

Further in reference to my previous testimony on LD 30 etc, a pertinent example of dormant railroad branch line restoration and reactivation is provided by rural Blackwell, Oklahoma. This declining community with 6,073 residents and a 17% poverty factor formed an industrial development authority that has attracted relocation interest from two compatible rail-dependent industries (pet food and plastics). An out-of-service, 37-mile, substandard rail connection with the national network is being cleared of vegetation and will be physically upgraded to appropriate safety weight and speed standards for weight, speed and crossing protection to accommodate the associated economic benefit. Had the rail infrastructure been removed, this opportunity for municipal revitalization could not have been pursued financially.

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