Purpose of Scoping Meeting

- Start Federal Environmental Review Process
- Share Information
- Seek Input
- Define How You Can Be Involved
History of Project

- Regional Agency Conducted Initial Study 1989
- NICTD Completed *West Lake Corridor Study* 2011
- Released *20-Year Strategic Business Plan* June 2014
- *Began Environmental Review Process* Sept 2014

**Federal Lead Agency:**
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

**Local Lead Agency:**
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

Prepare Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
National Environmental Policy Act

NEPA Umbrella


Draft EIS Document

Project Scoping
- Purpose and Need
- Alternatives Considered
- Key Issues Addressed

Impact Assessment
- Transportation
- Social, Community, and Economic
- Natural Environment

Document Preparation & Review
- Affected Environment, Potential Impacts, and Mitigation
- Public and Agency Review and Comment
- Responses to Comments
Overall EIS Process

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PROCESS

Issue Notice of Intent to Prepare EIS → Conduct Scoping to Identify Issues → Develop and Screen Alternatives for Inclusion in Draft EIS → Prepare Draft EIS on Remaining Alternatives → Circulate Draft EIS and Hold Public Hearings to Seek Input → Respond to Comments on Draft EIS and Prepare Final EIS → Issue Final EIS and Begin Availability Period → Include Proposed Actions, Environmental Findings and Mitigation Requirements in ROD → File ROD

SCOPING AND SCREENING → DRAFT EIS → FINAL EIS → RECORD OF DECISION

Agency Coordination and Public Involvement Throughout

Official Public Opportunity for Comment during EIS Process

NOTE: A single Final EIS and ROD can be issued under MAP-21, unless FTA determines a combined document is not possible.

EIS = Environmental Impact Statement
ROD = Record of Decision
What is Scoping?

- **First Step in Environmental Review Process**
  - Allows for Early Coordination and Outreach

- **Notify Public and Agencies**
  - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) being Prepared
  - Solicit Input on Process and Project

- **Helps Guide “Scope” and Content of EIS**
  - Purpose and Need for Project
  - Alternatives Considered
  - Key Issues Addressed
What is Purpose and Need for Project?

- Serve High-Growth Areas in Lake County
- Conveniently Connect to Chicago
- Establish Alternative to Driving
- Lower Commute Times and Costs
- Increase NICTD System Ridership
- Promote Economic Development
- Create Local Jobs
- Attract and Retain Younger Families
- Provide Valued Transportation Asset
What is being Studied?

- **No Build Alternative**
  - Existing System and Planned Projects
  - Basis of Comparison
- **Commuter Rail Alternative**
Commuter Rail Alternative

- 9-Mile Extension of Existing South Shore Line (SSL)
- 12 Trains per Weekday
- 4 Stations in Hammond, Munster, and Dyer
- Maintenance Facility
- Improvements to Metra
- Options for Alignment, Stations, Maintenance Facility, and Vehicle

Note: Project route alignment, station locations and maintenance facility sites will be further refined during environmental review process.
Stations

- Boarding Platforms
- Shelters
- Parking
- Multi-Modal Access

Hegewisch Station, SSL

Beverly Shores Station, SSL

East Chicago Station, SSL
Maintenance Facility

- Shop Building for Maintenance of Vehicles
- Storage Yard Tracks for 6 Locomotives and 46 Cars
- Parking and Other Facilities

Metra Storage Yard Tracks, Elburn, IL

Metra Shop Building, 14th Street, Chicago, IL

NICTD Shop Building, Michigan City, IN
Vehicle Options

- Diesel
- Electric
- Combined Diesel/Electric

Metra Diesel Locomotive

NICTD South Shore Electric Vehicles

Combined Diesel/Electric Locomotive in Montréal
What are Key Environmental Considerations?

- Transportation
- Land Use and Acquisitions
- Economic Development
- Neighborhoods and Community Facilities
- Environmental Justice
- Parks and Recreational
- Historic and Archeological
- Noise and Vibration
- Visual and Aesthetics
- Farmlands and Soils
- Water and Ecological
- Hazardous Materials
- Safety and Security
- Short-Term Construction
What are Next Steps in EIS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop and Screen Alternatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further Define Remaining Alternative(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiate Environmental Review Process</td>
<td></td>
<td>▶️ Notice of Intent to Prepare EIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct Environmental Scoping Period</td>
<td>▫️ Scoping Meeting(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare Draft Environmental Impact Statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold Public and Agency Review Period</td>
<td></td>
<td>▫️ Public Hearing(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Locally Preferred Alternative</td>
<td></td>
<td>▶️ Select LPA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter Project Development Under New Starts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Dates are subject to change.*

- ▶️ Key Milestone
- ▫️ Public Meeting or Hearing
- EIS = Environmental Impact Statement
- LPA = Locally Preferred Alternative
What is Overall Project Schedule?

**PROJECT SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YEAR 2014</th>
<th>FALL 2015</th>
<th>2016-2019</th>
<th>2020-2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternatives Analysis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Impact Statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction and Vehicle Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **NEPA Class of Action**
- **Scoping**
- **LPA**
- **Request to Enter PD**
- **Submit Project Justification Criteria**
- **FTA Evaluation & Approval for Construction**
- **Project Start-Up**

**DRAFT EIS BY FALL 2015**

- **18-24 Months**
- **Up to 2 Years**
- **Approximately 5 Years**

*Note: Dates are subject to change*

NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act  
LPA = Locally Preferred Alternative  
RCD = Record of Decision  
FTA = Federal Transit Administration
How Can You Participate?

- **Today’s Scoping Meeting**
  - Review Information on Display Boards and Handouts
  - Provide Written Comments on Comment Cards
  - Provide Comments Verbally to Court Reporter

- **Additional Opportunities**
  - Project Website: [http://www.nictdwestlake.com/](http://www.nictdwestlake.com/)
  - E-mail: project.email@nictdwestlake.com
  - Automated Phone: 219-250-2920
  - Mail: NICTD West Lake Corridor Project
    33 East U.S. Highway 12
    Chesterton, IN 46304

- **Public Comment Period and Hearing in Fall 2015**

  *Please Submit Scoping Comments By November 11, 2014*