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February 13, 2025

Rick Walker
Mayor

Ms. Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Mike Brungardt, P.E.
City Administrator

Brandon Mills
City Clerk

Patrick G. Reavey
City Attorney

Re: Kansas Department of Transportation and Sunflower Redevelopment, LLC – Petition for Declaratory Order, Docket No. FD 36817

Dear Ms. Brown:

On behalf of the City of De Soto, Kansas (the “City”), I write to express our strong support for the Petition for Declaratory Order (the “Petition”) filed by the Kansas Department of Transportation (“KDOT”) and Sunflower Redevelopment, LLC (“SRL”) concerning certain railroad track located in the City. The track covered in the Petition has been defunct and no longer relevant to commerce within the City for nearly 30 years, and thus is best removed to facilitate KDOT’s interchange project, which is badly needed by the City. During the planning process, KDOT and the City have established that, without removal of the track, the interchange project will be vastly more expensive and will need to be moved to a more challenging location.

KDOT and SRL have filed the Petition to facilitate the construction of a new highway interchange at the intersection of K-10 and Lexington Avenue, which new interchange is vital to safely accommodate the substantial increase of visitors to the City resulting from the construction of Panasonic’s new, four million-plus square foot battery manufacturing facility that will create thousands of new jobs and residents within our City. The combined traffic from Panasonic and other development it has catalyzed is creating an acute traffic issue that will lead to public safety issues and hinder further economic development if a new interchange project is not completed.

Your decision in the above-captioned matter will serve as the catalyst for the interchange project and as a stimulus for ushering in a new era of economic development within our City. As such, we respectfully urge your expeditious review and decision on this matter. Should you have any questions about the City’s support for the Petition and the substantial, positive impacts the interchange project will have on the City, please do not hesitate to contact me.

www.desotoks.us

Sincerely,

Rick Walker, Mayor
City of De Soto, Kansas

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