



July 13, 2016

Mr. Dave Navecky
Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Dear Mr. Navecky,

This letter is regarding the Great Lakes Basin Transportation railroad project, Docket No. FD 35952, and concerns of the Kankakee Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization (KATS MPO). Please note that these comments and concerns do not reflect or indicate any official action taken by the MPO Policy Committee, nor are they to be intended as in favor of or in opposition to the project.

In June 2015 the KATS MPO adopted the current 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. During the two year planning process, the proposed Great Lakes Basin Railroad was not a known project and was not included in the plan. There are no planning documents in Kankakee County, including the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, that address this project. Undoubtedly, this project will have significant impacts across a multitude of issues. The Long Range Plan was prepared under contract for nearly \$250,000 of awarded state planning and research (SPR) funds over the course of two years. The long range plan was expected to be relevant for about ten years with only a minor update after five years. Will planning funds be made available for the affected areas that must now update their planning documents to accommodate this proposed railroad if it is approved?

The proposed GLBT project narrative includes the closure of 3000E Road and 5000E Road near the rail port. It seems clear that if 4000E Road existed, it too would be closed. In the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, 4000E Road is included as an important future thoroughfare for an eastern bypass of the metropolitan planning area. The future project is to connect IL-17 to 12000N Road with a mile of new construction to connect 4000E Road from 10000N Road to 11000N Road. 4000E Road currently already serves as a rural bypass with a fair amount of traffic. The amount of traffic is expected to increase over time. This project creates an unforeseen force that would make it exceptionally difficult if not impossible to build that new mile of road in the future. Due to the character and volume of traffic on 4000E Road, the proposed mile of new construction would benefit from additional grade separated crossing.

Although the proposed GLBT project only spans about 6.5 miles in the northern section of the metropolitan planning area, the proposed rail port could have large regional effects on the KATS MPO, including nineteen mobile homes within the 200-foot right-of-way in northern Manteno, Illinois. If roadway traffic, particularly heavy commercial vehicles, increases significantly as a

result, the roads may not be able to handle the capacity or frequent heavy weight of the traffic. These problems could be compounded by the additional road closures that have been proposed as existing traffic will have to find permanent, alternative routes. The Village of Manteno could also be adversely impacted if traffic on 9000N Road increases as travelers divert to IL-50.

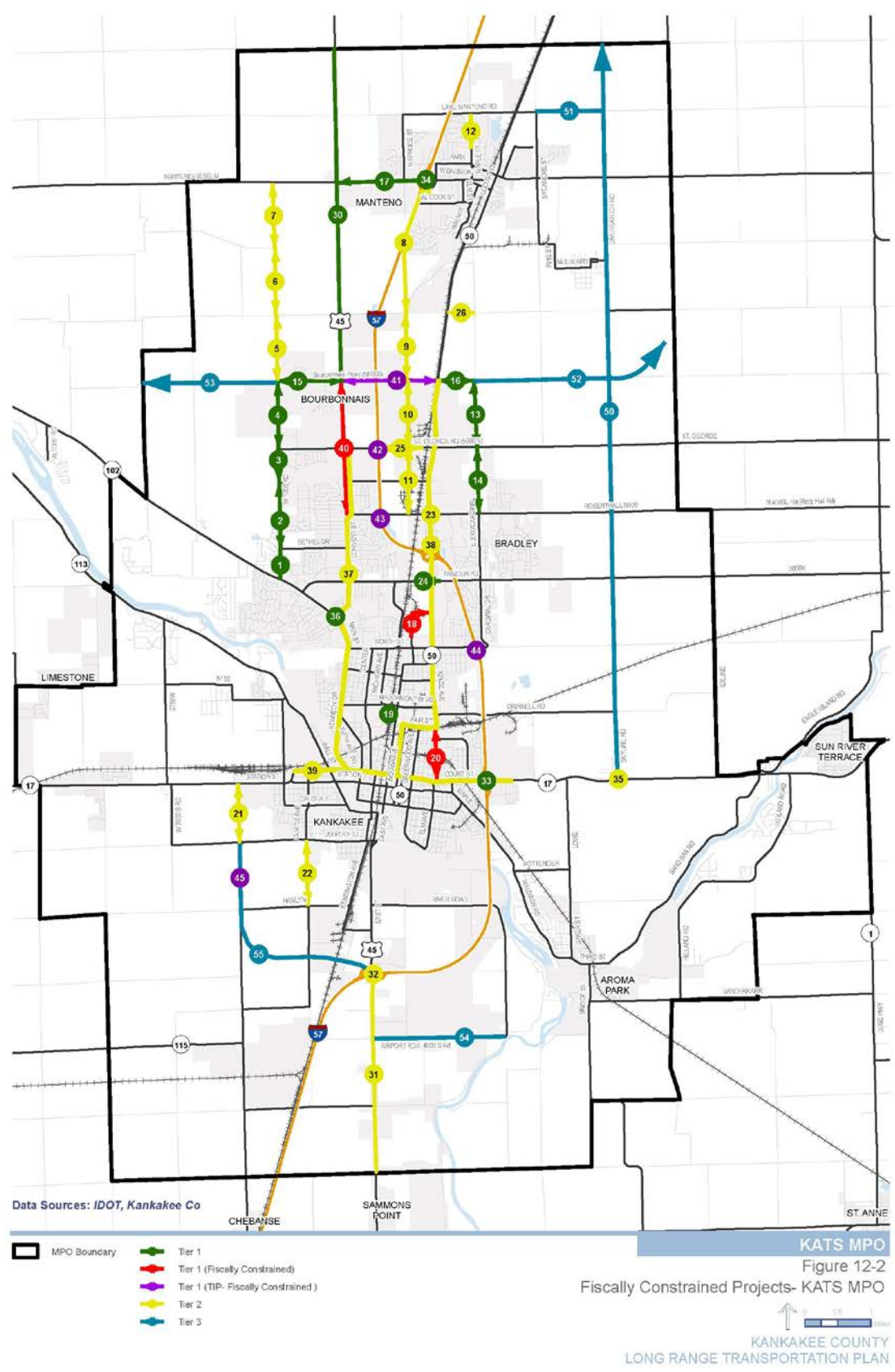
The project has been identified as a freight rail bypass for trains that do not need to start or end in Chicago with little or no mention about passenger rail. Is there any intention of providing passenger-rail transportation? With the current trend in high speed passenger rail, it may be worth considering necessary accommodations for travelers that also do not have an origin or destination in Chicago.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Olson
Transportation Program Manager
Kankakee Area Transportation Study

Figure 12-2: Tiered Projects – KATS MPO



Tier 3 Projects

ID No.	Roadway	Project Type	Starting Terminus	Ending Terminus	Current Conditions	Improvements	Improvement Length (In Miles)
50	Skyline Rd	Unsupported	IL-17	Manteno Rd	2 lane rural, township road, new north of E 10000N Rd	3 lane; concrete for heavy trucks; widen shoulders; drainage improvements; signals at major intersections	11.00
51	10000N Rd	Unsupported	4000E Rd	Sycamore Rd	2 lane rural, township road	3 lane; concrete for heavy trucks; shoulder-drainage improvements	1.00
52	Bourbonnais Pkwy	Unsupported	Cardinal Dr	Skyline Rd	2 lane rural, new from N 2000E to N 3000E, township road	4 lane; concrete for heavy trucks; shoulder-drainage improvements	3.50
53	Bourbonnais Pkwy	Unsupported	Career Center Rd	County Hwy 30/2250W Rd	2 lane rural, township road	4 lane; concrete for heavy trucks; shoulder-drainage improvements	2.00
54	Airport Road	Unsupported	US 45/52	River Rd	2 lane rural, township road	3 lane; shoulder-drainage improvements; turn lane onto Hwy 45/52	2.00
55	2000W	Unsupported	Jeffery St	US 45/52	New, township road	3 lane; concrete for heavy trucks; shoulder-drainage improvements	3.70