



## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## IDOT and INDOT Recommend B3 Route for the Illiana Corridor

**SCHAUMBURG, IL.** – After extensive public outreach and detailed environmental studies, the first tier of the Illiana Corridor project has been completed.

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have completed the first tier of the Illiana Corridor project, advancing one corridor and a no-build alternative into the second tier of the project. The recommended corridor, known as “B3,” extends from I-55 near Wilmington, Illinois, to I-65 near Cedar Lake, Indiana, and was selected as the preferred alternative during the first tier of the planning process.

This project is the first in the nation to use a combined federal and environmental clearance process using the latest federal highway authorization bill, also known as Map-21. Both states have accelerated the work to gain this approval to expedite economic development and job creation. This process also enables prompt decision making to inform potentially affected stakeholders more quickly.

“This decision represents an important step forward for the Illiana Corridor, which is a priority for my administration,” Illinois Governor Pat Quinn said. “The Illiana will create a new, much needed east-west link at the Crossroads of America, improving travel and commerce across the region. Building this expressway will create thousands of new jobs and pave the way for more long-term economic development in Illinois.”

“Roads mean jobs, and the Illiana Expressway will boost economic growth in northwest Indiana and across our state,” said Indiana Governor Mike Pence. “We are pleased that Indiana has been able to partner with Illinois to take this significant step forward.”

The expressway will reduce the strain of truck traffic on local roads, improving safety, cutting commuting times, reducing congestion, and improving accessibility to jobs. Environmentally, it will help by reducing the number of travel hours and fuel wasted due to cars and trucks caught in congestion. The economic benefits will be far reaching. IDOT and INDOT estimate the project will create or retain more than 9,000 construction jobs immediately, and more than 25,000 long-term jobs.

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“This is a significant milestone in the development of the Illiana Corridor,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann Schneider. “The selection of Corridor B3 could not have been made without the input from residents, communities, local officials, agencies, and other stakeholders who greatly assisted IDOT and INDOT every step of the way.”

The Corridor B3 recommendation reflects comments and input received after the release of the Tier One Draft Environmental Impact Statement on July 13, 2012, and throughout the study. Formal comments also were received in response to the public hearings held for the Tier One Draft Environmental Impact Statement on July 31, 2012, and August 1, 2012.

Public opinion favored Corridor B3 with 90 percent of government/interest group public hearing comments supporting a build alternative in favor of Corridor B3. Of all comments in support of a build alternative, 69 percent favored Corridor B3.

As a result of Tier One studies, IDOT and INDOT have secured federal approval for an approximate 2,000-foot-wide planning corridor. Tier Two studies can now begin to identify a refined alignment and preferred 400-foot right of way for the Illiana project.

Tier Two also will shift the focus from the original broad 952 square-mile study area to the communities, landowners and access needs along the preferred corridor. Some of the engineering work will include interchange locations and layout, drainage studies, and determining overpass or underpass opportunities. During this process stakeholder outreach will again be a top priority with careful consideration of community needs including farm operations, emergency services, school routes and local land use planning. Tier Two may take an additional 12 to 24 months to complete.

Another important component of the Illiana planning process, beginning in 2013, will be a study of funding, financing and implementation options, including the feasibility of Public-Private Partnerships (P3). P3 offers a unique opportunity to bring new investment dollars into the state and deliver much needed new jobs and travel benefits more quickly than conventional methods of project delivery.

Further information regarding the study can be found at [www.Illianacorridor.org](http://www.Illianacorridor.org).

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