



REPORT TO COUNCIL

City of Sacramento

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STAFF
August 23, 2005

Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

Subject: Report Back: Train Horn Rule Quiet Zones

Location/Council District: Highway-Rail Grade Crossings - Citywide.

Recommendation:

Adopt a Resolution: 1) approving the Transportation Programming Guide (TPG) Train Horn Quiet Zones scoring criteria and scored and ranked project list shown in Exhibit A, 2) authorizing staff to add the Train Horn Quiet Zones program to the TPG, 3) establishing the Train Horn Rule Quiet Zones Project (PN: TK86), and 4) appropriating \$50,000 (209-710-7012) from the Major Street Construction Tax Contingency to the Train Horn Quiet Zones Project (PN: TK86).

Contact: Saed Hasan, Senior Engineer, 808-7923; Hector Barron, Supervising Engineer, 808-2669

Presenters: Saed Hasan, Senior Engineer; Hector Barron, Supervising Engineer

Department: Department of Transportation

Division: Engineering Services

Organization No: 3431

Summary:

On April 27, 2005, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published the final train horn rule. The rule went into effect on June 24, 2005. The final rule requires that locomotives sound their horns while trains approach and enter public highway-rail-grade crossings. On July 27, 2004, the City council directed staff to report back with refined criteria to prioritize quiet zones with worse railroad crossings first, funding options, and an implementation plan. Staff has developed an objective criterion which measures the relative impact on the affected population by factoring population number and the number of train horn soundings at specific railroad crossings.

Staff requests that the City Council approve the Train Horn Quiet Zones TPG scoring criteria and scored and ranked project list, authorize adding a Train Horn Quiet Zones program to the TPG, establish the Train Horn Quiet Zones Project (PN: TK86), and appropriate \$50,000 to the Train Horn Quiet Zones Project.

Committee/Commission Action:

None

Background Information:

On April 27, 2005, the FRA published an interim final rule that requires locomotive horns be sounded while trains approach and enter public highway-rail grade crossings. The final rule contained an exception to the above requirement in circumstances in which: a) there is not a significant risk of loss of life or serious personal injury, b) use of the locomotive horn is impractical, or, c) safety measures fully compensate for the absence of the warning provided by the locomotive horn. Communities that qualify for this exception may create "quiet zones" within which locomotive horns would not be routinely sounded. Applying for quiet zones would require the City, at certain instances, to fund and implement certain improvements at railroad crossings.

TPG – Train Horn Rule Quiet Zones Program

The proposed TPG Train Horn Rule Quiet Zones Program would apply to railroad crossings that are subject to the FRA Train Horn Rule. Consistent with the rule, it would not apply to railroads exclusively operating freight trains on tracks which are not part of the general railroad system, passenger railroads that operate only on tracks which are not part of the general railroad system of transportation and which operate at a maximum speed of 15 mph, and rapid transit operations within an urban area that are not connected to the general railroad system of transportation. Currently within the City of Sacramento, the proposed TPG program would apply to 42 crossings.

The proposed TPG program focuses on ranking each eligible railroad crossing in the City based on the relative impact on the affected residential population adjacent to the crossing. Staff proposes to determine the relative impact by applying an objective criterion, "Person-Sounding" (PS), to each crossing. The PS for each crossing is measured by multiplying the residential population within 1.5 miles of the crossing by the number of trains (horn soundings) at the crossing each day. The list of all identified crossings within the City, with their respective PS and rank, is shown in Exhibit A.

Implementation

The TPG Train Horn Quiet Zones Program will be the basis for recommending and implementing future improvements leading to quiet zones within the City. Currently it is estimated that the total cost of implementing quiet zones throughout the City is between \$1.0 to \$2.0 million. Each fiscal year, as part of the Capital Improvement Program budget process, staff will make specific recommendations to appropriate funds toward establishment of specific Train Horn Quiet Zones.

In the interim, staff recommends implementing a Quiet Zone (24-hour) on all railroad crossings (Line 1, Exhibit A) that extend from Meadowview Road to West El Camino Avenue

(Rank number 4-19 and 21-34). The majority of these crossings are within the existing Partial Quiet Zone that currently exists within the City. Along this area, trains may not sound their horns between the hours of 6:00pm and 7:00am. As a condition of maintaining this Partial Quiet Zone, the City is required to implement improvements at a cost of approximately \$50,000. Staff estimates that the difference in the cost of implementing the Quiet Zone (24-hour) at these specified crossings and the cost of maintaining the Partial Quiet Zone is negligible, and therefore should be pursued at this time.

Staff is also looking at outside funding opportunities (grants) that may be used to implement improvements at crossings that would improve the safety at crossings and help in creating quiet zones. Staff is working with the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) staff in evaluating City crossings as possible candidates for grants awarded by the PUC.

Financial Considerations:

The estimated total cost to implement Quiet Zones citywide is between \$1.0 to \$2.0 million. Appropriating \$50,000 (209-710-7012) from the Major Street Construction Tax Contingency to the Train Horn Quiet Zones Project (PN: TK86) is sufficient to maintain the existing Partial Quiet Zone and implement a Quiet Zone (24-hour) on Line 1 from Meadowview Road to West El Camino Avenue. On an annual basis, and as part of the Capital Improvement Program budget process, staff will evaluate transportation funds and make Quiet Zone recommendations to the City Council.

Environmental Considerations:

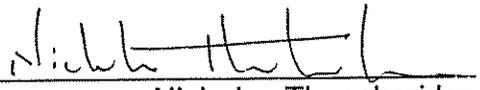
The requested action is not subject to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under the general rule (Section 15061 (b)(3)) that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect of the environment.

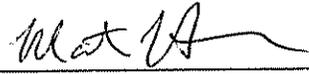
Policy Considerations:

Creating new Quiet Zones is consistent with the City's Strategic Plan goals of enhancing and preserving neighborhoods, promoting and supporting economic vitality, and enhancing the quality of life.

Emerging Small Business Development (ESBD):

None, since no goods or services are being procured with this action.

Respectfully Submitted by: 
Nicholas Theocharides
Engineering Services Manager

Approved by: 
Marty Hanneman
Director, Department of Transportation

Recommendation Approved:


ROBERT P. THOMAS
City Manager

Table of Contents:
Pg 1 Report
Pg 5 Resolution
Pg 6 Exhibit A

RESOLUTION NO.

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

REPORT BACK ON TRAIN HORN RULE QUIET ZONES

BACKGROUND

- A. On July 27, 2004, the City Council directed staff to report back with refined criteria for prioritizing the implementation of quiet zones, funding options, and an implementation plan.
- B. Train Horn Quiet Zones are ranked using one criterion: Person-Sounding. Person Sounding is calculated by multiplying the number of daily trains by the number of people within 1.5 miles of the respective crossing.
- C. The difference in the cost of implementing a Quiet Zone (24-hour) on the Line 1 crossings, shown in Exhibit A, and the cost of maintaining the existing Partial Quiet Zone within the City is negligible.
- D. The total cost to implement Quiet Zones citywide is between \$1.0 to \$2.0 million.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1. The Train Horn Quiet Zone, scoring criteria, and scored and ranked project list shown in Exhibit A is approved.
- Section 2. Staff is authorized to add the Train Horn Quiet Zones program to the Transportation Programming Guide.
- Section 3. The Train Horn Rule Quiet Zones Project (PN: TK86) is established.
- Section 4. The FY04/05 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is amended by appropriating \$50,000 (209-710-7012) from the Major Street Construction Tax Contingency to the Train Horn Quiet Zones Project (PN: TK86).

Table of Contents:

- Exhibit A: Year 2006 - Train Horn Quiet Zones Scored and Ranked Project List - 4 Pages
- Train Horn Lines-New Quiet Zones - 1 Page

TRAIN HORN QUIET ZONES PROGRAM

INTROUDCTION

On April 27, 2005, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) published an interim final rule that requires locomotive horns be sounded while trains approach and enter public highway-rail grade crossings. The final rule contained an exception to the above requirement in circumstances in which there is not a significant risk of loss of life or serious personal injury, use of the locomotive horn is impractical, or safety measures fully compensate for the absence of the warning provided by the locomotive horn. Communities that qualify for this exception may create "quiet zones" within which locomotive horns would not be routinely sounded. Applying for quiet zones would require the City, at certain instances, to fund and implement certain improvements at railroad crossings.

On April 13 2004 and on July 27, 2004, staff was directed by the City Council to consider evaluation criteria reflecting train horn impacts on residential areas, giving priority for areas that are impacted the most.

GOAL AND POLICY

The Train Horn Quiet Zones Program is consistent with the following City of Sacramento General Plan (adopted January 19, 1988, reflects City Council Amendments through September 2000) goals and policies:

Overall Goal:

Protect the public from detrimental sources that are within the City's ability and responsibility to regulate.

Goal:

Reduce noise levels in areas where noise exposure presently exceeds the standards set fourth in the general plan.

Policy

Encourage the incorporation of the latest noise control technologies in all projects.

PROJECT LIST DEVELOPMENT

Eligibility Criteria

Crossings that are subject to the applicability of the Train Horn Rule are the only crossings that are considered for the Train Horn Quiet Zones. Railroad spurs are not included in the list of crossings. The Train Horn Rule does not apply to railroads exclusively operating

freight trains on tracks which are not part of the general railroad system; passenger railroads that operate only on tracks which are not part of the general railroad system of transportation and which operate at a maximum speed of 15 mph; and rapid transit operations within an urban area that are not connected to the general railroad system of transportation.

PROJECT RANKING PROCESS

Train Horn Quiet Zones are ranked using one criterion: **Person Sounding (PS)**.

The PS is an objective criterion to measure the relative impact on the affected population. The PS is calculated for each crossing by multiplying the Number of Trains by Persons. There is no maximum score. The highest scoring projects are ranked first.

Number of Trains: The daily number of trains that cross over a specific crossing.

Persons: Number of people who lives within 1.5 miles from a specific crossing.

PS=Number of Trains x Persons

YEAR 2006 - TRAIN HORN QUIET ZONES RANKED LIST

2006 Rank	Council District	Street	Line	Soundings	Persons	Person Sounding
1	3	28th St	Line 4	42	47193	1982106
2	3	20th St	Line 3	42	46269	1943298
3	1,2	Main Ave	Line 1 N C	23	80679	1855617
4	1,2	West El Camino Ave	Line 1 N C	23	52452	1206396
5	1,2	Bicycle Path	Line 1 N C	23	48889	1124447
6	3	Q St	Line 1 S C	12	64050	768600
7	4	V St	Line 1 S C	12	63933	767196
8	4	S St	Line 1 S C	12	62919	755028
9	4	T St	Line 1 S C	12	62919	755028
10	4	W St	Line 1 S C	12	62609	751308
11	4	20th St - Broadway	Line 1 S C	12	62084	745008
12	3	P St	Line 1 S C	12	62063	744756
13	8	Meadowview Rd	Line 1 S C	12	60094	721128
14	4,5	21st St	Line 1 S C	12	59976	719712
15	4	X St	Line 1 S C	12	58793	705516
16	4	Second Ave	Line 1 S C	12	58766	705192
17	3	O St	Line 1 S C	12	58610	703320
18	3	N St	Line 1 S C	12	57133	685596
19	3	Capitol Ave - M St	Line 1 S C	12	55700	668400
20	3	Private Crossing East 20th St, N. C St	Line 4 to 1	14	46269	647766
21	3	K St	Line 1 S C	12	53654	643848
22	8,5	Florin Rd	Line 1 S C	12	53590	643080
23	3	L St	Line 1 S C	12	52936	635232
24	3	I St	Line 1 S C	12	52051	624612
25	3	J St	Line 1 S C	12	51924	623088
26	3	H St	Line 1 S C	12	48975	587700
27	8,5	47th Ave	Line 1 S C	12	48709	584508
28	3	G St	Line 1 S C	12	48401	580812
29	5	Fruitridge Rd	Line 1 S C	12	46062	552744
30	3	D St	Line 1 S C	12	45874	550488

YEAR 2006 - TRAIN HORN QUIET ZONES RANKED LIST

2006 Rank	Council District	Street	Line	Soundings	Persons	Person Sounding
31	3	F St	Line 1 S C	12	45790	549480
32	5	26th Ave	Line 1 S C	12	45646	547752
33	3	C St	Line 1 S C	12	45323	543876
34	3	E St	Line 1 S C	12	44015	528180
35	6	14th Ave	Line 2	12	41417	497004
36	6	Power Inn Rd	Line 2	12	36318	435816
37	6	Fruitridge Rd	Line 2	12	31748	380976
38	6	Elder Creek Rd	Line 2	12	25538	306456
39	6	Jackson	Line 5	2	25481	50962
40	6	Kiefer	Line 5	2	21685	43370
41	6	Florin Perkins Rd	Line 6	1	19004	19004
42	6	Fruitridge Rd	Line 6	1	12480	12480

Exhibit A

RAILROAD LINES NEW QUIET ZONES

