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Contact: Dave Wellman
Diversified Marketing Strategies
219-226-0300
dave@3dms.com

Gary Airport, CN Reach Accord on Runway Expansion Project

Two agreements pave the way for completion of the Gary Chicago International Airport's runway expansion.

Gary, IN (March 26, 2012) – Representatives from the Gary Chicago International Airport, the Canadian National Railway Company (CN) and the Regional Development Authority (RDA) joined Gary Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson and other City of Gary officials today at the airport to announce that the airport and CN has reached accord on the runway expansion project.

“I am extremely excited today,” said Mayor Freeman-Wilson. “We are one step closer to the completion of the runway.” She commended several groups for their diligence in getting the agreements signed, including CN, the Board of Directors of the Gary Chicago International Airport, the RDA and the office of Congressman Peter Visclosky. “This shows what happens when all parties work together,” she said.

The agreements announced today between the airport and CN were the Purchase and Sale Agreement, and the Design, Engineering, and Construction Agreement. The Purchase and Sales Agreement provides for the transfer of land between the airport and CN, so that the railroad will own the land its new tracks run on and the airport will own the land its runway extension is to be built on. The Design, Engineering, and Construction Agreement specifies all details of the project, such as what will be built, how it will be built and what materials will be used.

Once the runway is extended, “it will allow us to attract larger types of aircraft,” explained Airport Director Steve Landry. “Without lengthening the runway, it would be impossible for the airport to execute its strategic plan to attract increased passenger service.”

Maintaining Gary Chicago International Airport as a viable commercial airport is fundamental to the future of Northwest Indiana, says Bill Hanna, Executive Director of the RDA, which is funding \$30 million of the projects \$162 million cost. “We see the Gary Chicago International Airport as a key asset in the region,” he says. “A strong, busy airport will attract jobs and investment, fuel further construction and development, and be an engine for economic growth.”

Construction work on projects related to the runway expansion is already underway. Currently, Landry says that 19 different contracts are being worked on around the airport employing 17 Northwest Indiana contractors.

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