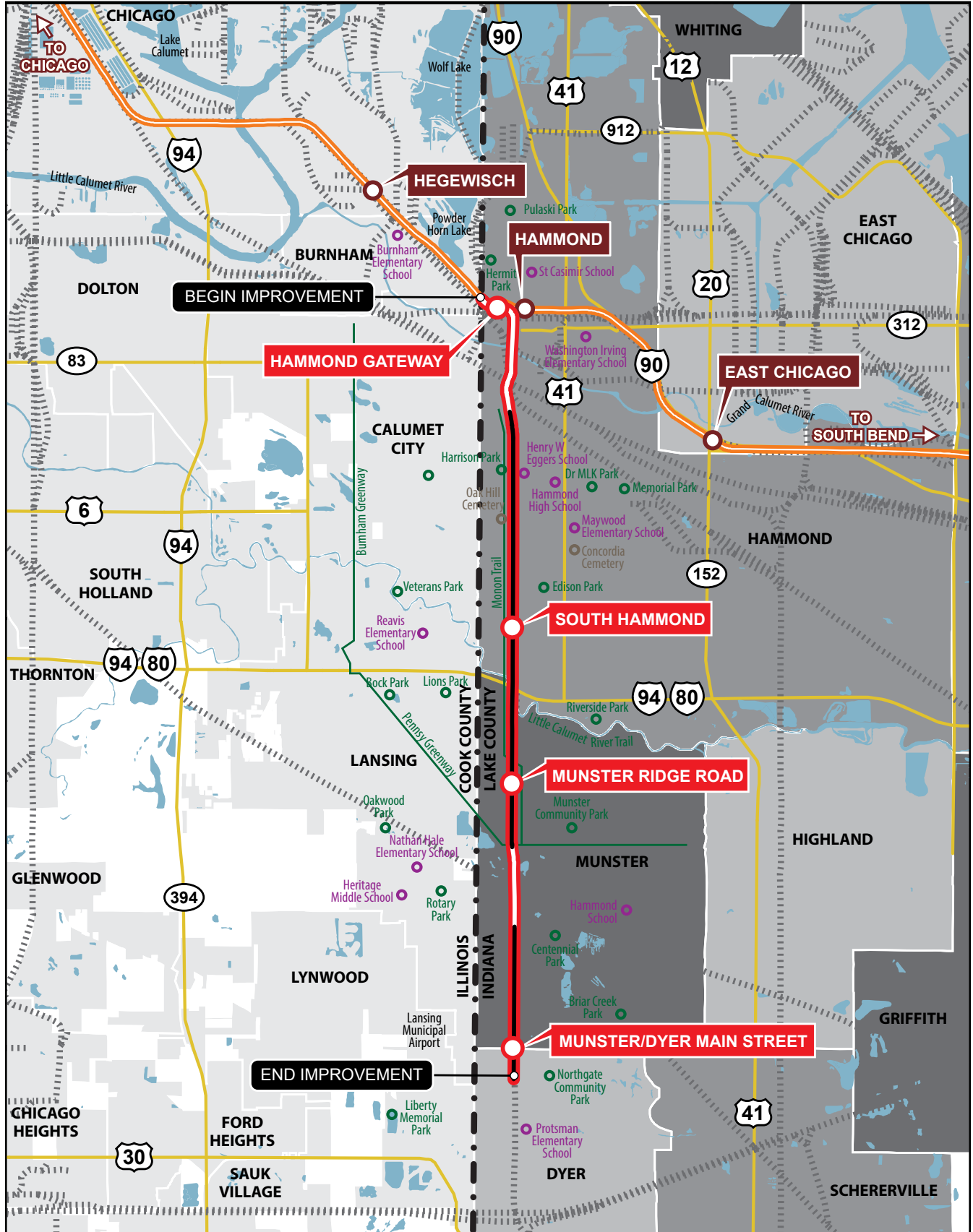


Sustainability Focus:

Registered with ISI's **Envision** Sustainable Infrastructure Rating System

HOW TO REACH US:

WEST LAKE CORRIDOR PROJECT MAP - HAMMOND, IN TO DYER, IN



- Existing Station
- Locally Preferred Alternative (At-Grade)
- Proposed Station
- South Shore Line
- Locally Preferred Alternative (Elevated - Open Underpass Structure)
- Existing Railroad Track
- State Line
- Stream and Water Body
- Major Roadway

N

0 Miles 1 1/2

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I read the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)?

The DEIS can be reviewed on the Resources page at www.nictdwestlake.com. Hard copies of the DEIS are available at:

- Hammond Public Library | 564 State St, Hammond, IN 46320
- Lake County Public Library, Dyer-Schererville Branch | 1001 W Lincoln Hwy, Schererville, IN 46375
- Lake County Public Library, Munster Branch | 8701 Calumet Ave, Munster, IN 46321
- NICTD Administrative Offices | 33 East U.S. Highway 12, Chesterton, IN 46304

How much will the project cost and how will it be funded?

Current estimate for the project, with the addition of the Gateway Station in Hammond, is \$615M. Capital costs will be updated as the project and design are further refined.

When the proposed West Lake Corridor Project is fully advanced through the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts process, it is anticipated that the New Starts program will provide approximately 50 percent of the Project's capital cost. The non-New Starts costs will be covered by a combination of funding sources, including funding from the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority, the State of Indiana, and local communities.

How will the acquisition of property be handled?

In order to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed West Lake Corridor Commuter Rail Project, it will be necessary for NICTD to acquire private property. When property is identified to be acquired, other measures will have already been considered to lessen and mitigate the amount of acquisition and the impact on property owners. The final determination of properties to be acquired will continue throughout our planning and engineering process.

Local, state, and federal regulations and laws govern the acquisition of private property for public use. These laws ensure that owners of property acquired for public projects are treated fairly and consistently. They are designed to encourage and expedite acquisition by agreements with property owners and to promote public confidence in land acquisition programs designed to benefit the public as a whole.

The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 provides for uniform and equitable treatment of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, or farms by federal and federally-assisted programs, and establishes uniform and equitable land acquisition policies. Federal regulations implementing the Uniform Act (49 CFR Part 24) establish the specific process and remuneration methodology that must be followed.

When would properties be acquired?

It is expected that NICTD will begin negotiations to acquire initial properties in late 2017 continuing throughout 2018.

How will the construction of the project affect my business or me?

The construction of the project will have short term effects during construction. Construction activities can temporarily affect access to businesses or require detours to traffic. Some construction noise and other inconveniences can be expected adjacent to the alignment. Information regarding construction staging and short-term effects would be communicated with the public.

Where are stations being considered?

Three stations locations were considered in Hammond, one station in Munster, and one station near the border of Munster and Dyer. However, each of the Build Alternatives considered in the DEIS would include four stations. The combination and location of stations for each Build Alternative is described in more detail in the DEIS.

How will parking be handled at stations?

Each proposed station concept design includes a parking lot and a pick-up/drop-off area. NICTD will work with the host community in later phases of the project to determine how parking operations will be handled for each station. It is possible the operation and maintenance will be the responsibility of the host community. Under this scenario, it is possible that a parking fee would be assessed. Host communities will be offered the opportunity to be fully engaged in the design of parking and station facilities.

Where will the maintenance and storage facility sites be located?

The maintenance facility in the Locally Preferred Alternative is north of the Grand Calumet River in Hammond, west of Sheffield and south of the CSX.

What vehicle type is proposed to be used for the service?

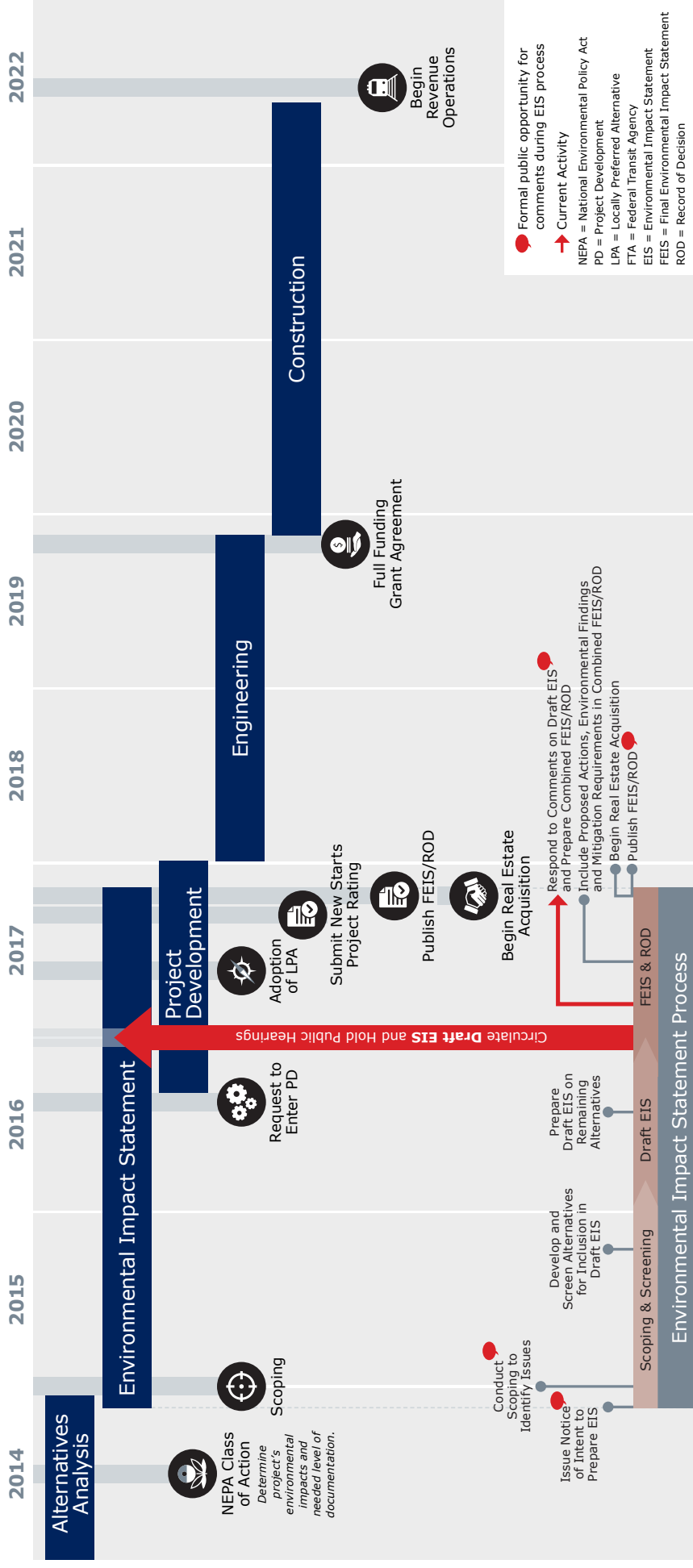
Electric powered trains using overhead wires, the same as is used on the existing South Shore Line.

Will I be able to bring my bike on the train?

Yes, bikes will be permitted on designated trains.



PROJECT SCHEDULE



< Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Throughout >

“Talent retention and attraction are critically important to the growth of the Northwest Indiana economy. Now is the time for us to start expanding access to amenities that commuter rail offers.”

– Heather Ennis, President/CEO, Northwest Indiana Forum