



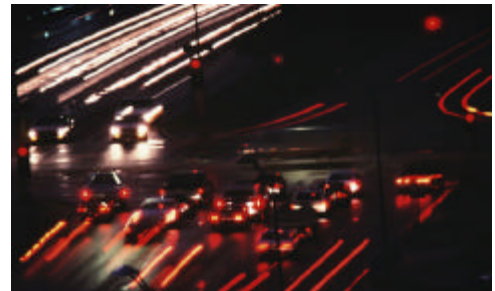
## INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

Effective intermodal transportation implies a public policy for actively decreasing the demand for automobile trips and consequently reducing automobile related traffic impacts. These policies reduce the frequency and length of auto trips by promoting an increased spatial association between residential areas, convenience retail and employment centers, and by encouraging relatively self-contained mixed use projects. Effective traffic management policies also seek to substitute for auto-oriented trips with other modes of travel like walking, biking and public transit. The City has an Official Thoroughfare Plan and map (see Growth Management Plan, Figure 10). The OTP was updated in 1998.

A well-planned intermodal transportation system is a vital component of any growing community such as the City of Valparaiso. The goal of the transportation system is to provide a functional and efficient roadway and public transportation system that is available to serve the travel and access needs of the full community. It is also desirable that the transportation system be designed to provide for all modes of transportation, whether by car, bus, train, bicycle or other any other means of travel. The system needs to allow for direct movement around all parts of the city and to the surrounding northwest Indiana regional area.

The city is fortunate to be located in central Porter County with good connections for travel in all directions via the interstate highway network, commuter rail lines and private airplanes. Interstate 65 is located 13 miles west of the city and provides for north-south regional travel. Interstates 80/90 and 94 are located 7 and 9 miles respectively north of the city and provide for east/west regional travel.



The South Shore Line, a commuter rail service operating between South Bend, Indiana and Chicago, Illinois, provides access to employment opportunities throughout northwest Indiana and Chicago through the Dunes Park station located 11 miles north of the city in Chesterton. Porter County Airport is located on U.S. Route 30 immediately east of State Route (SR) 49 and provides a means for businesses and privately owned planes to have access to and from the area. Bus shuttle service is available to Midway and O'Hare from Merrillville and Portage.

Local major arterial highways under the jurisdiction of the State of Indiana provide connections to the interstate, rail and airport systems. State Route 49, a partial access-controlled, four-lane, divided highway located on the east side of the city, provides connections north or south to the interstate and rail systems. U.S. Route 30, a four-lane divided highway, located on the south side of the city, provides connections east or west to the interstate system and other northern Indiana communities.

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State Route 2 and State Route 130, both two-lane highways, provide connections to other parts of the regional area to the west, southwest and east. State Route 149, though not directly within the city limits, is a two-lane highway providing connections to communities and employment in the northern part of Porter County.

## GOALS

- 1) Develop and maintain a safe and efficient circulation system for the residents of Valparaiso by monitoring changes in traffic patterns and volumes generated by future growth in order to identify required traffic improvements.**

The City needs to ensure that major traffic intersections in new growth areas provide clearly designated and safe pedestrian and bicycle circulation, and consider reconfiguration of problem intersections in order to improve traffic flow and safety.

Traffic flow is also helped when a standardized directional signage system that facilitates locating key destinations in Valparaiso is created.

- 2) Improve the pedestrian and bicycle path system**

The creation of a safe pathway system requires infrastructure upgrades particularly additional right-of-way either on the street, or creating larger pathways off the street. Modifications may also be needed to city requirements to allow for pathways such as number of curb cuts and height of curbs. These pathways are planned along appropriate roadways to ensure safe separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.



A pathway plan is under development by the Pathway Committee. That committee will also develop design standards. The Committee is also studying improved connections between Valparaiso's bike path system and that of other communities and regional trail networks. The Committee is also charged with planning for the placement of bike racks in convenient, well-lit areas, especially those in close proximity to shopping areas, and with promoting walking to enhance the community character, retail viability and the health of residents.

All new development is required to include sidewalks. The Committee is also studying how to finance the installation of sidewalks in areas where they presently do not exist.

The City's Street Department is in the process of reconstructing safe curb ramps at intersections that meet ADA requirements. The Plan Commission also promotes higher-density residential and mixed-use developments in order to encourage non-automobile dependent lifestyles.

- 3) Encourage and promote higher levels of public transportation in Valparaiso and work with regional agencies to implement public transit services.**

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The City and the Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District (NICTD) are working to realize a second South Shore train line into and out of Chicago. NICTD has completed a major investment study that recommended a second line will be needed in the foreseeable future. That line is best served on the existing Canadian National Railway tracks (formerly Grand Trunk). This second line is already needed as peak hour South Shore trains now run over 100% occupied. This new line would be an alternative to automobile use, and focus attention on new strategies for getting residents to Chicago and suburban employment locations via mass transit. All regional entities need to join together to plan and implement this long-term initiative to establish a direct rail link.

The City is also in discussion with Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) to provide funds for bus services to the Dunes Park South Shore station, and to Lake County. The City also continues to support the use and expansion of paratransit alternatives by agencies that serve special needs groups and the elderly.

## **SUMMARY OF 2001 COMMUNITY SURVEY - TRANSPORTATION**

All communities seek to establish a roadway system that is both safe and efficient. This is particularly true of the greater Valparaiso area given the community's strong vehicular orientation. To determine how the City's roadway network can be made more responsive to residents and visitors who use the system daily, existing conditions were recently assessed in a citywide survey conducted by Valparaiso University Research Center. The survey indicated that the most concern was voiced for the intersection referred to as the "Triangle," the area where Lincolnway, Sturdy and LaPorte meet. There were 223 references to this area that accounts for 14.6% of the total references.

The other area is referred to as the "fiveway." This is the intersection of Roosevelt, Vale Park, and Calumet by Wiseway and K-Mart. There are 218 specific references to this intersection that account for 14% of the total references. The traffic data indicates numerous references to problems on Calumet. Some of these are more than likely direct references to the area around the "Fiveway" and other references are for areas either north or south of that intersection. Given that all of these do refer in general terms to the North Calumet area, it is useful to put those into a single category.

For example, there are 22 references to "Calumet by County Seat" and another 108 references to North Calumet. We think it reasonable to assume that all of these persons were thinking about the same several block area and could be combined with the references to "the fiveway." If this is done, that area receives a total of 348 of the references, which amounts to 23% of the total. If we then add the 3 references to Calumet and Bulls Eye Lake Road, the 49 references to just "Calumet" and the 125 references to Calumet and Glendale, there are a total of 525 references to the area from Glendale to Bullseye Lake Road on Calumet. This amounts to 34% of all of the references. In addition, if you add the 14 references to Calumet and Evans the total reaches 539 and 35.4% of the total. Finally, if you put in the 12 references to the area on Calumet between Glendale and Vale Park, the total reaches 551 references and 36% of the total references.

After concerns about North Calumet and the Triangle, the next most frequently mentioned problem area is "Sturdy and 30". A total of 109 references were made to this area, 7% if the total responses. This area is, of course, quite near to the Triangle area and indicates there might be some connections here. Future assessment will be needed to continue to respond to the needs of the community.

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## AREAS OF CONCERN

### 1) Place in the region

From a regional perspective, Northwestern Indiana has an excellent highway network, and Valparaiso is within a 15-minute drive of several major highways. Interstates 80/90 and 94 pass approximately twelve miles north of the City, and Interstate 65 passes twelve miles west of Valparaiso. U.S.6 runs east and west three miles to the north, and U.S.30 forms part of Valparaiso's southern border. State Highways 2 and the 49 bypass are near the City, and State Highway 130 terminates at U.S.30.

The 49 Bypass is a limited access highway to the east, with interchanges at Highway 6, State Highway 2, and U.S.30. At-grade crossings are now located at Vale Park Road (400N), Burlington Beach Road (500N) and CR 600N. Plans are scheduled for the State to purchase the right-of-way necessary for a diamond interchange at Vale Park Road and at Burlington Beach Road.

### 2) Present street design and layout

Valparaiso's streets are laid out in a grid pattern with the exception of some new housing developments. City streets are classified as arterials, collectors or local roads. The current definitions are found in Article X of the City's Zoning Ordinances.

Minimum design standards for Collector and Local roads are in the City of Valparaiso Standards For Acceptance of Municipal Improvements. There are no adopted standards for arterials, but are determined on an individual basis depending on location, traffic volumes and function. All streets in the City are classified according to their average volume of traffic .

### 3) Present traffic volume and road capacities

Present traffic volume and road capacities are listed as average daily traffic volumes for Valparaiso streets. The most heavily used streets in the City are Lincolnway (State 130), US 30 (Morthland Drive), Roosevelt Road, Sturdy Road, Calumet Ave. and Campbell St. New counts will be available for Calumet by fall 2002. The City of Valparaiso takes periodic traffic counts on arterials and collectors. Counts are available from the City Engineer's Office.

City streets currently are operating at levels above capacity except for some during peak flow times. A list of road improvements is included in the Capital Improvement Plan, Chapter 7 of this Comprehensive Plan.



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#### 4) Accident Information

Valparaiso compiles annual accident reports by intersections based on information provided by the Indiana Department of Traffic Safety. Intersections with significant numbers of accidents in 2001 are:

<b>INTERSECTION</b>	<b>ACCIDENTS</b>	<b>INTERSECTION</b>	<b>ACCIDENTS</b>
SR 49/Vale Park	16	Glendale/Roosevelt	9
Calumet/Glendale	11	LaPorte/SR 49	9
Hayes-Leonard/U.S. 30	11	U.S. 30/Washington	8
LaPorte/Sturdy	10	U.S. 30/Horseprarie	8
Lincolnway/Sturdy	9	Calumet/Evans	8
Lincolnway/Roosevelt	9		

Traffic accidents were down in 2001 compared to previous years.

#### 5) Physical Conditions of streets, roads, and bridges.

State of Indiana roads are rated every year for inclusion in the State three-year road maintenance program. City streets are surveyed every year for inclusion in the City's five-year road maintenance program. The program is found in the Capital Improvement Plan. There are no street bridges within Valparaiso's city limits; several railroad bridges do exist. Bridges are the responsibility of county government.

#### 6) Parking facilities

Few areas in Valparaiso are characterized by acute parking shortages. The downtown experiences parking demand which can exceed supply, especially by major activity generators, like the library, YMCA and downtown churches. The County built a new government complex in 1991 that included a two-level parking garage which is underutilized.

### **ACTION PLAN**

As a result of the inventory and analysis of the existing thoroughfare system, existing and potential problems were identified. These are summarized below in list form.

- 1) Increased traffic on access roads to the 49 Bypass have resulted in a need for interchanges at both Vale Park (400N) and Burlington Beach (500N), and a safe crossing at 600N. These plans shouldbe pursued with INDOT and NIRPC.
- 2) City and County roadway classification designations and definitions differ. Coordination is critical between the two thoroughfare plans, particularly as new developments are established adjacent to the City's borders. Discussions should be started with the County regarding consensus on designations.

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- 3) The interchange at Vale Park will also necessitate widening Vale Park Road from State Highway 49 Bypass to Calumet Ave. That is a Redevelopment Commission project and should be scheduled consistent with the interchange project.
  - 4) Volume increases are expected on north/south connector roads such as Silhavy, Roosevelt, Calumet and Campbell as a result of residential and commercial developments. These streets should be studied for additional capacity or congestion mitigation.
  - 5) A trade has been proposed by INDOT to fund some Valparaiso projects, and in return, the City and County would agree to accept Lincolnway/State 130 as a local street. Terms for such an agreement are being drafted.
  - 6) Scheduled updates of the Intermodal Thoroughfare Plan including a map of city streets with percent of current capacity denoted.
  - 7) Continue to complete the triangle intersection plans, the LaPorte Ave. Phase III plans, and the redevelopment of the Eastgate area (Lincolnway between Roosevelt and LaPorte).
  - 8) Continue to develop a pathway system. This system should include additional pedestrian capacity for university students to and from commercial development, and linking Rogers-Lakewood Park to Sunset Hill Park.
  - 9) The City should develop a formal truck route plan with input from County officials. Trucks should be restricted to arterials wherever possible.
  - 10) Continue to evaluate multi-street intersections for possible improvements. Carefully monitor the impacts of increased traffic volumes through the Vale Park/Roosevelt/Calumet, the Center/Joliet/Lincolnway, and the Lincolnway/LaPorte intersections.
  - 11) Discussion should continue to resolve differences in City and County common areas of concern, such as road designations and specifications.
  - 12) Extend Vale Park Road west to connect with 400 North Road at 150 West Road, and construct the missing link between Campbell and Valparaiso streets. This will provide a needed east/west route in northern Valparaiso and connect the 49 Bypass to State Highway 149.
  - 13) Study a proposed alignment for the extension of Sturdy Road to Vale Park Road.
  - 14) Intersections with a history of accidents should be studied for safety improvements.
  - 15) The minimum standards for street design should be reviewed often.
  - 16) Study and support NIRPC plans for public transportation that will decrease traffic congestion (see attached list of Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) projects for our community).

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17) Continue to work with the Northern Indiana Commuter District Board to create commuter service to and from Chicago.

**CROSS REFERENCES**

<b>Zoning Ordinance</b>	
Article VII	Off-Street Parking
Article X	Streets and Thoroughfares
Article XXIX	Signature Street Ordinance

