



# WEST LAKE CORRIDOR PROJECT NICD

## Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Section 4(f) Evaluation

Volume I: Main Text  
December 2016

Prepared by:  
Federal Transit Administration and  
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

In Cooperation with:  
United States Army Corps of Engineers

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**Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

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Prepared by  
United States Department of Transportation,  
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Pursuant to

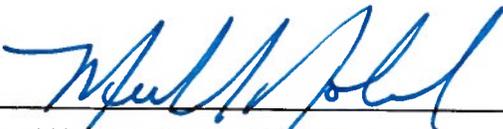
National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 [42 USC § 4332]; Efficient Environmental Reviews for Project Decisionmaking [23 USC § 139]; Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedures of the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR § 1500-1508); FHWA/FTA Environmental Impact and Related Procedures [23 CFR § 771]; Section 4(f) requirements [49 USC § 303 and 23 USC § 138] and regulations [23 CFR § 774]; and Clean Water Act [33 USC § 1251 et seq.].



Marisol R. Simón, Regional Administrator  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration

12/2/2016

Date of Approval



Michael Noland, General Manager  
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District

12/2/2016

Date of Approval

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# WEST LAKE CORRIDOR PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

## Responsible Agencies

**Federal Lead Agency:** United States Department of Transportation; Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

**Local Project Sponsor:** Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD)

**Cooperating Agency:** United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

**Title:** West Lake Corridor Project

**Location:** Lake County, Indiana and Cook County, Illinois

## Abstract

FTA and NICTD, in cooperation with USACE, have prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the West Lake Corridor Project (Project) in Lake County, Indiana, and Cook County, Illinois. The Project is an approximately 9-mile proposed southern branch extension of NICTD's existing South Shore Line (SSL) between Dyer and Hammond, Indiana. The Project would also operate on about 15 miles of existing SSL and Metra Electric District's line to Millennium Station in downtown Chicago. Alternatives to be considered include a No Build Alternative and three build alternatives—Commuter Rail, Indiana Harbor Belt, and Hammond—and several design options for the latter in terms of route alignment, station locations, and vehicle mode. This DEIS evaluates the environmental, transportation, social, and economic impacts associated with the Project. More information can be found on the Project website at <http://www.nictdwestlake.com>.

## Comments on this DEIS

This DEIS will be made available for comment during a 45-day public and agency review period from December 16, 2016 to February 3, 2017. During that period, FTA and NICTD will hold three public hearings to provide the opportunity for comment on this document. The dates, times, and locations of the public hearings are as follows:

January 17, 2017, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Protsman Elementary School, 1121 Harrison Avenue, Dyer, IN

January 18, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., Washington Irving Elementary School, 4727 Pine Avenue, Hammond, IN

January 19, 2017, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Centennial Park, 1005 S. Centennial Drive, Munster, IN

A Notice of Availability of the DEIS will be published in the *Northwest Indiana Times*, *Post-Tribune*, and *Gary Crusader*. The availability of the DEIS will also be announced through e-mails and postcards to parties on the Project's mailing list. The DEIS, supporting technical reports, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act compliance reports will also be available on the Project website at <http://www.nictdwestlake.com/>.

Written comments should be submitted to NICTD West Lake Corridor Project, 33 East U.S. Highway 12, Chesterton, IN 46304. Comments may also be e-mailed to [project.email@nictdwestlake.com](mailto:project.email@nictdwestlake.com), submitted on-line by going to <http://www.nictdwestlake.com/>, or called in to the automated phone line at 219-250-2920.

In order for comments to be a part of the Project's final environmental record, they must be received no later than February 3, 2017.

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

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Federal Transit Administration  
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Chicago, IL 60606  
Telephone: 312-353-4070

Nicole Barker  
Director of Capital Investment and Implementation  
Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District  
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Chesterton, IN 46304  
Telephone: 219-926-5744 ext. 313

FTA intends to issue a single document that consists of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) pursuant to 23 United States Code § 139(n), unless the FEIS makes substantial changes to the proposed action that are relevant to environmental or safety concerns, or there is a significant new circumstance or information relevant to environmental concerns that bears on the proposed action or the impacts of the proposed action.

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