



City of Emeryville

CALIFORNIA

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 21, 2020
TO: Christine Daniel, City Manager
FROM: Mary Grace Houlihan, Public Works Director
SUBJECT: **Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Emeryville Approving Minor Scope Of Work Changes Described In Amendment Request Letter For The Quiet Zone Safety Engineering Measures Project; Approving Permanent Street Closure Of 66th Street 130' East Of Shellmound Street At The Union Pacific Railroad Crossing On July 1, 2021**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the above-entitled resolution.

BACKGROUND

Union Pacific Railroad's (UPRR) Martinez Subdivision is the operating railroad right of way that runs through Emeryville. The UPRR operating rail has three at-grade crossings through Emeryville at 65th, 66th and 67th Streets. Both passenger and freight trains operate through this corridor. It is anticipated that as the Port of Oakland expands its freight capacity and the number of trains passing through Emeryville will increase.

In 2005 the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued regulations requiring locomotive horns be sounded in advance of all public highway-rail crossings. Locomotive engineers must sound train horns for a minimum of 15 seconds. FRA provided local communities the option of establishing Quiet Zones where crossing safety mitigation measures could be installed and thereby eliminate the requirement to sound horns at each crossing.

In 2008, Emeryville opted to perform a Quiet Zone Feasibility Study to assess what safety mitigation measures could be implemented for the 65th, 66th and 67th street crossings thereby reducing the impacts of train horns on nearby communities. The study recommended installation of four-quadrant gates at the at-grade crossings, amongst other safety engineering improvements. Noise impacts are one of the most difficult areas of conflict between freight uses and more sensitive land uses such as residential, schools, and recreational facilities. A Quiet Zone in Emeryville would greatly reduce the scale of impacts to adjacent land uses, and is expected to have significant benefits to land use conflicts.

In late 2017 a grant funding opportunity became available through the 2018 SB 1 – Trade Corridor Enhancement Program (TCEP). On December 19, 2017, City Council unanimously gave support to apply grant funding for the Quiet Zone project in Emeryville. Staff worked with Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC) and the Emeryville Quiet Zone project was added to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).

The City of Emeryville submitted a project application asking for \$4.2 Million in construction funding with a required a total estimated match of about \$1.8 Million (30%), for a total project value of \$6 Million with the 30% match funded through Alameda CTC. The application included a project to install of four-quadrant gates at the at-grade crossings, amongst other safety engineering improvements.

On May 16, 2018, the California Transportation Commission (CTC) approved the 2018 Trade Corridor Enhancement Program Final Adopted Program of Projects. Included in this list of projects was the City's project, titled "Quiet Zone Safety Engineering Measures." The Project was officially approved in Resolution TCEP-P-1819-05B (October 17, 2018) and revised per Waiver 19-33 (June 26, 2019).

Due to unforeseen staffing changes at UPRR and additional study requests made by UPRR, the City's Plans, Specifications & Engineering (PS&E) phase extended beyond the time limit for the originally programmed project. The CTC approved a twelve (12) month extension at the June 2019 CTC Meeting to address these issues.

DISCUSSION

The City has successfully executed Preliminary Engineering (PE) Agreements with UPRR for all three at-grade railroad crossings. The PE Agreements are necessary for UPRR to perform the signal design for the railroad crossings. UPRR's technical review resulted in the requirement to perform a Transportation Impact Assessment ("Closure Study") for the closure of the 66th and 67th Street grade crossings. The impacts of this study and field review by UPRR recommended changes to the project scope previously approved by CTC.

Negotiations with UPRR resulted in three minor changes to the scope of work submitted and approved by CTC as part of the original SB 1 TCEP Funding program:

- 1) UPRR would not agree to the installation of quad gates at the 67th Street at-grade crossing without a queue prevention strategy. To alleviate this concern and provide the best safety measures at this crossing, the **addition of a pre-signal at 67th Street and Shellmound Street is required.**
- 2) The Closure Study recommendations (see Exhibit B), determined that 67th Street must remain open with added pedestrian/bicycle facilities, but **the 66th Street at-grade crossing must be closed to all modes of travel.** This solution provides for increased safety while maintaining reliable circulation for all modes of transportation. A closure of 66th Street removes all conflicts between trains and all modes of travel at the crossing. The Closure Study concluded that the closure of 66th Street would not be detrimental to the overall circulation patterns for all modes of travel (including emergency services). The closure would occur on 66th Street 130' East Of Shellmound Street at the Union Pacific Railroad Crossing.

- 3) The Closure Study recommended (see Exhibit B) to **signalize the 67th Street and Hollis Street intersection** which is directly impacted by the closure of 66th Street and the re-direction of traffic circulation for all modes. This signal would improve:
- a. East/west connectivity for both pedestrians and bicyclists who choose to use the 67th Street corridor to access Aquatic Park
 - b. Access to the bus stops on Hollis Street by providing signalized pedestrian crossings
 - c. Trucking safety and activities in the corridor because 67th Street would be signalized at both Shellmound and Hollis Streets.

These **three changes** are considered minor changes to the original scope of work submitted and approved by CTC as part of the SB 1 TCEP Funding program. With the closure of one crossing and addition of two signalized intersections, these changes allow for increased safety and freight movement benefits for the project.

Due to delays statewide related to the COVID-19 emergency and varying levels of shelter-in-place directives, the CTC has modified state funded transportation programs in April 2020. For the SB 1 TCEP program, the CTC will allow up to a 20-month time extension for programmed projects. The Emeryville Quiet Zone project was previously granted a twelve (12) month extension in June 2019. Due to the delays that our City, our consultants, and UPRR are experiencing under COVID-19 directives, the City will be seeking an Amendment Request asking for an additional eight (8) months of time extension.

Closure of 66th Street

The closure would occur on 66th Street 130' East of Shellmound Street at the Union Pacific Railroad Crossing. A local agency may close a street to vehicular traffic when the agency determines the street is no longer needed for vehicular traffic (Vehicle Code section 21101(a)(1)). The City Council may by ordinance or resolution close the described portion of 66th Street if the Council determines that portion is no longer necessary for vehicular traffic. Staff recommends the closure take effect on July 1, 2021. For a period of 60 days prior to the closure, staff would post advance notice of the closure, as provided by Vehicle Code section 21103.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no anticipated cost increase if the Amendment Request is approved. The savings from a reduced scope of work at 66th Street will cover the cost for the installation of both additional signals.

STAFF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PUBLIC

The Quiet Zone Safety Engineering Measures Project has been discussed as part of regular Public Works Updates at various BPAC and Public Works/Transportation Meetings since mid-2018.

At the April 9, 2020 Transportation Committee meeting, the committee recommended to forward the scope of work changes and closure of 66th Street to the April 21, 2020 City Council Meeting for Approval.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

N/A

CONCLUSION

Staff concludes that it is in the public's interest for City Council to adopt the above entitled resolution.

PREPARED BY: Ryan O'Connell, P.E., Senior Civil Engineer

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EMERYVILLE:



Christine Daniel, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

- Draft Resolution
- Exhibit A – Amendment Request Letter to CTC
- Exhibit B – Emeryville Quiet Zone Transportation Impact Assessment by Fehr & Peers ("Closure Study")