



SUSTAINABILITY & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

October 31, 2013

The Sustainability & Transportation Committee of the City of Mesa met in the lower level meeting room of the Council Chambers, 57 East 1st Street, on October 31, 2013 at 9:17 a.m.

COMMITTEE PRESENT

Christopher Glover, Chairman
Dennis Kavanaugh
David Luna

COMMITTEE ABSENT

None

STAFF PRESENT

Kari Kent
Jim Smith

1. Items from citizens present.

There were no items from citizens present.

2-a. Hear a presentation, discuss and make a recommendation on the proposed street name change of East 3rd Place to Martin Luther King Jr. Way from North Center Street to North Centennial Way.

Interim Transportation Director Lenny Hulme introduced Deputy Transportation Director Alan Sanderson and Sr. Transportation Engineer Al Zubi, who were prepared to assist with the presentation.

Mr. Zubi displayed a Power Point presentation (**See Attachment 1**) and reported that the Martin Luther King (MLK), Jr. Celebration Committee submitted a request for a street name change. He stated that the proposal is to change East 3rd Place to Martin Luther King, Jr. Way between Centennial Way and Center Street. He stated that the proposed name change will not affect any residents or addresses and that staff has evaluated the proposal based on City policies. He added that the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) has recommended approval of this street name change.

Mr. Zubi provided background information on the first staff proposal to TAB, which was to change the name of Hibbert Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Way between University and 5th Place. (See Page 6 of Attachment 1) He stated that due to citizen opposition, TAB requested that staff conduct a public outreach effort, and as a result of those meetings, the Celebration Committee modified the proposal to 3rd Place. He summarized public comment in favor of renaming 3rd Place (See Pages 7 and 8 of Attachment 1), as follows:

- Adjacent to historic Washington/Escobedo neighborhood
- Starting point of Martin Luther King (MLK) Parade
- No residences or businesses affected
- Recognizes historical significance of neighborhood
- Celebrates Mesa's civil rights achievements
- Location of first MLK celebration meeting 20 years ago
- Location of historic Rendezvous Park and pool

Mr. Zubi reported that there have been no comments in opposition to the most recent proposal, and stated that the fiscal impact will be approximately \$200 for two new street name signs. He highlighted the next steps in the process (See Page 12 of Attachment 1) and noted that staff is recommending that if the name change is approved, it become effective on January 20, 2014.

In response to a question from Committeemember Luna, Mr. Zubi stated that Councilmember Richins had proposed that Pepper Street be changed to Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, however, staff based its recommendation on the Celebration Committee's proposal and citizen input.

Dr. Cliff Moon, Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committeemember, addressed the Committee and explained that when the process to change the street name originated two years ago, the Committee had considered recommending the renaming of either Mesa Drive or Center Street. He added that the Committee chose not to pursue either of those options due to the amount of time that would have been needed to meet with businesses and residents. Dr. Moon noted that he had spoken with Councilmember Richins regarding his proposal to rename Pepper Street, but ultimately the Committee decided on 3rd Place due to the historical significance of Alston House and of the Washington/Escobedo neighborhood, and the hopes that perhaps Martin Luther King, Jr. Way could be extended to Mesa Drive in the future.

Committeemember Kavanaugh thanked City staff for assisting with research regarding this proposal. He explained that the City has never named a street after an individual, but has named streets after families, and advised that future Councils be cognizant of the current Council's practice in this regard. He added that he realized the historical significance of this particular name and stated that he would support the proposed name change, although he cautioned that naming the street after an individual rather than a family name would set precedent and effectively change a practice that has been followed up to this point.

Committeemember Luna indicated that he would support the proposed name change, however, he hoped a more prominent area would have been chosen.

Chairman Glover stated his support for the proposed name change and commented that while he appreciates Committeemember Kavanaugh's thoughts, he feels that this is an exception since 3rd Place holds so much historical significance for the City.

It was moved by Committeemember Luna, seconded by Committeemember Kavanaugh, that the proposed street name change be forwarded on to the full Council with a recommendation for approval.

Carried unanimously.

2-b. Hear a presentation, discuss and provide a recommendation on the establishment of a Railroad Quiet Zone at the crossing at Southern Avenue west of Mesa Drive.

Deputy Transportation Director Alan Sanderson and Sr. Transportation Engineer Al Zubi displayed a presentation (**See Attachment 2**) and provided background information on a request for a Quiet Zone to be established at the railroad crossing located on Southern Avenue and Center Street. He defined a "Quiet Zone" as an area on the rail corridor where trains are not allowed to blow their horns, except in emergencies or for safety-related reasons.

Mr. Zubi explained that quiet zones can be established by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) rule stating that the local agency can request to establish a Quiet Zone if they meet specific criteria and requirements. He provided a brief explanation of the types of quiet zones and illustrations of Supplementary Safety Measures (SSM) that must be in place for a quiet zone to be established. (See Pages 5 through 9 of Attachment 2)

Mr. Zubi briefly outlined the steps in the application process to the FRA and the need to coordinate with the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) and the Arizona Department of Transportation. (See Pages 10 and 11 of Attachment 2) He added that the cost associated with establishing a Quiet Zone can range from a few thousand dollars to over \$100,000, depending on, but not limited to, the following factors:

- The crossing itself
- The width of the street/pavement
- The condition of the intersection and pavement
- The location of the intersection
- Whether or not gates need to be added.

Mr. Zubi demonstrated how the FRA's "Quiet Zone Calculator" was used to estimate an approximate cost of \$15,000 for this crossing. He noted that this tool only estimates the cost for the SSM, which in this case is for a non-traversable, raised median. He cautioned that this estimate only looks at the installation of the median and that costs increase due to additional ACC, FRA and City code requirements.

Mr. Zubi detailed the process to be followed before an application can be filed. (See Page 13 of Attachment 2)

Sean Ragan, a Mesa resident, addressed the Committee and voiced his support for a Quiet Zone to be established at the railroad crossing located at Southern Avenue and Center Street. He noted his concerns related to the noise from the horns during night hours, and requested that the Committee recommend a Partial Quiet Zone be established at this crossing.

Committeemember Kavanaugh thanked Mr. Ragan for his comments, and noted that he has received multiple requests from constituents in his district regarding quiet zones. He recognized City Council Assistant Charlotte McDermott for initiating research on this issue. He further stated that quiet zones can be expensive and time-consuming to implement, however, the horn noise presents a valid concern. He stated that he would support proceeding with a project at this location in order to introduce the concept to the community and to gain a better understanding of the variety of sound attenuation measures that can be explored.

In response to a question from Committeemember Kavanaugh, Mr. Hulme stated that the intersection at Southern Avenue and Center Street is under construction, and added that the Country Club Road/Southern Avenue intersection has also been undergoing improvements. He suggested that the installation of a median as a SSM at this intersection could also be addressed.

Committeemember Kavanaugh stated that he is “heartened” at the lower than expected estimated costs to implement the quiet zones in comparison to other jurisdictions. He added that most of the residents’ requests had come during budget cutbacks and although he has always supported quiet zones, the issue could not be given the proper attention at that time.

Deputy City Manager Kari Kent cautioned that if an application is initiated, there would most likely be additional costs associated with the federal process, on top of the estimated \$15,000.

In response to question from Chairman Glover, Mr. Zubi stated that Tempe’s entire project cost was over \$1 million for approximately 11 intersections. He added that there are 10 railroad crossings in Mesa, one of which is a pedestrian crossing.

Mr. Sanderson explained that the current proposed project cost would not include raised medians to cover the entire length of Southern Avenue. He remarked that raised medians would likely be less expensive than adding gates and sidewalk devices and stated that this would all merit a closer review.

In response to a question from Committeemember Luna, Mr. Zubi advised that the process to implement a Quiet Zone is lengthy and complicated, since it involves dealing with the Railroad Transportation Authority and other state and federal agencies.

Mr. Sanderson clarified that the City does not need permission to start the process or to apply, however, up front work needs to be done to determine what safety improvements are needed and to get permission from the railroad to make those improvements before making the crossing an official Quiet Zone.

Brief discussion ensued relative to whether staff should pursue estimates for quiet zones and/or partial quiet zones at all crossings in the City; obtain estimates only for crossings that are adjacent to residential areas; and whether the estimates should be brought back to the Committee, or be presented to the full Council.

Mr. Zubi noted that some communities implement quiet zones in the entire railroad corridor, since sound can carry a distance of a mile or more. He suggested evaluation of quiet zones at all railroad crossings in the City.

Chairman Glover replied that he would favor evaluating the feasibility of implementing quiet zones for the entire expanse of the railroad corridor.

It was moved by Committeemember Kavanaugh, seconded by Committeemember Luna, to direct staff to further explore and conduct additional research regarding the establishment of Quiet Zones at all railroad crossings located within the City and that the information be forwarded on to the full Council for further discussion and consideration.

Carried unanimously.

3. Adjournment.

Without objection, the Sustainability and Transportation Committee Meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Sustainability & Transportation Committee meeting of the City of Mesa, Arizona, held on the 31st day of October, 2013. I further certify that the meeting was duly called and held and that a quorum was present.

DEE ANN MICKELSEN, CITY CLERK

Ljm
(Attachments – 2)

3rd Place Name Change Proposal

Sustainability & Transportation Committee

October 31, 2013



MLK Jr. Celebration Committee Request

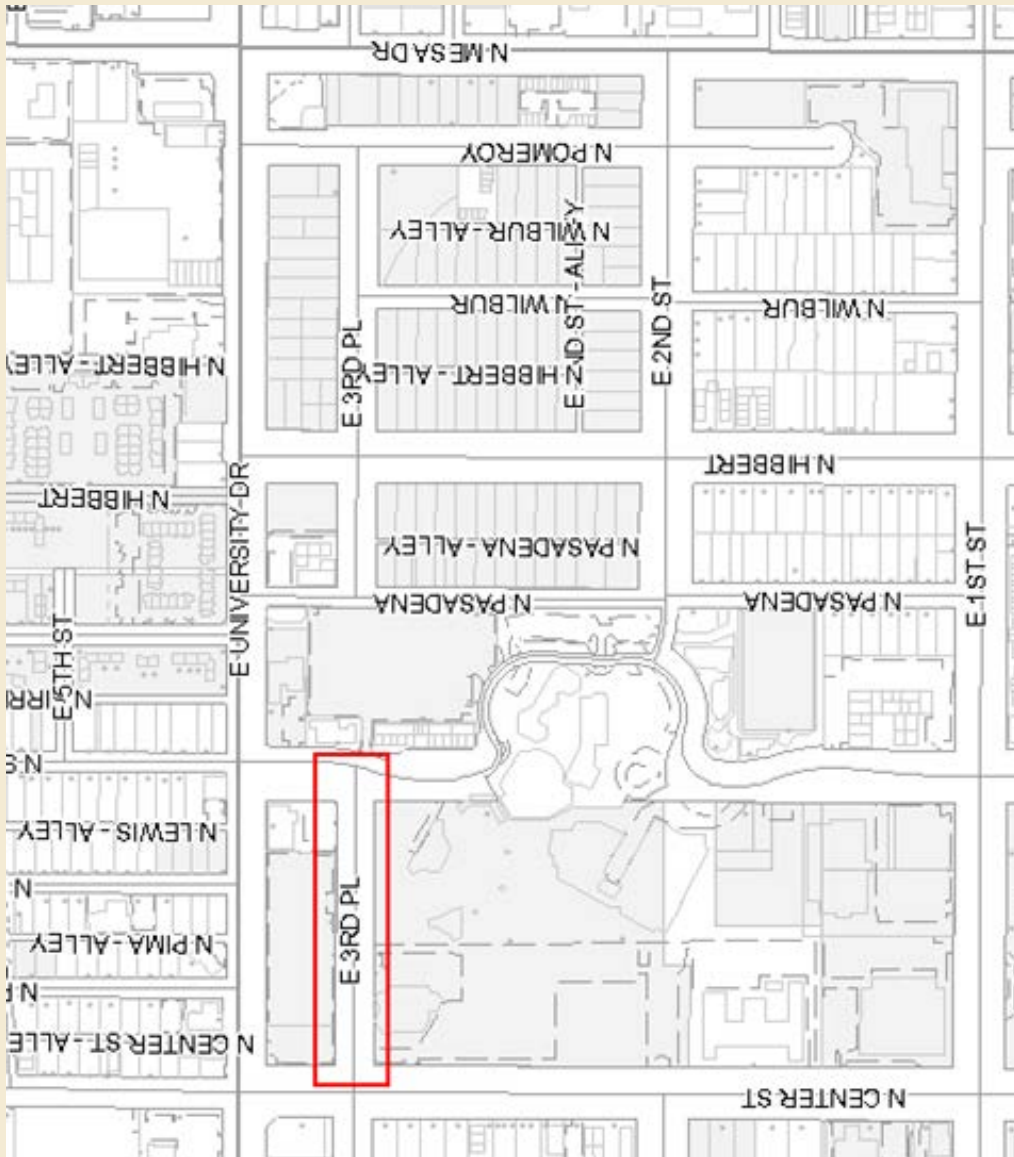
3rd Place

to

Martin Luther King Jr. Way

between

Centennial Way and Center Street



3rd Place Centennial Way-Center



First Proposal

- **Hibbert, University to 5th Place**
- **June Transportation Advisory Board Meeting**
 - **Opposition from neighborhood**
- **TAB did not endorse**

Revised Proposal

- **3rd Place, Centennial Way to Center Street**
- **September TAB meeting**
- **TAB recommends approval**

Why 3rd Place

- **Adjacent to historic Washington/Escobedo**
- **Starting point of MLK Parade**
- **No residences or businesses affected**

Comments in Favor

- Recognizes historical significance of neighborhood
- Celebrates Mesa's civil rights achievements
- Location of first MLK celebration meeting 20 years ago
- Rendezvous Park and pool

Rendezvous Park



Comments Opposed

- **None**

Fiscal Impact

- +/- \$200 for street name signs



Next Steps

- **City Council**
- **If approved**
 - **Change street signs**
 - **Notify affected agencies**
 - **Change City databases and maps**

Effective Date

- Typically 90 days
- Recommend January 20, 2014
- MLK Day

Questions?



Railroad Quiet Zones

Sustainability and Transportation Committee (SAT)

October 31, 2013





What is a Quiet Zone

- **A rail corridor where train horns are not sounded**
- **There are exceptions related to safety**

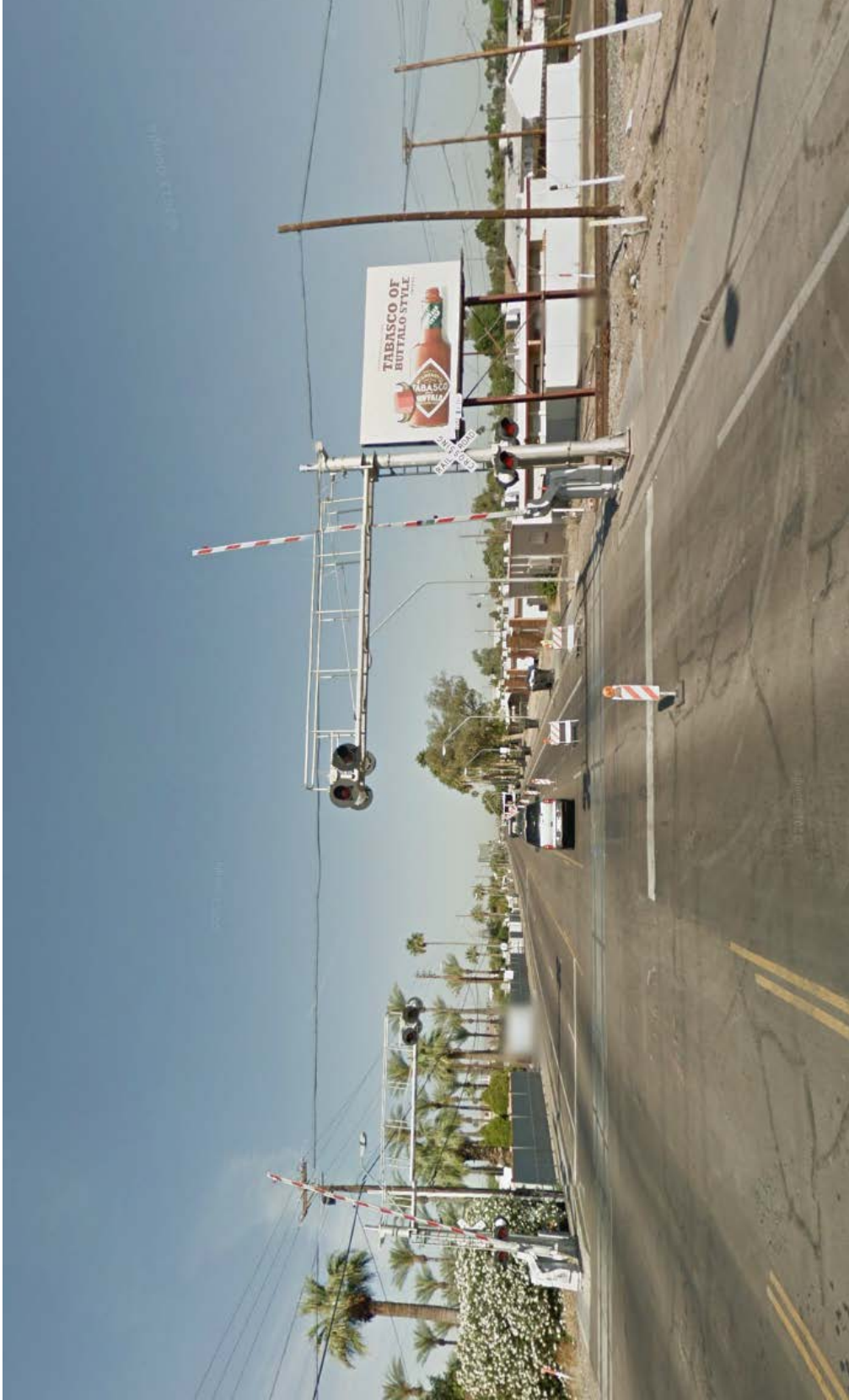
Federal Railroad Administration

Rule

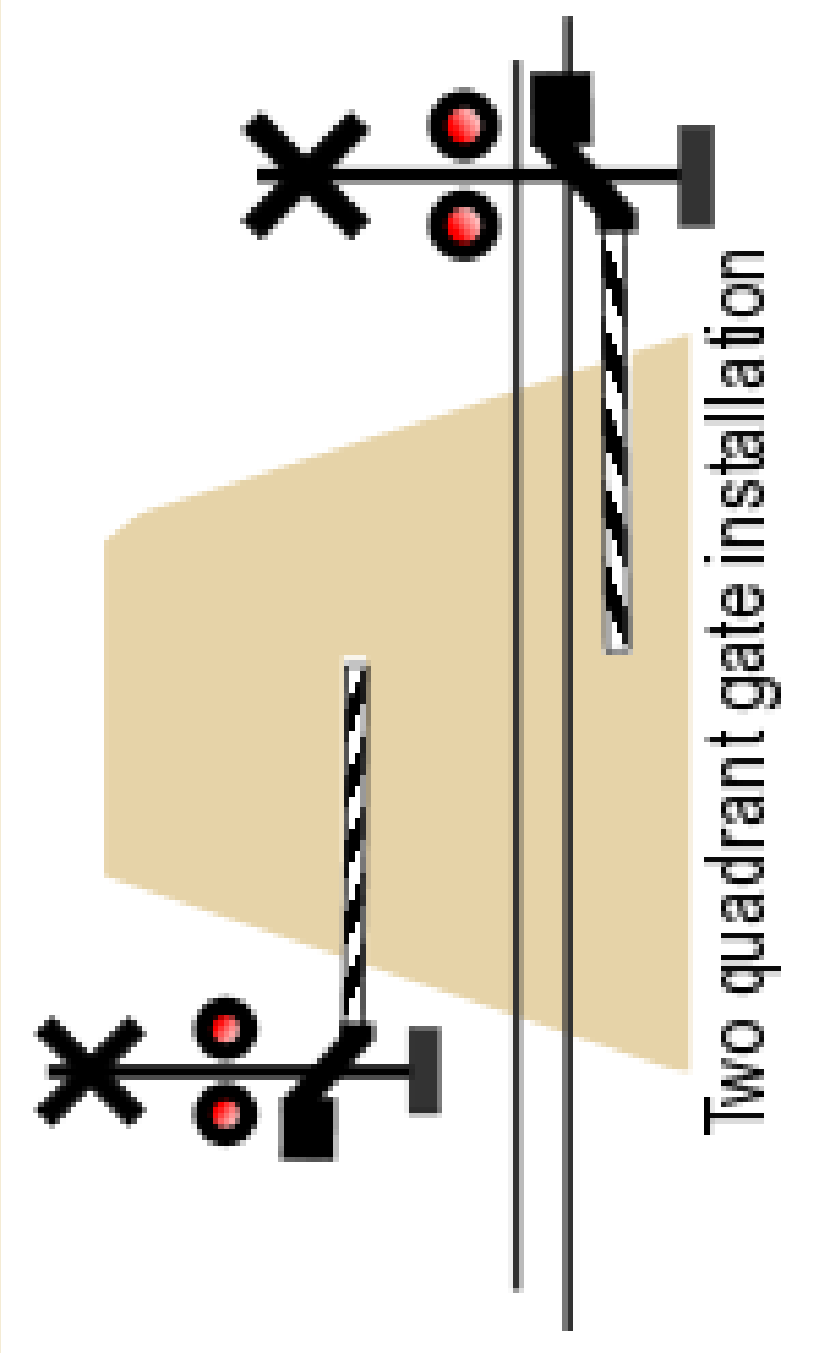
- **FRA rule allows public agency to establish Zones**
- **Cost and maintenance by public agency**
- **Several types of Quite Zones including partial**
- **Must meet requirements to establish**

Requirements Include ..

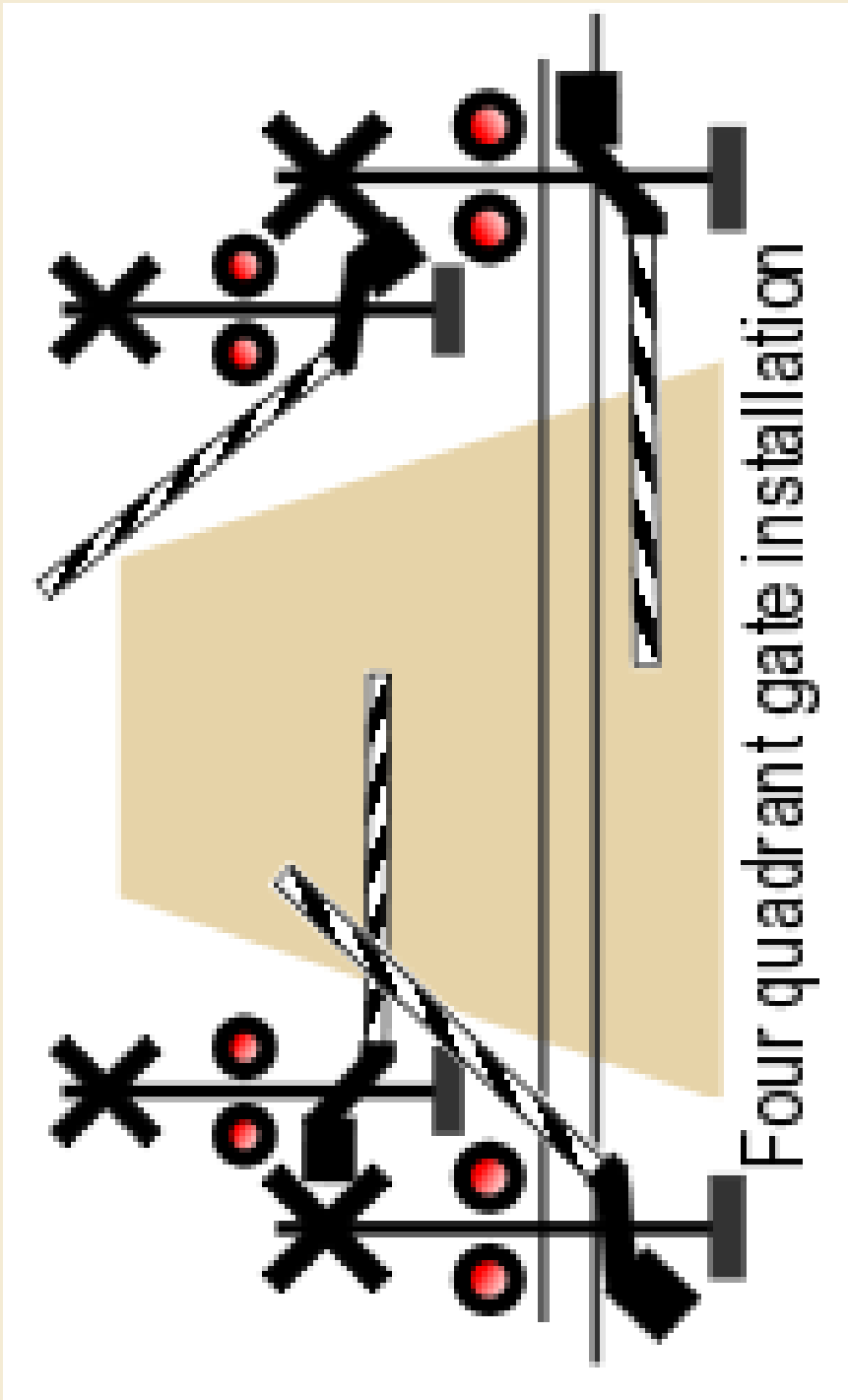
- **“Partial” (limited hours) requires temporary closure**
- **Supplementary Safety Measures (SSM)**
- **Appendix A of Federal Rule**
 - **Quadrant gates**
 - **Median**
 - **Closure**



2 Quadrant Gates



4 Quadrant Gates



Median



Application to FRA

- **Agency would file application with FRA**
- **Coordinate with Railroad and other agencies
(State Corporation Commission)**
- **Follow application process**

Cost

- **Depends on the crossing's geometrics and equipment**
- **From few \$1000's to over \$100,000**

Print This Page

Federal Railroad Administration
QUIET ZONE CALCULATOR

Home | Help | Contact | logoff | al.zubi@mesaaz.gov

Change Scenario: 1_40925 Continue

Crossing Street	Traffic Warning Device	Pre-SSM	SSM	Risk
741659M SOUTHERN AVE	39500 Gates	0	13	9,248.00

Create New Zone

Manage Existing Zones

Log Off

Step by Step Instructions:

Step 1: To specify New Warning Device (For Pre-Rule Quiet Zone Only) and/or SSM, click the MODIFY Button

Step 2: Select proposed warning device or SSM. Then click the UPDATE button. To generate a spreadsheet of the values on this page, click on ASM button—This spreadsheet can then be used for ASM calculations.

Step 3: Repeat Step (2) until the SELECT button is shown at the bottom right side of this page. Note that the SELECT button is shown ONLY when the Quiet Zone Risk Index falls below the NSRT or the Risk Index with Horn.

Step 4: To save the scenario and continue, click the SELECT button

* Only Public At Grade Crossings are listed.

ALERT: Quiet Zone qualifies because SSM has been applied in each crossing.

Click for Supplementary Safety Measures [SSM]

Click for ASM spreadsheet: **ASM** * Note: The use of ASMs requires an application to and approval from the FRA.

Summary	
Proposed Quiet Zone:	1
Type:	New 24-hour QZ
Scenario:	1_40925
Estimated Total Cost:	\$15,000.00
Nationwide Significant Risk Threshold:	13722 .00
Risk Index with Horns:	27721.81
Quiet Zone Risk Index:	9248
	<input type="button" value="Select"/>

What is Needed

- **Evaluation of Crossings**
- **Propose safety measures**
- **Secure funding**
- **Coordinate with agencies**
- **Implement measures**
- **File application**



Next Steps

Recommendation to full City Council if SAT wants to proceed with establishing a railroad quiet zone.

Questions?

