

Project Overview

The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) proposes to expand its commuter rail service through an approximate eight-mile extension of the South Shore Line (SSL), known as the West Lake Corridor Project (Project). The line would be extended to the south to provide passenger rail service to three municipalities in Lake County, Indiana: Hammond, Munster and Dyer. Trains on the new branch line would connect with the existing SSL and ultimately with the Metra Electric District (MED) line to the north to Millennium Station in downtown Chicago—a total distance of approximately 30 miles.

This Project would provide a vital transportation link connecting northwest Indiana with Chicago and Cook County, Illinois. It would also expand NICTD's service coverage, improve mobility and accessibility, and stimulate local job creation and economic development opportunities for Lake County.

What Happens Next?


In March 2019, NICTD received a positive Medium-High rating for the project from FTA. NICTD is awaiting approval from the FTA to enter into the final engineering phase of the project.

NICTD has issued a Request for Qualifications to seek engineers and construction contractors to propose to design and build the West Lake Project. In traditional projects (Design-Bid-Build), the engineers complete the design and issue construction documents and construction companies submit cost estimates and bids to complete the project based on the construction documents. With a Design-Build approach, the engineers and contractor work under a single contract with NICTD to provide integrated design and construction services. The combined Design-Build approach can save money by compressing the schedule and using one team from conceptual design through completion. The Design-Build contract is expected to be awarded in 2020.



Key Milestones

- EIS Process: 2014 to 2018
- Property Acquisition: to begin in mid-2019
- Engineering and Construction: 2019 to 2025
- Project Completion: 2025



Project Cost

Current estimate for the project, with the addition of the Gateway Station in North Hammond, is \$933M. Capital costs will be updated as the project and design are further refined.




Approximate Length:

8 Miles dedicated guideway




4 Stations

- Hammond Gateway
- South Hammond
- Munster Ridge Road
- Munster/Dyer Main Street



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)




Parking:

Each proposed station concept design includes a parking lot, Kiss-and-Ride area, and ADA parking area.



Travel Time:

- 47** Minutes Munster/Dyer Main Street to Millennium Station in Chicago
- 14** Minutes Munster/Dyer Main Street to Hammond Gateway Station



Maintenance & Storage:

New combined facility in north Hammond to take advantage of shared facilities and central location.

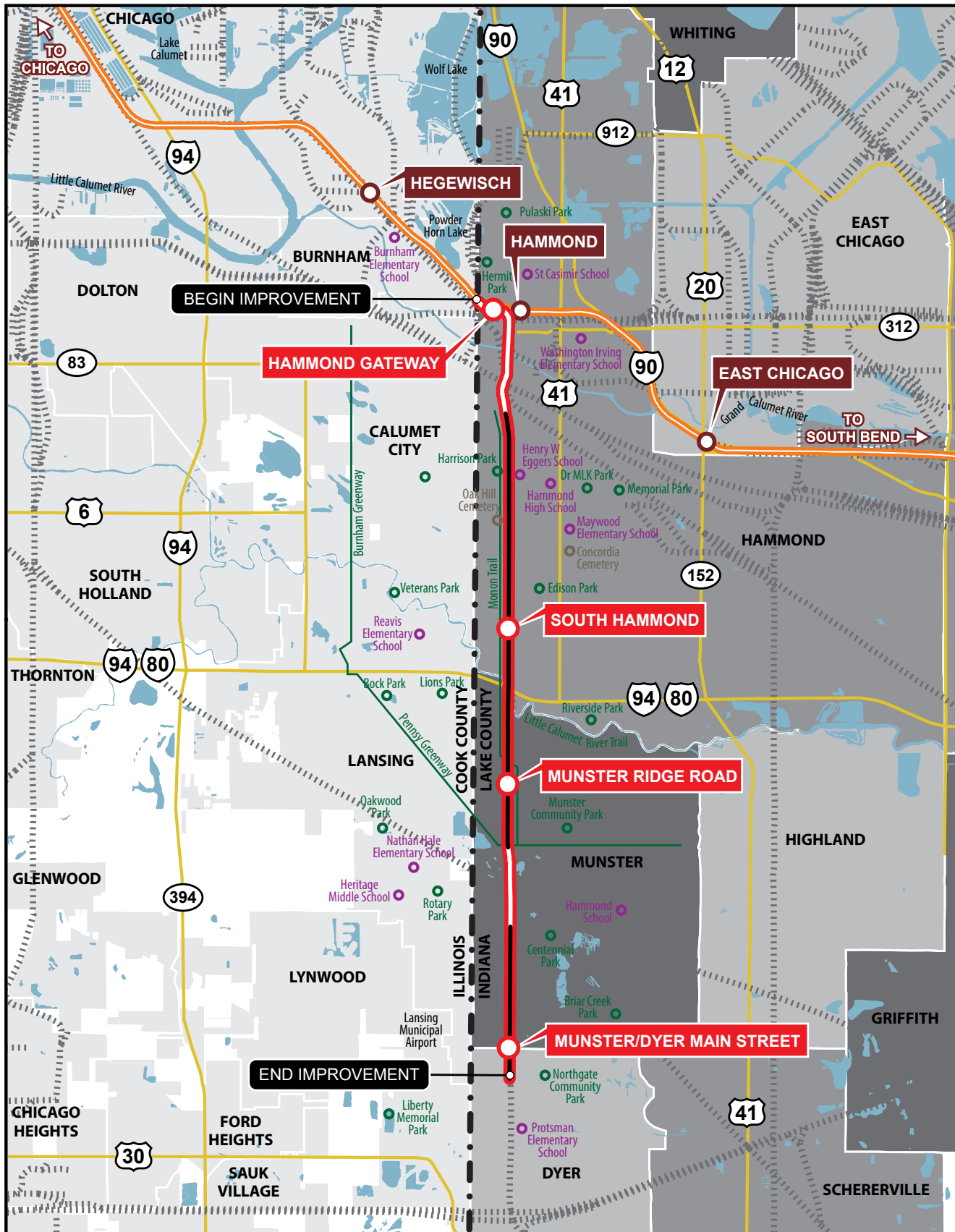


Sustainability Focus:

Designed with a focus on sustainability and wetland mitigation.

HOW TO REACH US:

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

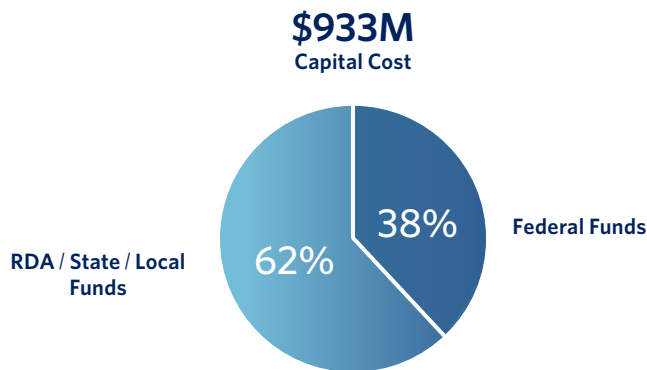


- Existing Station
- Locally Preferred Alternative (At-Grade)
- Proposed Station
- Existing Railroad Track
- Stream and Water Body
- South Shore Line
- Locally Preferred Alternative (Elevated - Open Underpass Structure)
- State Line
- Major Roadway



Frequently Asked Questions

Where are we with funding?



The USDOT proposed 2020 budget includes \$500M programmed for new CIG full funding grant agreements. This project is being developed following the FTA's New Starts CIG process, which includes three phases: 1) Project Development; 2) Engineering; and 3) Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA)/Construction. Once the FFGA is in place, construction can begin. The West Lake Corridor Project is currently wrapping up the first phase, Project Development. The project will advance into the Engineering phase later in 2019. The FTA continues to administer CIG projects, including accepting new applications for funding projects in future years. NICTD is following the process and working closely with the FTA to obtain a funding recommendation for this project in Fiscal Year 2020.

Is my property going to be acquired?

We understand the concern surrounding your home or business and what the future might bring. The design is currently at a preliminary phase and property needs may change as the design develops, particularly as project team members seek to minimize impacts to properties and the community.

In the DEIS, a preliminary and conservative estimate was prepared to identify properties that could potentially be purchased to construct the project. The number and location of those properties is currently under review to look for ways to reduce the number of property acquisitions. Some property owners in the corridor may have received letters notifying them of survey and soil testing work being performed on their property. Please note that receiving one of these letters does not necessarily mean that your property will be bought. This important survey work supports our preliminary engineering and design. Property needs required to complete the project are still under review.

Local, state and federal regulations and laws govern the purchase of private property for public use and define when purchase would be required. These laws also confirm that owners of property acquired for public projects are treated fairly and consistently. They are designed to encourage and expedite purchase by agreements with property owners, to minimize litigation and relieve congestion in the courts, 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 process that must be followed.

NICTD would begin negotiations with property owners during the Engineering phase of the Project, scheduled to begin in late 2019. If you have questions about whether your property is being considered for purchase or have any project-related real estate questions, please contact NICTD at 800-382-5206 or realestate@nictd.com.

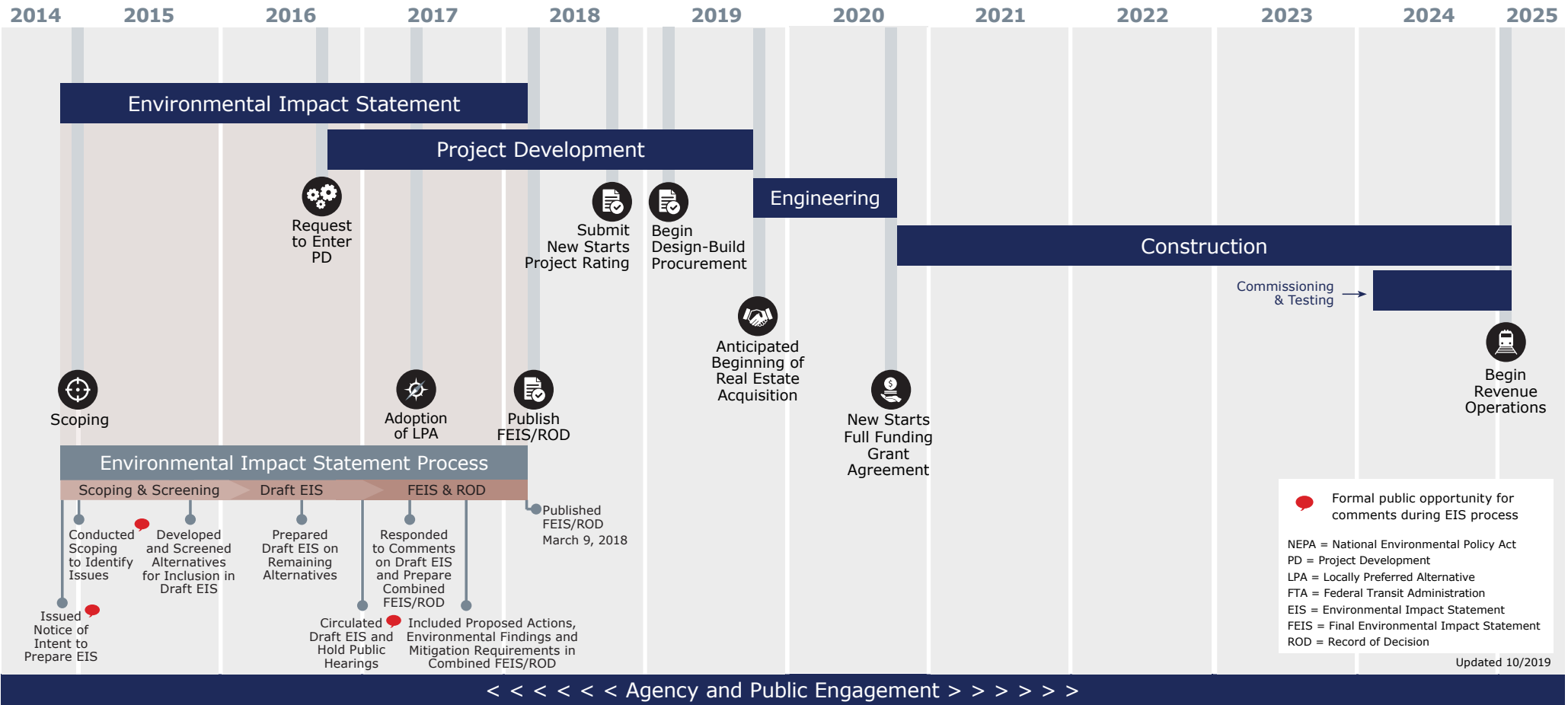
How is this project going to be funded?

When the proposed West Lake Corridor Project is fully advanced through the FTA's New Starts process, it is anticipated that the New Starts program will provide approximately 38 percent of the Project's capital cost. The non-New Starts costs will be covered by a combination of funding sources, including the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority, the State of Indiana, and local communities.

The USDOT has indicated in the last couple years that only Capital Investment Grant (CIG) projects with existing full funding grant agreements will be funded by Congress. Does this project have a full funding grant agreement and if not, why do we believe the project will be funded?



PROJECT SCHEDULE



“With the expansion of the NICTD South Shore Commuter Rail Line – West Lake Corridor Project and Double Track NWI expansion – the Region will see increased economic development by attracting and keeping residents in Northwest Indiana. The South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority’s Board of Directors supports the expansion as a source of increased business for our hospitality assets and to create opportunities to bring additional high-paying jobs to our corner of the state.”

South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority Board of Directors and Staff • www.southshorecva.com

Updated 10/2019