

12-0693

TRANSPORTATION

MAY 08 2012

MOTION

For safety reasons, trains are required to sound horns/whistles at all highway and rail grade crossings. Federal regulation requires locomotive horns be sounded for 15-20 seconds before entering all public grade crossings, but not more than one-quarter mile in advance. This federal requirement preempts any state or local laws regarding the use of train horns at public crossings.

There are ongoing noise issues in the Taylor Yard area related to railroad-related noise from Metrolink, Amtrak, and freight trains. Local residents have long complained that the noise from these horns and bells echoes through the surrounding communities. Although Metrolink has implemented train horn and bell ringing reductions, the problem still exists.

Federal regulations provide public authorities the option to maintain and/or establish quiet zones provided certain supplemental or alternative safety measures are in place and the crossing accident rate meets Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) standards. To help abate the noise pollution associated with trains, the City should investigate the feasibility of implementing a "Quiet Zone," along with the implementation of additional safety measures that may provide relief to the neighborhoods.

Recently Metrolink and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) constructed one of the largest quiet zones in the United States consisting of 39 crossings. This work improved the safety of crossings and reduced noise pollution throughout the county. Improvements of this nature should be considered in Los Angeles County.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council instruct the Department of Transportation, with the assistance of the Department of Public Works, to report on the steps necessary to establish a "Quiet Zone" as provided through the Federal Railroad Administration in the Taylor Yards area, as well as the feasibility of implementing alternative and/or supplemental safety measures that could also decrease train-related noise.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Chief Legislative Analyst's office and DOT report back on recommendations to work with other stakeholders in the region to implement quiet zones in Los Angeles.

PRESENTED BY:



ED P. REYES
Councilmember, 1st District

SECONDED BY




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ORIGINAL