

# Land Use Plans

## Section III

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
Lake Michigan Coastal Program

# 2050 Comprehensive Regional Plan

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*Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission  
2019*

<https://www.nirpc.org/2040-plan/mobility/2050-plan>

## About the Plan

The NWI 2050 Plan builds on the foundation of the [2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan](#) and takes a planning approach that focuses on the intersections and linkages between transportation, the environment, land use, and economic development. By using updated scenario planning methods, the NWI 2050 Plan provides a framework that includes different possible futures Northwestern Indiana may encounter over the next 30 years, and a suite of appropriate strategies by which to address them. The NWI 2050 Plan includes four focus areas:

- Economy and quality of place
- Environmental quality
- Mobility and transportation choices
- The people and community leaders of Northwestern Indiana

Each focus area is further informed by the Plan's overall vision for the Region:

- **Connected:** NWI's people have accessible, safe, and equal opportunities for working, playing, living, and learning.
- **Renewed:** NWI's urban and rural centers are places people want to come to and live in, and our environment is safe and healthy.
- **United:** NWI's diversity is celebrated, and we work together as a community across racial, ethnic, political, and cultural lines for the mutual benefit of the region.
- **Vibrant:** NWI's economy is thriving, our people are well educated, growth is planned, and natural and agricultural areas are valued and protected.

The NWI 2050 Plan contains several scenarios and chapters that each focus on different aspects of the overall vision for the region. The document concludes with an "Action Plan" and strategy section. Because NIRPC does not have authority to change laws and policies at the local level, it must rely upon its strong network of partners to realize the vision of the plan. NIRPC most often plays the role of consensus-builder and funder.

## Recommendations

The NWI 2050 Plan is a high-level planning document, therefore recommendations are fairly generalized. Look to the NIRPC plans that support the CRP for more specific recommendations about certain geographic or topical areas. The recommendations are based upon the principles of smart growth and focus heavily on reinvesting and revitalizing existing urban centers. There is also an emphasis on enhancing equity, livability and sustainability within communities, and expanding the use of green

infrastructure. Key strategies, a plan for implementation, best practices, performance measures, and potential sources of funding are provided for each of the vision components.

# Indiana Coastal & Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) Plan

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*Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Lake Michigan Coastal Program  
2012*

[http://www.in.gov/dnr/lakemich/files/lm-Indiana\\_CELCP\\_Final\\_Approved.pdf](http://www.in.gov/dnr/lakemich/files/lm-Indiana_CELCP_Final_Approved.pdf)

## About the Plan

The Department of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-77), directed the Secretary of Commerce to establish a Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) “for the purpose of protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses.” The CELCP gives priority to lands that can be effectively managed and protected, provide public access to coastal and estuarine resources, and have significant ecological value. Indiana’s CELCP Plan was developed in order for the state to be able participate in the program. The CELCP Plan incorporated recommendations from existing plans such as the Marquette Plan Phases I and II, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Coastal Historic and Cultural Resources Study of the Lake Michigan Watershed, and the Greenways and Blueways Plan. It provides an assessment of priority land-conservation needs and clear guidance for nominating and selecting land-conservation projects within the state.

## Recommendations

The CELCP Plan contains maps that depict areas with high conservation potential, positive development pressure, negative development pressure, and proposed transportation projects. The Plan also contains maps with suitable habitat for eight animal species that are representative of habitat needs for the region as a whole: American badger, Blanding’s turtle, Blue-spotted salamander, Eastern massasauga rattlesnake, golden-winged warbler, Karner blue butterfly, red-shouldered hawk, and scarlet tanager. Additionally, the Plan outlines areas of particular concern to protecting the natural heritage of the region, including rare or vulnerable habitats, areas of historical significance, areas of essential habitat, areas necessary to protect coastal features like dunes and floodplains, and coastal hazard zones.

# The Marquette Plan 2015: The Lakeshore Reinvestment Strategy

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*Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission and Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority  
2015*

<https://www.nirpc.org/2040-plan/economy-and-place/marquette-plan/the-marquette-plan-2015-the-lake-shore-reinvestment-strategy> **About the Plan**

The Marquette Plan is a comprehensive and collaborative vision for guiding future decision-making across all 45 miles of Indiana's Lake Michigan shoreline. Phase I of the Marquette Plan (2005) had set the goal of increasing public access and redeveloping the region's urbanized coastal areas, from the Illinois state line to the Port of Indiana. Phase II of the Marquette Plan (2008) identified the needs of the smaller communities east of the Port, and created a vision that identified greenways for protecting and accessing the coastline ecosystem, and possible watertrails along the lakeshore. The Marquette Plan 2015 serves to integrate the vision and strategies of these two earlier phases, by establishing more consistency among the plan's priorities and policy frameworks across the entire region. The plan prioritizes improving the physical, social and economic connections throughout Northwest Indiana's lakefront communities, expanding and improving the region's trail and transportation infrastructure, and protecting the long-term health of our environment and natural resources.

## Goals

The four overarching goals of the Marquette Plan are:

- Be a comprehensive vision for the Lake Michigan shoreline
- Recapture 75% of the lakeshore for public use
- Establish a minimum setback from the water's edge of 200 feet
- Create a continuous trail network through Northwest Indiana from Illinois to Michigan

The Marquette Plan contains six policy frameworks that guide implementation of the Plan's vision. Each framework contains policy recommendations and descriptions of completed projects. The frameworks are:

- Access, recreation and tourism development
- Transportation and infrastructure development
- Environmental protection and restoration
- Neighborhood reinvestment and redevelopment
- Brownfields and industrial development
- Community coordination
- Historic and cultural resource preservation

# Lake County Parks and Recreation Master Plan: 2014-2018

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*Lake County Parks and Recreation Department  
2014*

## <https://lakecountyparks.com/241/Park-Open-Space-Plan> About the Plan

This plan provides a guide to continued programs and services for residents of and visitors to Lake County over the next five years. Information contained with the Plan aids decisions regarding opportunities to acquire, reclaim, and preserve significant natural systems and open space resources, and to expand recreational, cultural, historical and educational programs. The Department's current facilities are assessed for current conditions, offerings and accessibility. From this analysis, a public participation process, and park board input, priorities and an action schedule were developed.

## Recommendations

Property-by-property accessibility recommendations are contained in Chapter 4. Property-by-property priority and actions plans are contained in Chapter 7. In addition, the Department has developed a long-range vision for future land acquisition. While the vision plan identifies sites that will expand the department's current holdings, it also seeks to create partnerships with other agencies for management of lands held in ownership outside the parks department. Partner organizations can potentially focus their efforts in areas that are close to current and visionary Department properties.

# Porter County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan: 2017-2022

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*Porter County Parks and Recreation Department  
2017*

<http://www.porterco.org/DocumentCenter/View/4158>

## About the Plan

This plan provides an evaluation, analysis, and series of recommendations and associated action items regarding the development, management, and administration of the Porter County Parks and Recreation Department. The Plan was developed based upon community input, local and regional trends, community demographics, county finances, and the current organizational state of the Department and the County.

## Recommendations

Chapter 8 contains specific recommendations and action items that will guide the Department's implementation of the Plan. This includes priorities for land acquisition, such as connections to trail systems, use of the *Blueways and Greenways Plan* to maintain and protect natural areas and wildlife habitats, and the identification of historical attributes to protect within the County. The Plan also contains additional recommendations about how the Department can address accessibility concerns at each of its properties in Chapter 4.

# LaPorte County Parks and Recreation Master Plan: 2016-2020

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*LaPorte County Parks Department  
2016*

## About the Report

This plan provides an evaluation, analysis, and series of recommendations and associated action items regarding the development, management and administration of the LaPorte County Parks and Recreation Department. The Plan was developed based upon community and Park Board Planning Committee input, community demographics, county finances, and the current organizational state of the Department and the County.

## Recommendations

The Plan focuses on capital improvement and needs for its seven properties, two of which are held by the LaPorte County Parks Foundation, Inc. (Menkes and Sebert properties).

Luhr County Park – 89 acres “Environmental Education and Nature Park”

1. Develop new park loop drive through park and parking lot closer to pond
2. Expand fishing opportunities
3. Construct environmental classroom onto Nature Center

Creek Ridge County Park - 112 acres “Family Park”

1. Construct enclosed (heated) picnic pavilion
2. Develop open-field recreation opportunities

Bluhm County Park – 96 acres “Multi-Use Park”

1. Develop campground (lodge, cabins, tent sites, RV sites, horsemen camp)
2. Develop outdoor amphitheater
3. Construction enclosed pavilion with observatory room
4. Construct a nature center/farmstead/visitor center facility
5. Develop splash park facility (city utility hookup)

Red Mill County Park – 160 acres “Historical & Natural History Park”

1. Develop environmental and historical education programs and facilities
2. Develop historical village and grist/saw mill re-creation

Kankakee River Property – 140 acres “Hunting & Fishing Park”

Develop access and parking and canoe landing site

Menkes Property – 17 acres “Nature Park” and Sebert Property – 40 acres “Day-Use Park”

Develop small parking area and walking trails