



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

Pat Quinn, Governor • Adam Pollet, Director

NEWS



Illinois Department of Transportation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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State agencies announce backing for transportation studies in Decatur region

DECATUR—Two state agencies today pledged funding for transportation studies covering Decatur and Macon County that will examine how to increase and better handle freight moving through the region. The studies will look for ways to capitalize on growth of multi-modal shipping at the region's Midwest Inland Port and at the operations of Archer Daniels Midland Co.

The studies will receive funding from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and have support from lawmakers and local officials, including state Sen. Andy Manar (D-Bunker Hill), state Rep. Sue Scherer (D-Decatur) and Decatur Mayor Mike McElroy. The City of Decatur will oversee the study and select a consultant to carry it out.

"This is the first step in a long-term commitment from the state to invest resources in Decatur to encourage job creation and economic growth," Senator Manar said. "City officials and local leaders have done tremendous work presenting a comprehensive city plan to state officials, and I want to thank DCEO Director Adam Pollet and Transportation Secretary Ann Schneider for making this investment a priority."

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“We appreciate of the efforts of Senator Manar and leaders in Decatur in calling the need for these studies to our attention,” Director Pollet said. “The findings will help the region maximize its strength in logistics and transportation and bring about job growth.”

“The Illinois Department of Transportation is committed to improving the flow of freight involving all appropriate modes of transportation throughout the state. We are pleased to assist Decatur and Macon County officials in developing a deeper understanding of how freight moves through their communities, and this partnership, including DCEO and Senator Manar, is vitally important in doing so,” said Secretary Schneider. “This study will help to identify and create more seamless multi-modal transportation connections that will provide sustainable benefits to the environment and the community, while further enhancing the vital role freight plays in the local and state economies.”

The first study will cover industrial transportation and will be followed by one that examines infrastructure needs. The two state agencies will share the cost. The studies are expected to take about 18 months to complete.

“Investing in our local infrastructure is vital to creating good-paying jobs and revitalizing our economy,” said Representative Scherer. “I look forward to working with Senator Manar and other community leaders to ensure we are doing everything possible to make sure our Central Illinois communities remain vibrant places to live, work and raise a family.”

Points to be covered in the reports include forecasted trends in freight movement and how they could affect the Decatur region’s rail lines, industrial parks, brownfields and state and local highways. The goals of the recommendations would be to support overall economic growth and preserving livability for the area’s residents.

“Decatur has positioned itself as a first-class national transportation hub thanks to investments being made by local leaders, industry and the State of Illinois,” said Mayor McElroy. “Specifically, the Midwest Inland Port represents a real game changer for the region the likes of which have never been seen in the area.

“We greatly appreciate the continued support of Senator Manar, DCEO and IDOT on projects such as this that will bring about real, sustained job growth for our residents and that will be of lasting benefit to the Decatur community for years to come.”

Under Governor Pat Quinn, the state has provided strong support for growth initiatives in Decatur. In 2012, the state provided a \$750,000 grant to ADM to help it expand its intermodal shipping complex.

A longterm plan would be generated using input from regional development and governmental agencies and businesses as well as public hearings.

Specific emphasis will be placed on freight movements relating to hydraulic fracturing or fracking, sand, grain and regional agriculture and manufacturing shipments.

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