

# How much and where?

## FOLLOW THE RDA'S MONEY

The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority has so far committed \$132.1 million to projects in Lake and Porter counties. In turn, federal, state and local governments have committed \$232.4 million to those same projects. By that measure, the organization seems to be living up to its vision of being a "catalyst" for investment. Private funds committed to the projects have been relatively scarce at \$1.09 million, far short of the billions of dollars in private money the RDA estimates will be invested through 2029.



## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RDA

**HAMMOND** \$13.13 million    **EAST CHICAGO** \$11.38 million    **GARY** \$9.15 million    **LAKE COUNTY** \$13.13 million    **PORTER COUNTY** \$12.25 million    **INDIANA** \$65 million



**1 Marquette Park Lakefront Gary**  
 Projected total cost: \$32.1 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$0  
 RDA money committed: \$28.2 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$3.92 million  
 This is the city of Gary's project to rejuvenate historic Marquette Park on Lake Michigan. The plan entails multimillion-dollar improvements and rehabilitation for the recreation pavilion, the aquatorium, Lake Street Beach and a former National Guard Armory. Planning work has begun, and construction should start by the middle of next year. Marquette Park opened in 1922.



**2 Gary/Chicago International Airport Gary**  
 Projected total cost: \$100 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$20 million  
 RDA money committed: \$20.25 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$80 million  
 Gary/Chicago International Airport's expansion project is funded largely with money from the Federal Aviation Administration with significant funds also coming from the city of Chicago. The project will expand its main runway to 9,000 feet from its current 7,000 feet. That will allow it to handle full-size commercial airliners and greatly increase its chances of landing commercial air service.



**3 Regional Bus Authority Gary**  
 Projected total cost: \$15.93 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$5.3 million  
 RDA money committed: \$6.93 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$9 million  
 Startup funding for the Northwest Indiana Regional Bus Authority has been supplied by the RDA. A chunk of that, \$1.5 million, is being paid to the Gary transit agency on a month-to-month contract to increase service on its regional routes, which run through six municipalities. Another chunk, \$1.3 million, was used to establish a regional dispatch center for dial-a-ride services. Also funded were mini buses for social service agencies, administrative costs and transit studies.



**4 ChicaGo Dash Valparaiso**  
 Projected total cost: \$6 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$1.8 million  
 RDA money committed: \$1.8 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$4.2 million  
 The ChicaGo Dash provides daily express bus service weekdays from Valparaiso to Chicago's Loop and back for commuters. Valparaiso city leaders say ridership on the bus will provide an indicator for future South Shore commuter rail service to the city. The RDA's money was used to buy and build a parking lot where commuters can park their cars when taking the bus.



**5 Water filtration plant East Chicago**  
 Projected total cost: \$56.4 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$1.98 million  
 RDA money committed: \$1.98 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$54.4 million  
 Almost a year ago, the RDA granted East Chicago money to pay for the demolition of its outmoded water filtration plant. The city wanted the water plant out of the way to make way for lakefront development. The RDA is funding two other lakefront projects there. East Chicago has secured local, state and federal funds to build a \$55 million water filtration plant south of Cline Avenue.



**6 Shoreline due diligence Gary, East Chicago**  
 Projected total cost: \$1.15 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$1.15 million  
 RDA money committed: \$1.15 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$0  
 In 2006, the RDA granted Gary and East Chicago funds to do environmental assessments of a congested rail and energy corridor that blocks access to the lakefront from Jeorse Park to near Buffington Harbor. Officials say the corridor presents some of the greatest challenges to the Marquette Plan, which aims to open up 75 percent of the Lake Michigan shoreline to the public.



**7 Gateway startup East Chicago**  
 Projected total cost: \$8.9 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$3.39 million  
 RDA money committed: \$3.9 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$5 million  
 In 2008, the RDA granted funds to East Chicago to acquire and prepare 32 acres on both sides of Cline Avenue to develop. The purpose is to get ready to create a "gateway" that would include an overpass for cars and pedestrians over Cline Avenue and affect the railroad tracks that separate neighborhoods from the lake. It is part of an overall \$57 million redevelopment project in the area.



**8 Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission travel study**  
 Projected total cost: \$485,200  
 RDA money spent to date: \$85,200  
 RDA money committed: \$85,200  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$400,000  
 In one of its earliest grants, the RDA approved the local funding necessary for the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission to conduct a household travel survey. The last such survey was done in 1995. The results now are being used to plan transportation routes, reduce congestion and secure state and federal funding for projects. The Federal Highway Administration provided \$400,000.



**9 Northwest Indiana Forum marketing**  
 Projected total cost: \$870,000  
 RDA money spent to date: \$130,000  
 RDA money committed: \$130,000  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$740,000  
 In its only grant to a private organization, the RDA in 2007 granted \$130,000 to the Northwest Indiana Forum to build support for extending the South Shore commuter railroad. The Forum is the region's leading economic development group. Local companies pay a hefty membership fee to belong. A number of its members also laid out a total of \$740,000 of their own money for the advertising campaign.



**10 Lakefront and Riverwalk Park Portage**  
 Projected total cost: \$16 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$10 million  
 RDA money committed: \$10 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$6 million  
 RDA members frequently refer to the Portage Lakefront Park as the organization's "signature project." Opened this summer, it features a certified "green" pavilion, a 595-foot river walk and an 86-foot fishing pier. The project also was subject to cost overruns that had Portage increase its original \$4.6 million RDA request to almost \$9.7 million.



**11 Hammond Lakes Marquette Plan Hammond**  
 Projected total cost: \$54.26 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$6.03 million  
 RDA money committed: \$31.48 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$22.78 million  
 The RDA voted 6-0 to fund Hammond's project in January. The RDA's \$31.5 million commitment was its largest for any project up until that time. The Hammond project, already under way, will include an amphitheater and aquatic center at Wolf Lake and trails connecting to Chicago. A pedestrian bridge will be built over Indianapolis Boulevard to connect the George Lake Trail to Whiting Lakefront Park.



**12 Lakefront Park Whiting**  
 Projected total cost: \$4.9 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$2.56 million  
 RDA money committed: \$2.56 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$2.34 million  
 Whiting was the last of the four primary lakefront communities in Lake and Porter counties to receive RDA funding for a Marquette Plan project, in March 2008. The money helped pay for running gas, electric and other infrastructure to Whiting Lakefront Park. It also funded a five-mile bike trail to link with trails coming out of Hammond. The project is the first stage of a lakefront development that could someday include a marina.



**13 Bike path plan Burns Harbor**  
 Projected total cost: \$200,000  
 RDA money spent to date: \$50,000  
 RDA money committed: \$50,000  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$150,000  
 Burns Harbor originally asked for \$100,000 for planning work for an east-west bike trail and town center. It whittled that to a \$50,000 request for just a bike trail when RDA members raised questions about how the town center would fit into the Marquette Plan. The Lake Michigan Coastal Program of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources also chipped in money.



**14 South Shore Line rail cars**  
 Projected total cost: \$51.1 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$17.5 million  
 RDA money committed: \$17.5 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$33.6 million  
 Helping the South Shore commuter railroad buy 14 new double-decker rail cars was one of the RDA's first projects. The South Shore initially requested just \$7.8 million, but, when some expected state funding failed to materialize, it increased its request to \$17.5 million. The new cars are already in use on the South Shore and also benefit the non-RDA counties of LaPorte and St. Joseph.



**15 Little Calumet River flood control Lake County**  
 Projected total cost: \$32.41 million  
 RDA money spent to date: \$4.51 million  
 RDA money committed: \$6 million  
 Projected non-RDA funds: \$26.4 million  
 The money for the Little Calumet River flood control project came after an unusual request from U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Ind., and Gov. Mitch Daniels requesting money for the last two stages of the project. The request came after flooding in August 2007 closed the Borman Expressway for three days. Visclosky and Daniels said they would work to see that the money is repaid to the RDA out of state funds.

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NOTE: All figures are as of June 30, 2009

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Sources: RDA Historical Project Funding statement, RDA Financial Commitment statement, RDA Comprehensive Strategic Plan, city planning departments.