

RESOLUTION NO.: R-2020-079

*Authorizing the City Manager to execute an Agreement between the City of Columbia and Norfolk Southern Railway Company for Modifications to Grade Crossing Warning Devices for Purposes of Establishing a Quiet Zone*

WHEREAS, there are more than 60 at grade crossings within or directly adjacent to the City of Columbia, and,

WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Train Horn Rule (49 CFR 222) was finalized in 2005 and requires train horns be blown at every public crossing unless a Quiet Zone has been established and authorized by FRA; and,

WHEREAS, there are more than 40,000 City of Columbia residents living within a half mile radius from a crossing; and,

WHEREAS, some crossings have an average of 18 trains per day and most sections of line have night time train activity; and,

WHEREAS, a Quiet Zone is a section of rail line at least one half a mile in length that contains one or more consecutive public highway grade crossings at which locomotive horns are not routinely sounded when a train approaches the crossing; and,

WHEREAS, more than 800 Quiet Zones have been created across the United States; and,

WHEREAS, City Council created a Quiet Zone Committee via resolution R-2017-040 on April 4, 2017; and,

WHEREAS, the Quiet Zone Committee and City Staff worked together to develop a plan for the establishment of Quiet Zones throughout the City of Columbia; and,

WHEREAS, in 2018, the City staff and the Quiet Zone Committee worked with FRA, SCDOT, Norfolk Southern and CSX to complete diagnostic studies of all crossings in Columbia; and,

WHEREAS, the Quiet Zone Committee presented a recommendation to City Council on September 18, 2018; and,

WHEREAS, partner agencies such as the State of South Carolina and the University of South Carolina have demonstrated support for the Quiet Zone project; and,

WHEREAS, improvements planned will enhance safety aspects of each crossing that are consistent with the criteria required for the establishment of Quiet Zone per Federal Train Horn Rule (40 CFR 222); and,

WHEREAS, the City submitted a Notice of Intent to Norfolk Southern dated February 28, 2020 for the establishment of a Quiet Zone along fourteen crossings from Gadsden St to Beltline; and,

WHEREAS, the public comment period for the Notice of Intent expired on April 24, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, the City and Norfolk Southern have worked together to develop the Preliminary Engineering Agreement for the Quiet Zone; and,

WHEREAS, Norfolk Southern will begin preliminary engineering work upon execution of the agreement, NOW, and THEREFORE,

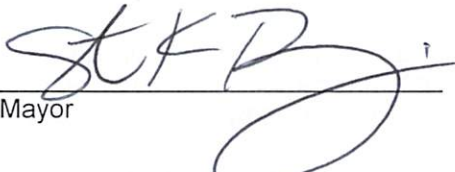
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BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council this 18th day of August, 2020, that the City Manager is authorized to execute the attached Agreement between the City of Columbia and Norfolk Southern Railway Company for modifications to the grade crossing warning devices listed therein, or on a form approved by the City Attorney, for the terms and conditions therein contained.

Requested by:

Assistant City Manager Gentry

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

Approved as to form:

T. A. Knox  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Introduced:  
Final Reading: