

Railroad Quiet Zone Public Engagement Plan



Communication and Public Engagement Objectives

- Public and elected officials have accurate information upon which to base opinions and decision-making.
- Authentic listening sessions and other public involvement mechanisms ensure that staff and decision-makers have heard all ideas.
- Key stakeholders feel they have had reasonable engagement opportunities.
- Awareness is increased about the options for safety measures at the various crossings and the costs associated with the safety options.

Communication and Public Engagement Strategies

- Identify key stakeholders, and communicate and engage with each group in ways that match their needs and interests.
- Engage the Citizen Advisory Panel in identifying and communicating with their natural constituencies.
- Be clear up front on the purpose for engagement (how input will be used).
- Structure input so that it is meaningful to decision makers.
- Find low-resource opportunities to inform and engage broader audiences (e.g., community events, presentations to community groups, online input tools available via www.eugene-or.gov/quietzone)
- Create mechanisms to report back to the community on the input received and the decisions made.

Opportunities and Constraints

- The quiet zone has been discussed for more than 10 years with no outcome; there may be some mental fatigue on this issue.
- That said, there are current indications of strong support for the idea of a quiet zone.
- There is less evidence of public support for specific strategies such as closing streets or raising taxes.
- Railroad projects often take quite a bit of time to come to fruition; care will need to be taken to not overpromise quick results when it comes to the quiet zone.
- Care should be taken to not schedule public engagement activities in the middle of the holiday season.

Tactical Ideas (a laundry list)

- Have the project manager and his team do one-on-one visits with directly affected residents and business owners
- Schedule presentations with community groups (bring a committee member and key staff to each presentation). Ideas for venues include:
 - Neighborhood groups
 - Downtown Merchants
 - Downtown Rotary
 - League of Women Voters
- Hold a community open house, with scheduled presentations, maps and project fact sheets, a place where people could leave comments.
- Create a short video that could be taken to presentations and also placed on the project web site.
- Use social media (city has Facebook and Twitter) to send and receive information.
- Create an online comment form to be placed on the project web site.

Last updated 11/13/2015