



## Sherri Ziller

**President and Chief Executive Officer**

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### CONTACT:

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☎ 219.644.3500

### Professional Experience:

Sherri Ziller, a lifelong resident of Northwest Indiana, is currently serving as the organization's **President and Chief Executive Officer** as of October 2021. She had been serving as their Chief Operating Officer since 2012. The Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) is recognized as a highly credible organization known for catalytic project investments and strong financial management practices. She has been with the organization since inception, spring of 2006 and provides leadership in the RDA's efforts to support economic development and redevelopment throughout the Region. Sherri works with her leadership team to continually refine and implement the strategic growth plan to expand and position the RDA as a leader in regional development. She works diligently to provide oversight leadership in marketing development, operations, professional services and financial performance of the RDA. While managing the organization's overall activities, Sherri fosters an environment of accountability, excellence, collaboration, and innovation among the staff and demonstrates fiscal responsibility. Through strong communication, problem solving, capacity building, legislative awareness and financial leveraging, she works to solidify and foster new relationships and stronger regional collaboration. Sherri also develops financial plans and provides budgetary analysis to support the organization in providing guidance and understanding of revenue sources and expenditure costs needed to strengthen their budget. A strategic analysis of budgets yields effective and streamlined policy decisions for the RDA's Board of Directors.

The RDA is now entering its 20<sup>th</sup> year of operations and has reached a high water mark as an established organization. Sherri works with the RDA's partners to change Northwest Indiana's vision for itself and moving the region toward its economic development potential. Responsible for creating benchmarks for financial and policy performance, Sherri ensures best management practices are created, adopted, implemented and adhered to in all facets of the RDA's operations. Since the RDA's inception, all financial and internal control audits have yielded "clean" opinions. Sherri serves as the fiscal agent due to her expertise and strong dedication to the highest standards of public service when working with local, state and federal dollars.

Sherri works with the community and stakeholders to identify ways to leverage RDA investments. Partnered with her team, Sherri has assisted in leveraging over \$1B (*one Billion*) since 2006 from federal, state, local, private, and other sources of funds.



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Sherri is working with the RDA to lead a coalition of partners on one of the largest economic development projects ever undertaken in the State of Indiana in the financing and planning of the West Lake Corridor and the Double Track commuter rail projects. In October of 2020, the Federal Transit Administration awarded the West Lake Corridor its full funding grant agreement. The same milestone was reached earlier that year with the Double Track project. As of today, both region-wide economic development initiatives, the rail projects, are fully funded through Federal, state and local match. This is the result of years of visionary planning, hard work and commitment at all levels of government and being a partner on this project has been a highlight in her career. This level of funding commitment by the administration shows that they recognize the importance of the West Lake Corridor and Double Track and its ability to grow our state's economy with new jobs and business development.

Prior to joining the RDA team, Sherri has served as full-time faculty for Kaplan Higher Education since 2001. Sherri has a demonstrable commitment to her students providing a student-centered approach to create the best educational experience possible for her learners. Sherri's practical experience makes her an excellent resource for giving students the tools they need to achieve their educational and career goals.

## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT & STEWARDSHIP

- Horizon Bank Advisory Board, **Board Member**, *January 2024 - Present*
- Northwest Indiana Regional Growth Fund, **Board Member**, *January 2024 - Present*
- **Speaker**, NWIBRT and Construction Advancement Foundation, Business and Economic Outlook, *November 2024*
- **Panelist** – Engage Indiana Series, Northwest Indiana, Indiana Business Journal Media, Parent Company of Indiana Business Journal, Inside Indiana Business, *October 2024*
- **Speaker**, Association of Landscape Architects Insight Conference, “The Region” – Uplifting Communities Through Transit Oriented Development in Northwest Indiana, *October 2024*
- **Speaker**, Urban Land Institute, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, *August 2024*
- **Speaker**, Lake County Economic Alliance, *June 2024*
- Purdue University Northwest Advisory Board Alumni, **Board Member**, *August 2024 - Present*
- **Recognition: Indiana 250 Honoree**, *Most Influential in Indiana*. Indiana Business Journal Media, Parent Company of Indiana Business Journal, Inside Indiana Business, and Indiana Lawyer, *July 2024*
- **Speaker**, Highland/Griffith Chamber of Commerce, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, *May 2024*
- **Speaker**, Senator Todd Young/In-State Staff, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, *May 2024*
- **Speaker**, Ribbon Cutting: Rail Projects - Double Track Michigan City, *May 2024*
- Northwest Indiana Times, 2024 Progress Edition, “Ziller: Northwest Indiana, Envy of the Midwest and Beyond”, Authored, March 2024, *New Horizons Series*
- **Speaker**, Ribbon Cutting: The Franklin Project, Michigan City, *March 2024*
- **Speaker**, One Region, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, *February 2024*
- **Speaker**, Mpact Transit and Mobility Conference, Pushing the Jurisdictional Envelope on Joint Development, Phoenix, AZ, *November 2023*
- **Speaker**, NWIBRT and Construction Advancement Foundation, Business and Economic Outlook, *November 2023*
- **Speaker**, Northwest Indiana Homebuilders Association, Economic Outlook Forum, *October 2023*
- **Recognition: Influential Women**, – Community Leader of the Year, *September 2023*
- **Speaker**, City of Hammond, Northwest Indiana Realtors, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, *September 2023*



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- Legacy Foundation, Board of Director's, **Board Member**, August 2023 – Present
- **Recognition: Indiana 250 Honoree**, *Most Influential in Indiana*. Indiana Business Journal Media, Parent Company of Indiana Business Journal, Inside Indiana Business, and Indiana Lawyer, July 2023
- **Speaker**, Lambda Alpha International, Chautauqua, June 2023
- **Speaker**, Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, May 2023
- **Speaker**, Crossroads Regional Chamber of Commerce, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, April 2023
- Northwest Indiana Times, 2023 Progress Edition, "Ziller: The Curtain Rises on New Transit-Oriented Development in Northwest Indiana", Authored, March 12, 2023, *Region of Relevance Series*
- **Speaker**, One Region, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, November 2022
- **Speaker**, Crown Point Rotary, Defining the Future of Northwest, IN, November 2022
- **Speaker**, NWIBRT and Construction Advancement Foundation, Business and Economic Outlook, November 2022
- **Speaker**, Northwest Indiana Homebuilders Association, Economic Outlook Forum, October 2022
- **Speaker**, Ribbon Cutting: 69<sup>th</sup> Avenue Infrastructure Improvement Project, Hobart, IN, March 2022
- Northwest Indiana Times, 2022 Progress Edition, "Ziller: Rail-Related Investment Has Begun – and the Best is Yet to Come", Authored, March 13, 2022, *Region of Relevance Series*
- **Speaker**, Destination 2024 Housing Summit, RDA'S Role in Support of TOD and Expanded Housing Choices in Northwest Indiana, February 2022
- Northwest Indiana Business, "Longtime RDA Leader Steps Up", February 2022
- **Speaker**, Indiana Economic Development Corporation READI Session, Northwest Indiana Region, December 2021
- Northwest Indiana Forum, Board of Director's, **Board Member**, January 2022 - Present
- United Way Northwest, Board of Trustees, **Board Member**, June 2021 – Present
- Inside Indiana Business, "Northwest Indiana RDA Chief Lays Out Road Map", October 2021
- **Speaker**, Economic Development Corporation of Michigan City, IN, "Development of 11<sup>th</sup> Street Central Station", October 2021
- Northwest Indiana Times, 2021 Progress Edition, "Ziller: NWI Will Bounce Back with Rail Expansion and Local Development", Authored, March 21, 2021, *Region Rising Series*
- **Recognition: Influential Women**, 2020/2021, Influential Woman of the Year, Nominee and Finalist: Economic Development, March 2021
- **Speaker**, Various Community Leadership Information Sessions, Benefits of Transit Development Districts, 2017-2024
- **Speaker**, Northwest Indiana Building and Construction Trades Symposium, April 2017
- **Speaker**, Munster Chamber of Commerce, April 2017
- **Speaker**, Griffith/Highland Chamber of Commerce, March 2017
- **Speaker**, Northwest Indiana Homebuilders Association, February 2017
- **Speaker**, Lake County on Track (*Two-Part Series*), Regional Strategic Plan, January 2017
- **Speaker**, Groundbreaking: East Chicago Marina Project, November 2016
- **Speaker**, Greater Northwest Indiana Association of REALTORS®, Economic Forum, October 2016
- Lake Area United Way, **Recognition: Exceptional Board Service**, April 2019
- Lake Area United Way, Board of Trustees, Chairperson, February 2018 - February 2019
- Lake Area United Way, Board of Trustees, Board Member, February 2015 – June 2021
- **Recognition: Influential Women**, 2014 Up and Coming Nominee and Finalist, **Winner: Economic Development**, November 2014
- **Panelist**, One Region Community Leader Retreat, "Critical Issues Facing Northwest Indiana", October 2014
- **Recognition: The Times Media Company**, 20 Under 40 Honoree, September 2014
- Environmental Protection Agency, Revolving Loan Fund Committee Member, February 2014 - Present
- Building Indiana, Indiana's Logistics Framework Edition, "Commuter Logistics: Commuter Rail In Northern Indiana is Underdeveloped Economic Development Opportunity", Authored, July/August 2013 Edition
- **Speaker**, Leadership Northwest Indiana: A Thriving Community of Opportunity, June 2013



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- **Speaker**, Ribbon-Cutting: Wolf Lake Memorial Park Conservatory and Gardens, *June 2013*
- **Recognition**: Influential Women, 2013 Up and Coming Nominee and Finalist, Economic Development, *May 2013*
- **Keynote Speaker**, Sixteen Plus Organization, Economic Development in Northwest Indiana, *April 2013*
- Northwest Indiana Business Quarterly, "*New Year, New Leadership*" Featured in **Economic Development** Category, *Winter – Spring 2013 Edition*
- **Keynote Speaker**, Duneland Chamber of Commerce, "Economic Development in Northwest Indiana", *June 2013*
- **Speaker**, Groundbreaking: Dunes Kankakee Trail, *July 2013*
- **Speaker**, American Planning Association Event: Economic Development in Northwest Indiana, *April 2013*
- **Speaker**, Leadership Northwest Indiana: Economic Development; Projects that Define the Future of Our Region, *November 2012*
- Southshore Leadership Society, Member, *2010 - Present*
- Leadership Northwest Indiana, Member, *2009 – Present*

## EDUCATION, CERTIFICATES & TRAINING

- **Master of Science**, Education, Purdue University, Hammond, IN, 2012
- **Bachelor of Art**, Political Science, Purdue University, Hammond IN, 2008



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