



Kristen Brown, Mayor

April 22, 2014

Via Email to david.naveckyd@stb.dot.gov

Dave Navecky
Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, SW
Room 1104
Washington, DC 20423

**Re: City of Columbus, Indiana's Response as an Interested Party to
"STB Docket No. FD 35523, CSX Transportation, Inc. – Joint Use –
Louisville and Indiana Railroad Company, Inc.: Consultation on
Scope of Supplemental Environmental Assessment**

Mr. Navecky:

I am in receipt of the above referenced request for input on a joint use by CSX Transportation and Louisville & Indiana Railroad. My response is made on behalf of the community and as the Mayor of the City of Columbus.

The City of Columbus is located approximately 45 miles south of Indianapolis and 70 miles north of Louisville. Our community's geography is unique in that our city is divided between the central core and the western portion by the current Louisville and Indiana Railroad line (please see the attached map). The central core contains the majority of our city's businesses, schools, services and our county hospital. The division between the western portion of our city from the central core is along one of the most highly traveled thoroughfares in our city – Indiana State Road 46.

Currently when a train crosses Indiana State Road 46 in Columbus on the Louisville and Indiana Railroad line, it routinely causes a backup of well over a mile reaching back to Interstate 65 which can then take up to an hour to finally resume regular traffic flow. Because of the age and condition of the bridge that the Indiana and Louisville Railroad line must use to cross the East Fork of the White River (immediately before reaching Indiana State Road 46), the train must decrease its speed to such a slow rate that traffic backups and delays are exacerbated. Just the traffic of two trains per day creates one of the biggest complaints within our community – the backups and delays along this highly traveled thoroughfare.

Beyond the inconvenience and more importantly, I am most concerned with the public safety and public service component of adding any additional train traffic to this portion of line – needless to say the thought of adding fifteen additional trains per day to this intersection is alarming at best. By adding additional trains, you are cutting the western portion of our city off from the vital public safety services that they must have – police, fire and emergency medical services. While we have a fire station in the western portion of our city, the other five fire stations are located in the central core, so backup response would be hindered. Emergency medical services (i.e. ambulances) would be cut off from the hospital or be delayed. Police services would be cut off from backup, department headquarters and the jail. Finally, our city bus depot is located adjacent to the railroad line and the backups inhibit the buses ability to keep their routes on time.

While I understand the need to offset capital improvement costs with additional revenue, I must firmly state my objection to increasing the number of trains that would utilize the current Louisville and Indiana Railroad line within the Columbus city limits. The safety of the citizens of our community would be impaired should the additional traffic be allowed to occur.

We would very much welcome a discussion of possible solutions, including improvements to the current line to increase the speed of which the trains are able to move through this intersection *prior to* any additional train traffic and potentially moving the current tracks to facilitate with the Indiana Department of Transportation's (INDOT) construction of a vehicle overpass which would eliminate all of our concerns (INDOT has shown a willingness to begin this dialogue).

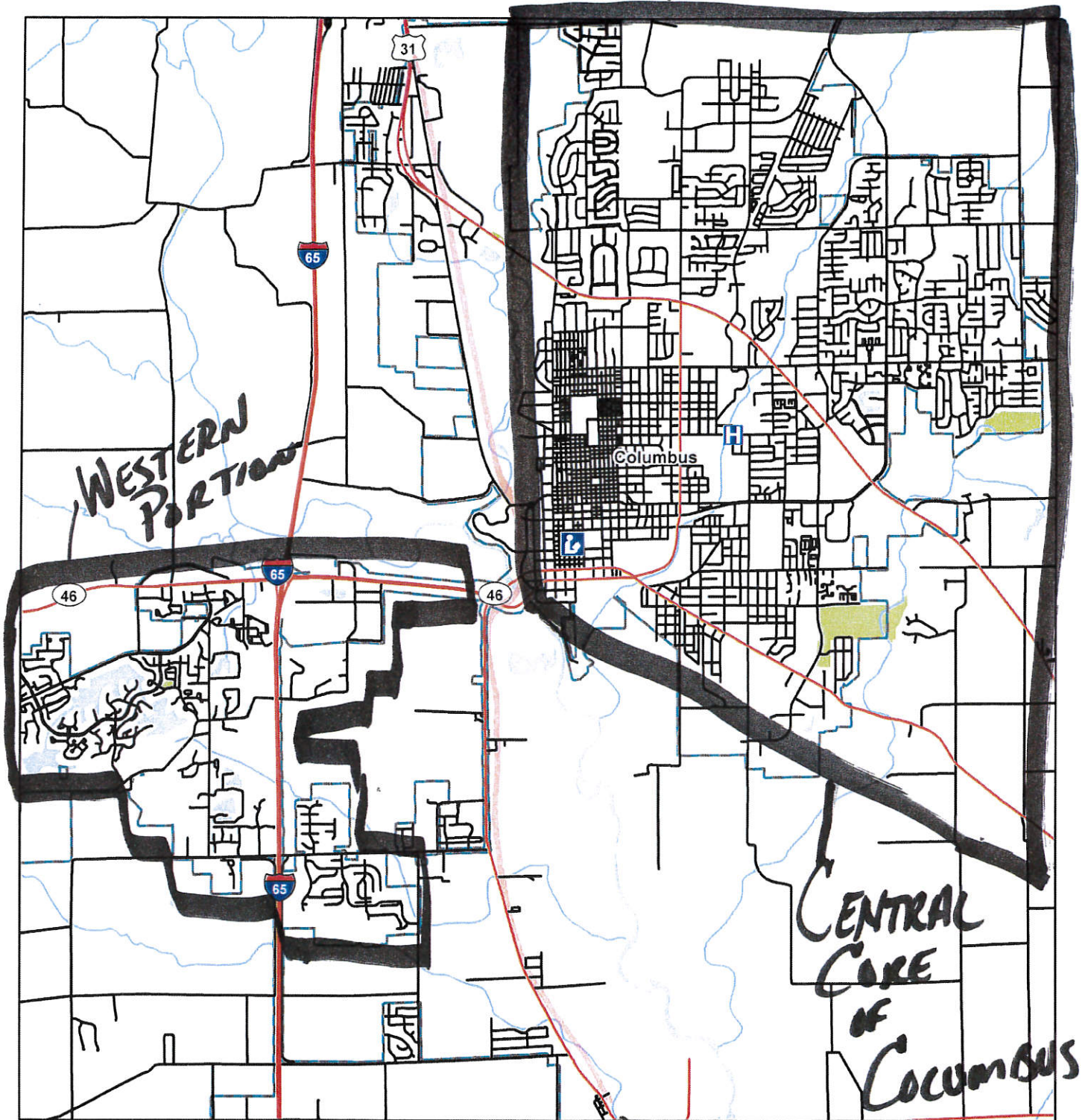
Should you have any questions or if there is anything I could do to assist in this process, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristen Brown', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kristen Brown, Mayor

Bartholomew County, IN



April 21, 2014

1:64,000
0 0.5 1 2 mi
0 0.75 1.5 3 km

LOUISVILLE & INDIANA RR