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Cynthia T. Brown
Chief, Section of Administration
Office of Proceedings
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 2043

Re: *CSX Transportation, Inc.—Acquisition of Operating Easement—Grand Trunk
Western Railroad Company*
STB Docket No. FD 35522

Dear Ms. Brown:

CSX is submitting the enclosed May 20, 2019 letter from CSX President and Chief Executive Officer James M. Foote, which responds to the May 9, 2019 letter from the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

/s/

Matthew J. Warren

CC: STB Docket No. FD 35522 Service List



James M. Foote
President & Chief
Executive Officer

500 Water St., C900
Jacksonville, FL 32202

May 20, 2019

The Honorable Ann D. Begeman
The Honorable Patrick Fuchs
The Honorable Martin Oberman
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423

Dear Chairman Begeman, Vice Chairman Fuchs, and Board Member Oberman:

I am responding to your May 9, 2019 letter concerning CSXT's rail operations over the Elsdon Line in Chicago. It has been nearly a year since the Board ended formal monitoring of the Line. In our final update to the Board, we described favorable performance trends, capital investments, operational changes, and our commitment to community engagement.

Since then, the favorable performance trends have continued. Using readily available data from Evergreen Park and the 19th Ward, CSXT has achieved a 35% reduction in the number of blocked crossings, and a 23% reduction in the total duration of those blockages, when comparing the first quarter of 2019 to the final quarter reported to the Board. The frequency of blocked crossings has also decreased, with 97% of trains traversing without blocking a crossing. Each category shows that the hard work of our operations team has delivered a steady trend of improvement over the period.

At my request, a CSXT team has compiled the more detailed information in the attachment. In addition to the trend data you requested, the attachment details our successful efforts to enhance operations and engage with the community.

CSXT's improving performance over the Elsdon Line is consistent with the improved performance of our entire network. In the first quarter of 2019, we achieved an all-time record in velocity, which rose to 20.4 mph in the first quarter of 2019, up from 17.5 mph in the first quarter of 2018. Similarly, our terminal dwell hit an all-time record, dropping to 8.9 hours in the first quarter of 2019, down from 10.4 hours in the first quarter of 2018.

We are proud of our improved service performance across our entire network, including the Elsdon Line. Our government affairs group, with support from our local operations team, will continue to engage the communities along the Line to respond promptly to any community questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim", with a large, looping flourish underneath.

James M. Foote

ATTACHMENT
CSXT Response to May 9, 2019 STB Request

I. CSXT Update on Blocked Crossings Using Recent Trend Data

The three tables below provide data responsive to the Board’s request for recent information on Elsdon Line performance, including blocked crossings, duration of blocked crossings, and frequency (“success rate”).

Table 1 – Blocked Crossings

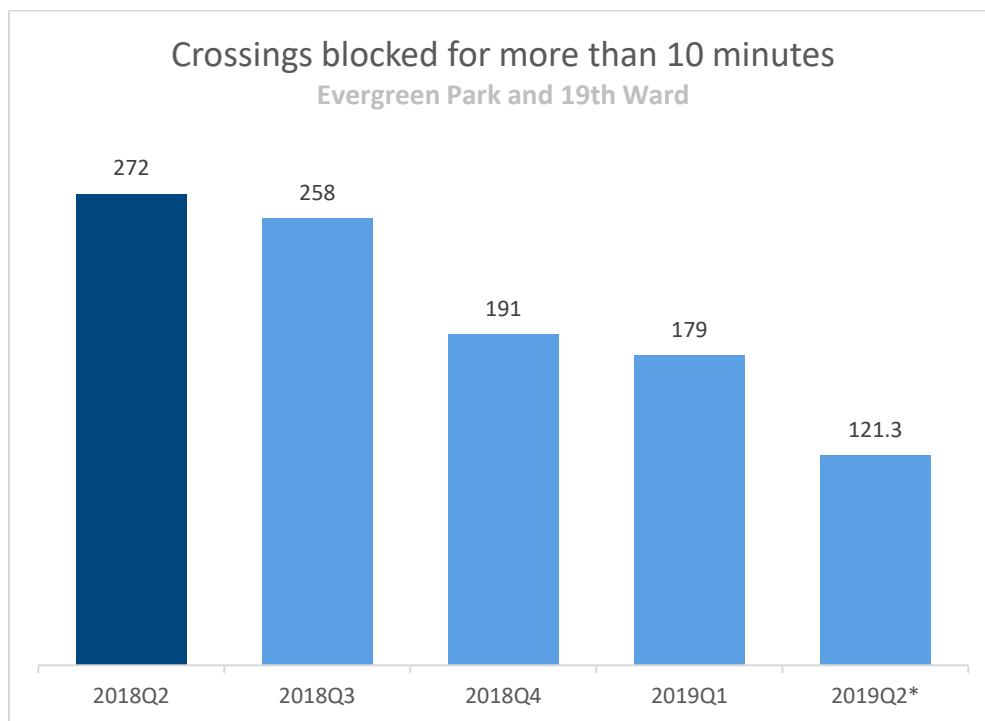


Table 1 shows total crossings blocked for more than ten minutes since the last quarter of reporting (2018Q2) until the present (2019Q2). The dark blue column for 2018Q2 represents the last quarter of data previously reported to the Board. Data for the current quarter (2019Q2) is an estimate based on April results. As **Table 1** illustrates, there has been a steady decline in blocked crossings on the northern portion of the line in Evergreen Park and 19th Ward.

Table 2 – Duration of Blocked Crossings

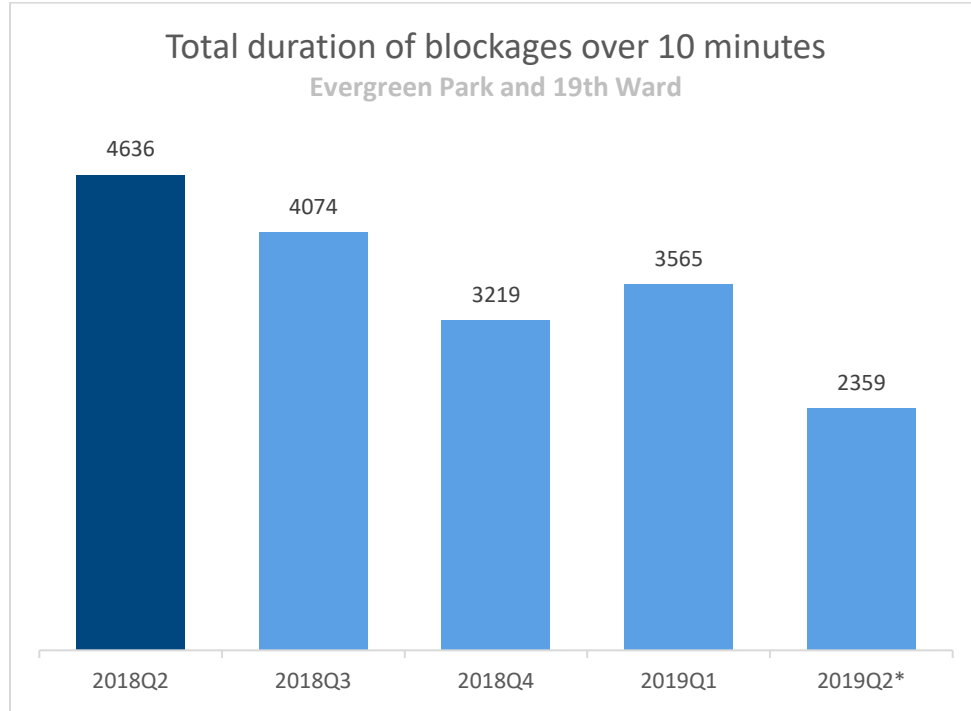


Table 2 provides the total duration of blocked crossings for more than ten minutes since the last quarter of reporting (2018Q2) until the present (2019Q2). As with **Table 1**, the data for 2019Q2 is an estimate of full quarter results, based on April results. During this period, there has been a decline in the duration of blocked crossings on the northern portion of the Line in Evergreen Park and 19th Ward.

Table 3 – Success Rate

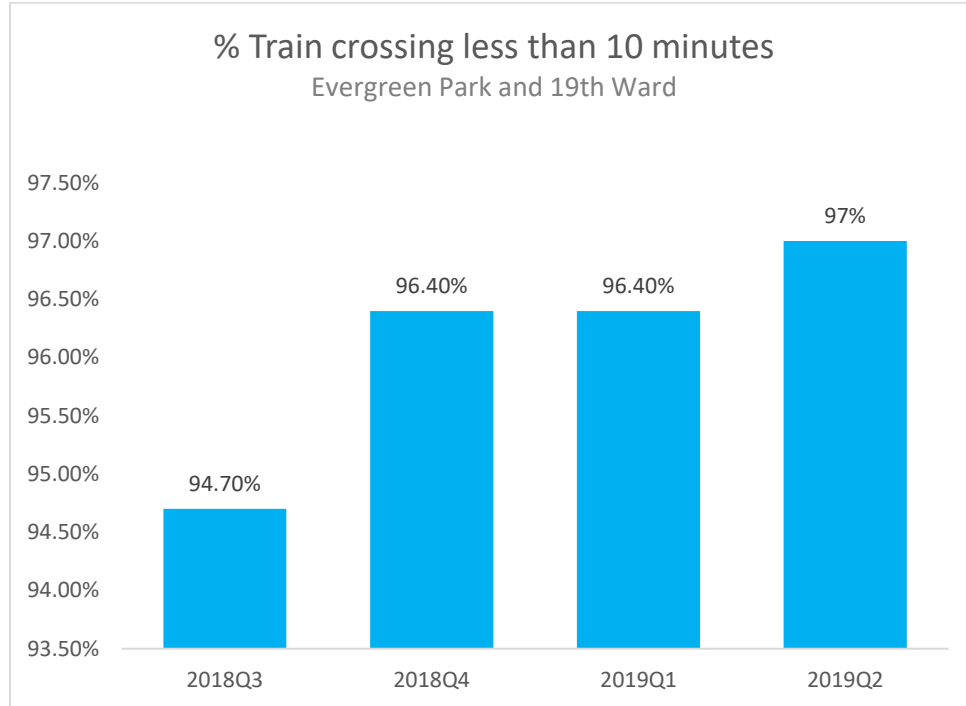


Table 3 provides the “success rate,” which is the percentage of trains that traverse a grade crossing in 10 minutes or less. The current quarter’s data is adjusted to assume a full quarter, as explained previously. **Table 3** shows that, since the Board ended monthly reporting, the vast majority of trains have traversed without blocking a crossing in excess of ten minutes. The success rate trend is upward, rising from 94.7% to 97% during the period.

Tables 1-3 present data associated with the northern segment of the Line through Evergreen Park and 19th Ward, which are the two communities where formal complaints on blocked crossings have been raised, and which have been equipped with remote gate monitors for several years making the data readily available.¹ CSXT has been working to install remote monitoring equipment on the segment south of Evergreen Park and the 19th Ward, with completion expected by year end.²

¹ As CSXT explained to the Board in its May 30, 2017 and August 23, 2018 reports in this proceeding, the southern segment of the line has never been the focus of community concerns about blocked crossings. This is due in large part to the multiple grade separated crossings in this area that allow for increased flow of vehicle traffic.

² As CSXT explained to the Board in its prior reports, its reported data for the segment south of Evergreen Park and the 19th Ward was created contemporaneously based on analysis of several data sources, including locomotive GPS pings. Similarly, causation for individual blocked crossings was developed contemporaneously each month. That blocked crossing and causation data cannot be readily and reliably assembled retroactively.

II. CSXT Update on Operational Enhancements

CSXT's operations team has had recent success in improving conditions on the Elsdon Line in the following ways:

- CSXT is constantly reviewing operations and service design alternatives to move trains over alternative lines when business levels and network efficiency permits.
- As the Board is aware, multiple railroads traverse and intersect the Elsdon Line, including UP, CN, NS, Amtrak and Metra. As a result, communication and coordination with other railroads is absolutely critical. Recently, CSXT worked with the Belt Railway Company ("BRC") to change the scheduled time for a CSXT train start out of BRC's Clearing Yard to reduce the potential of blocked crossings that sometimes have occurred due to unanticipated Metra interference. This change became effective March 21, 2019.
- Similarly, CSXT is in the process of working with the BRC to run distributed power (DP) trains to help reduce the volume of trains entering and exiting the Elsdon Line. CSXT typically had two scheduled trains that would leave the BRC each day, but often one or two additional trains were called each day to ease congestion in BRC's Clearing Yard. The use of DP trains reduces the need for as many extra trains to be called.
- We have completed the installation of all PTC-related equipment and infrastructure on the Elsdon Line and implementation (interoperability currently being tested with foreign carriers) has been achieved as of December 2018. During PTC installation, CSXT fully replaced the signals on the Elsdon Line with modern state of the art equipment. These upgraded signals have improved overall signal reliability along the Line and enhanced our ability to reduce false gate activations.
- Construction will soon begin on the B9 CREATE Project, which CSXT continues to oversee and manage. The improvements will increase capacity on the IHB and make the terminal carrier a more viable option for routing around the Elsdon Line.

III. CSXT's Update on Community Engagement

CSXT's community engagement efforts in 2019 continue to provide proactive outreach to elected stakeholders and community leaders, and prompt responsiveness to community concerns and issues as they arise. CSXT has had recent success in community engagement in the following ways:

- CSXT initiated phone calls and/or in-person meetings to proactively engage on any potential concerns related to the Elsdon Line and to report promptly any changes in operations over the Line with each of the following: Office of Congressman Dan Lipinski, Chicago 19th Ward Alderman Matt O'Shea and his staff, IL State Senator Bill Cunningham, IL State Representative Kelly Burke, and Illinois Commerce Commission Staff. CSXT received consistent feedback that "things were quiet" or equivalent statements. Approximately 10 or less complaints of idling trains have been received thus far in 2019. One community leader had a train-movement related information request, which was promptly provided by CSXT.
- CSXT initiated a letter to Congressman Lipinski, detailing our performance on the Elsdon during the "Polar Vortex" (Jan-Feb 2019) compared to earlier periods, which showed fewer blocked crossings and gate activation failures despite the historic weather conditions causing signal problems across the country.
- The community has multiple means of contacting CSXT, particularly its Government Affairs team. Email is the preferred mode of communication, although many community leaders contact CSXT Head of State Relations, Tom Livingston, on his cell phone. Whenever CSXT receives a complaint from the public about a crossing-related issue, CSXT's Government Affairs and Operations teams are in immediate contact with each other to resolve the situation and provide updates and/or explanations to the complainant and applicable community leaders.