

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Sample Agency Invitation Letters**

## Cooperating Agency Letters



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION V  
Illinois, Indiana,  
Michigan, Minnesota,  
Ohio, Wisconsin

200 West Adams Street  
Suite 320  
Chicago, IL 60606-5253  
312-353-2789  
312-886-0351 (fax)

September 29, 2014

Colonel Christopher T. Drew  
Commander and District Engineer  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
111 North Canal Street, Suite 600  
Chicago, IL 60606

RE: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Colonel Drew:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in cooperation with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) is initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project) in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FTA is the lead agency and NICTD is the joint lead agency and Project sponsor. This letter invites your agency to be a Cooperating Agency in the EIS process for the Project.

NICTD's existing South Shore Line (SSL) provides a vital transportation link that connects Northwest Indiana to Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. The proposed Project is an extension of the SSL route to reach high-growth areas in central, southern, and western 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 proposed Project for analysis in the EIS would include an approximately 9-mile southern extension of NICTD's existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Trains on the new Project branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately the Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north, providing new transit service between Dyer and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago.

RE: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

To facilitate this, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to accommodate the Project. Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham, and Chicago, Illinois on the northern end.

The Project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as an attachment.

In accordance with Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1501.6 and 23 CFR 771.111(d), your agency has been identified as one that has jurisdiction in this proposed Project due to the potential need to cross multiple waterways along the corridor. Accordingly, you are being extended this invitation to serve as a Cooperating Agency in the EIS process. As a Cooperating Agency, you would be requested to provide the following regarding development of the Project EIS:

- Meaningful input on the methodologies and level of detail required by your agency to evaluate impacts to your resource(s);
- Participation in coordination meetings, and/or field visits, as appropriate;
- Timely reviews and comments on the NEPA documents that explain the views and concerns of your agency on the adequacy of the document, anticipated impacts and mitigation; and
- Identification of the impacts and important issues to be addressed in the EIS pertaining to the intersection of the Project alternatives with the resource(s) in your jurisdiction.

If your agency does not wish to be a Cooperating Agency, you will have the opportunity to become a Participating Agency. If you elect not to become either a Cooperating Agency or a Participating Agency, the FTA respectfully requests that you decline this invitation in writing indicating that your agency is unable to provide the degree of involvement requested or has other program commitments precluding any involvement in the EIS process. Your response may be transmitted electronically to Mark Assam of our staff at [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov).

The FTA and NICTD greatly appreciate your input, and we invite you to an Agency Scoping Meeting for the Project as follows:

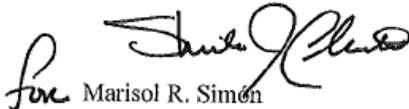
**Tuesday, October 28, 2014, 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM**  
The Center for Visual and Performing Arts  
1040 Ridge Road, Munster, IN 46321

In addition, we invite you to attend the Public Scoping Meeting for the Project at 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM on the same date and location. In order to give your agency adequate opportunity to weigh the relevance of your participation as either a Cooperating Agency or Participating Agency in this environmental review process, written response to this invitation is not due until the **end of the scoping period on Tuesday, November 11, 2014.**

RE: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

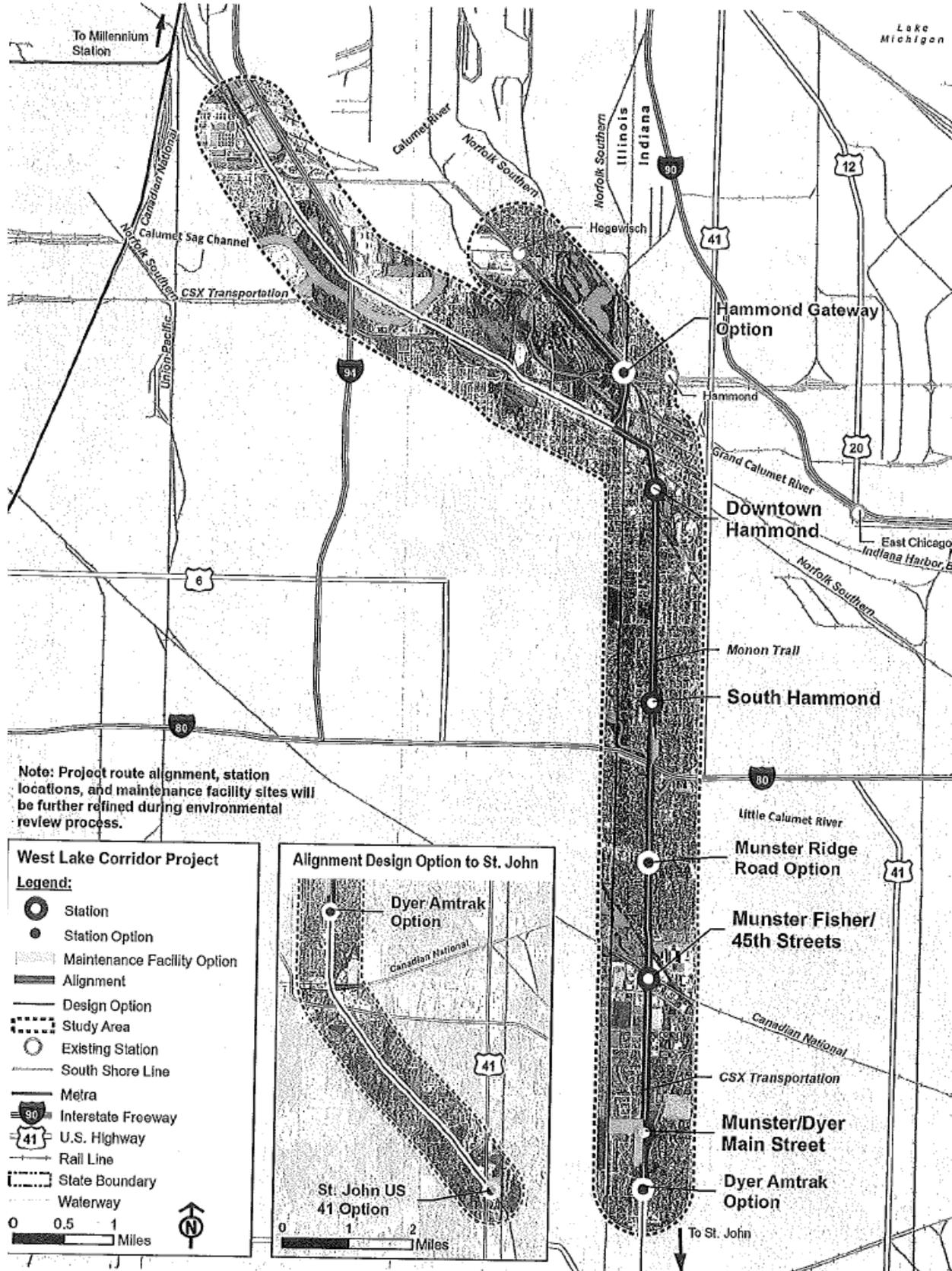
If you have additional questions, please contact Mark Assam, FTA Environmental Protection Specialist, at 312-353-4070 or [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov). Thank you for your cooperation and interest in the West Lake Corridor Project.

Sincerely,

  
Marisol R. Simón  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure: West Lake Corridor Project Study Area

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
John Parsons, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager





U.S. Department  
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REGION V  
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Michigan, Minnesota,  
Ohio, Wisconsin

200 West Adams Street  
Suite 320  
Chicago, IL 60606-5253  
312-353-2789  
312-886-0351 (fax)

September 29, 2014

Laurence Hasvold, Regional Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration, Region 4  
200 West Adams Street, Suite 310  
Chicago, IL 60606

RE: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Mr. Hasvold:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in cooperation with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) is initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project) in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FTA is the lead agency and NICTD is the joint lead agency and Project sponsor. This letter invites your agency to be a Cooperating Agency in the EIS process for the Project.

NICTD's existing South Shore Line (SSL) provides a vital transportation link that connects Northwest Indiana to Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. The proposed Project is an extension of the SSL route to reach high-growth areas in central, southern, and western 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 proposed Project for analysis in the EIS would include an approximately 9-mile southern extension of NICTD's existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The Project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Trains on the new Project branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately the Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north, providing new transit service between Dyer and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago. To facilitate this, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to accommodate the Project.

RE: Invitation to be a Cooperating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham, and Chicago, Illinois on the northern end.

The Project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as an attachment.

In accordance with Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1501.6 and 23 CFR 771.111(d), your agency has been identified as one that has jurisdiction in this proposed Project due to the utilization of an existing active freight rail corridor. Accordingly, you are being extended this invitation to serve as a Cooperating Agency in the EIS process. As a Cooperating Agency, you would be requested to provide the following regarding development of the Project EIS:

- Meaningful input on the methodologies and level of detail required by your agency to evaluate impacts to your resource(s);
- Participation in coordination meetings, and/or field visits, as appropriate;
- Timely reviews and comments on the NEPA documents that explain the views and concerns of your agency on the adequacy of the document, anticipated impacts and mitigation; and
- Identification of the impacts and important issues to be addressed in the EIS pertaining to the intersection of the Project alternatives with the resource(s) in your jurisdiction.

If your agency does not wish to be a Cooperating Agency, you will have the opportunity to become a Participating Agency. If you elect not to become either a Cooperating Agency or a Participating Agency, the FTA respectfully requests that you decline this invitation in writing indicating that your agency is unable to provide the degree of involvement requested or has other program commitments precluding any involvement in the EIS process. Your response may be transmitted electronically to Mark Assam of our staff at [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov).

The FTA and NICTD greatly appreciate your input, and we invite you to an Agency Scoping Meeting for the Project as follows:

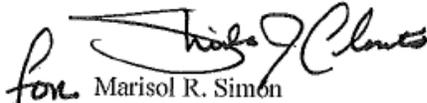
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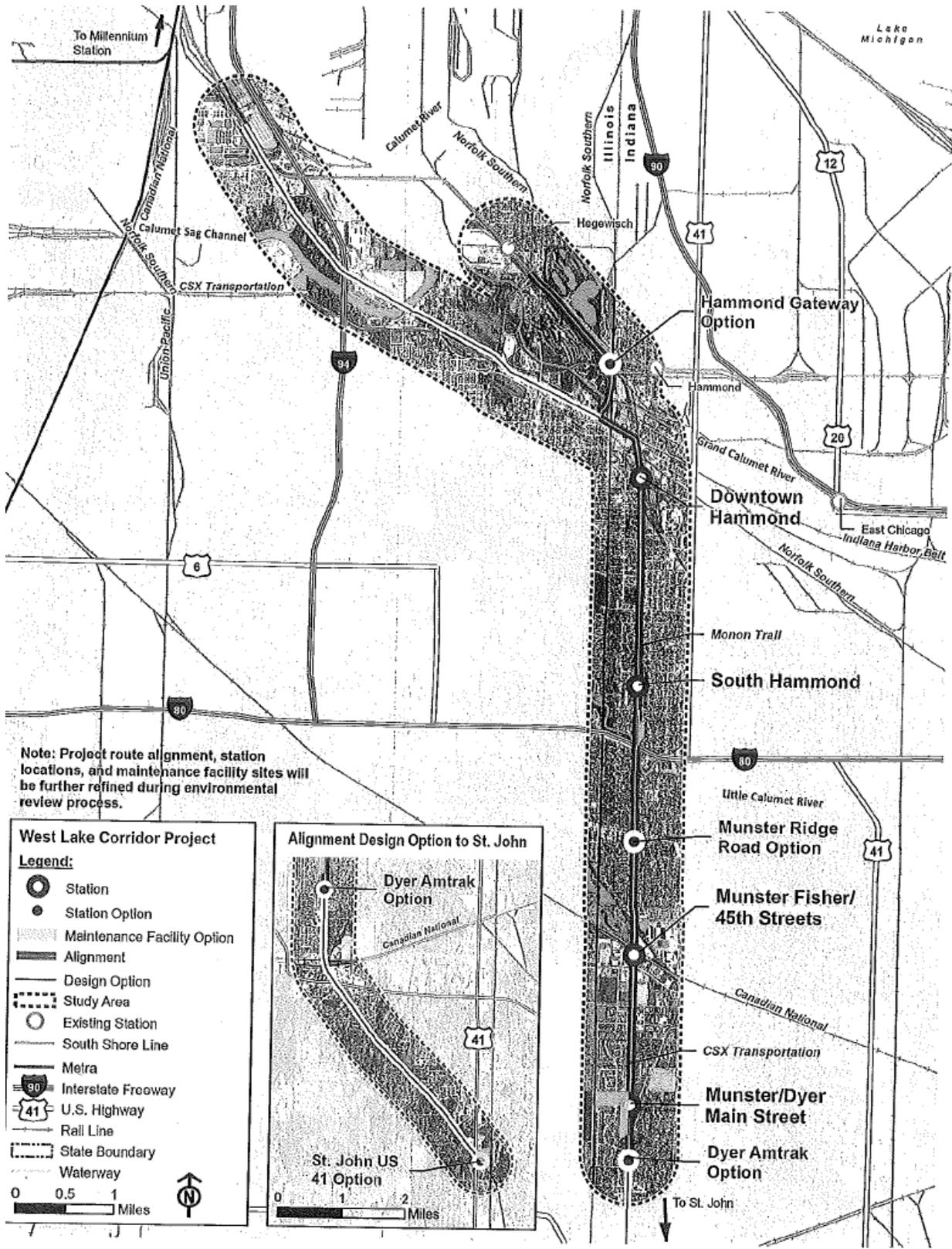
If you have additional questions, please contact Mark Assam, FTA Environmental Protection Specialist, at 312-353-4070 or [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov). Thank you for your cooperation and interest in the West Lake Corridor Project.

Sincerely,

  
for Marisol R. Simon  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure: West Lake Corridor Project Study Area

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
John Parsons, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager



## Sample Participating Agency Letter



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
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REGION V  
Illinois, Indiana,  
Michigan, Minnesota,  
Ohio, Wisconsin

200 West Adams Street  
Suite 320  
Chicago, IL 60606-5253  
312-353-2789  
312-886-0351 (fax)

October 1, 2014

Michelle Markiewicz Qualkinbush  
Mayor  
City of Calumet City  
204 Pulaski Road  
Calumet City, IL 60406

RE: Invitation to be a Participating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Michelle Markiewicz Qualkinbush:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in cooperation with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) is initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project) in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FTA is the lead agency and NICTD is the joint lead agency and Project sponsor. This letter invites your agency to be a Participating Agency in the EIS process for the Project.

NICTD's existing South Shore Line (SSL) provides a vital transportation link that connects Northwest Indiana to Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. The proposed Project is an extension of the SSL route to reach high-growth areas in central, southern, and western 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 proposed Project for analysis in the EIS would include an approximately 9-mile southern extension of NICTD's existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Trains on the new Project branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately the Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north, providing new transit service between Dyer and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago.

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To facilitate this, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to accommodate the Project. Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham, and Chicago, Illinois on the northern end.

The Project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as an attachment.

In accordance with Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1501.6 and 23 CFR 771.111(d), the FTA invites your organization to be a Participating Agency during the EIS process. As a Participating Agency, you would be requested to provide the following regarding development of the Project EIS:

- Participation in coordination meetings, and/or field visits, as appropriate; and
- Identification of the impacts and important issues to be addressed in the EIS pertaining to the intersection of the Project alternatives with the resource(s) in your jurisdiction.

If your agency does not wish to be a Participating Agency, the FTA respectfully requests that you decline this invitation in writing indicating that your agency has no jurisdiction or authority with respect to the Project; has no expertise or information relevant to the Project; and does not intend to submit comments on the Project. Your response may be transmitted electronically to Mark Assam of our staff at [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov).

The FTA and NICTD greatly appreciate your input, and we invite you to an Agency Scoping Meeting for the Project as follows:

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RE: Invitation to be a Participating Agency in the Environmental Review Process for the West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

If you have additional questions, please contact Mark Assam, FTA Environmental Protection Specialist, at 312-353-4070 or [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov). Thank you for your cooperation and interest in the West Lake Corridor Project.

Sincerely,



Marisol R. Simón  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure: West Lake Corridor Project Study Area

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
John Parsons, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager

## Section 106 Initiation Letters



U.S. Department  
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**Federal Transit  
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REGION V  
Illinois, Indiana,  
Michigan, Minnesota,  
Ohio, Wisconsin

200 West Adams Street  
Suite 320  
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312-353-2789  
312-886-0351 (fax)

September 29, 2014

Chad Slider  
Assistant Director for Environmental Review  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology  
402 W. Washington Street, Room W274  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2739

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Mr. Slider:

As part of its responsibilities under 36 CFR § 800 – Protection of Historic Properties and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is initiating a Section 106 Consultation Process for the West Lake Corridor Project located in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. The undertaking, proposed by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), would primarily create an approximately 9-mile commuter rail extension from the existing South Shore Line (SSL) to Dyer, Indiana. The purpose of the Project is to expand NICTD's service coverage between Northwest Indiana and the Chicago region, improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County. FTA has determined that the proposed project will be a Federal undertaking as defined in § 800.16(y), and that it is a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties.

The undertaking would include an approximately 9-mile southern extension of NICTD's existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Trains on the new Project branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately the Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north, providing new transit service between Dyer and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago. To facilitate this, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to accommodate the Project. Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham, and Chicago, Illinois on the northern end.

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

The project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as an attachment.

The Section 106 consultation process consists of four steps, all of which are completed in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), and other consulting parties.

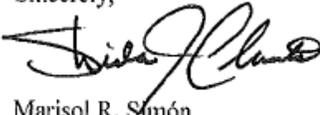
1. FTA initiates the Section 106 process, pursuant to § 800.3 – Initiation of the Section 106 process, with the SHPO (or THPO if the property is on tribal lands) and other consulting parties, if any.
2. FTA determines the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE) and the properties within the APE that are listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). FTA evaluates properties eligible for listing using the processes established in 36 CFR § 60 and National Register Bulletin 15. FTA's determination of the APE requires consultation with and concurrence by the SHPO. If FTA determines there are no properties within the APE that are listed, or eligible for listing, in the NRHP, or if FTA determines there are historic properties present but the project will have no effect upon them, then FTA will determine "no historic properties affected" in consultation with the SHPO and/or THPO.
3. FTA determines adverse effects with respect to historic properties within the APE. FTA's determination considers whether the project will diminish those qualities that make any of the properties eligible for listing in the NRHP. FTA makes a determination of "adverse effect" when the project will diminish these qualities in one or more properties; if not, FTA makes a determination of "no adverse effect." FTA's determination of "no adverse effect," along with concurrence by the SHPO, completes the Section 106 consultation process.
4. If FTA determines an "adverse effect," it consults with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), SHPO, affected tribes, and other interested parties, as appropriate, to resolve the adverse effects on historic properties. Resolution of adverse effects may involve redesigning a project to avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts to historic properties. Actions that the consulting parties agree upon to mitigate adverse effects are documented in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). Once the agreement is signed by all appropriate parties, including the SHPO and other invited signatories, and the agreement is filed with the ACHP, the Section 106 process is completed and the FTA's responsibilities are fulfilled when the MOA's stipulations are implemented.

NICTD will be in contact with your office regarding the preparation of information, analyses, and graphics in support of the Section 106 consultation process for the project. This delegated authority to undertake coordination activities with the SHPO and / or THPO does not extend to designation of consulting parties or to making determinations of the APE, NRHP eligibility, or adverse effects.

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District,  
West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

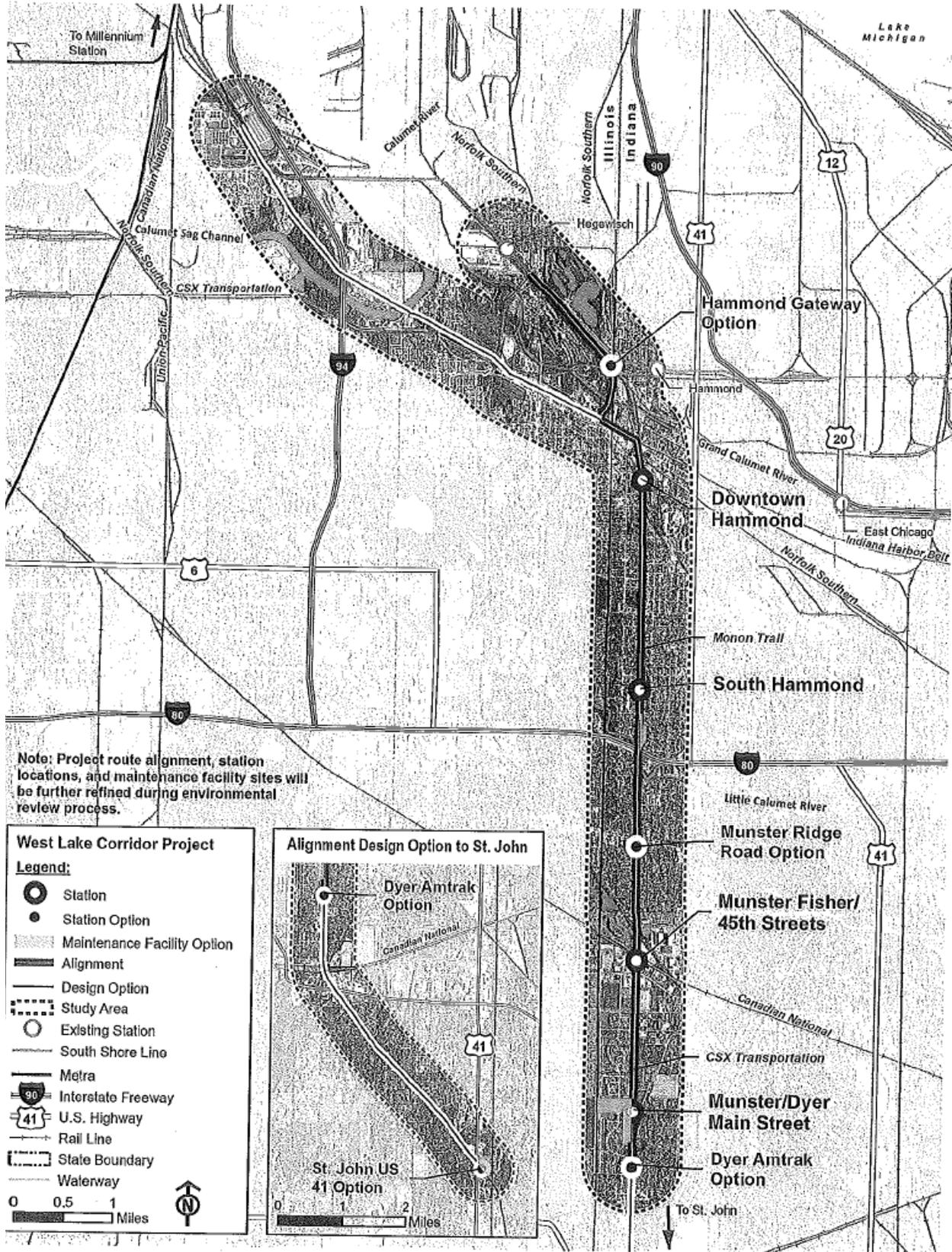
Please contact Mark Assam, Environmental Protection Specialist, of the FTA Regional Office at 312-353-4070 or [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov) with any questions. Thank you for your assistance on this project.

Sincerely,

  
for Marisol R. Simón  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure: West Lake Corridor Project Study Area

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
John Parsons, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager





U.S. Department  
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200 West Adams Street  
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Chicago, IL 60606-5253  
312-353-2789  
312-886-0351 (fax)

September 29, 2014

Anne Haaker  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
1 Old State Capitol Plaza  
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1507

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Ms. Haaker:

As part of its responsibilities under 36 CFR § 800 – Protection of Historic Properties and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is initiating a Section 106 Consultation Process for the West Lake Corridor Project located in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. The undertaking, proposed by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), would primarily create an approximately 9-mile commuter rail extension from the existing South Shore Line (SSL) to Dyer, Indiana. The purpose of the Project is to expand NICTD's service coverage between Northwest Indiana and the Chicago region, improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County. FTA has determined that the proposed project will be a Federal undertaking as defined in § 800.16(y), and that it is a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties.

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1 of 3

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

The project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as an attachment.

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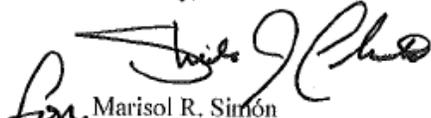
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2. FTA determines the project's Area of Potential Effects (APE) and the properties within the APE that are listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). FTA evaluates properties eligible for listing using the processes established in 36 CFR § 60 and National Register Bulletin 15. FTA's determination of the APE requires consultation with and concurrence by the SHPO. If FTA determines there are no properties within the APE that are listed, or eligible for listing, in the NRHP, or if FTA determines there are historic properties present but the project will have no effect upon them, then FTA will determine "no historic properties affected" in consultation with the SHPO and/or THPO.
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NICTD will be in contact with your office regarding the preparation of information, analyses, and graphics in support of the Section 106 consultation process for the project. This delegated authority to undertake coordination activities with the SHPO and / or THPO does not extend to designation of consulting parties or to making determinations of the APE, NRHP eligibility, or adverse effects.

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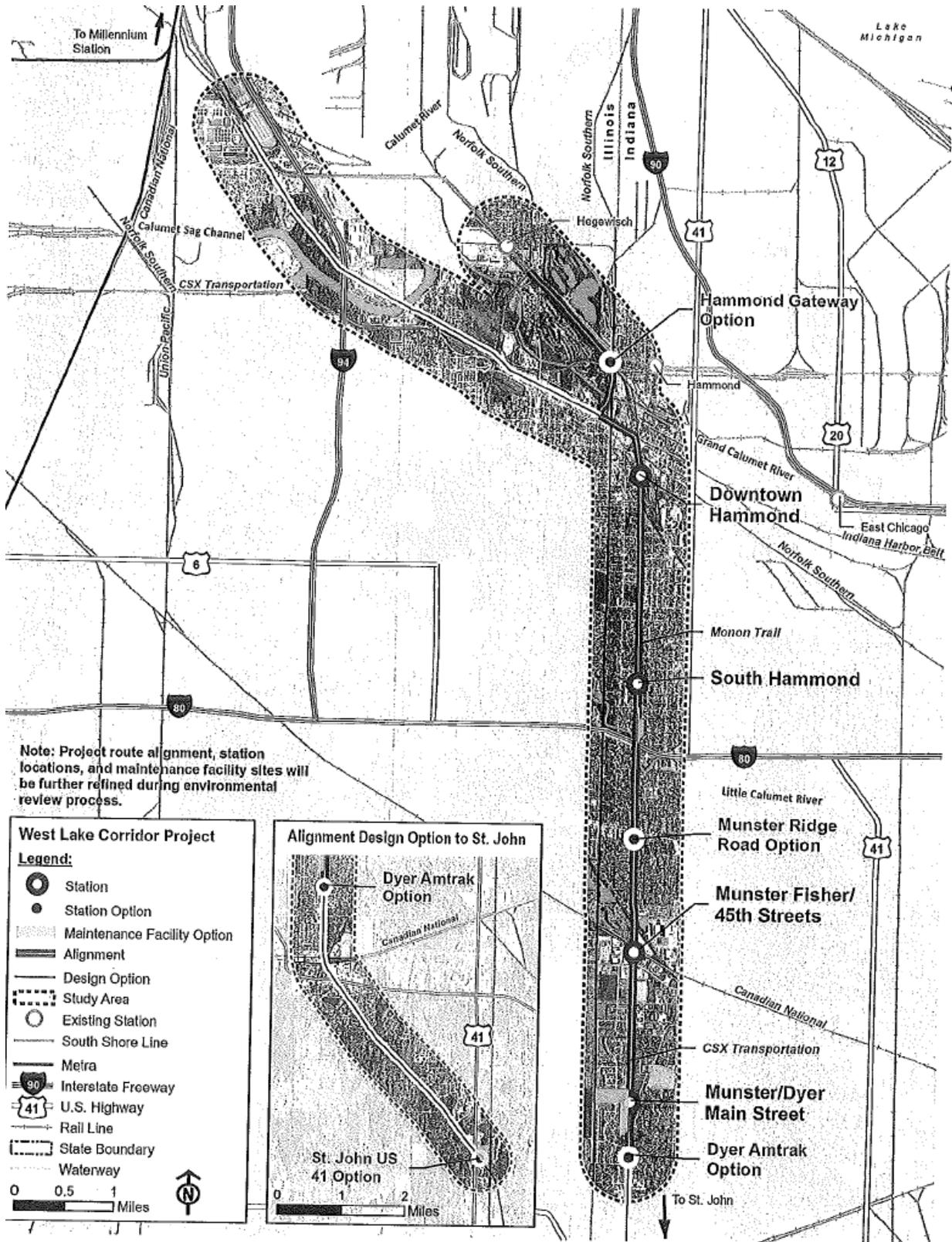
Please contact Mark Assam, Environmental Protection Specialist, of the FTA Regional Office at 312-353-4070 or [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov) with any questions. Thank you for your assistance on this project.

Sincerely,

  
for Marisol R. Simón  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure: West Lake Corridor Project Study Area

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
John Parsons, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager



## Sample Consulting Party Letter



NORTHERN INDIANA  
COMMUTER TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT

33 E. U.S. HIGHWAY 12 • CHESTERTON, IN 46304-3514

PHONE: 219.926.5744 • FAX: 219.929.4438

October 22, 2014

Tiffany Tolbert  
Director  
Indiana Landmarks – Northwest Field Office  
541 South Lake Street  
Gary-Miller Beach, IN 46403

RE: Section 106 Notification of Undertaking and Request for Comment on  
West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Ms. Tolbert:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), in cooperation with the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), is initiating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project) in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. The proposed Project is a federal undertaking subject to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended, and its implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] § 800). This letter invites your organization to participate as a Consulting Party for the Section 106 compliance process, as provided in 36 CFR § 800.3(f)(1) of the regulation.

#### Project Description and Federal Undertaking

NICTD's existing South Shore Line (SSL) provides a vital transportation link that connects Northwest Indiana to Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. The proposed Project is a branch extension of the SSL route to reach high-growth areas in central, southern, and western 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 proposed Project for analysis in the EIS would include an approximately 9-mile southern extension of NICTD's existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Trains on the new Project branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately the Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north, providing new transit service between Dyer and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago. To facilitate this, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to

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accommodate the Project. Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham, and Chicago, Illinois on the northern end.

The Project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as Attachment 1.

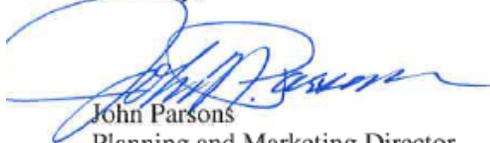
#### Responsibilities of a Consulting Party

A Consulting Party is typically an agency, group, or organization with special knowledge of, concern for, or a mandated regulatory role relative to historic properties in the Area of Potential Effects (APE). Historic properties include buildings, structures, objects, sites, districts, and archeological sites that are on or eligible for the NRHP, which is kept by the National Park Service. Consulting Parties will have a formal and defined role in the Section 106 process to help FTA and NICTD consider the impacts of the proposed Project on historic properties. Additional information about the Section 106 consultation process is available online at <http://www.achp.gov/citizensguide.html>.

If you are interested in participating as a Consulting Party for this Project under the Section 106 guidelines, please respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of this letter to John Parsons at NICTD at the address provided on the attached form. We request that your response include a statement of demonstrated interest in historic properties associated with this Project, as stipulated in the Section 106 regulation (36 CFR § 800.2(c)). NICTD will notify Consulting Parties and other interested stakeholders of future public meetings in the Section 106 and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental review process.

If you would like additional information or have any questions about this process, please contact me at (219) 926-5744 ext. 204 or [john.parsons@nictd.com](mailto:john.parsons@nictd.com).

Sincerely,

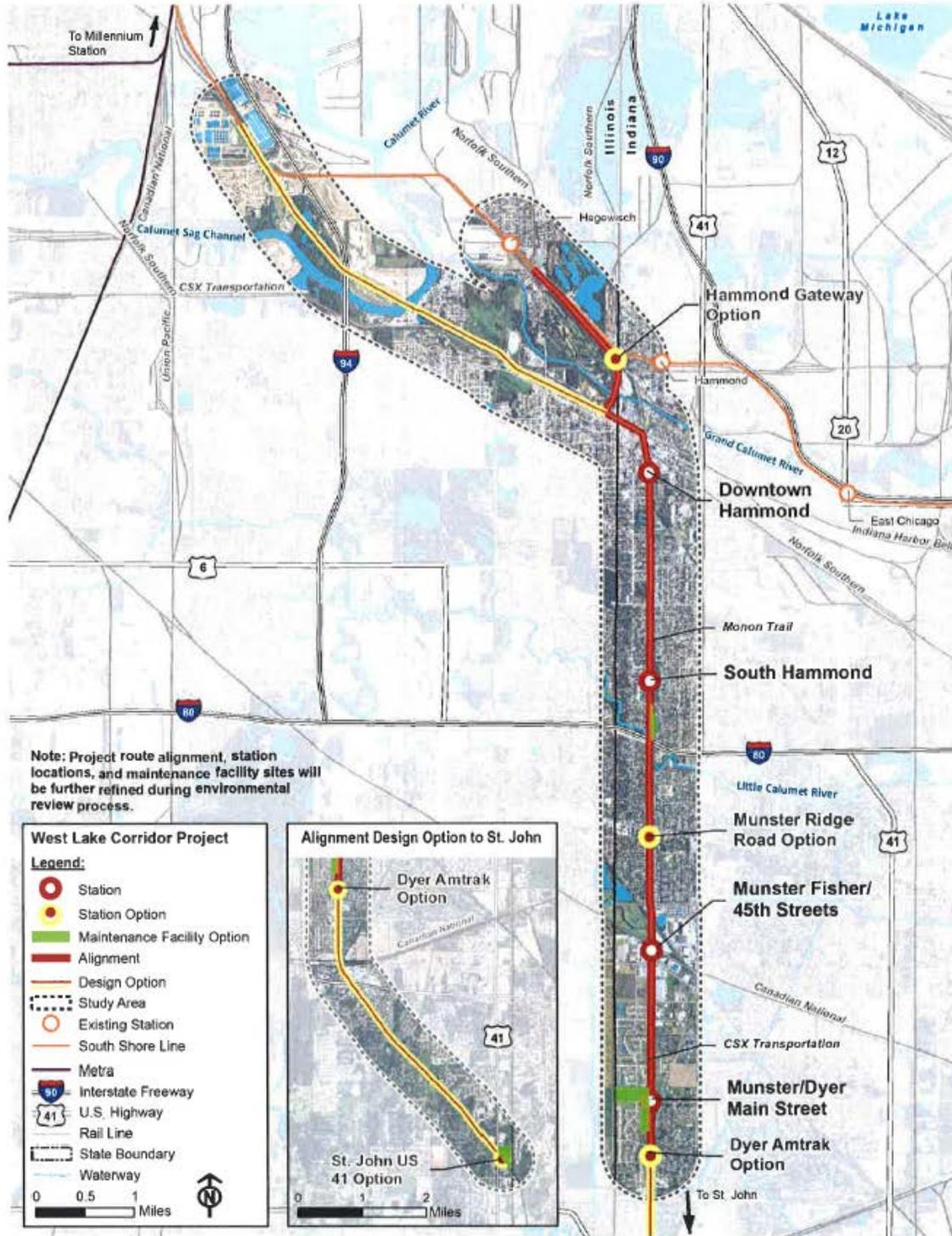


John Parsons  
Planning and Marketing Director  
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

Enclosures

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager

**Attachment 1: West Lake Corridor Project Study Area**



Page 4 of 4

**SECTION 106  
Consulting Parties Acceptance Form  
West Lake Corridor Project  
Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois**

Yes, I \_\_\_\_\_, wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project. My demonstrated interest in historic properties as associated with this Project is described as follows:

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Or;

No, I \_\_\_\_\_, do not wish to be a consulting party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for the West Lake Corridor Project.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:  
John Parsons  
Director of Marketing and Planning  
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District  
33 East U.S. Highway 12  
Chesterton, IN 46304  
[john.parsons@nictd.com](mailto:john.parsons@nictd.com)

## Sample Consulting Party Letter for Tribes



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION V  
Illinois, Indiana,  
Michigan, Minnesota,  
Ohio, Wisconsin

200 West Adams Street  
Suite 320  
Chicago, IL 60606-5253  
312-353-2789  
312-886-0351 (fax)

October 3, 2014

Mr. John Blackhawk  
Chairperson  
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska  
100 Bluff St.  
Winnebago, NE 68071

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Dear Mr. John Blackhawk:

As part of its responsibilities under 36 CFR § 800 – Protection of Historic Properties and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is initiating a Section 106 Consultation Process for the West Lake Corridor Project located in Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois. The undertaking, proposed by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), would primarily create a commuter rail extension from the existing South Shore Line (SSL) to Dyer, Indiana. The purpose of the Project is to expand NICTD's service coverage between Northwest Indiana and the Chicago region, improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County. FTA has determined that the proposed project will be a Federal undertaking as defined in § 800.16(y) and that it is a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties.

The undertaking would include an approximately 9-mile southern extension of NICTD's existing SSL between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The Project would involve new track improvements along the existing CSX Transportation and former Monon railroad corridors, with a flyover to the existing SSL in Hammond. Four potential stations would be included at Munster/Dyer Main Street, Munster Fisher/45th Streets, South Hammond, and Downtown Hammond. A maintenance facility would also be needed to store and maintain the vehicles. Trains on the new Project branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately the Metra Electric District's (MED) line to the north, providing new transit service between Dyer and Metra's Millennium Station in Downtown Chicago. To facilitate this, core capacity improvements to the existing MED line and Millennium Station may be required to accommodate the Project.

RE: FTA Section 106 Historic Review Initiation: Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

Two alignment design options are also being considered for the Project, including a possible extension to St. John, Indiana on the southern end, and another along the Indiana Harbor Belt Kensington Branch through Calumet City, Burnham, and Chicago, Illinois on the northern end.

The project route alignment, station locations, and maintenance facility will be further refined during the environmental review process, working in close consultation with the public, agencies, and key stakeholders. A map of the major Project components and the study area is provided as an attachment.

We are inviting you to participate in consultation to help us identify places that may have traditional religious and cultural importance to your tribal organization. Please note that we are requesting information only on such places that you believe may be impacted by the proposed Project so that we may try to avoid impacts.

Your timely response will greatly help us incorporate your concerns into Project development. For that purpose, we respectfully request that you complete the enclosed Project Consultation Options form and forward it to our office by November 3, 2014. If you have any questions or comments on the proposed Project, please contact Mark Assam, FTA Environmental Protection Specialist, at 312-353-4070 or [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov).

Sincerely,



Marisol R. Simón  
Regional Administrator

Enclosures

Cc: Mark Assam, FTA Region 5  
Reginald Arkell, FTA Region 5  
Chad Slider, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology  
Anne Haaker, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency  
John Parsons, NICTD Director of Marketing and Planning  
Lisa Ives, West Lake Corridor Project Manager

**PROJECT CONSULTATION OPTIONS**

**Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska**

**Project Name: West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois**

Please check the appropriate response. Use the back of this form or additional sheets if you wish to make comments:

Project	There are no known places of traditional religious or cultural importance present or within the vicinity of the proposed project and <b>further consultation is not requested.</b>	There are or may be places of traditional religious or cultural importance present or within the vicinity of the proposed project and <b>further consultation is requested.</b>	Our organization has no interest associated with this proposed project and <b>further consultation is not required.</b>
West Lake Corridor Project, Lake County, Indiana and Illinois	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have chosen to continue consultation, please indicate the manner in which you wish to do so:

Mail (address): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

(NAME OF TRIBE) designated contact for this proposed Project:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 NAME, TITLE (please print) Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SIGNED Date

**Please return to:** Mark Assam  
 Environmental Protection Specialist  
 Federal Transit Administration, Region 5  
 200 W. Adams Street, Suite 320  
 Chicago, IL 60606

Or e-mail: [mark.assam@dot.gov](mailto:mark.assam@dot.gov)