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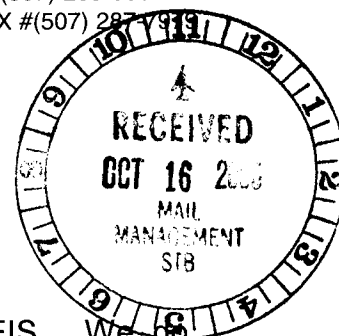
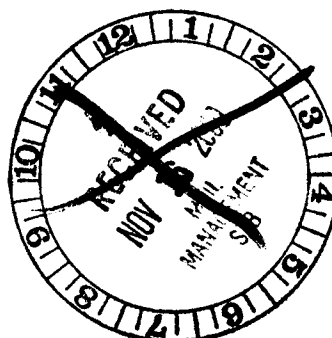
October 12, 2000

Victoria Rutson, Project Manager
Surface Transportation Board
Powder River Basin Expansion Project
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

GARY H. NEUMANN
Assistant City Administrator
City Administrator's Office
201 4th Street SE, Room 266
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(507) 285-8082
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RE: Requests for Additional Information

Dear Ms. Rutson:



We have been reviewing the information that is contained in the DEIS. We do appreciate the volume of information in the documents. It certainly was a major undertaking to prepare.

Some additional information on certain aspects would be extremely useful for us to prepare an adequate response to issues relating to our community. I have listed below some additional information that we request be provided to the City of Rochester if it is available from you or the consultants for the project.

1. SIDINGS. Table 2-6 lists five sidings to be constructed entirely or partially within Olmsted County. Two of these sidings would be partially within the City limits of Rochester. The City would request copies of drawings of these five siding locations, particularly for the two sidings in or adjacent to the City of Rochester. We would assume that drawings are available that would show the approximate location of the sidings and their approximate distance from the centerline of the existing track. If there is a map showing the existing right of the DM&E Railroad in Olmsted County, that would be useful also.

Page 1-27 indicates that the sidings to be constructed initially are designed to accommodate existing train traffic and 40 million tons of coal hauled annually. Are the five sidings that are listed for Olmsted County intended to be constructed under the initial construction phase and to accommodate the 40 million tons of coal or are they intended to be constructed in a subsequent phase to accommodate coal traffic greater than 40 million tons annually? Is the intent to use these five sidings as passing sidings or are they to be used for marshalling yard purposes?

Victoria Rutson, STB
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2. VIBRATION. Tables 5.1-10 and 3.3-17 reference buildings potentially impacted by vibration. The City would request specific information from the STB on which 32 buildings it determined to be within 100 feet; which 180 buildings were found to be within 101 to 200 feet; and which 364 buildings were found to be within 201 to 400 feet. If there are either listings of the building locations or addresses available or a copy of a map that was used to make this determination, it would be very helpful to the City. At present, we have not been contacted by very many owners of the buildings that are likely to be within those distances. However, as more people in the community become familiar with the DEIS, we are likely to get questions on which buildings were considered to be within a specific distance category and which were not. A listing of the buildings or a copy of the map is needed to address future questions that are certain to arise.
3. NOISE. Table F-6 and other references refer to a noise distance or contour of 2,230 feet on either side of the tracks. The City would request that a map or other information that was available to determine the properties that were within the noise contour be provided to the City. This would enable the City to better understand the area of impact and the specific properties that were included in the SEA's determination.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in providing the City of Rochester with this information.

Sincerely,



Gary Neumann
Assistant City Administrator

c: Mayor and Council
Stevan Kvenvold, City Administrator
Terry Adkins, City Attorney
Steve Kalish, McCarthy Sweeney, & Harkaway