

# NORTHERN INDIANA PASSENGER RAIL CORRIDOR

## PURPOSE AND NEED

Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima

Prepared for the City of Fort Wayne, IN

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**DRAFT**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

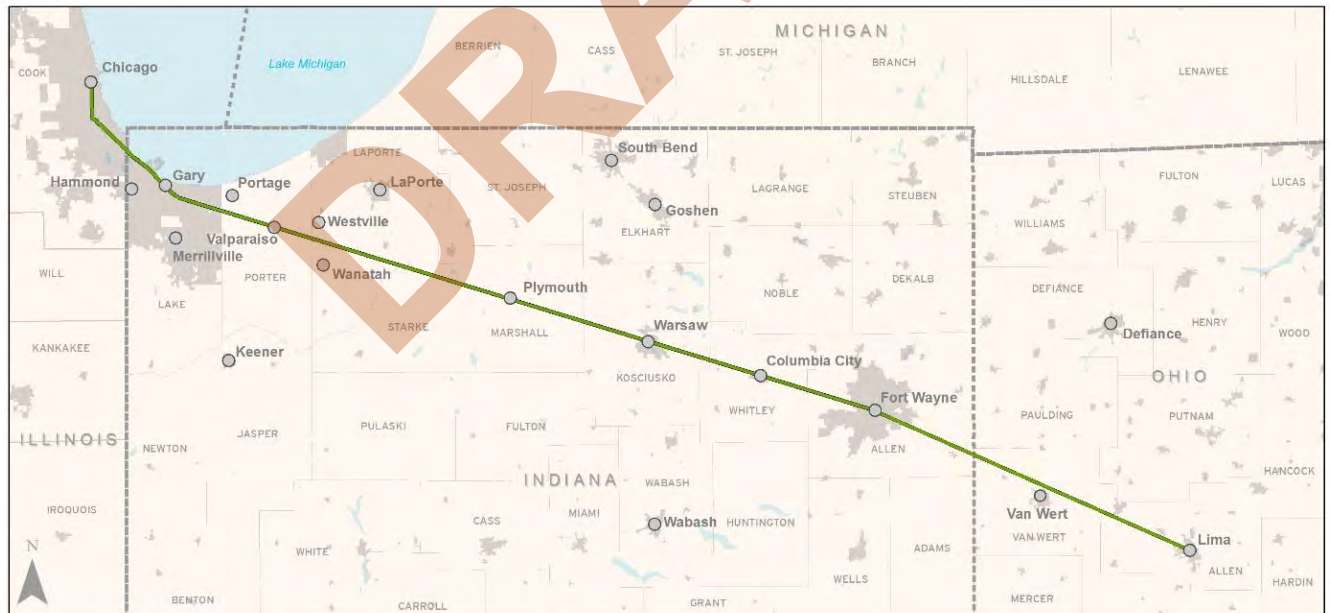
This report introduces the Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Corridor Project (Project) and provides a description of the proposed Project, prior studies, and the purpose and need for the Project.

## 1.1 Project Description

The City of Fort Wayne and the Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA), in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are evaluating reestablishing passenger rail service between Chicago and Fort Wayne, Indiana with a probable extension to Lima, Ohio. The Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima corridor (Corridor) would improve access and mobility for the communities along the Corridor and lay the foundation for potential future passenger rail connections in Ohio, including connections to Columbus, other metropolitan Ohio communities and beyond.

The proposed passenger rail Corridor, as shown in **Figure 1**, is approximately 130 miles long. It connects the major metropolitan region of Chicago with Fort Wayne and Lima and the smaller cities and towns in between including Gary, Valparaiso, Plymouth and Warsaw in Indiana. The Corridor traverses east to west through two counties in Ohio (Allen and Van Wert), eight counties in Indiana (Allen, Whitley, Kosciusko, Marshall, Starke, La Porte, Porter and Lake) and Cook County Illinois where it would terminate at Chicago Union Station. Station locations have not been determined at this point.

**Figure 1: Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Project Location**



## 1.2 Current Project Phase/NEPA

This current study phase is undertaking early planning activities that includes identifying the Project purpose and need, conducting a route alternatives analysis, and completing conceptual engineering to understand Project infrastructure requirements and preliminary cost estimates. The Project will also evaluate service alternatives to determine operating characteristics for the service including the number of round trips and the maximum train speeds. Decisions from these early planning activities will position the Project to complete an environmental review required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for a potential future federally funded action.

The Project would utilize the selected “South of the Lake” route (Chicago Union Station to Tolleston in Gary, Indiana) that is being evaluated by the Michigan Department of Transportation and the FRA in the *Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Corridor Program Tier 1 Draft EIS* published in September 2014.<sup>1</sup>

The Project sponsors anticipate requesting federal funds and securing private sector funding to implement the Project and must comply with the requirements of NEPA. The NEPA process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on an understanding of potential environmental consequences. During a future study phase, an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared for the Project in compliance with 42 USC 4321-4347. The Project sponsors will prepare an EA that will provide the public with a description of the potential environmental impacts of the alternatives developed to meet the Project purpose and need. The EA serves as the primary document to facilitate the review of the proposed Project by federal, state, and local agencies and the public.

## 1.3 Passenger Rail Service Background

No passenger rail service currently operates along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor. Amtrak previously provided service between Chicago, Fort Wayne and Lima along the Chicago, Fort Wayne & Eastern (CFER) Fort Wayne line as a part of the Broadway Limited and Capitol Limited services that connected Chicago to New York and Washington DC. Amtrak rerouted the services in 1990 when the Fort Wayne line deteriorated under Conrail ownership, who decided to focus their investments in routes that paralleled the Fort Wayne Line. Amtrak discontinued the Broadway Limited in 1995, while the Capitol Limited still operates through South Bend, IN and Toledo, OH on its way to Washington DC.

## 1.4 Prior Planning Studies

Prior passenger rail planning studies provide the basis for the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor.

### 1.4.1 Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

In 1996, nine Midwest states, including Indiana and Ohio, and Amtrak initiated the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MWRRI). The MWRRI elements include:

- Operation of a hub and spoke passenger rail system centered on Chicago
- Use of 3,000 miles of existing rail right of way to connect rural and urban areas
- Track and signal improvements and introduction of modern trains operating at speeds to 110 mph

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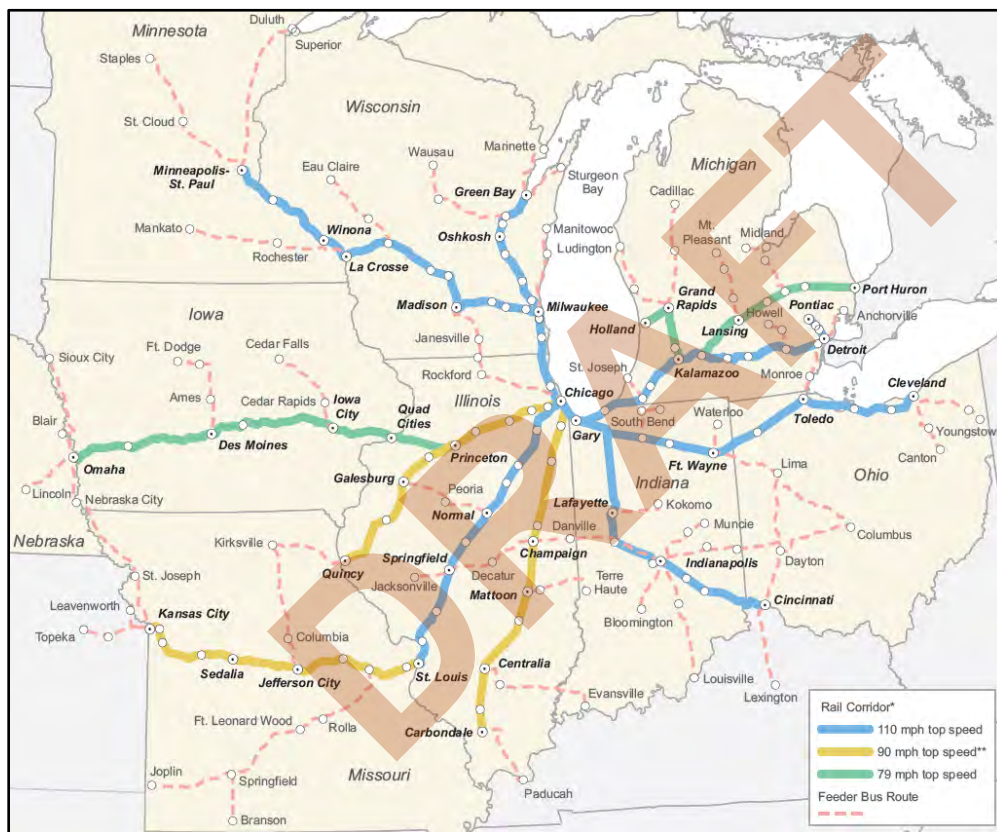
<sup>1</sup> It is expected that the FRA will complete and publish the Final EIS and Record of Decision in 2017.

- Provision of multi-modal connections to improve system access
- Improvement in frequency, reliability, speed, and on-time performance

Under the passenger rail system proposed by MWRRI, shown in **Figure 2**, Chicago serves as the hub around which the Midwest service is based. The Chicago-Fort Wayne Corridor was proposed in MWRRI with service to Toledo and Cleveland.

FRA has initiated a new planning effort, the Midwest Regional Rail Planning Study, to provide a 40-year framework as an update to the 2006 Midwest Regional Rail Initiative, a 12-state Midwest passenger rail network. The new study will look at the entire network area including service levels, financing, passenger rail interconnections and governance. NIPRA and the City of Fort Wayne are participating in the planning process through the Stakeholder Planning Group. A new Midwest Rail Plan is anticipated in Summer 2018.

**Figure 2: Proposed Midwest Regional Rail System**



### 1.4.2 Ohio Hub System

An Ohio Hub system was originally conceived in 2004 as an eastern complement to the system proposed by MWRRI. It consisted of a Cleveland Hub network with four interconnecting 110-mph diesel-powered passenger rail lines. However, in 2007 the Ohio concept was expanded by the addition of three Columbus-centered routes to Pittsburgh, Toledo/Detroit and Fort Wayne/Chicago. As a result, the name of the system was changed from “Cleveland Hub” to “Ohio Hub” reflecting the expanded statewide and multiple-hub focus of the proposed corridor system.

The Ohio Hub study funded the initial feasibility-level assessment of the rail route connecting Columbus to Fort Wayne, but the scope of that assessment did not extend west of Fort Wayne.

The Ohio Hub system connected the Chicago-Columbus corridor to Pittsburgh, which together with service onward to Harrisburg and Philadelphia could provide the first interregional link between the Northeast Corridor, Ohio Hub, and Midwest Regional Rail Systems. The State of Ohio has discontinued the Ohio Hub study.

### **1.4.3 NIPRA Feasibility Study**

Since the completion of MWRRI studies in 2004, NIPRA built on the MWRRI's plan to return passenger rail service to Fort Wayne by testing the feasibility of providing service to Columbus instead of Toledo and Cleveland. In 2013, NIPRA commissioned a study to assess the feasibility of a Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima-Columbus corridor. The study revealed that positive financial and economic criteria can be achieved on this corridor and the development of the route would result in significant benefits for system users and the communities linked by the system. (TEMS, 2013).

With the discontinuance of the Ohio Hub study, NIPRA and the cities of Fort Wayne and Lima realized that the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor could still move forward as a segment of independent utility regardless of potential future passenger rail linkages in Ohio and beyond. Therefore, NIPRA and the cities of Fort Wayne and Lima are continuing to take steps to implement service along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor.

## **2 PURPOSE AND NEED**

### **2.1 Project Purpose**

The purpose of the Project is to re-establish a new intercity passenger rail service that provides a convenient, direct and reliable alternative transportation choice for travelers and communities along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor. The Project would address future travel demand, strengthen connections between the communities along the Corridor and provide access to the major economic centers and transportation modes in the Chicago metropolitan area.

Goals of the Project include:

- Provide riders with an efficient, safe, equitable and affordable alternative to highway, bus, and air travel;
- Be a cost-effective investment;
- Protect freight-rail carrying capability (cargo loads by freight rail);
- Support the ongoing implementation of regional passenger rail in the MWRRI, including new service between Chicago and Fort Wayne, Indiana;
- Promote economic development;
- Avoid or minimize community and environmental impacts; and
- Integrate with existing and planned multimodal transportation networks.

### **2.2 Project Need**

The need for the Project arises from a lack of convenient, direct and reliable transportation options along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor and the need to provide an additional mode of transportation that will improve transportation access, sustain growing populations and increase employment options in the small and mid-sized communities along the Corridor. Travel is currently limited to vehicles along a single highway corridor that can be unreliable due to numerous traffic conflict points and increasing congestion levels. Other travel options do not directly serve many of the small and mid-sized communities along the Corridor, leaving them without adequate transportation access. In addition, population and employment trends indicate

a need to growing travel market that will increase the need for more travel options along the Corridor.

### 2.2.1 Travel demand increasing due to population and employment growth

Corridor-wide and sub-area trends show the Corridor is experiencing an increase in population and employment that will continue to increase travel demand and the need for additional transportation options.

#### Corridor-Wide Trends

The Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor is an important area in the Midwest region that traverses the states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. The socioeconomic projections for the Corridor indicate demographic and economic growth will continue over the next several decades, resulting in increased travel demand for the study area.

**Table 1** shows current and projected population, employment, and income for the study area. In 2015, the study area had a population of 11.8 million and contained nearly 6.9 million jobs. In 2040, population is projected to be 14.5 million and employment is projected to be over 9.0 million, a 23 percent and 31 percent increase, respectively. Per capita income is projected to increase to nearly \$70,000 in 2040, a 48 percent increase from 2015.

**Table 1: Base and Projected Socioeconomic Data for the Study Area**

Data	2015	2040	2015-2040	
			Difference	Percent increase
Population	11,849,797	14,539,898	2,690,101	23%
Employment	6,887,638	9,007,576	2,119,938	31%
Per Capita Income (2015\$)	47,194	69,966	22,772	48%

Source: *Transportation Economics & Management Systems (TEMS), Inc., 2017*

The Chicago-Ft. Wayne-Lima Corridor has a substantial amount of business and commuter travel among its urban areas with substantial social and tourist travel. In 2015, the total annual intercity trips in the study area were estimated to be 54 million (TEMS, 2017). About 24 percent of the trips were business related and 76 percent were non-business commuter, social and tourist trips. The auto mode dominates the current travel market with 97.9 percent of the market share. The air and bus modes made up 1.65 percent and 0.45 percent, respectively, in 2015.

The anticipated population, employment and income growth is expected to increase travel demand in the study area in the upcoming decades with the total travel demand increasing to 70.1 million trips by 2035 (TEMS, 2017). The auto mode will continue to dominate with over 95 percent of the market share in 2035.

#### Sub Area Population and Employment Trends

Subarea population and employment trends indicate the distinct communities and regions along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor have a substantial economic base that is projected to grow in the upcoming decades. This growth drives travel demand along the Corridor and increases the need for direct and reliable transportation options such as the proposed passenger rail service.

## Chicago Region

Cook County, IL and the greater Chicago region comprise one of the largest metro regions in the nation and is a major economic hub for the Midwest. Cook County, which includes the City of Chicago, contained 5,104,393 people and 2,379,923 jobs in 2010. By 2040, Cook County population is expected to increase by nearly 17 percent to 5,960,242 and employment is expected to increase by 18 percent to 2,814,972 (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2014).

## Northwest Indiana

Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties comprise the Northwestern Indiana region and include the metro areas of Gary and Hammond. Northwest Indiana contained 771,815 people and 279,868 jobs in 2010. The region is expected to have a population of 941,815 with 353,091 jobs by 2040, representing a 22 and 26 percent increase, respectively. (Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, 2011).

## North Central Indiana

North Central Indiana is comprised of Marshall, Kosciusko, Saint Joseph and Elkhart counties. The region had 590,909 people in 2010 and is expected to grow to 648,242 by 2040, a 10 percent increase (STATS Indiana, 2017). South Bend and Elkhart are the largest communities in the four-county area with 2010 populations of 101,168 and 50,949, respectively. (Michiana Area Council of Governments, 2014)

Employment levels for the four-county region totaled 298,153 in 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The regional economy has a strong manufacturing base and contains major employers in the manufacturing, health and education sectors.

A unique cluster of businesses related to orthopedic devices is in the Corridor in Kosciusko County in Warsaw, Indiana. Warsaw is known as the “Orthopedic Capital of the World and is home to over 30 orthopedic device manufacturing, supply, and technical service companies (Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2011). Its medical device cluster is considered one of the most concentrated centers of economic activity in the world and Warsaw is home to 60 percent of the global hip and knee replacement market. The Warsaw-based orthopedic industry is one of the largest employers in Kosciusko County and employs about 6,800 workers (OrthoWorx and Kelley School of Business, 2011). Improving transportation access to and from Warsaw is important to keeping the orthopedic industry competitive by allowing greater access to economic markets, transportation modes and workers.

Also, Steel Dynamics, Inc. located in Columbia City, IN is one of the largest domestic steel producers and metals recyclers in the United States. SDI is now the preeminent provider of quality rail for all cut or welded, premium or standard rail products in the United States. This company is Amtrak’s main provider of rail in the United States.

## Northeast Indiana

The Northeast Indiana region includes the four-county area containing DeKalb, Allen, Wells and Adams counties. In 2010, the four-county area had a population of 459,575 that is expected to increase to 529,207 in 2040. Fort Wayne in Allen County is the largest city in the region, with a population of over 250,000, and the second largest city in Indiana.

Employment levels for the four-county region totaled 211,856 in 2015 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The economy, which is centered in Fort Wayne and Allen County, has a variety of core industries with a strong manufacturing base and long-standing insurance sector.



Fort Wayne has a vibrant downtown with offices and residential living options. It also provides many cultural, recreational and entertainment destinations. Since 2005, downtown Fort Wayne has seen over \$273 million of new public and private investment and over \$720 million of additional investment is planned over the next 20 years (Economic Development Downtown, 2017). Fort Wayne is also home to several higher education facilities including Indiana University – Purdue University Fort Wayne, Ivy Tech Northeast, and several private universities.

#### Allen County/Lima, OH

Allen County Ohio contains the city of Lima, Ohio, which is the largest metropolitan area in west central Ohio. In 2010, Allen County had a population of 106,331. Population is expected to decline to 100,650 by 2040, representing a 0.2 percent annual decline. Employment in Allen County was 63,802 in 2010 and is projected to increase to 80,431 by 2040, a 26 percent increase. Although the economy has shifted to a more service-oriented economy, Allen County still maintains a strong manufacturing base, accounting for nearly 20 percent of the employment in the county (Future iQ Partners, 2015). The county maintains a presence of global firms such as Ford, Proctor-Gamble and Potash. The education and health services sector also is a principal industry for Allen County because of the three health systems and four universities/colleges in the county. Increasing Lima's transportation access is very important to sustain its population and employment since Lima/Allen County have an aging workforce.

#### **2.2.2 Limited direct and reliable travel options for Corridor communities**

The limited travel mode options available for the communities along the Corridor creates a need for more direct and reliable transportation options. Many of the available travel modes are routed through South Bend, Indiana and do not directly serve the communities along the Corridor. This leads to less efficient and higher transportation costs for travelers along the Corridor. Intercity passenger rail would increase travel efficiencies and provide improved access for communities along the Corridor to major destinations in Chicago and Fort Wayne.

#### Intercity Bus

The Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor is served by two Greyhound bus partner carriers, Miller Transportation and Barons Bus Line. Four daily departures are available between Fort Wayne and Chicago. Although times and routes vary depending on the origin and destination, the service can be inefficient because of multiple stops and normally indirect travel through South Bend as well as inconvenient travel times. Also, service is very limited to smaller communities along the Corridor such as Warsaw and Plymouth where only one daily departure time is available.

#### Passenger Rail

The communities along the Corridor, including Fort Wayne are not directly served by passenger rail services. The South Shore Line, operated by the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), provides a commuter rail service that travels between South Bend, Gary, Hammond and downtown Chicago at Millennium Station. Amtrak's Capitol Limited and Lake Shore Limited long distance routes stop at stations in South Bend and Elkhart and at Chicago Union Station, but do not directly serve Fort Wayne or other Corridor communities of Valparaiso, Plymouth, and Warsaw, Indiana and Lima, Ohio.

Amtrak's arrival and departure times focus on long-distance leisure travelers and are not convenient for business travelers who typically work between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Amtrak's Capitol Limited and Lake Shore Limited provide morning departures out of Elkhart and South Bend that arrive relatively late in the morning in Chicago at 8:45 a.m. and 9:45 a.m. Central Time, respectively. The return home is also challenging for business travelers since

Amtrak does not provide departures from Chicago on the Capitol Limited or Lake Shore Limited until 6:40 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., respectively.

Additionally, Amtrak's on-time performance between June 2016 and June 2017 for the Capitol Limited was 43.4 percent and 49.2 percent on the Lake Shore Limited. The lack of reliability on these Amtrak services negatively impacts consumer confidence, resulting in travelers using more reliable transportation when arrival times matter.

Business travelers may also consider utilizing the South Shore Line; however, the morning departures out of South Bend are not that much more convenient. Morning departures out of South Bend leave at 6:00 a.m. and 8:48 a.m. Eastern Time with arrivals at Millennium Station in Chicago at 6:55 a.m. and 10:28 a.m. Central Time. The 6:00 a.m. Eastern Time departure enables business travelers to get to work by 8:00 a.m., but perhaps slightly earlier than desired. The 8:48 a.m. departure arrives at Millennium Station at 10:28 a.m. Central Time, typically later than desired. The most convenient departure out of Chicago in the evening is at 5:30 p.m. Central Time. However, this train does not arrive in South Bend until 9:05 p.m. Eastern Time.

Of additional concern for travelers along the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor is the distance needed to travel to a station city, such as South Bend. Departures become even more inconvenient for travelers with added drive time ahead of boarding the train. For example, a traveler originating in Fort Wayne would need to travel over 90 miles (approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes along state highways with frequent stops) via auto to access passenger rail services in South Bend. As a result, current passenger rail services in Indiana require indirect travel and do not adequately address travel needs along the Corridor.

#### Air Service

Two airlines provide daily service in the Corridor between the Fort Wayne International Airport and Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. Other airports providing commercial passenger service near the Corridor include South Bend International Airport and Chicago Midway International Airport. Although air service is available, it is not competitive with auto travel in terms cost and time. The typical roundtrip nonstop airline ticket between Chicago and Fort Wayne ranges between \$200 and \$300 whereas an auto trip would cost about \$85<sup>2</sup>. Plus, travel via air does not provide direct travel between downtown Fort Wayne and downtown Chicago and would require a second mode of transportation to reach downtown Chicago from O'Hare, increasing the total trip time. Connection time from O'Hare to downtown Chicago via the L train is approximately 45 minutes whereas passengers arriving at Chicago Union Station via rail provides immediate downtown connectivity to several modes of public transportation.

#### Highways

The I-90/I-80 corridor is the major east-west freeway through northern Indiana and northern Ohio. Heading south from Chicago, the I-90/I-80 corridor traverses the northern border of Indiana through Gary and South Bend and heads east to Toledo and Cleveland Ohio. The entire length of I-90/I-80 in Indiana is the Indiana Toll Road. It serves as the major artery of northern Indiana and connects with other major highways including I-94 in Chicago, I-65 and I-69 in Indiana and I-75 in Ohio. The interstate does not directly serve many of the communities along the proposed passenger rail Corridor. It is about 25 miles north of Plymouth, over 30 miles north of Warsaw and nearly 50 miles from Fort Wayne.

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<sup>2</sup> Auto trip cost assumes approximately 160 miles of vehicular travel between Fort Wayne and Chicago at 2017 the IRS standard mileage rate of 53.5 cents per mile.

US 30 is the most direct highway serving the Chicago-Fort Wayne-Lima Corridor. US 30 is an east-west four-lane divided highway that provides a critical link between many of the rural communities in Indiana and Ohio that are not directly served by the interstate system. In Indiana, US 30 traverses through the communities of Merrillville, Valparaiso, Plymouth, Warsaw and Fort Wayne. It continues east into Ohio just north of Lima and points beyond.

US 30 is prone to slow traffic movements due to several at-grade intersections and traffic conflict points along the route. An inventory of US 30 commissioned by the U.S. 30 Coalition<sup>3</sup> in Indiana found that over 360 impediments to freeway conversion are present including 36 intersections, 33 stoplights and 209 driveway cuts (Appian, Inc., 2017). These impediments are only likely to increase traffic problems with growing population and employment over time. Average annual daily traffic already reaches over 30,000 vehicles in some locations between Fort Wayne and Valparaiso, and traffic is expected to increase by more than 30 percent in 2035 (Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, 2017). The Indiana Blue Ribbon Panel on Transportation Infrastructure identified US 30 between Valparaiso and Fort Wayne as a state priority project, but currently no state funding has been committed to convert the highway to a limited access freeway (Blue Ribbon Panel on Transportation Infrastructure, 2014).

### 2.2.3 Unreliable Travel connections to major economic hub of Chicago

For many communities along the Corridor, vehicular travel is the only viable option to access Chicago. However, travel times to Chicago from northern Indiana via the highway system are unreliable due to congestion and traffic backups that frequently occur in Northwest Indiana and the Chicago area including the I-90/I-80 and US 30 corridors. According to Google Maps, which factors traffic congestion into estimated travel times, a car trip from Fort Wayne to Chicago can range from 2 hours and 50 minutes to 4 hours and 10 minutes, demonstrating the varied travel times along this corridor. Winter weather conditions also add to the unpredictable nature of highway travel in this corridor. Traffic backups and slow travel are frequent during inclement weather conditions which can occur for several months of the year between November and March.

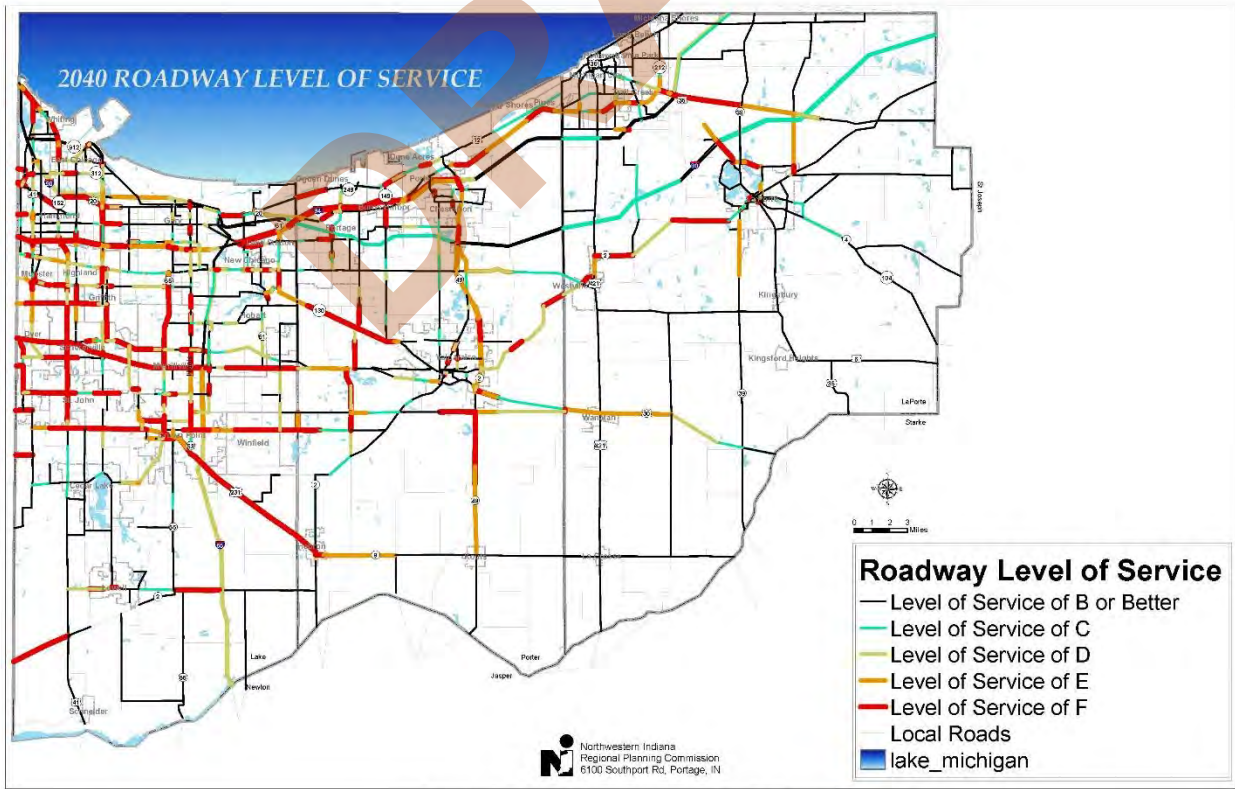
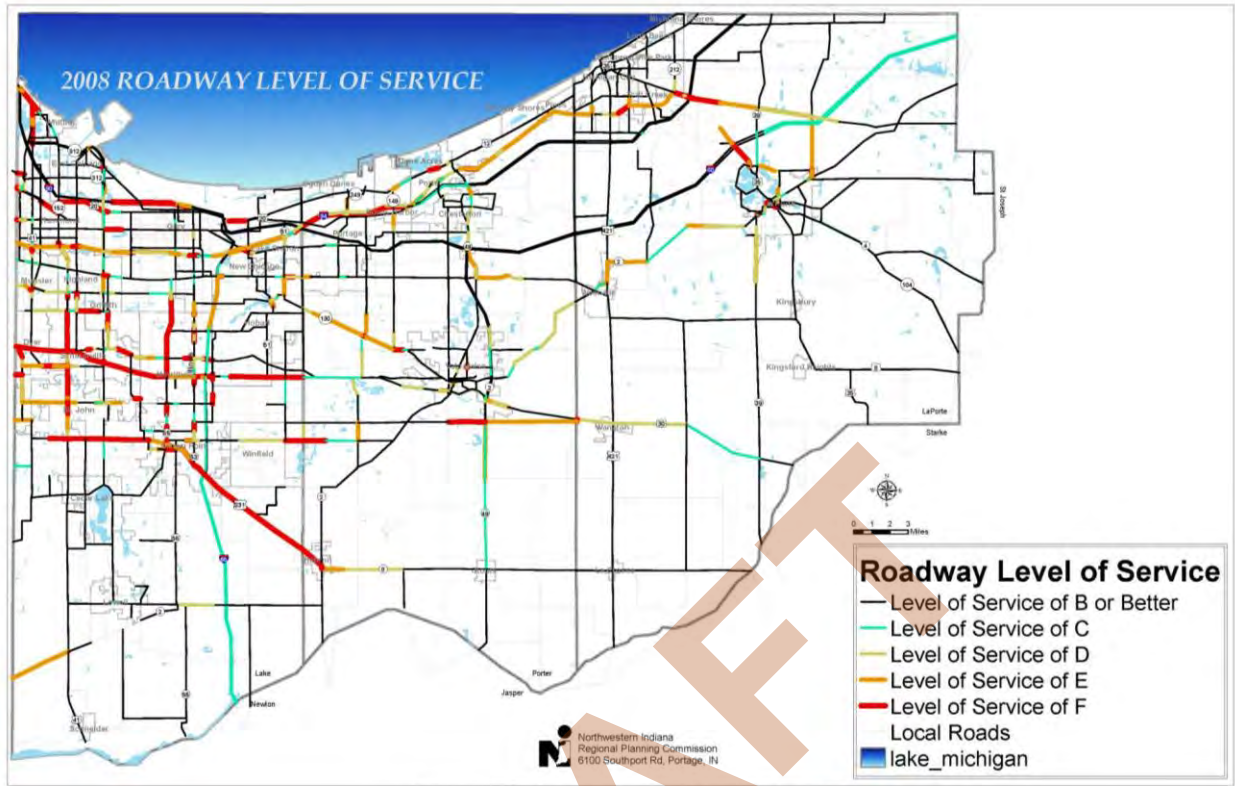
**Figure 3** shows roadway congestion maps for Northwest Indiana (Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties). According to the Northern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, the worst roadway congestion in the region is in Lake County on the east-west expressways and arterials. These areas are landlocked with little room for roadway expansion and require investments in alternative modes of transportation to address travel demand. (Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission, 2011) By 2040, the congestion is only expected to get worse with many of the east-west highways in Lake County experiencing very congested conditions and traffic backups for longer periods of the day.

The I-90/I-94 Dan Ryan corridor into downtown Chicago is also very congested and carries a very high volume of traffic with an annual average daily traffic value of over 250,000 (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2016). According to the CMAP 2016 Quarterly Congestion Report, some of the interstate segments leading to downtown Chicago experience more than 6 congested hours per weekday with some segments reaching more than 10 congested hours per weekday. This means congestion lasts beyond the normal morning and afternoon peak travel hours. Also, according to the CMAP Quarterly Congestion Report, the most intense congestion on the I-90/94 Dan Ryan occurs mostly in the outbound direction during the PM peak and inbound direction during the AM peak, (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2017).

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<sup>3</sup> The U.S. 30 Coalition is an advocacy group charged with upgrading U.S. 30 to a freeway, from Valparaiso to the Ohio line. <https://www.us30coalition.com/>

Figure 3: Northwest Indiana Roadway Congestion, 2008 and 2040



## 2.2.4 More transportation choices are needed to facilitate the region's economic development goals

By improving transportation access, the Project would help facilitate the region's planned economic development and support its major industries that drive the economy. Through the Indiana Regional Cities Initiative, the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership that includes Fort Wayne and the 11-county region, developed the Road to One Million Plan. This plan sets forth a bold vision for growing the region's population from 789,015 today to 1 million residents (Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, 2015). The plan is meant to facilitate quality of life and connectivity improvements that will help the region attract and retain its labor force. Current demographic trends indicate the economy will be impacted by retiring Baby Boomers and lagging growth among the Millennial generation. If these current trends are not addressed, the region's gross domestic product is expected to shrink and wages will stagnate. As a result, the region must attract a younger and more educated workforce to sustain and grow its economy. [note: looking to broaden this section with data on aging work force/population and investigate data on millennial demand for alternative travel]

The proposed passenger rail Project can help the region attain its goal by making it easier to attract more people and workers to the region by better connecting Fort Wayne and the smaller communities along the Corridor to Chicago and its economic, cultural and recreational assets. For example, living and working in a small town would be more desirable if a short car trip to a train station could conveniently and reliably bring people to downtown Chicago in less than three hours. Plus, the train trip would eliminate uncertainties with auto travel times due to congestion, road construction or inclement weather, and it would allow travelers to be productive while traveling.

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