



**Date:** December 7, 2016  
**From:** Mark Schoening, City Engineer  
**To:** Mayor Piercy and City Council  
**CC:** Railroad Quiet Zone Citizen Advisory Panel,  
**Subject:** Transmittal of Final Report on Proposed  
Railroad Quiet Zone and Safety  
Improvement Project

The purpose of this memo is to transmit the *Final Report on the Proposed Railroad Quiet Zone and Safety Improvement Project* and provide an executive summary of the Final Report. The Final Report details the extensive study of the cost and technical feasibility of creating a "railroad quiet zone" in Eugene. The Final Report is available on the City's website at <http://www.eugene-or.gov/2920/Railroad-Quiet-Zone>. The impetus of the study came from direction provided by the Eugene City Council in March 2015: "...Pursue a Eugene railroad quiet zone approval with the Federal Railroad Administration using one-way streets and possible crossing closures as alternate supplemental safety measures as needed and direct staff to pursue sources of local funding."

Staff conducted a technical analysis using a Diagnostic Review Team as prescribed by the Federal Rail Administration, then formed an 11-member citizen advisory panel charged with "providing a recommendation to Public Works staff for supplemental safety measures for each crossing in the rail corridor between Hilyard Street and Van Buren Street, and providing a recommendation for funding the supplemental safety measures." The recommendations are described in detail beginning on page 8 of the Final Report and shown in conceptual drawings included as Appendix G to the Final Report. The estimated cost of the recommended safety measures is \$7.1 million. The recommended safety measures are briefly described below:

- Van Buren Street – Add center-line medians on both sides of the railroad crossing.
- Monroe Street – Install a quad-gate crossing system.
- Madison Street – Install a quad-gate crossing system.
- Jefferson Street – Convert to a one-way street southbound from 200 feet north of the railroad crossing to Fifth Avenue.
- Washington Street - Install a quad-gate crossing system.
- Lawrence Street - Add center-line medians on both sides of the railroad crossing.
- Lincoln Street – Add center-line medians on both sides of the railroad crossing.
- Pearl Street – Install a quad-gate crossing system.
- High Street – Install a quad-gate crossing system.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Hilyard Street – Re-align 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue west of the railroad crossing to its original alignment, add center-line medians on both sides of the railroad crossing, construct a roundabout on the EWEB riverfront property.
- Fencing – Install approximately 7,000 lineal feet of fencing to fill gaps and missing sections of fencing along the rail line.

The Citizen Panel recommended pedestrian gates at two crossings – High Street and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Hilyard Street. High Street currently has a high pedestrian count at the rail crossing and it



is anticipated that the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Hilyard rail crossing will have a high pedestrian count with the redevelopment of the EWEB riverfront property. During the public outreach on the preliminary recommendation, the American Council of the Blind recommended pedestrian gates on Washington Street and Pearl Street – streets that serve as transit routes. The Citizen Panel was split on this recommendation with a majority in favor of reducing projects costs by not including additional pedestrian gates as this time.

The Citizen Panel reviewed a wide range of funding options as outlined in Appendix E. The recommended funding strategy includes funding the east end (Pearl Street, High Street, and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Hilyard Street) with Riverfront Urban Renewal District funds and the west end (Lincoln Street, Lawrence Street, Washington Street, Jefferson Street, Madison Street, Monroe Street, and Van Buren Street) with funds from a general obligation bond.

While the Citizen Panel supported the funding strategy, there was significant concern by a majority of the Citizen Panel members about the likelihood of a successful general obligation bond measure to fund the west end of the proposed railroad quiet zone. Concern was expressed that a separate east end railroad quiet zone would be funded and established with Riverfront Urban Renewal District funds and the west end would not be funded and would not go forward.

This report also summarizes the process used to engage the public over the course of the study, including an informal issue analysis based on the feedback received. Appendices are provided to offer greater detail of technical and public engagement findings.