



"The Best Waterfront City in Which to Live, Work and Play."

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**CITY OF RIVIERA BEACH – MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** HON. MAYOR, CHAIRPERSON, AND BOARD

**FROM:** TERRENCE BAILEY, CITY ENGINEER

**THROUGH:** JONATHAN EVANS, CITY MANAGER, MPA, MBA, ICMA-CM

**SUBJECT:** **DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION ON “REIMAGINE RIVIERA BEACH – 2030” -- DESIGNATION OF SITE FOR CITY HALL**

**DATE:** NOVEMBER 3, 2021

**CC:** GENERAL PUBLIC

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**Background:**

The purpose of this item is to provide an update regarding the Brightline passenger rail service, establishment of quiet zones on the FEC rail corridor, and opportunities for Federal grant funding for trespass prevention measures.

Initiated in 2018, the Brightline rail system provides higher-speed, intercity passenger service from West Palm Beach to downtown Miami (referred to as the Brightline Phase 1 segment). The service was suspended in April 2020 due to impacts from COVID-19, but service will resume operations in November 2021. Brightline provides hourly service totaling 32 daily trains, with trains traveling up to 79 MPH. In addition to an existing station in Fort Lauderdale, Brightline is adding new stations in Boca Raton, Aventura, and Port Miami in the Phase 1 segment.

Brightline’s Phase 2 segment will extend service from West Palm Beach to Orlando International Airport, with completion anticipated in late 2022. Phase 2 construction has been underway since 2020 and includes the installation of a second railroad track as well as bridge and grade crossing improvements. Long-term, the company has indicated it plans to extend the service to Tampa in 2028, with additional stations anticipated in Martin/St. Lucie County, Brevard County, and Disney Springs.



**QUIET ZONES:** Under the Federal Train Horn Rule, all locomotives are required to sound horns when approaching roadway grade crossings. However, if grade crossing infrastructure is sufficient, Federal statutes allow local governments to establish quiet zones such that all locomotives (both passenger and freight) only are required to sound horns in the event of an emergency. At the request of local governments along the Brightline Phase 1 segment, quiet zones have been established from West Palm Beach to Miami.

In Palm Beach County, for the Brightline Phase 2 segment (West Palm Beach to Tequesta), funding has been made available through the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) for quiet zone establishment if desired. The TPA's funding provides both technical assistance provided by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) as well as supplemental grade crossing infrastructure if required. A quiet zone workshop with FRA representatives is scheduled in January 2022 along with diagnostic field reviews to evaluate grade crossing conditions. Subsequently, TCRPC can assist the City with quiet zone documentation for the City to establish a quiet zone following the completion of Brightline's Phase 2 construction (anticipated December 2022).

**TRESPASS PREVENTION:** Because trespassing on railroad property is the leading cause of all rail-related deaths in the United States, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has developed a national strategy to prevent trespasser incidents that includes research, education, and funding. FRA conducted a trespass prevention summit in September 2021 to provide trespassing data, prevention strategies, and an overview of federal grant funding programs available to local governments to address trespassing in their communities. Up to 100% grant funding is available to fund capital improvements for trespass prevention (e.g., fencing, landscaping, barriers), trespassing enforcement (for law enforcement officials), and suicide prevention. If desired by the City Council, TCRPC is available to assist the City for public outreach, identification of appropriate trespass prevention measures, and developing a grant application for funding in 2022.

**City Goals:**

The Citywide goal is to achieve a sustainable economy.

**Fiscal/Budget Impact:**

Not applicable

**Recommendation:**

Council direction regarding (1) the establishment of quiet zones, and (2) developing an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with TCRPC regarding trespass prevention measures.

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