



Central Avenue at BRC Railroad Grade Separation Study Draft Problem Statement

Draft Problem Statement

The problems to be addressed by the Study are associated with traffic congestion, excessive travel delays and reduced mobility that occur when Central Avenue is blocked by freight trains using the Belt Railway Company (BRC) 59th Street Rail Branch. These train blockages cause Central Avenue traffic backups that affect traffic operations at the Archer Avenue and 55th Street intersections causing delays to extend in every direction, and the high volumes of traffic on nearby routes such as Cicero and Harlem Avenues do not provide secondary relief. Train delays and resulting traffic congestion encourage traffic to cut through residential areas, contribute to speeding in uncongested periods, and prevent safe and efficient access to local businesses, residences, churches and schools. The lack of consistent travel times, caused by train interference, has prevented the development of public transportation.

The Garfield Ridge neighborhood and business community have noted that the lack of grade separations to improve mobility has impacted business development, and the general enjoyment of the area is compromised by train delays during the night and on weekends. The condition of pavement and gate equipment are cause for concern and train noise and vibration creates undesirable conditions for local residents. An acceptable solution at this crossing must be cost effective and consider funding constraints.