

Village of Franklin Park Train Horn Quiet Zone Update

October 13, 2023

The Village is pleased to report that the application review period has passed without objection, indicating that a Quiet Zone designation will go into effect over the next several weeks. This designation will spare residents from the train horn blasts required ahead of each pedestrian crossing.

The Village submitted the final paperwork in August for the joint application with the Village of River Grove to establish a Quiet Zone. Both towns and Metra completed extensive safety improvements at all the grade and pedestrian crossings.

With this Quiet Zone designation, train engineers will no longer be legally required to sound the horns. However, if the train engineer perceives a threat on or near the tracks, the horn will be sounded. If the engineer sees a car, pedestrian, or an animal on the tracks or feels that there is a danger to the train ahead, they can still blow the horn. Also, an engineer can sound their horn when passing another train, if a train is stopped on the tracks, or if a passenger train is stopped at the station picking up passengers. In addition, an engineer may sound their horn in the railyard located west of Mannheim Road.

According to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), approximately 95% of all railroad-related deaths in the U.S. are attributed to issues related to grade crossings and trespassing. Audible warnings of approaching trains are necessary to ensure the safety of motorists and pedestrians.

Trains also have an automatic horn system in place that is activated by a computer system. When a Quiet Zone designation is granted, railroads are notified to remove the automatic triggering of the mandatory sounding of the horn. We have been informed that it may take several months to have this system reprogrammed once the Quiet Zone designation is in place.

Quiet Zone Status – March 2023 The final phase of the Quiet Zone process required each entity to make safety improvements. Despite COVID-related setbacks, Metra has completed their required pedestrian safety improvements. The Village has also completed \$1.2 million in safety improvements which included installing the delineators down the centerline of the roads at 25th and Ruby. The Village of River Grove is nearing completion of their required safety improvements. The required delineators at the River Road and Thatcher Avenue Railroad Crossings have been installed. In mid to late April when the weather warms up, the Village of River Grove will complete their final street improvements. When River Grove's work is complete, the Village of Franklin Park and the Village of River Grove will file jointly for a Quiet Zone designation. The Village is in regular contact with River Grove regarding updates on their progress. Please watch our Village newsletter for updates

Quiet Zone Status – December 2022 The final phase of the Quiet Zone process required each entity to make safety improvements. Despite COVID-related setbacks, Metra has completed their required pedestrian safety improvements. The Village has also completed \$1.2 million in safety improvements which included installing the delineators down the centerline of the roads at 25th and Ruby. The Village of River Grove is in the process of completing their required safety improvements. This includes installing lane delineators on River Road and Thatcher Road. When River Grove's work is complete, the Village of Franklin Park and the Village of River Grove will file jointly for a Quiet Zone designation. The Village is in regular contact with River Grove regarding updates on their progress. Please watch our Village newsletter for updates.

2021 The Village is in the final stages of applying to secure a Train Horn Quiet Zone with the Village of River Grove. Completion of the

pedestrian safety improvements will allow the two Villages to qualify for the Quiet Zone. Since fall of 2020, METRA has been working to construct the required safety improvements which include upgrading crossing equipment technology at Scott Street, a new pedestrian crossing at the Rose Street grade crossing, installing new gates at the Calwagner pedestrian grade crossing and shifting the pedestrian grade crossing at the Metra depot. Unfortunately, METRA has informed the Village that due to COVID-related setbacks, they will not be able to complete their work this summer as expected and have extended their estimated completion date to late October. The Village is proceeding with making street improvements including installing plastic delineators down the centerline of the roads at 25th and Ruby. Please watch our Village newsletter for updates on this important project.

Freight Train Horn Activation System Freight train horns are automatically activated by a Federally mandated Positive Train Control system. Federal law dictates the decibel level of the horn and the length the horn is sounded. The engineer has no discretion under this system. The train horns are automatically activated by a computer system inside each locomotive. However, when a community qualifies for a Quiet Zone, the Positive Train Control System in every locomotive is programmed to remove the automatic triggering of the mandatory sounding of the horn. The Village has been aggressively pursuing a Train Horn Quiet Zone with the Village of River Grove for several years. Metra is implementing pedestrian safety improvements that have a total cost of \$1,573,715.00. The Village was successful in obtaining grants from several Federal and State sources in the amount of \$1,416,343.50. Construction work on the project began in 2020. Completion of the Pedestrian Safety Improvements will allow the two Villages to qualify for the Quiet Zone. However, the Quiet Zone does not prohibit the engineers from blowing their horns, but it does relieve