



\$19.5 Million CREATE Project Completed *Reduces Rail Congestion and Improves Air Quality in South Suburbs*

ALSIP- (November 7, 2011) The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE) partners celebrated the completion of the \$19.5 million railroad modernization project that will help reduce railroad crossing delays in a highly congested south suburban corridor and allow freight trains to move through more quickly and efficiently. The ribbon cutting event was attended by Alsip Mayor Patrick Kitching, a representative of U.S. Senator Durbin, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Division Director, Public and Intermodal Transportation, Joe Shacter, and Mark Hinsdale, Assistant Vice President, CSX Transportation.

CREATE project B12 added a third main line of rail track and updated signals from 123rd St. to the Cal Sag Channel. Additionally a new rail bridge was constructed over 127th Street. This project will alleviate congestion for the 77 freight trains that use that track each day. Trains destined to Barr and Blue Island Yards to the east had to wait at this location for access to the yards, creating main line congestion. The third main line track will provide additional capacity for through movements around trains waiting for yard access. The \$19.5 million project was funded with federal funds from the 2005 federal transportation bill, along with railroad contributions, (80% federal funds, 20% railroad.).

CREATE supporters commented:

"Investing in rail infrastructure strengthens our economy, creates jobs and promotes economic development," Governor Quinn said. "This critical project, done in cooperation with our CREATE partners, will improve the quality of life in the south suburbs by reducing delays, while creating jobs throughout the metropolitan area by enhancing the flow of goods and services."

"The CREATE program is instrumental in improving the safety and efficiency of Chicago's vast rail network," said IDOT Acting Secretary Schneider. "This project to reduce delays, ease congestion and improve air quality could not have happened without the close cooperation of our railroad partners. We look forward to continuing this successful partnership on other important projects."

"This project will be transformative for the entire freight railroad industry because of new capacity and signalization which is now been completed. We are grateful to our public officials in Blue Island, Alsip, Chicago, Governor Quinn, the Illinois General Assembly, and Congressman Rush for their support of CREATE," added Mark Hinsdale, Assistant Vice President, CSX Transportation.

Initiated in 2003, the CREATE Program is a first-of-its-kind public-private partnership to address freight, commuter, and intercity passenger rail congestion in the Chicago area. The CREATE Partners include the U.S. Department of Transportation, Illinois Department of Transportation, Chicago Department of Transportation and the Association of American Railroads (AAR), representing BNSF, CN, Canadian Pacific, CSX, Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific, the switching railroads Belt Railway Company of Chicago and Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad, as well as Amtrak and Metra. The program includes 70 critically needed rail and highway infrastructure improvements in Northeastern Illinois, aimed at reducing congestion and improving the quality of life of area residents and increasing the efficiency of freight and passenger rail service throughout the region and across the United States.

For more information:

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