



Visual and Aesthetic Conditions Technical Memorandum

NICTD Double Track NWI (DT-NWI)
Milepost (MP) 58.8 to MP 32.2

Gary to Michigan City, IN

August 18, 2017



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NICTD Double Track – Visual and Aesthetic Conditions Technical Memorandum

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms.....	ii
1.0 Visual and Aesthetic Conditions	3
1.1 Legal/Regulatory Context and Methodology.....	3
2.0 Existing Conditions	4
3.0 Environmental Impacts.....	11
3.1 No Build Alternative.....	11
3.2 Build Alternative	11
4.0 Measures to Avoid or Minimize Harm	19
5.0 References.....	20

Tables

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East).....	5
Table 3-1. Historic Properties and Assessment of Visual Impacts	16

Figures

Figure 3-1. Artist’s Conceptual Rendering of Miller/Gary Station (For Visualization Purposes Only)	12
Figure 3-2. Existing 10 th Street, Looking East.....	14
Figure 3-3. 2014 Artist’s Conceptual Rendering of 10 th Street with Proposed Project, Looking East (For Visualization Purposes Only)	14
Figure 3-4. Existing 11 th Street (Michigan City) Station, Looking Northeast.....	15
Figure 3-5. Conceptual Rendering of 11 th Street (Michigan City) Station with Proposed Project, Perspective East (For Visualization Purposes Only)	15



List of Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
CSS	Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad
CSX	CSX Transportation
IHSSI	Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory
MP	milepost
NICTD	Northern Indiana Commuter District
NIPSCO	Northern Indiana Public Service Company
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NS	Norfolk Southern Railway
OCS	overhead contact system
ROW	right-of-way
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SSL	South Shore Line
TOD	transit-oriented development



1.0 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC CONDITIONS

The Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD), in cooperation with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), proposes improvements and expansion of a 26.6-mile segment of the South Shore Line (SSL) between Gary and Michigan City, Indiana. The SSL is an important component of northwest Indiana's transportation system, and double tracking would provide a more competitive transportation option between northwest Indiana and Chicago. The proposed improvements would better connect the region by providing faster, more frequent, and more reliable train service.

The proposed Project limits are defined by mileposts (MPs), which correspond with signal control points for the SSL/Chicago South Shore and South Bend Railroad (CSS) railroad tracks. The proposed Project begins in Gary at MP 58.8, west of Virginia Street, and ends at MP 32.2, near Carroll Avenue in Michigan City. The total distance is 26.6 miles. Nearly 6.5 miles of double-track mainline already exists within the proposed Project limits, generally between the east end of Gary (MP 54.0) and Burns Harbor (MP 47.5). There are also three separate passing sidings totaling 2.2 miles. Therefore, the total distance of existing double track is 8.7 miles.

Within the 26.6-mile Project Area, the proposed Project would include 1.8 miles of signal work at the far west and east ends of the project, generally between MP 58.8 and 58.1 and MP 33.3 and 32.2, and the construction of 16.1 miles of new second mainline track and new overhead contact system (OCS or catenary) between MP 58.1 in Gary and MP 33.3 in Michigan City. These MPs roughly correspond with Tennessee Street in Gary and Michigan Boulevard in Michigan City.

This technical memorandum discusses the proposed physical improvements of the proposed Project that would result in changes to the surrounding visual environment.

1.1 LEGAL/REGULATORY CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to examine the impacts of federal actions on visual resources. In addition, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act require that visual impacts be considered to protect public parks, recreational areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and public and private historical sites.

For the purposes of this analysis, NICTD assessed visual and aesthetic impacts first by identifying the Project Area's visual resources, including sensitive views, categories of potential viewers of both existing and potential future visual resources, and any Project-related changes to important visual features.

Visual resources are prominent built features such as parks and open space; landmark structures or districts; and natural resources such as vegetation, wetlands, and other natural features within the Project Area. Such resources define the overall visual quality of an area and the context for determining potential visual impacts of a proposed project. The evaluation focuses on whether and how the Project Area's visual quality would be altered by the proposed Project and whether any anticipated change would be generally positive or would degrade the existing essential visual character or context of the surrounding community areas.

NEPA does not identify thresholds for visual impacts. For the purposes of this technical memorandum, an impact would be adverse if it resulted in one of more of the following:

- A substantial change in the community's visual character that would degrade the existing visual character or quality of a site and its surroundings



- A major incompatibility with the context or character of the area (that is, a project feature would contrast strongly with its surroundings)
- Incompatibility with community goals
- Impacts on a historic site through extensive remodeling or removal of buildings or their surrounding area

The determination of impacts considered viewer sensitivity, which is qualitatively considered based on adjacent land use. Viewers include Project Area residents; commercial business owners, employees, and patrons; recreational users of parks, open spaces, and trails; SSL commuters; railroad workers; motorists; and visitors to the area with views of the SSL.

Residents are those who reside within direct visual contact of the Project Area and have a high degree of familiarity with the surroundings and frequent visual interaction.

Business owners, employees, and patrons of businesses within direct visual contact of the Project Area have a high degree of familiarity with the surroundings and frequent visual interaction.

Recreational users are individuals that may walk, run, or bike within the parks, open spaces, and trails in direct visual contact of the Project Area. Recreational users have some familiarity with the scenic views and vegetation.

SSL commuters, motorists, and railroad workers would view the Project Area in the course of daily travel to and from their ultimate destination. Each would typically have lower sensitivity than other viewers because they are traveling through the Project Area or traveling to reach a destination within the Project Area.

Visitors are individuals who rarely have visual interaction with the Project Area and have little familiarity with existing conditions. Visitors would be most affected by changes to historic buildings or structures, and by the blocking or removal of scenic views.

The evaluation was based on aerial photographs, Google Earth, Project Area photographs, and field observation. The visual impacts of any Project-related construction (stations, parking, signals and OTC, and bridges) was compared to the existing terrain and viewshed to determine if any mitigation should be proposed. Mitigation measures are identified where adverse visual impacts would be likely.

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

The SSL corridor has served as an active interurban rail and freight line for over a century. A variety of landscapes, including residential, parks and open space, wetlands, industrial, commercial, and three historic districts characterize the Project Area. The existing SSL rail infrastructure traverses the full length of the Project Area and includes improvements to five stations. The SSL has been a feature of the Project Area's landscape since it was constructed in the early 1900s.

Residential and commercial landscapes are prevalent in the Gary and Michigan City areas, where the Project Area is more urbanized and offers predominant views of buildings, roadways (including U.S. 12), and parking. Industrial landscapes are prevalent in the Gary and Burns Harbor areas, with views of the ArcelorMittal steel mill and the Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) Bailly Generating Station. Other areas along the Project Area offer predominant views of open space and trails, with periodic clusters of houses and retail and commercial buildings. Scenic resources scattered within the Project Area include wetland areas; streams and woodlands associated with the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and the Indiana Dunes State Park; trails; and historic buildings in Michigan City, including the

former 11th Street (Michigan City) Station building. **Table 2-1** describes locations and viewers and provides example photographs of landscapes along the Project Area.

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)




Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
Virginia Street, to Clay Street, Gary (MP 58.4 to MP 55.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban area • Residential and industrial to the south • Some industrial and residential to north • Scattered wetland areas to the north, including high-quality wetlands between MP 57.1 to MP 56.7 • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • U.S. 12 • I-90 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Business employees and patrons • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists 	 <p>Looking East near Ohio Street, Gary</p>
Gary/Miller Station Area (MP 55.7 to MP 54.8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban area • Commercial to north and south (some vacant) • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • Adjacent and intersecting roadways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Business employees and patrons • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists 	 <p>Looking East at Gary/Miller Station, Gary</p>  <p>Looking North on Lake Street, East of Gary/Miller Station, Gary</p>

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)(cont.)




Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
Bridges over CSX Transportation (CSX) and Hobart Road (MP 54.8 to MP 54.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway Existing CSX railroad tracks Existing bridges, retaining walls, and abutments Woodlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rail passengers Railroad workers Motorists 	 <p>Bridge over CSX</p>  <p>Bridge over Hobart Road</p>
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (MP 54.6 to MP 51.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodlands Wetlands NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park visitors Rail passengers Railroad workers Motorists 	<p>No construction within this area</p>
Portage/ Ogden Dunes Station (MP 51.1 to MP 50.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Woodlands to north Commercial and residential to south Recreational harbor to south NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS U.S. 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Business employees and patrons Rail passengers Railroad workers Motorists Visitors to harbor 	 <p>Looking West at Portage/Ogden Dunes Station</p>

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)(cont.)



Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
Bailly/ ArcelorMittal (MP 50.1 to MP 45.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial to the north • NIPSCO overhead power lines and towers to north • Wetlands and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to south • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS U.S. 12 • I-249 overpass • NICTD bridge over ArcelorMittal Main Entrance road • Midwest Highway overpass • NICTD bridge over Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIPSCO and ArcelorMittal employees • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists • Visitors to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore 	 <p>View North toward NIPSCO Bailly Generating Station</p>  <p>Looking Southeast at the Bridge over NS</p>

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)(cont.)





Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
<p>MP 45.1 to MP 43.6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIPSCO overhead power lines and towers to north • High-quality wetlands to north; Cowles Bog • Other portions of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to north • Trails, including Cowles Bog Trailhead, Calumet Trail, Dunes Kankakee Trail • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • U.S. 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIPSCO and ArcelorMittal employees • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists • Visitors to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore • Recreational trail users 	 <p>Looking Northwest at Mineral Springs Road, Porter</p>  <p>Looking East across Waverly Road, Porter</p>
<p>Dune Park Station (MP 43.7 to MP 43.3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calumet Trail • NIPSCO overhead power lines and towers to north • Indiana Dunes State Park to north and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to south • High-quality wetlands to the north • Parking lot and woodland to south • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • U.S. 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists • Visitors to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and Indiana Dunes State Park • Recreational trail users 	 <p>Looking West from Dune Park Station, Chesterton</p>  <p>Looking East toward Dune Park Station, Chesterton</p>

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)(cont.)




Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
MP 43.3 to MP 39.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIPSCO overhead power lines and towers to north • Calumet Trail to north • Indiana Dunes State Park to north • Sporadic high-quality wetlands to the north • Woodlands to south • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Recreational trail users 	 <p>Looking East from State Park Road, Beverly Shores</p>
Beverly Shores Station (MP 39.20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic station building • Calumet Trail and parking lot to north • Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to north • High-quality wetlands to north • Neighborhood commercial • Woodlands to south • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Recreational trail users • Business employees and patrons 	 <p>Looking East toward Beverly Shores Station</p>
East of Beverly Shores to Sheridan Avenue (MP 39.2 to MP 35.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calumet Trail to north • Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore to north • Sporadic high-quality wetlands to north • Woodlands to south • Brown Ditch • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Recreational trail users • Visitors to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore 	 <p>Looking West near Carolina Avenue, MP 36.5</p>

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)(cont.)





Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
10th Street – Sheridan to Chicago (MP 35.2 to MP 34.5) in Michigan City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Historic buildings • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists 	 <p>Looking East along 10th Street from Sheridan Avenue, Michigan City</p>
11th Street from east of Kentucky to Michigan Boulevard (MP 34.5 to MP 33.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential • Commercial • Elston Grove, Franklin Street, and Haskell and Barker Historic Districts and associated buildings • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists • Business employees and customers • School and church goers 	 <p>Looking West along 10th Street from Spring Street, Michigan City</p>
11th Street (Michigan City) Station (MP 33.9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial • Residential • Historic Buildings • Franklin Street Commercial Historic District • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists • Business employees and customers 	 <p>Station Building, Michigan City</p>  <p>Existing 11th Street (Michigan City) Station, Michigan City</p>

Table 2-1. Visual Landscapes along the Project Area (West to East)(cont.)

Location (Mileposts [MP])	General Description	Viewers	Representative Photograph
Michigan Boulevard to Carroll Avenue (MP 33.8 to MP 32.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial • Residential • Historic buildings • NICTD/CSS railroad tracks and OCS • Roadway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents • Rail passengers • Railroad workers • Motorists • Business employees and customers 	 <p>Looking East at School Street, Michigan City</p>

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

3.1 NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The No Build Alternative would not result in changes to the Project Area's visual resources or quality.

3.2 BUILD ALTERNATIVE

3.2.1 PERMANENT IMPACTS

Construction of the second track between Tennessee Street in Gary and Sheridan Avenue in Michigan City parallel to the existing track would be consistent with the context of the existing corridor. Elements of the proposed Project that could permanently alter the visual environment include new station buildings, platforms, pedestrian crossings, additional parking lots or structures, a second track, and new signal and OCS. The four new bridges would be similar to what exists presently and their construction would be consistent with the existing landscape context. Some trees and vegetation would be removed throughout the Project Area; however, given the density of existing vegetation and woodlands, these limited removals would not result in a visual impact. There would be approximately 4.75 acres of fill in scattered wetlands but would not result in a visual impact because the fill would be in limited sections of numerous wetlands along the alignment.

There would be impacts resulting from the track realignment from Sheridan Avenue to Michigan Boulevard in Michigan City. There may be positive visual impacts at the five existing stations and in Michigan City, as described in the following sections.

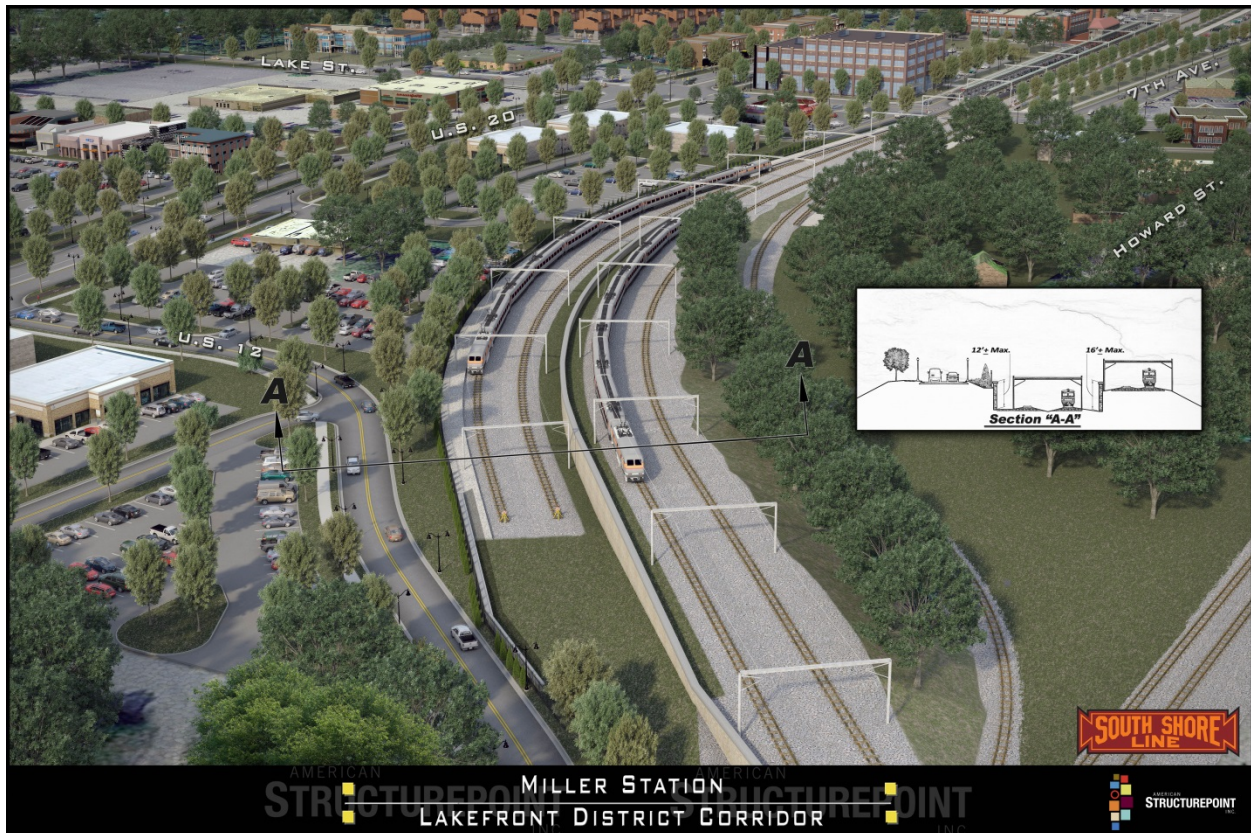
GARY/MILLER STATION

Thirty-nine parcels would be purchased to realign the tracks to the south, add gauntlet and storage tracks, and construct additional and improved parking lots. Of the parcels to be purchased, six have buildings and the rest is vacant land. The station area improvements would be consistent with transit-oriented development (TOD) plans for the area. Construction of the high-level platforms and warming shelters would create some changes in views from the street but would be within the context of the existing station area.

The storage tracks would be constructed east of the immediate station area within a vacated section of U.S. 12. The retaining wall and storage tracks would be below the grade of both the NICTD/CSS railroad tracks to the north and the adjacent parcel and newly aligned U.S. 12 to the south (**Figure 3-1**). The storage tracks would require an 800-foot-long, approximately 14-foot-high retaining wall between the storage tracks and the realigned NICTD/CSS railroad tracks. South of the storage tracks, a NICTD maintenance road would run parallel to the storage tracks. A 12-foot high retaining wall would separate the maintenance road from U.S. 12 and the adjacent parcel to the south.

The SSL storage tracks would be viewed looking east from Lake Street and would be consistent with the character of a railroad station area. The visual character of the immediate station area would change due to the removal of six existing buildings on some of the purchased parcels for the realigned tracks and new platforms. The context of the immediate area would be changed as a result of the proposed Project only to the extent that the footprint of the station area, associated tracks, and parking would be expanded past its existing footprint. The changes in visual surroundings are compatible with the existing setting and with community goals, and would not degrade the visual character of the Project Area. An artist's rendering of the station improvements is depicted in **Figure 3-1**.

Figure 3-1. Artist's Conceptual Rendering of Miller/Gary Station (For Visualization Purposes Only)



Source: Structurepoint 2017

PORTAGE/OGDEN DUNES STATION

Construction of new, updated high-level platforms and warming shelters would improve the visual setting of the existing station area and would be consistent with the context of the existing station area. The proposed parking area south of U.S. 12 would remove some woodland area south of the existing station as viewed from U.S. 12, the station, adjacent businesses and residences, and the tracks. Lighting would



be installed at the parking lots and could affect adjacent residences. The improvements would be consistent with the overall context of the surrounding visual landscape and community goals.

DUNE PARK STATION

Construction of the low-level platforms north of the existing tracks would be consistent with the context of the existing station area, as viewed from the Calumet Trail and the State Road 49/County Road 25 bridge. The new parking area would remove some woodland area south of the existing parking lot, as visible from the existing station, Calumet Trail, and U.S. 12, but would be consistent with the overall context of the surrounding visual landscape and community goals.

Additionally, a small segment of the Calumet Trail would need to be relocated under the State Road 49/County Road 25 bridge; however, the viewshed from and toward this segment of the trail would not be impacted, because it would be moved less than 20 feet to the north.

BEVERLY SHORES STATION

Construction of the low-level platforms would not create adverse visual impacts on the historic station building or neighboring residential and commercial areas and would be consistent with the overall context of the surrounding visual landscape.

MICHIGAN CITY

Visual impacts of the proposed Project within Michigan City would be considerably larger than other segments of the Project. Realignment of the existing street-running tracks would alter a unique visual feature in Michigan City, as experienced by residents, motorists, and commuters. The realigned tracks would run alongside the roadway and the train and tracks would continue to be visible within the context of the area.

10TH STREET

Along 10th Street, the existing street-running tracks would be realigned to the south of the roadway. Homes along the south side of this segment of 10th Street would be removed to accommodate the new alignment and would change the visual character of the south side of the roadway from residential to a pedestrian path with new landscaping and lighting. The railroad tracks, OCS, and short (approximately 3-foot) barrier wall would be visible from the street and homes to the north of 10th Street but would be buffered by new landscaping. **Figure 3-2** and **Figure 3-3** provide a before and after perspective of 10th Street, respectively. **Figure 3-3** is provided as a conceptual rendering for visualization purposes only.

Figure 3-2. Existing 10th Street, Looking East



Figure 3-3. 2014 Artist's Conceptual Rendering of 10th Street with Proposed Project, Looking East (For Visualization Purposes Only)



Source: Transystems 2013

11TH STREET

Construction of the high-level platforms and parking structure at the 11th Street (Michigan City) Station would alter the visual setting of the station area. The high-level platforms require grade changes on the approaches to the station that could block views of the existing surroundings as viewed from the street, businesses, and residences on the south side of 11th Street. **Figure 3-4** shows the existing 11th Street (Michigan City) Station area. A conceptual rendering of the 11th Street (Michigan City) Station area with the proposed Project is provided in **Figure 3-5** for visualization purposes only.

Figure 3-4. Existing 11th Street (Michigan City) Station, Looking Northeast



Figure 3-5. Conceptual Rendering of 11th Street (Michigan City) Station with Proposed Project, Perspective East (For Visualization Purposes Only)



Impacts on historic properties, including visual impacts, are evaluated in the *Assessment of Effects Report*. Removal of buildings in the southern part of the Elston Grove Historic District, and the edges of the Franklin Street Commercial Historic District, compounded with street closures and the creation of cul-de-sacs would alter view sheds and streetscapes resulting in adverse effects to the historic districts. Further, the installation of high-level platforms in front of the 11th Street Station would have an adverse visual impact on the station and the Elston Grove Historic District and the recommended boundary expansion of the Elston Grove Historic District, as noted in Error! Reference source not found..

Table 3-1. Historic Properties and Assessment of Visual Impacts

Property Name	IHSSI No. / NRHP No.	Address	County	NRHP Eligibility	Assessment of Impacts
Elston Grove Historic District	091-406-18001/ NR-2331	N/A	LaPorte	Listed	Adverse Effect
Apartment Building	091-406-21082	328 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House (Scherrbaum Residence)		1012 Spring Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House		1015 Spring Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House (Lubiniecki Residence)		202 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House (Hill Residence)		206 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House (Isbell Residence)		210 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House		218 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House (Bibb Residence)		314 Lafayette Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect

Table 3-1. Historic Properties and Assessment of Visual Impacts (cont.)

Property Name	IHSSI No. / NRHP No.	Address	County	NRHP Eligibility	Assessment of Impacts
Apartment Building		320-322 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
House (Vance Residence)		716 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Elston Grove Historic District	Adverse Effect
Elston Grove Historic District Boundary Expansion		N/A	LaPorte	Recommended eligible	Adverse Effect
House		501 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended eligible as contributing resource to recommended Elston Grove Historic District Expansion	Adverse Effect
House		509 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended eligible as contributing resource to recommended Elston Grove Historic District Expansion	Adverse Effect
House		513 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended eligible as contributing resource to recommended Elston Grove Historic District Expansion	Adverse Effect
House		517 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended eligible as contributing resource to recommended Elston Grove Historic District Expansion	Adverse Effect

Table 3-1. Historic Properties and Assessment of Visual Impacts (cont.)

Property Name	IHSSI No. / NRHP No.	Address	County	NRHP Eligibility	Assessment of Impacts
House		505 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended eligible as contributing resource to recommended Elston Grove Historic District Expansion	Adverse Effect
First Christian Church	091-406-21081	1102 Cedar Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended eligible as contributing resource to recommended Elston Grove Historic District Expansion	Adverse Effect
Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	091-406-16001/ NR-2339	N/A	LaPorte	Listed	Adverse Effect
Commercial Building		1010 Franklin Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	Adverse Effect
Commercial Building (Inca Properties LLC)		1015 Franklin Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	Adverse Effect
Commercial Building (Inca Properties LLC)		1019 Franklin Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	Adverse Effect
Commercial Building (Andrea Italian Kitchen/Dough Boys/3 rd Degree BBQ Restaurants)		106 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	Adverse Effect
House		121 E. 10 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Contributing resource to Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	Adverse Effect

Table 3-1. Historic Properties and Assessment of Visual Impacts (cont.)

Property Name	IHSSI No. / NRHP No.	Address	County	NRHP Eligibility	Assessment of Impacts
South Shore Station	091-406-21092	114 E. 11 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended Individually Eligible/Contributing resource to the Franklin Street Commercial Historic District	Adverse Effect
House		1116 W. 10 th Street, Michigan City	LaPorte	Recommended Individually Eligible	Adverse Effect

Notes: IHSSI = DEFINE; NRHP = National Register of Historic Places; N/A = Not applicable

In summary, the permanent visual changes from the proposed Project would be primarily at station areas and within Gary and Michigan City. Between Gary and Michigan City, removal of limited trees and woodlands, fill in scattered wetlands, introduction of parking lots, and additional tracks would not change the existing landscapes. Removal of structures, realigned tracks, and new structures in Michigan City would alter the existing landscape and historic districts.

3.2.2 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Construction of the proposed Project would result in temporary impacts on the surrounding visual environment because of construction work zones. Construction would primarily take place within existing NICTD right-of-way (ROW), on property acquired for the proposed Project, or on temporary construction easements immediately adjacent to railroad ROW, which would minimize visual impacts during construction.

4.0 MEASURES TO AVOID OR MINIMIZE HARM

Visual impacts of the proposed Project would be mitigated by developing the improvements according to the local communities' design standards. This may include landscaping; reusing building façades; and/or using building construction materials, colors, and architectural styles consistent with station sites' surroundings, to the extent possible. NICTD would consider directional lighting and placement during final design. Measures to mitigate potential adverse visual impacts affecting the integrity of historic properties would be developed in consultation with the local historic planning commissions and/or Indiana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), as part of the Section 106 of the NHPA consultation process. A Draft MOA would be developed by FTA and NICTD, in consultation with the SHPO and consulting parties, to resolve the adverse visual effects on historic properties.

NICTD would coordinate with each County regarding tree replacement requirements. Tree removals on National Park Service or Indiana Dunes State Park property would be coordinated with those entities. Mitigation for the loss of wetlands would be coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), and other agencies as required. Compensatory mitigation measures would be identified. NICTD would discuss mitigation proposals with the local community.



5.0 REFERENCES

- HDR. 2017. Draft Assessment of Effects for the NICTD Double Track NWI Project, Michigan City to Gary, Indiana
- Transystems. 2013. Michigan City/NICTD Rail Realignment Study. Prepared for NICTD and City of Michigan City.



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