

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 11, 2014

CONTACTS:

Guy Tridgell 312-793-4199

Will Wingfield 317-233-4675

Illiana Corridor Project Receives Federal Approval

FHWA Signs the Tier Two Record of Decision, Marks End of Planning Phase

Springfield, IL and Indianapolis, IN – The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) today signed the Illiana Corridor Tier Two Record of Decision, marking the completion of the project's environmental planning phase. With the issuance of the Record of Decision, the FHWA supports the transportation need for the project, approves the analysis of its environmental impacts, as well as any mitigation efforts, and concurs with the selected route alternative for the new 50-mile highway facility connecting Interstate 55 near Wilmington, IL, with Interstate 65 near Lowell, IN.

Today's action provides federal authorization for Indiana and Illinois to move the project forward from the planning phase to the implementation phase, laying the foundation for the continued exploration of public-private partnership opportunities for construction, maintenance and operation. Land acquisition efforts, including landowner relations and local planning activities, also can continue.

Throughout the Illiana planning process, the states and FHWA considered the benefits, impacts, and costs of many alternatives, as well as a host of federal policies, procedures, and regulations that guide transportation projects.

Studies for the Illiana Corridor were driven by an inclusive planning process with an unprecedented amount of stakeholder outreach and coordination, including five public meetings, two public hearings, five large-scale landowner meetings, sixteen Corridor Planning Group meetings, and over 300 small group meetings. The Record of Decision demonstrates how the bi-state partnership between Illinois and Indiana successfully collaborated with federal and state agencies, townships, municipalities, counties, elected officials, and all stakeholders to develop the region's vision for a 21st century transportation system, while protecting our environment. This achievement will help facilitate long-term job creation and economic growth, while addressing a major transportation need in the Midwest.

The Tier Two Record of Decision and other information about the project can be viewed at www.IllianaCorridor.org.