Livable Centers clustering many different land uses in a compact area gives people the opportunity to accomplish various activities without using a car.
Livable Centers make it easy to reach multiple destinations by foot, bicycle, car or transit.

A well-designed street and sidewalk system provides good connectivity and safety for everyone.

Livable Centers concentrate housing, employment, shopping, and entertainment in areas with good pedestrian networks.
2040 Plan Implementation Projects

NIRPC Projects/Initiatives
Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)
Creating Livable Communities (CLC) Funding Program
Jobs and housing
On-street, shared, structured or rear parking areas
Transit stops and amenities
Traditional street grid
Access management
Pedestrian-friendly speed limits
Short block lengths
Bicycle lanes
Wide sidewalks
Public spaces
Minimal building setbacks
Existing infrastructure
Specific Elements of Livable Centers

- Compact, mixed use development-
- Building facing streets
- Traditional street grid
- Short block length (400’-600’)
- Balanced jobs and housing
- Having unique and distinct design characteristic with shops offer local products and services
- Many Access options including pedestrian lanes, bike lanes, trails, transit, and roadways
- Convenient, safe and easy street crossing
- Well-maintained public streets
- Public gathering places
- Serving different activities that occurred both daytime and night time
Livable Centers Analysis
GIS
Analyzed the region as a whole
- Block Size
- Street Grid
- Population, housing, and employment density
- Proximity of schools, civic halls, transit, and trails

Research
- Read the municipality’s plans and past projects
- Learned about current projects and initiatives

Drawing Boundaries
- Met with individual municipality, mayors, town managers planners, and other staff
- Listened to their plans, hopes, and considerations for their town or city
- Drew boundaries directly on the maps using their insight and NIRPC’s analysis
• Project team met with 19 Cities/Towns in NWI to work on defining livable/neighborhood centers.

• Project team met with Transit Operators in NWI to discuss transit area/station boundary within ½ a mile.

• Small communities Workshop was held to define livable centers boundaries for the remaining 22 communities.
Livable Centers have been defined in 40 of the municipalities in Northwest Indiana. These Livable Centers vary widely in scale, use, mix and purpose within each community, but all represent areas of regional significance. They are already served by utility infrastructure and the roadway network. In some cases, significant reinvestment will be needed to upgrade existing utility and roadway capacity for the future. The centers are classified in four categories: Metro Center, Large Center, Medium Center, and Small Center.
NIRPC/Walk Score Methodologies

**Walk Score® Description**

- **90–100**: Walker's Paradise
  
  Daily errands do not require a car.

- **70–89**: Very Walkable
  
  Most errands can be accomplished on foot.

- **50–69**: Somewhat Walkable
  
  Some errands can be accomplished on foot.

- **25–49**: Car-Dependent
  
  Most errands require a car.

- **0–24**: Car-Dependent
  
  Almost all errands require a car.

**Walk Score Analysis:**

- Walking routes to nearby amenities.
- Points are awarded based on the distance to amenities.
- Amenities within a 5 minute walk (.25 miles) are given maximum points.
- The more distant amenities the more decline in score with no points given after a 30 minute walk.
- Pedestrian friendliness is measured by analyzing:
  - population density
  - road metrics such as block length and intersection density

**NIRPC Analysis**

- Block Length (400’-600’)
- Street Grid/Connectivity
- Population, housing, and employment density
- Proximity of schools, civic halls, transit, and trails
- Transit
- Mixed use
- Building Setback

http://www.walkscore.com/
Walkability Score/ Density Comparison

- Population Density
- Housing Density
- Employment Density
- Walkability Score

Locations:
- Chesterton
- Whiting
- Crown Point
- Valparaiso
- Hammond
- East Chicago
- Highland
- Hobart
- Michigan City
- LaPorte
- Portage
- Schererville
- East Chicago

Scores:
- Whiting: Population Density 12.4, Housing Density 10.8, Employment Density 10.0
- Portage: Population Density 6.8, Housing Density 4.4, Employment Density 3.9
How to Use the Report?

• Use the Introduction section to get yourself familiar with:
  • Livable Centers definition and benefits.
  • How center are defined
  • Livability checklist
  • NIRPC Methodology
• Find your Community

Transit-Related Projects should be located within half a mile from a transit stop or station.
The purpose of this funding is to support community-based transportation/land use projects that bring vitality to downtown areas, neighborhoods, station areas, commercial cores, and transit corridors.
Types of Grants:

- To fund planning projects or pre-development plan that revitalize: existing centers, neighborhood, downtown, transit stop or transit corridors, TOD ordinance, and

- To prepare projects to compete for funding in the STP construction projects category.
Eligibility Area

Livable Centers in Northwest Indiana
Eligibility Area

Transit Areas in Northwest Indiana

Legend:
- Red: Bus Transit Lines
- Blue: South Shore Line
- Orange: Bus Stops
- Blue: South Shore/ChicaGo Dash
- Pink: Walkable 1/2 Mile to Transit
Projects related to access management, transportation-related zoning ordinance, and streetscape improvements.

Transit amenities, TOD plans and zoning ordinances, and transit area plans.

Plans for street lighting and signage, public pedestrian features like sidewalks, bike lanes, street furniture, and crosswalks.

Traffic calming plans.

Public-use parking plan or shared public-private garage; and access projects.
Examples of ISSUES
Source: San Diego Association of Governments, Designing for Smart Growth | Creating Great Places in the San Diego Region
NIRPC awarded seven grants totaling $402,500 of STP funding to seven communities. The total funding with the local match is $495,500. These communities are:

- Chesterton
- Crown Point
- East Chicago
- Gary
- Highland
- Porter
- Winfield
Streetscape plan connecting the Historic Chesterton Downtown Business District to the South Calumet Business District via:

- A multi-use pathway along with a streetscape improvement for the South Calumet Roadway Corridor.
- The pathway also functions as a segment of the Dunes-Kankakee Trail.
- Streetscape includes signage, lighting, street furniture, landscaping features, crosswalks, bicycle amenities, and ADA improvements to enhance the non-motorized options in this corridor.
City of Crown Point
North Street Corridor Vision and Guideline Plan

Developed a corridor vision plan and related strategies to create a livable, sustainable, and context sensitive North Street Corridor.

- Strengthen and expand improved vehicular and pedestrian connectivity and coordinate new economic and revitalization projects
- Assure land uses within the North Street Corridor and Downtown Livable Center are complementary to the edicts of a livable center.

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City of East Chicago

Three principal planning components:

1. A Transit Oriented Development, housing and commercial development along the Indianapolis Blvd. corridor from Michigan Avenue on the south to 149th Street on the north.

2. A transportation coordination between South Shore passenger trains and city bus service.

3. Marquette Corridor trail through East Chicago, from White Oak, the City's western border with the City of Hammond.

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New land use, development policies and strategies to revitalize the three neighborhoods by improving transit access, enhancing quality of life, reducing emissions, and providing more efficient mobility alternatives.

Improves connectivity to local regional assets in the neighborhoods, specifically the Adam Benjamin Metro Center and the Rail Cats Stadium.

Increases connectivity to other assets of regional importance, specifically, Marquette Park’s Pavilion, the Gary Bathing Beach Aquatorium, the beaches of Lake Michigan and National Park Service resources.
Town of Highland
Kennedy Avenue Corridor Plan

- Plan identifies land uses, parcels and existing buildings within the corridor that could be redeveloped or repurposed in order to create more jobs, services, and amenities for the Town's residents and visitors.

- Address potential conflicting land uses and provides a guide for adaptive reuse and infill development.

- Guide to assist Town in developing an Arts & Cultural District.
Town of Porter

Downtown Porter, Sidewalk and Streetscape Improvements Plan

- Planning project to design new streetscape corridors in downtown Porter.
- Plan designs’ focus on the pedestrian experience by providing sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting at key intersections, landscaping and signage.
- Addresses the Town’s ADA Transition Plan in the limits of the livable center.
Town of Winfield
Downtown Master Plan

- Create connectivity within and to downtown area that does not currently exist in the town.
- Town desires to create a true streetscape and downtown environment for this area.
- Streetscape incorporates pedestrian and transportation facilities such as sidewalks, intersection improvements including handicap accessible crosswalks, decorative street lighting, street furniture, bike lanes/paths and traffic calming elements involving narrower lanes and re-stripping of the roadways.
- Incorporates current stormwater management practices.

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Questions

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