

The Rail Summit

“Rail Delivers Jobs”

1. What is the Rail Summit?
 - a. A regional initiative singularly focused on creating public awareness and support for rail initiatives in Northwest Indiana by educating stakeholders and community leaders of the economic importance of rail to Northwest Indiana.
 - b. It is organized as a not-for-profit entity governed by a nine-member Board of Directors that includes both economic development and rail leaders from the region.
 - c. It was launched in February 2011 with a convening address by Congressman Peter Visclosky. Keynoters included U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood; Dr. Dane Miller, Founder and Former Chairman of Biomet, Inc.; and Gary Eelman, Vice President of Progress Rail Division of Caterpillar.

2. How will Indiana benefit from support for and participation in The Rail Summit?
 - a. Indiana is “rail rich,” benefitting from the presence of 41 railroads operating nearly 4,500 miles of track and employing more than 6,000 Hoosiers.
 - b. The concentration of these rail assets in NW Indiana is one of the region’s key economic development assets. The Rail Summit is a systematic effort to capitalize on these assets and to coordinate regional economic development efforts with railroads. We are the only organization committed to realizing this opportunity.
 - c. A major focus for The Rail Summit is to engage railroads and leaders of business and industry that are dependent on or attracted by the availability of a strong and accessible freight rail system.

3. What is the plan for the next Rail Summit?
 - a. Scheduled for Thursday, March 15 and Friday, March 16, at the Sand Creek Country Club, Chesterton, IN.
 - b. The keynoters will be:
 - i. Paul Fisher, newly-appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of CenterPoint Properties, will focus on ways to capitalize on the presence of rail and other transportation assets to attract new investment and generate new jobs
 - ii. John Vickerman, President of Vickerman & Associates, will explain changing patterns of movement of cargo and identify ways these changes will have impact on our region. He will focus significant attention on ways we can capitalize on the presence of the Port of Indiana at Burns Harbor.
 - c. The agenda will include two major components:
 - i. Thursday: An invitation-only event for 40 key leaders to have dinner and dialogue with keynote speakers, Congressman Visclosky, Governor Daniels and/or Secretary of Commerce Dan Hasler. The event begins with a reception from 6:00 to 6:30pm, followed by dinner and dialogue ending at 8:45 to 9:00pm (Central Time)
 - ii. Friday: Following media interviews for speakers and dignitaries, there will be a reception at 11:15am, followed by lunch at Noon, program beginning at 12:20pm, and concluding by 2:15pm. We estimate approximately 200 attendees.

4. Why should you participate in this event?
 - a. The Thursday evening event will include Congressman Visclosky and high-level leadership from key economic development, transportation and logistics and industry. The dialogue time should be lively and informative. The opportunity for relationship building with Center Point will be particularly important, since they have proven to be a major creator of jobs in Illinois and have indicated a desire to invest in Indiana.
 - a. At the luncheon on Friday, there will be an opportunity for dialogue with many participants, hopefully emphasizing the importance of Potash Corporation as an economic development partner dedicated to working with railroads and others in fueling Indiana’s economic development.