

## Calumet National Heritage Area Management Plan Economy and Tourism Focus Area Planning Group

### Background and Strategic Questions

#### I. Overall goals of the National Heritage Area (NHA)

According to the National Park Service, “National Heritage Areas are places where historic, cultural, and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes. Unlike national parks, National Heritage Areas are large lived-in landscapes.”

Few places are as distinctive and nationally significant as the Calumet region. Happily, the momentum to create a Calumet National Heritage Area (CNHA) has been building: the extensive *CNHA Feasibility Study* has successfully made the case to National Park Service staff that the region is nationally significant and is operationally feasible. While the formal process to create a National Heritage Area (NHA) requires Congressional action, there is great energy in the region to behave like a functioning NHA.

An ever-widening group of regional experts and stakeholders have joined in with a core set of partners to contribute time and talent to the project’s next phase: the creation of a Management Plan that specifies priorities, projects, and leaders for the next five years. The Calumet Heritage Partnership has spearheaded the overall NHA process and now works in close coordination with the Calumet Collaborative. Staff from the Field Museum are guiding the Management Plan process and created this document to prepare you for participation in the Focus Area Planning Committee. Your involvement as part of the Calumet NHA Management Planning process is a major contribution to the NHA’s success, and will have a real impact on the shape and direction of the effort for the next five years.

Every Heritage Area has overarching themes, which are supported by identifiable resources on the ground. The themes are the key story lines that frame an experience of the area for visitors and residents alike. The themes for the Calumet National Heritage Area are:

- Nature Reworked: The Calumet’s Diverse Landscape (NR)
- Innovation and Change for Industries and Workers (II)
- Crucible of Working Class and Ethnic Cultures (CC)

Chapter 2 of the *Feasibility Study* succinctly describes these themes as part of the NHA’s national significance. (The full *Feasibility Study* is available online at

<http://www.calumetheritage.org/cnhastudy.html>)

The *Feasibility Study* also identifies how multiple stakeholders and partners have stated regional goals and priorities over two decades for the region across seven focus areas – including Economy and Tourism Recreation, Environment and Stewardship, Cultural Heritage/Historic Preservation, The Arts, Wayfinding and Branding, and Education. Those goals can now be coordinated with the NHA effort and its themes as part of a coordinated regional strategy. For Economy and Tourism, the *Feasibility Study*

highlights a few potential priority economy and tourism projects, potential approaches, and potential partners, as indicated in this table:

<p>Industry has been a key identifying factor and the backbone of the Calumet region. The region’s industries are in flux, making stability and redevelopment key goals. Conserving the industrial heritage of the Calumet region is important, but should be coupled with efforts to support existing industries and attract new investment, and build on environmental and community assets. Priorities are:</p>		
<b>Goals/Priorities &amp; Connection to Themes</b>	<b>Potential Approaches</b>	<b>Potential Partners</b>
Make the most of opportunities that meet the “triple bottom line” that enhance economy, build community, and protect environment.	Structurally serve as an organization that facilitates the collaboration of heritage, non-profit, governmental, and commercial entities.	CC
Improve the lakeshore in ways that balance industrial development and water based tourism and recreation.	See previous entry.  Offer interpretation and historical insights on the shoreline to inform planning initiatives.	NIRPC, CHP
Utilize brownfield sites for industrial development.	See previous entry, both points, and substitute “brownfield” for “shoreline.”	NIRPC, CHP
Increase tourism marketing at the bi-state regional scale.	Convene the range of cross-sector stakeholders with an interest in regional brand identity building.  Play a leading role in developing regional marketing themes, on the group identity markers, and wayfinding priorities.	CC, CHP
Attract and retain a workforce that enjoys a high quality of life by residing in the region.	A consequence of all the other strategies.	CC, CSEDC, NWI Forum
Identify and elevate opportunities for adaptive reuse of buildings and other structures, such as closed steel mills and Union Station in Gary, to become regional gateways or interpretive centers.	Lead the convening of stakeholders to consider a range of appropriate repurposing of historic buildings and to identify them.  Within the consortium, lead efforts to repurpose locations as heritage education and tourism stops.	CC, CHP

**ABBREVIATIONS:** CC= Calumet Collaborative; CHP = Calumet Heritage Partnership; CSEDC = Chicago Southland Economic Development Corporation; NWI Forum = Northwest Indiana Forum; NIRPC = Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

## II. Purpose of the Economy Focus Area Planning Group and Charge

The task of the Management Plan is to set the course for a functioning Heritage Area by turning the potential indicated in the *Feasibility Study* into a defined set of prioritized projects with clearly defined goals, activities, and project leaders for the next five years. Assuming that the NHA has an adequate core of staff and volunteers to undertake projects, the Management Plan should provide guidance on which

projects the NHA should *lead*, on which projects it should *collaborate*, and of which projects it should be aware and *support*.

It is not the intent of the Heritage Area effort for it to become all things to all people, nor for this process to re-invent the wheel and replicate the many excellent and compelling planning projects already undertaken. But it is important to be aware of projects that could benefit from affiliation with the Heritage Area, or that might even require Heritage Area involvement to leverage resources to ensure project completion. As a result, as the Economy Focus Area Planning Committee considers an NHA-relevant Economy program, it needs to be broadly aware of what is happening in the region. This paper will provide some guidance on that question in the next section.

In thinking through what NHAs can do and what the current state of NHA-relevant programming in the region is, the group should try to answer some key questions:

- a. What are potential projects that could be undertaken within the next 5 years that would most tie in to the NHA?
- b. How would an NHA add value to this work?
- c. If the NHA did not exist, would this project even go forward?
- d. Of those projects, who should be the project lead or point person?
- e. What resources are needed to complete this work?

### **III. Economy and National Heritage Areas**

The Calumet region rose to prominence as the nation's premier industrial district in the years following the Civil War, and in important respects it continues to be so. As a market area, it has more people than metropolitan Milwaukee. It is still the beating heart of the nation's steel industry, contains its 7<sup>th</sup> largest petroleum refinery (and largest in the Midwest), remains a major producer of transportation equipment, and sits astride the most significant crossroads of waterways, interstate highways, railroads, and pipelines in the country. The region has also undergone deindustrialization, environmental degradation, and workforce dislocation that threaten community stability and the region's image as a place with a high quality of life.

Important work is being done to re-ignite the economy of the region. The Northwest Indiana Forum has conducted a major study of economic redevelopment potential. The OneRegion organization in Northwest Indiana has focused on the retention of talent by zeroing in on quality of life improvements. A regional economic development strategy, part of the South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative, is emerging in the Chicago Southland as well. All of these efforts note the increasing importance of "placemaking", not only as an adornment of everyday life in the region, but as a key part in economic development thinking. This is the NHA's sweet spot.

The recent re-naming of the Indiana Dunes National Park, the dedication of the Pullman National Monument in Illinois, the completion of major trail systems, the rise of craft brewing, and local strategies to bring in visitorship to attractive and historic downtowns are part of the puzzle. Indiana

Dunes National Park is already the number one tourist destination in the State of Indiana and the Pullman National Monument anticipates an increase of visitorship from 30,000 to 300,000 once its new Visitors Center is complete.

An NHA offers the opportunity to identify, coordinate, and dovetail these assets with regional economic development strategies. It is worth bearing in mind that National Heritage Areas first evolved in some of the nation's most distressed communities and were, in fact, part of the response to that distress. What Brenda Barrett wrote about heritage areas a dozen years ago still holds true today and seems especially applicable to the Calumet region: "...all are working landscapes and almost all are communities that are under stress. They are places that are losing or have lost their traditional economic base and are facing a loss of population, particularly young people. Many areas have the historic infrastructure of extinct or dying industries or long-outmoded transportation systems, and some still bear the scars of resource extraction."<sup>1</sup>

Examples from other NHAs provide serious food for thought about what could be accomplished in this region and convey the sense that NHAs can fulfill a variety of roles depending on the circumstances. For example:

- In 2017, across the (then) 49 NHAs, 87 community development projects were carried-out, including streetscape improvement and art projects. 95 historic preservation grants were awarded totaling \$1.4 million.
- The Carrie Furnace in Pittsburgh's Rivers of Steel NHA is a restored blast furnace that is much more than a crucial remnant of the steel industry. Along with the nearby Pump House, it also serves as a site of public art, concert venue, and trailhead for the Great Allegheny Passage bicycle trail from Pittsburgh to Washington. OneRegion convened a group of Northwest Indiana stakeholders to view this site. In this instance, the NHA owns and operates the structures, and participates in the broader trail partnership.
- The Baltimore NHA manages a small capital grants program for heritage projects that awarded more than \$1 million in 72 separate project grants. The NHA also oversees a Heritage Investment Grant program that supports non-capital heritage tourism focused projects and programs. For example, BNHA awarded a \$7,000 Heritage Investment Grant to the National Great Blacks in Wax Museum, which is Baltimore's first wax museum and first in the nation devoted to African American history. Here, the NHA serves as the point organization on funding for heritage-related project work.
- The Ohio and Erie Canalway NHA is a 120 long passage from downtown Cleveland to south of Canton that features not only a towpath hiking/biking trail, but a parallel National Scenic Byway auto route and a tourist railroad that offers frequent enough weekend service to be of practical use to recreational cyclists and hikers. In this case, the NHA coordinates the Canalway, and provides a coordinated public-facing website that puts the complicated organizational arrangements in the background.

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<sup>1</sup> Brenda Barrett, "National Heritage Areas: Places on the Land, Places in the Mind," *The George Wright Forum*, 22:1 (2005), pp. 10-18.

- In 2013, the Delaware and Lehigh NHA added 13 miles to the Delaware and Lehigh Trail, constructed three trailheads, and completed an assessment of a larger Lehigh Valley Trail Network. The success of the D&L Trail prompted the Landmark Towns Project, which aims to bring people from the trail to nearby downtown areas. Here, the NHA led the trail construction project.
- The National Coal Heritage Area NHA established 26 informational kiosks along the route of Paint Creek to tell the story of the creek's central place in the lives of its residents, its environmental degradation over time, and its recovery. The NHA also developed an Auto Tour, a CD, and an app, and foregrounds the voices of local residents in telling the story. In this case, the NHA played a primary interpretive role.
- The office of the Wheeling NHA are in a restored industrial building called The Artisan Center. This building also contains an artisan gift shop supplied by regional arts and craft products, a museum exhibit documenting many of the past industries of the area, a restaurant, which is also used for public events and wedding receptions.

These examples highlight the flexibility inherent in the NHA concept. In most of the projects mentioned, the NHA was a critical – if not *the* critical – component of the project's success. Its role varied depending on the situation, but in all situations, linking the recreation project to the themes and goals of the NHA added significant value, enhancing experiences for visitors and residents alike.

NHAs do many other things than these examples, of course. Many of them contribute to the placemaking engine that is becoming an important element of local economies. A 2013 independent analysis conducted by TrippUmbach assessed the impact of NHAs on the nation's economy. The report determined that the 49 NHAs then in existence contributed \$12.9 billion to the nation's economy and created 148,000 jobs. For every \$1 of federal funds invested, NHAs leverage an additional \$5.50 to create jobs, generate revenue for local governments, and sustain local communities through revitalization and heritage tourism. 99% of the economic benefit was attributed to tourism and visitation spending. 94,000 of the jobs are directly supported by NHAs and 54,000 are indirect and induced jobs. According to the report, "Food service, retail, lodging, and amusements comprise the businesses that have experienced the greatest increase in employment due to NHAs in their regions."<sup>2</sup> Since this report's release, a series of case studies of the economic impact of individual heritage areas has reinforced these findings.<sup>3</sup>

#### **IV. Scan of Economy and Tourism-related Projects in the Calumet Region**

Great projects are underway in the Calumet region, and now the question is, "how, exactly, can the NHA add value to this work?" The NHA is not intended to duplicate existing planning processes, although it

<sup>2</sup> Alliance for National Heritage Areas, *Supporting Regional Economies: National Heritage Areas and their Impacts*, [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritageareas/upload/The-Economic-Impact-of-National-Heritage-Areas\\_Final-Report-pdf-2.pdf](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritageareas/upload/The-Economic-Impact-of-National-Heritage-Areas_Final-Report-pdf-2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The reports may be found at [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritageareas/economic\\_impact\\_studies.htm](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritageareas/economic_impact_studies.htm)

has made a strong effort to account for them. Field Museum staff studied significant regional plans for what they say concerning goals and priorities in the area of Economy. (Links to these plans may be found in the Appendix.)

The starting point for this scan were the key areas identified in the Feasibility Study, reported on the Table above. What follows is an elaboration of those goals from the perspective of existing plans.

**a. Make the most of opportunities that meet the “triple bottom line”**

The “triple bottom line”, where environment, economy, and community equally thrive, is found most explicitly in the work of the sustainable development organization, the Calumet Collaborative, which “is dedicated to achieving inclusive regional prosperity and improving quality of life by focusing attention and resources of diverse stakeholders on priorities and on-the-ground work that integrate community, economic, and environmental values and have regional impact.” It is important for members of the Economy and Tourism Focus Area Planning Committee to know that all four of the Collaborative’s initiatives are directly relevant to work described here: advancement of the NHA entity itself; a regional brownfield initiative; bi-state environmental conservation initiative; and a wayfinding and branding effort that has recently led to the creation of branding materials for the NHA. (Details of this work will be shared during the committee process.)

Both of the regional planning organizations that cover the Calumet region in their 2050 plans incorporate strong elements of the “triple bottom line” without naming it as such. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), for example, urges an urban development pattern that targets that fills in the already developed pattern and that brings resources to make vibrant, livable communities. CMAP notes that “as they pursue redevelopment opportunities, communities should improve natural resources, use sustainable building and greening practices, and address the needs of the most vulnerable residents and areas.” (Pg. 61)

Similarly, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) envisions a Northwest Indiana that in 2050 will be “connected, renewed, united, and vibrant.” Each of these vision statements is combined with one of four Focus Areas (Economy & Place, Environment, Mobility, and People & Leaders) to create 16 critical paths to action. The concerns of economy, environment, and community are woven throughout the plan.

Elements of the “triple bottom line” approach are also seen in plans and projects that take a specifically economic development tack. The most prominent example is the Northwest Indiana Forum’s *Ignite the Region: A Regional Strategy for Economic Transformation* plan, completed at the end of 2018. The plan focuses in five key areas: business development & marketing, entrepreneurship & innovation, infrastructure, talent, and placemaking. The placemaking angle, in particular, is of direct relevance to the NHA effort, although the plan does not mention it specifically. According to *Ignite*, “The region’s local and regional placemaking efforts are laudable. However, much more needs to be done. This will require regional organizations, such as the Northwest Indiana RDA, the NWIF, OneRegion, and NIRPC to

continue articulating why placemaking is critical to economic development. It will also entail ongoing advocacy for additional federal, state, and local resources to be invested in quality-of-place enhancements.”

Cook County’s Bureau of Economic Development has been leading a *South Suburban Economic Growth Initiative* project and released a Phase I report in 2017. The report carefully inventories the region’s assets and challenges for economic development. One heritage-relevant idea is to “Establish the South Suburbs as the Region’s “Green Playground”, with “shared vision and coordinated investments in recreational infrastructure and complementary amenities such as retail, restaurants, and lodging to position the South Suburbs as the region’s destination for outdoor recreation.” The report goes on to make a specific linkage to the NHA: “Projects such as the Calumet Collaborative, the Cal-Sag Trail and the proposed Calumet National Heritage Area will build on and further supplement existing recreational assets to make the sub-region a draw for outdoor enthusiasts across metro Chicago. These efforts can also serve to attract residents to live in the area for regular, convenient access to these amenities.” The report also notes some process advantages of the regional collaboration embedded in the CNHA: “several large-scale efforts aimed at coordinating southland geography on non-economic issues further illustrate the potential to convene stakeholders around common issues – e.g., the Calumet Collaborative, Great Rivers Chicago, Calumet Heritage Partnership and others.” (pp. 70-71)

#### **b. Improve the lakeshore**

For much of the region, wonderful guidance on access to the Lake Michigan shore is provided by the Marquette Plan, which sets an ambitious goal of making 75% of the shore accessible to the public. As that accessibility is enhanced, the plan lays the groundwork for the Marquette Greenway, “51 miles of continuous trail along the shoreline that is tied to other trail systems developing in the region, various waterway and greenway systems, with diverse surface materials, trailheads, lookout points, interpretive areas, and activity nodes.” Enhancements are also underway at Calumet Park and Steelworkers Park in Chicago.

While South Shore railroad improvements are a factor in improving access to the lake shore, plans also call out the need to provide north-south transit access, and the need for better boat launches, both along the lake and on tributary streams (such as at Beaubien Woods Forest Preserve and other locations along the Calumet River, and at the Portage Marina).

Exemplary pathways that provide a link to regional heritage have been created at Hammond and Whiting, and at Portage.

Other local efforts include those in Gary, where the Gary Green Link plan of a dozen years ago still provides a fund of excellent ideas that may be relevant to the NHA effort: “One of the goals of this Master Plan is to develop a natural resources greenway and recreation corridor, the Gary Green Link, which will ring the City of Gary, connecting the Grand Calumet River, the Little Calumet River, and the Lake Michigan shoreline.”

### **c. Utilize brownfield sites for industrial development**

While the CNHA is never likely to become an actor in industrial development as such, to the extent that brownfield redevelopment becomes a regional strategy it will be useful to keep the heritage implications in mind. The shining example here is the 57 acre Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk, which was developed on a former brownfield site and is now one of the park's leading attractions. Are there other potential examples like this, to which a CNHA could contribute?

Here it is especially useful that the Calumet Collaborative, a leading actor in the NHA effort, is also playing a lead role in a regional Brownfields Initiative. The Collaborative is currently engaged in rolling out a Phase I regional brownfields map that can facilitate just this sort of strategic examination of the heritage implications.

One over-arching goal of the NHA effort is to change the external perception of the region, as one riddled with brownfields and risks. As creative solutions to the pervasive brownfield issue are found, the potential to display the solutions to others interested in brownfield redevelopment exists as a prime example of the region's creativity in dealing with environmental issues. One such idea is found in the *Ignite* projects notion to "explore establishing a national center of excellence in brownfield redevelopment in Northwest Indiana. Such a center could be associated with one of the region's universities." (p23). Similarly, *Ignite* makes the suggestion to "host a national brownfield conference annually to generate new ideas for market-driven redevelopment of brownfield sites in Northwest Indiana. Promote the advancement of the region and by using Northwest Indiana as a test bed for new technologies and programs...Such an event would help to educate the region's development community on the brownfield redevelopment process." (p23)

### **d. Increase tourism marketing at the bi-state regional scale**

The re-naming of the Indiana Dunes National Park (the state's number one tourist destination) comes at an excellent time for the developing NHA effort. The 2012 *Quality of Life* report looks for a "leadership role for the National Lakeshore in integrating the park more deeply into economic and community development arenas. This can serve as a starting place for a serious, thoughtful effort to make the Dunes central to the identity and image of Northwest Indiana." Issues of "identity and image" are in the NHA's wheelhouse, and, indeed, a Brand Toolkit for the NHA has just been established by the Calumet Collaborative.

One way to develop this connection between regional identity and the magnetic attraction of the dunes is to enhance the presence of the NHA at the Visitors Center. If the Center develops as a regional "gateway", what better place to frame the regional story? Efforts already underway to develop a Native American Heritage Trail on site at the Visitors Center invite further exploration of the region's heritage and also indicates a potentially replicable model for trail development rooted in cultural history and knowledge. The NHA has a potentially critical role to play in developing interpretive materials, tours,

fostering further conversation about creating “culture-nature” trails, and perhaps leading an effort to create a regional-scale “nature-industry” interpretive trail (such as the one that anchors the visitor experience in the Ruhr area of Germany.)

Other tourism gateways could play a similar role. Such places include the Indiana Welcome Center in Hammond, Lake Etta, the casinos, downtown Whiting, and Pullman National Monument.

A number of specific marketing variations on the collaboration theme were published in the *Positioning Pullman* document (2016), including:

- Collaboratively market “regional heritage, industrial, and eco-tourism initiatives, as well as the development of historic inn, hotel and motorhome accommodations to enable people to stay overnight in the immediate area.” (p100)
- “With two national parks – Pullman and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore – in close proximity, there is strong incentive for marketing collaboration and visitation synergy.” (p100)
- “To reach the employment and economic growth goals, all of the various sectors and activity centers need significant interaction, shared marketing and coordination. Pullman should be marketed as part of a broader network of regional attractions in order to grow visitation. Collaborative marketing could be structured around visitation themes and tied directly to attractions between downtown Chicago, Pullman, the Lake Calumet region and northwest Indiana.” (p101)
- “It is important to market Pullman as part of a broader network of regional attractions in order to grow visitation. Collaborative marketing could be structured around themes and tie directly to attractions between downtown Chicago and Pullman, and between Pullman and northwest Indiana and southwest Michigan.” (p101);

It will be important to determine what the potential interpretive role will be at the “Greenway Centers” proposed in the *Greenways and Blueways* plan, which could “increase public access to conservation lands and provide ecotourism magnets.” (p. 53) A specific task that could benefit from NHA involvement on the way to developing the “eco-tourism infrastructure” at the centers is to “identify and map points of interest for recreational users and tourists...” (p. 160)

All this supports *Ignite’s* point that, “finally, the region is placing a greater emphasis on tourism as an economic driver. Creating new amenities and attractions along the lakefront, promoting sustainable agritourism at Fair Oaks Farms, and studying the development of a convention center and hotel in Lake County are just a few examples of renewed efforts to grow the region’s tourism economy. These initiatives also present an opportunity to leverage tourism to support industry and talent attraction efforts.” (p10). In addition to making the case that tourism is important to the economy, *Ignite* suggested several specific ways to expand it:

- “The proposed convention center in Lake County represents a tremendous opportunity to take tourism in the region to a new level. According to the findings of the convention center feasibility analysis, one of the primary nonlocal event markets for the convention center is

“corporate and other types of event activity from the Chicago/Northwest Indiana greater metropolitan area and throughout the state of Indiana.” (p15)

- "Identify a complementary theme for tourism attraction, business recruitment, and talent attraction." (p15)
- "The NWIF and LEDOs should work with the South Shore Convention & Visitors Authority and other local tourism organizations to align their conference and meeting strategy to targeted occupations, groups, and industries." (p15)
- "Leverage tourism assets to distribute business marketing messages.// Prominently display positive information about the region’s economy and business climate at key visitor destinations; Encourage first points of contact to communicate positive messages about the region’s business advantages to visitors. Provide educational materials and talking points about the region’s economy to first points of contact." (p16)
- "Continue regional and local efforts to expand cultural, arts, entertainment, and recreational infrastructure and amenities" (p35)
- "Craft breweries, wineries, and distilleries across the US continue to experience rapid growth. Growth associated with craft beverages also supports regional tourism and talent attraction." (p50)

**e. Attract and retain a workforce that enjoys a high quality of life**

The reports already cited make the strong case between quality of life and workforce development and retention. NHAs can play a role, both in job creation and retention, as the reports cited in section II above point out.

On its face, an NHA would not seem to have a major role in workforce development. But the examples listed in Section 2 above indicate that some NHAs are part of a diversifying web of job readiness. As the Chicago Wilderness Next Generation of Conservation Leaders Working Group recommends, “Advocate for better integration of a “web” of opportunity that lets young people find their entry point into training or jobs, and in which educational institutions, non-profits, and for profits recognize each others’ roles in making the web of green/sustainability jobs.” Other working groups that are thinking about Arts, Education, Recreation, Environment, and Cultural Heritage/Historic Preservation, are at work to identify specific programs that could bear job creation potential. Some of these ideas are listed here:

- *Relate lifelong learning to potential for workforce development.* A livable place rich in nature and culture can also potentially translate to job opportunities. At the CMAP 2050 plan relates, “Planning for human capital means bridging the gap between residents seeking to build a career and employers looking to build their workforce. It will require increased coordination among regional industries, community colleges, and other institutions engaged in workforce development at every level.”
- *Link NHA innovations to the broader context of innovation and the regional economy, such as the Society of Innovators.* Specific links to the heritage of innovation may be a first pathway.

- *Artspace*. Live/work space for artists has been constructed or is underway in Michigan City and Pullman in partnership with “Artspace”. Are there other candidate locations in the region?
- *Foster integration of the arts across sectors*. The *Indicators Report* goes on to say, "As with many aspects of life in Northwest Indiana, the arts tend to be standalone and would benefit from deeper integration with economic development, community development and public education efforts." As a step in this direction, the Northwest Indiana Forum identifies the performing arts as one of Northwest Indiana's target industry clusters (p8).
- *Restoration/revitalization*. Some places have historic resources – some of them already appropriately designated – that could contribute to a broader-scale revitalization efforts. For example, the Gary Downtown/East Lakefront sub area contains five historic districts (Horace Mann, West 5th Apartments, Gary City Center, Combs, and Eskilson) and one historic property (Ralph Waldo Emerson School) that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As the Marquette Plan points, out, “Though many of these districts and buildings are threatened by blight and disinvestment, their traditional street grid pattern, access to transportation infrastructure, and walkability, serve as potential drivers for revitalization." Does the process of historic reconstruction and redevelopment bring with it the potential for new jobs?

**f. Identify and elevate opportunities for the adaptive reuse of buildings and other structures**

The prospect of adaptive reuse of buildings and other structures is a major part of the Cultural Heritage/Historic Preservation Working Group’s remit. The argument is made again that this work, a good in itself as a stabilization of regional assets and cultural memory, also links with regional economic development strategy and, by fostering development where infrastructure is already in place, is an efficient use of resources.

CMAP’s On to 2050 Plan is clear on this point: "Infill and redevelopment can provide a variety of benefits, such as leveraging and making efficient use of existing infrastructure and services, promoting walkability, and spurring investment in disinvested or stagnant growth areas." (Pg. 39) NIRPC’s 2050 plan points out that "a number of urban communities are addressing vacancy concerns, including housing redevelopment in Whiting and downtown redevelopment in Michigan City. The region is currently placing a greater emphasis on renewing and concentrating growth within existing communities and main centers. These centers are ideally compact in form, mixed-use, walkable, and transit-accessible, with a wide choice of affordable housing options developed at a density and scale appropriate to their community context, whether urban, suburban or rural." (p66-67)

The region’s most significant historic asset is the Pullman National Monument. The *Positioning Pullman* document calls out a number of historic preservation opportunities, and, again, links them to economic development: “National parks are economic generators. Visitors to Pullman National Monument will boost the region’s economy significantly and provide the foundation for expanded access to the goods and services longtime community residents would like to see." (p100);

"Pullman National Monument and the Pullman neighborhood could become a significant economic catalyst for the Calumet region and the larger South Side of Chicago, particularly in the ability to add a significant number of new and higher paying jobs in the community." (p101);

NIRPC's Greenways and Blueways is also conscious of this intersectionality of goals: "Historic structures in these areas (geographic intersections) could be repurposed for public access or amenities." (Pg. 127)

## **V. Next steps**

As the Focus Area Planning Committee gathers to consider some of these ideas and their applicability to the NHA, please consider the following questions.

- Does the preceding discussion capture the full range of possible NHA-relevant work in the area of the Economy? If not, what's missing?
- What specific project ideas could be undertaken in the next five years?
- Of these project ideas, which have the highest priority to be completed?
- For each project area, please consider needed roles, resources, and suggested pathways for completion. Who should lead the work? What is the role for the NHA and its constituent organizations? What is needed to complete the work (in terms of policies, procedures, and financial resources.)
- Is there anything surfaced that should be referred to other Focus Area Planning Committees for further discussion?