



# Welcome

## Welcome to the Open House Public Hearing for the Double Track Northwest Indiana Project!

The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Share information on the Project
- Summarize the results of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Section 4(f) Evaluation completed pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Historic Properties Assessment of Effects completed pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act
- Obtain your input



Formal comments can be made through **October 23, 2017** by:

1. Speaking with the court reporter tonight
2. Providing written comments on comment cards
3. Emailing [DoubleTrackNWI@nictd.com](mailto:DoubleTrackNWI@nictd.com)
4. Mailing to South Shore Line, Attn: Double Track NWI, 33 East U.S. Highway 12, Chesterton, IN 46304
5. Submitting comments on the website at [www.doubletrack-nwi.com](http://www.doubletrack-nwi.com)



# Project Overview

Anticipated Cost: **\$312 million**

The Project would construct a second track next to the existing South Shore Line track from Gary to Michigan City, Indiana.

2017

- Review and Consider Public Comments
- Decision Document

2018

- Project Rating
- Approval to Enter Engineering
- Property Acquisition
- Design and Engineering
- Full Funding Grant Agreement

2019

- Property Acquisition
- Begin Construction

2020

- Begin Operations

## What's Next?

- The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will respond to public comments on the EA.
- FTA will issue a NEPA decision document summarizing results of the EA including all comments and responses.
- NICTD will receive a Project Rating from the FTA to start the next phase of the Capital Investment Grant funding process.



# Project Purpose and Need

The EA describes the purpose and need for this project and how the project provides solutions to meet these needs.

## Project Purpose:

The purpose of the Project is to improve capacity, travel time, service, reliability, and safety along the South Shore Line. The project would allow NICTD to add more trains, reduce travel time, enhance safety, and support economic growth in Northwest Indiana.



## Needs to be Addressed:

- The existing South Shore Line is a single track shared by commuter and freight trains. The shared single track limits scheduling and the ability to add trains.
- Service on the single track is delayed by track maintenance, equipment failure, or a blocking train.
- Passenger crowding is common, especially during peak hours.
- Ridership is expected to increase as population in Northwest Indiana is forecasted to grow.
- Travel times to employment centers like Chicago are not competitive with automobiles.
- Street-running track and numerous at-grade crossings in Michigan City create safety issues for vehicles and pedestrians.



# Project Benefits

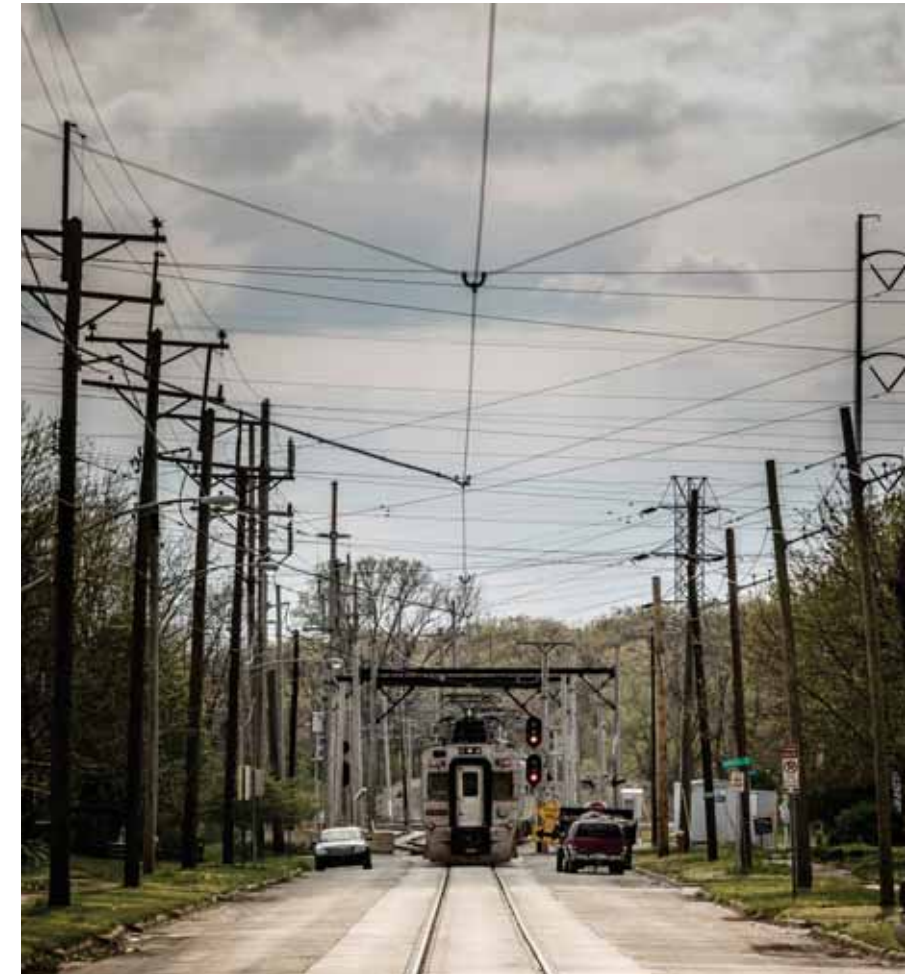
If the Project is constructed, NICTD would expand weekday service by adding:

**5**  
westbound  
trips

**7**  
eastbound  
trips

Travel Times to Millennium Station Would Be Reduced:

Station	Existing Average Peak Hour Travel Time	Anticipated Fastest Peak Hour Travel Time
Gary/Miller	1 hour 9 minutes	46 minutes
Portage/Ogden Dunes	1 hour 16 minutes	51 minutes
Dune Park	1 hour 21 minutes	54 minutes
11 <sup>th</sup> St. (Michigan City)	1 hour 41 minutes	1 hour 4 minutes



Construction of the Project would result in:

**IMPROVED**  
Reliability

**FASTER**  
Travel Time

**INCREASED**  
Service

**MORE COMPETITIVE**  
Travel Options

**INCREASED**  
Safety

**INCREASED**  
Economic Benefits



# Alternatives Considered

The EA compares the No Build Alternative and a Preferred Alternative for the Project. The Preferred Alternative was chosen after evaluating options in several areas:

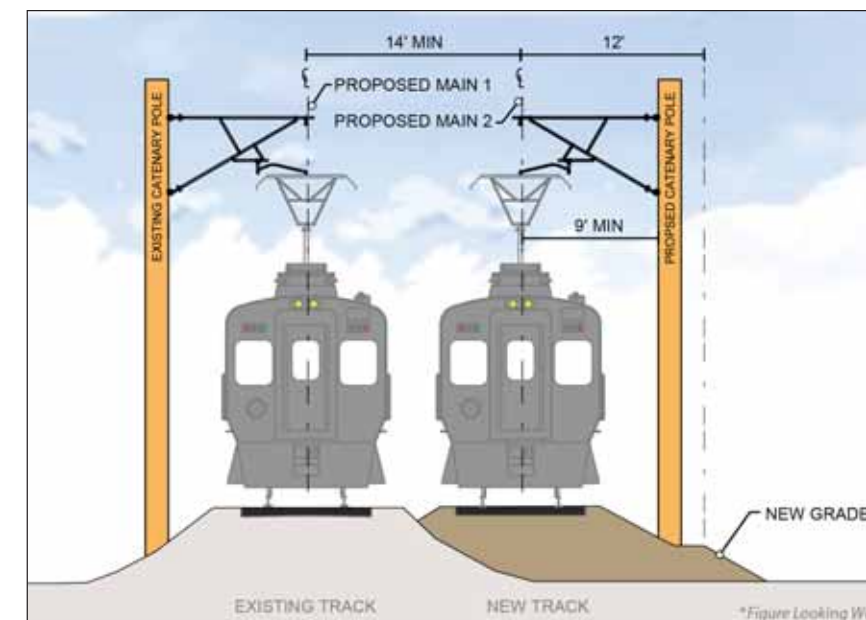
- Two options at Goff/CN crossing in Gary
- Seven options at Bailly near Burns Harbor
- Two station design options in Michigan City

## No Build Alternative

- Required under NEPA
- Represents the future condition if the project were not constructed
- Compares the relative impacts and benefits of the Preferred Alternative

## Preferred Alternative

- 16.9 miles of second track
- 4 new bridges
- New platforms and/or parking at Gary/Miller, Portage/Ogden Dunes, Dune Park, Beverly Shores, and 11<sup>th</sup> Street (Michigan City) stations
- Removal of street-running track in Michigan City and construction of new tracks south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street and along the north side of 11<sup>th</sup> Street





# Goff/CN (Gary)

Located just west of the I-90 overpass, two options were evaluated where freight and passenger tracks cross. **Design Option 2** was selected as part of the Preferred Alternative.

## Key Features

- New second track south of the existing track
- Shifts the existing CSS freight siding track
- Shifts the CSS connection to CN freight track

## Key Benefits

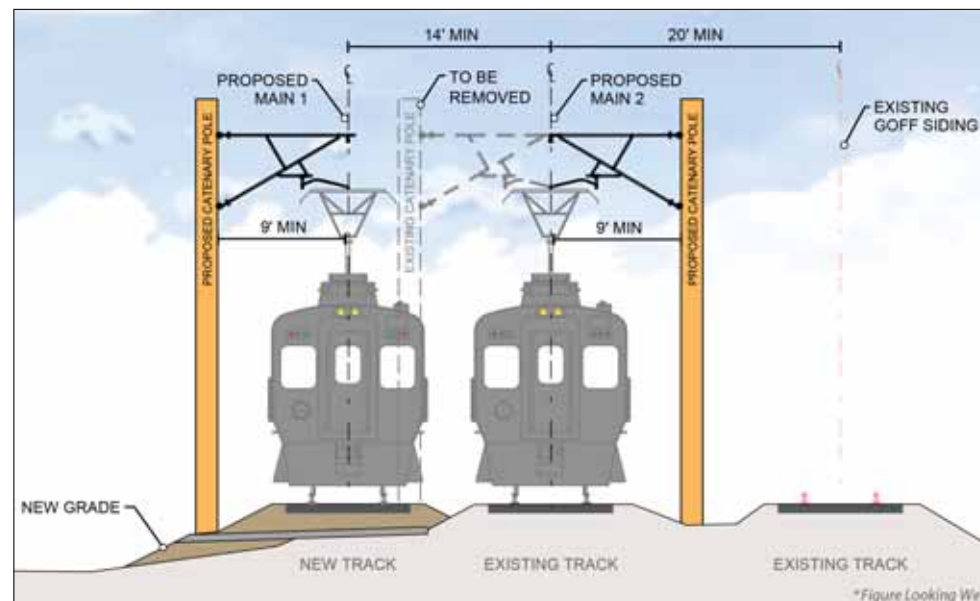
- Fewer impacts to CSS and CN operations
- Built within existing NICTD right-of-way
- Fewer impacts to wetlands
- Avoids impacts to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (Miller Woods)

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Fill in wetlands
  - Mitigation to be completed by enhancing and restoring wetlands at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Temporary construction easement from Indiana Department of Transportation for work near U.S. 12



LOCATOR MAP





# Gary/Miller Station

## Key Features

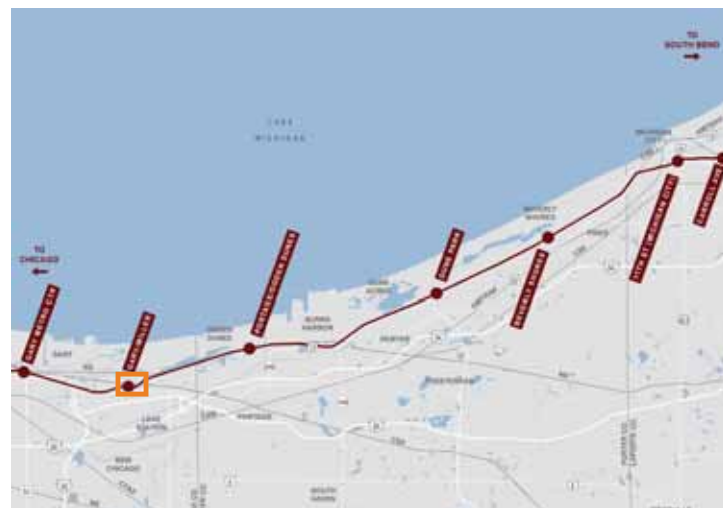
- Reroutes U.S. 12 to merge with U.S. 20 (separate project by INDOT)
- Realignment of two NICTD tracks south of existing tracks
- Two ADA-accessible high-level platforms with warming shelters
- Gauntlet tracks for freight train operations past high-level platforms
- Storage tracks for trains ending or starting at Miller
- Two new bridges east of the station area, over Hobart Road and the CSX tracks

## Key Benefits

- 348 new parking spaces on opening day
- Opportunity for transit-oriented development and more parking through Gary planning efforts
- More frequent express service between Gary/Miller Station and Chicago

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Permanent land acquisitions
  - 37 commercial properties - 31 vacant parcels, 6 with buildings
  - 1 residential property
  - 1 INDOT property
- Temporary construction easements
- Temporary construction impacts include noise, visual changes, traffic, and parking lot access
  - Plans for parking staging and maintenance of traffic during construction
  - Close coordination with businesses regarding work in their area and maintaining access
- Visual changes in station area and eastward with grade change near storage tracks
  - Coordination with Gary and INDOT on landscaping and retaining walls



LOCATOR MAP



MILLER STATION  
LAKEFRONT DISTRICT CORRIDOR



# Portage/Ogden Dunes Station

## Key Features

- Two ADA-accessible high-level platforms with warming shelters
- Additional parking

## Key Benefits

- 267 new parking spaces on opening day
- Expanded parking west of Hillcrest Road & across U.S. 12
- Vehicle and pedestrian access designed according to INDOT standards

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Permanent land acquisition
  - 2 commercial properties - 1 vacant parcel, 1 building
- Temporary construction easements
  - Plan for parking staging during construction
- Tree clearing during winter to avoid impacting protected bat species and migratory birds



LOCATOR MAP







# Bailly Track Segment (near Burns Harbor)

Seven options were evaluated. **Design Option 4** was selected as a part of the Preferred Alternative.

## Key Features

- Commuter and freight operations separated
  - Two CSS freight tracks to the north, with crossovers
  - Two NICTD tracks to the south
- 7,000-foot freight siding track between Midwest Steel and McCool Road
- Two new bridges over NS tracks and ArcelorMittal entrance (parallel to existing bridges)

## Key Benefits

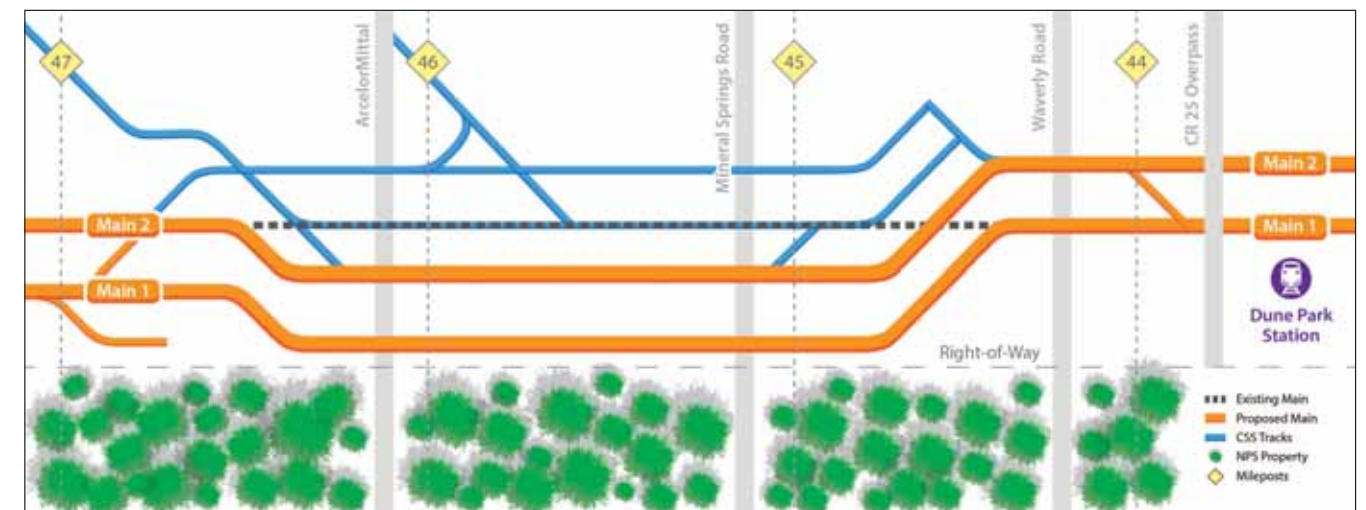
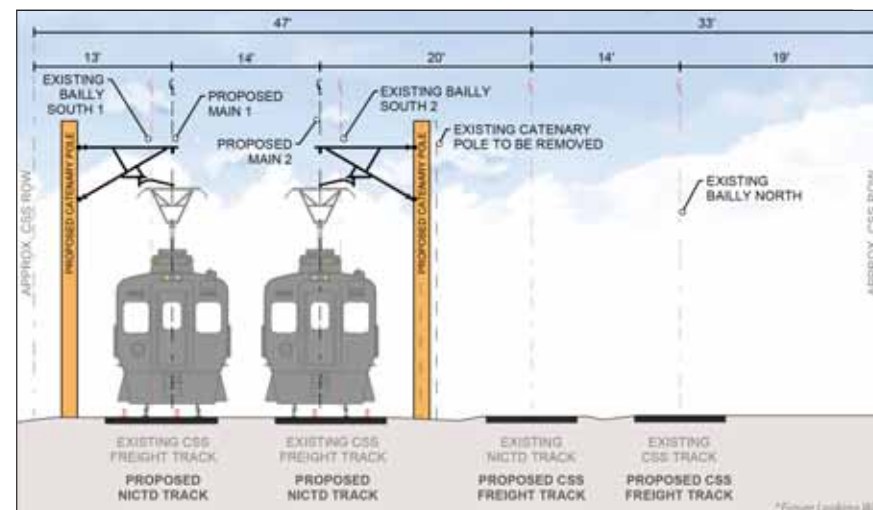
- Reduces train conflicts resulting in fewer and shorter delays
- Maintains CSS freight operations and provides necessary railcar storage
- Avoids impacts to adjacent Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Maximizes use of existing tracks and sidings

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Temporary construction easements
- Fill in wetlands
  - Mitigation to be completed by enhancing and restoring wetlands at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Construction in suitable habitat areas for threatened & endangered species
  - Drift fences
  - Daily inspections
  - Removal of protected amphibians, reptiles, and plant species from construction area, if practicable



LOCATOR MAP





# Dune Park Station

## Key Features

- One additional low-level platform
- Gauntlet track for freight train operations past existing high-level platform
- Expanded parking lot

## Key Benefits

- 72 new parking spaces opening day
- Opportunity for increased parking in the future
- Avoids conflicts with utilities

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Relocation of Calumet Trail under State Route 49
  - Calumet Trail would remain open and accessible during construction
- Fill in wetlands
  - Mitigation to be completed by enhancing and restoring wetlands at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Construction in suitable habitat for threatened & endangered species
  - Drift fences
  - Daily inspections
  - Removal of protected amphibians, reptiles, and plant species from construction area, if practicable



LOCATOR MAP





# Beverly Shores Station

## Key Features

- New track north of existing track
- Two new low-level platforms

## Key Benefits

- No changes to historic depot building
- Operational flexibility

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Two vibration impacts
  - Modifications to the track in this location would be evaluated and installed to reduce vibration
- Two noise impacts from train horn
  - Train horn noise would be mitigated by lowering the horn volume



LOCATOR MAP





# Michigan City - 10<sup>th</sup> Street

## Key Features

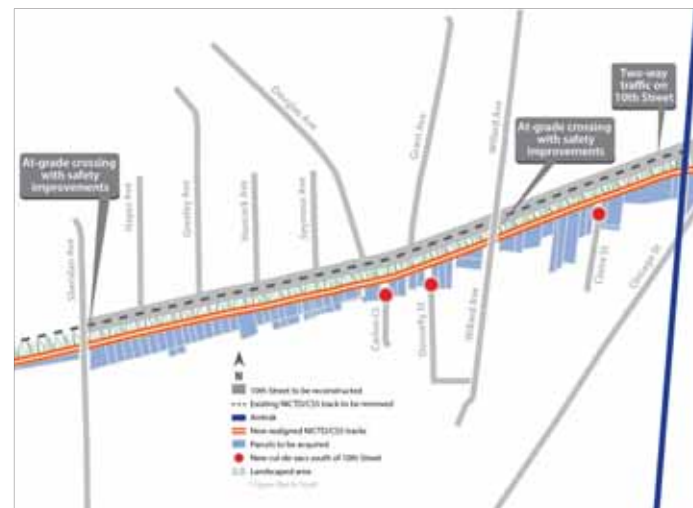
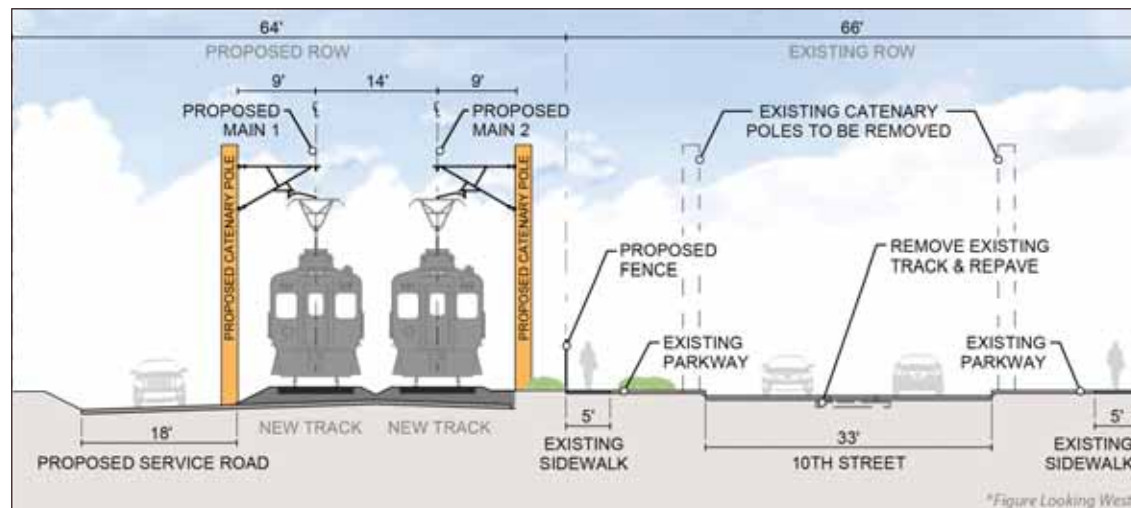
- Removes embedded street-running track
- Two new tracks south of 10<sup>th</sup> Street, separated from roadway
- Closes three streets to the south
  - Carlon Street
  - Donnelly Street
  - Claire Street
- Establishes Quiet Zone

## Key Benefits

- Maintains two-way vehicular traffic
- Removes 10 at-grade crossings
- Increases safety
- Faster train speed
- Decrease in noise from crossing removals and implementation of Quiet Zone

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Permanent Land Acquisition
  - 73 properties
    - 51 residential - 23 vacant parcels, 28 buildings
    - 14 commercial - 13 vacant parcels, 1 building
    - 7 municipal, all vacant parcels
    - 1 utility
- Two temporary utility easements for construction
- Changes to travel patterns
  - Southern access to 10<sup>th</sup> Street would be from Willard Street or Chicago Street





# Michigan City - 11<sup>th</sup> Street Chicago Street to Washington Street

## Key Features

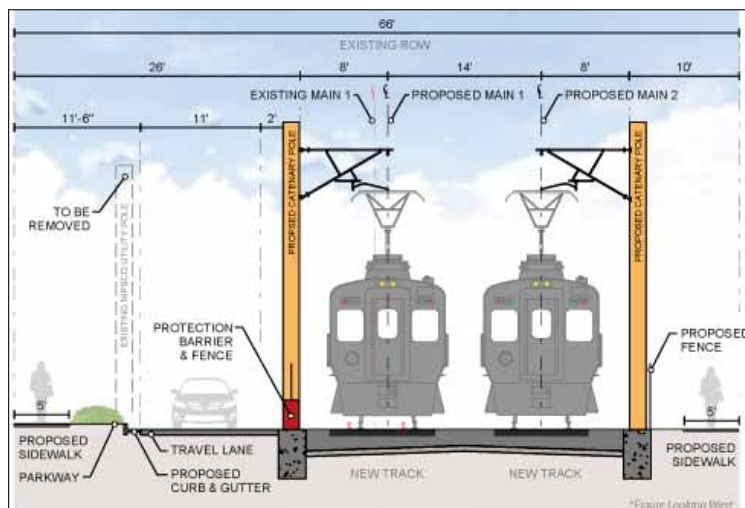
- Two new tracks on the north side of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, separated from roadway
- Closes five streets to the north
  - Kentucky Street
  - Tennessee Street
  - Elston Street
  - Manhattan Street
  - Buffalo Street
- One-way eastbound traffic on 11<sup>th</sup> Street
- Establishes Quiet Zone

## Key Benefits

- Increases safety
- Faster train speed
- Removes six at-grade crossings and upgrades remaining crossings
- Decrease in noise from crossing removals and implementation of Quiet Zone

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Permanent Land Acquisition
  - 2 residential properties
- Changes to travel patterns
  - Traffic redirected to the next nearest cross street, generally two to three blocks away
- Five vibration impacts north of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, between Elston and Washington Streets
  - Modifications to the track to be evaluated and installed to reduce vibration





# Michigan City - 11<sup>th</sup> Street Washington Street to E. Michigan Boulevard

Two options were evaluated for 11<sup>th</sup> Street in the vicinity of the station: aligning the tracks north or south of the roadway. The north side alignment option was selected as part of the Preferred Alternative.

## Key Features

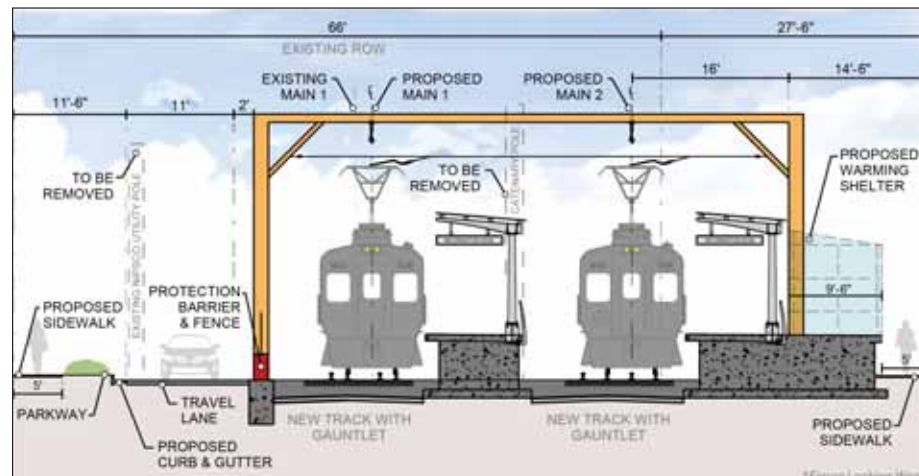
- Two new tracks on the north side of 11<sup>th</sup> Street, separated from roadway
- Closes five streets to the north
  - Pine Street
  - Spring Street
  - Cedar Street
  - York Street
  - Maple Street
- New parking garage and station facility, incorporating façade of old South Shore Station building
- Two high-level platforms
- One-way eastbound traffic on 11<sup>th</sup> Street
- Establishes Quiet Zone

## Key Benefits

- Removes five at-grade crossings
- Increases safety
- Faster train speed
- Decrease in noise from crossing removals and implementation of Quiet Zone
- Opportunity for future station area development (by others)

## Impacts and Mitigation

- Permanent Land Acquisition
  - 28 residential - 5 vacant parcels, 23 with buildings
  - 9 commercial - 2 vacant parcels, 7 with buildings
  - 2 utility parcels
- Changes to travel patterns and Bus Route 2
  - Traffic redirected to the next nearest cross street, generally two to three blocks away
  - Coordination with Michigan City Transit
- Adverse effects to 27 historic properties
  - Memorandum of Agreement between FTA, NICTD, and Indiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
  - Coordination with Indiana Landmarks
- Visual changes at station area
  - Coordination with Michigan City station design, landscaping, and architectural styles





# Land Acquisition and Relocation

- 158 parcels would be permanently acquired
  - 81 residential properties - 29 vacant parcels, 52 with buildings (one parcel has two residences)
  - 62 commercial properties, 47 vacant parcels, 15 with buildings
  - 16 transportation, utility, and municipal properties

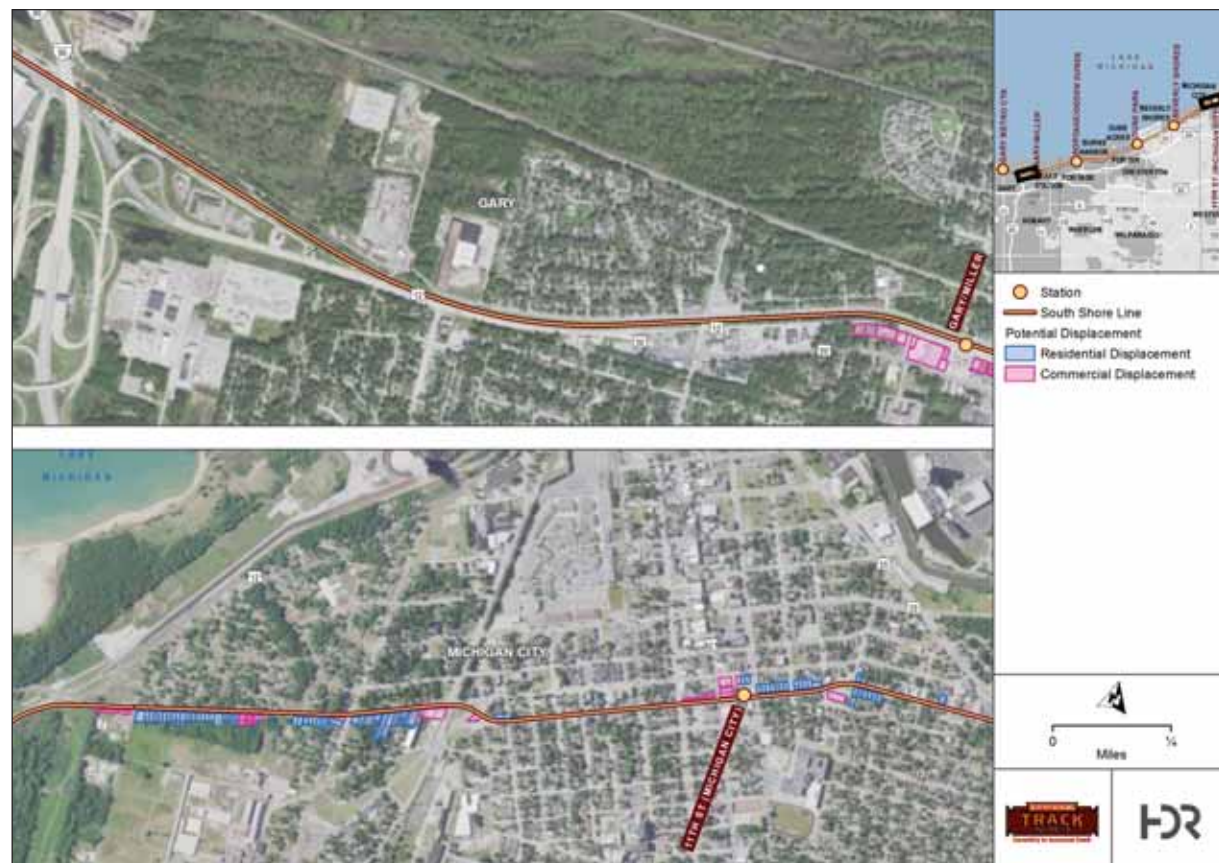
## Property Purchase Negotiations to begin January 2018

NICTD will be contacting affected property owners to negotiate the purchase of their properties following the NEPA decision document (anticipated by January 2018).

## Compensation for Property Owners

Owners will be paid no less than fair market value for their land and buildings.

All property acquisitions would comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970.



See Separate Map  
for Proposed Property Acquisitions



# Biological and Water Resource Impacts

- Fill in 5.73 acres of adjacent wetlands
  - Mitigation to be completed by enhancing and restoring wetlands at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
  - Coordinated with National Park Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Indiana DNR
- Scattered tree removal along the alignment
  - Coordination with the Indiana DNR and National Park Service regarding appropriate tree replacement
- Construction in potential habitat for threatened & endangered species
  - Drift fences around construction areas
  - Daily inspections
  - Removal of amphibians or reptiles from construction area, if practicable
  - Tree clearing in the winter to avoid impacts to bat species and migratory birds
  - Relocation of plant species before construction, if practicable
- In-stream work in Dunes Creek, Brown Ditch, and Kintzele Ditch, and permanent fill in the 100-year floodplain
  - In-stream construction permits under the Section 404 of Clean Water Act and Section 401 Water Quality Certification by Indiana DNR
  - Drainage structure design would follow state requirements
  - Floodplain permits from Indiana DNR
  - Erosion control and stormwater pollution plans would be implemented during construction







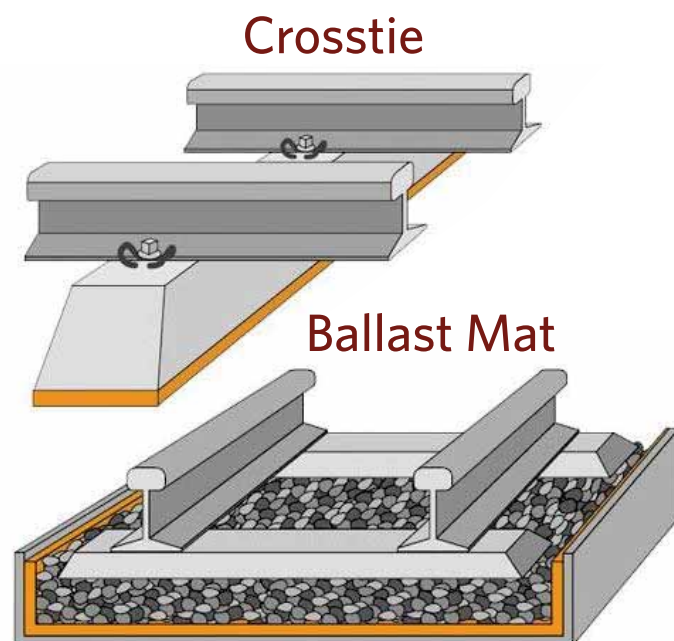
# Built Environment Impacts and Mitigation

## Noise and Vibration

- Two impacts from train horns at crossing in Beverly Shores
  - South Shore Line train horn volume to be lowered
- Quiet Zone to be established in Michigan City between Sheridan Ave. and Carroll Ave. to eliminate the need for trains to sound their horns
- Vibration impacts at 8 locations within Michigan City (5), Beverly Shores (2), and Town of Pines (1)
  - Modifications to the track would be evaluated and installed in these locations to reduce vibration impacts

## Construction Impacts

- Temporary impacts to neighborhoods, including noise, visual changes, traffic, and access to communities and parking lots
  - Coordination with local governments to develop outreach plans regarding construction impacts
  - Fenced active construction zones
  - Contractor to comply with USEPA's construction emission checklist for air quality
  - Coordination with businesses and residents during construction to maintain access





# Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

There will be 27 adverse effects to historic properties. A Memorandum of Agreement developed with the FTA, NICTD, and SHPO will identify mitigation measures to resolve the effects. The mitigation measures will be included in the decision document.

- NICTD will incorporate the façade of South Shore Station building into the new station
- NICTD will hire professionals to complete Historic American Building Surveys prior to demolition
- New station building will include an exhibit focusing on the history of the South Shore Line
- NICTD will install streetscaping and interpretive panels for the Franklin Street Commercial and Elston Grove Historic Districts





# Section 4(f)

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 applies to historic properties and publicly owned parklands and trails.

- *De minimis* impacts are minor impacts that do not adversely impact the features or attributes of the resource
- *De minimis* impacts to two trails
  - Calumet Trail to be relocated under the State Route 49 bridge but would remain open and accessible at all times
  - The Porter Brickyard Segment of the Dunes Kankakee Trail would be relocated near Mineral Springs Road, but would remain open and accessible at all times
- Adverse effects to 27 historic properties
  - The Memorandum of Agreement developed with the FTA, NICTD, and SHPO will identify mitigation measures to resolve the effects





# Funding and Support

With Project Partner Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA), NICTD has received funding support from the State of Indiana; Lake, Porter, LaPorte, and St. Joseph counties; and Michigan City.

Total Estimated Project Cost is \$312M	
Federal Core Capacity (50%)	\$156M
Non Federal Share (50%)	\$156M

*Breakdown of Non Federal Share:*

St. Joseph County	\$18.25M
LaPorte County/Michigan City	\$18.25M
NW Indiana RDA on behalf of Lake and Porter Counties	\$3M annually over 30 yrs*
State of Indiana	\$6M annually over 30 yrs*

*\*Includes financing costs*

“ Investing in the South Shore Rail Line will connect my constituents to Chicago’s \$500 billion economy and nearly four million jobs. It will also allow us to begin to draw Chicago’s economic vibrancy to our region as we attract not only new residents, but also new businesses that are seeking locations that offer quality educational, recreational, and transportation opportunities for their employees and their families. ”

U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky

“ These projects have the capacity to truly transform Northwest Indiana by creating a catalyst for billions of dollars in private investment and thousands of high-paying, permanent jobs for Hoosiers. Making the South Shore Line into a modern commuter line will greatly reduce travel times to downtown Chicago and be a significant driver in positioning communities throughout the Region as viable options for relocation and residential growth. ”

Gov. Eric Holcomb

“ [West Lake] and Double Tracking represent the largest investment in commuter rail ever made in Indiana. Together, they are projected to double South Shore ridership; attract an estimated 11,000 new residents to Lake and Porter counties; create more than 6,000 new jobs in Indiana; and catalyze more than \$2 billion in private investment in Lake, Porter, LaPorte and St. Joseph counties over the next 20 years. ”

Bill Hanna, RDA President and CEO