



BUILDING AMERICA®

July 19, 2019

The Honorable Robert Gallegos
City of Houston Council Member – District I
900 Bagby – 1st Floor
Houston, Texas 77002

Dear Council Member Gallegos,

Thank you and your team for your patience as we continue to work through many of the issues discussed at the May meeting. I am continually visiting with my colleagues in dispatch and operations regarding the blocked crossings. Please be aware recent weather related incidents across our system have impacted the fluidity of trains throughout the complex particularly in the past several weeks.

Please continue to encourage constituents to report any railroad related issues to our Response Management Communications Center (RMCC) at 1-888-877-7267. As mentioned at our meeting, this is the process we utilize to track the incident data.

Our Director of Track Maintenance (DTM), Manager of Track Maintenance (MTM), Public Safety Manager, and Special Agents were made aware of the operational items discussed at our meeting. The blue Emergency Notification Sign (ENS) at Telephone Road has been ordered and should be mounted within the next two weeks, and the quiet zone signs are in place at the East Belt track.

I want to reiterate the railroad's schedule is dictated by the needs of Houston's industrial sector, but we will continue to work with the community to minimize disruption to traffic. Houston's industrial sector is thriving and many businesses are served by rail. As industry continues to grow and more people move to the area, you naturally see the impact on the roads and the rails.

Our dispatch team members provided further information related to the listed crossing concerns and our efforts to address.

- If trains are stopped on crossings at South Lockwood or Oates Road for an extended period of time, the dispatcher will advise the crew to cut the crossing where it can be done safely and will not extend driver delays.
- The Lawndale crossing on the Houston East Belt Subdivision requires communication and coordination with the BNSF Railway South Yard Yardmaster, who provides direction on when the train needs to be held or brought in. If told to hold it out, we will advise the crew to cut the crossing where it can be done safely and will not extend driver delays. However, depending on size and length of the train, cutting Lawndale could put us at risk of blocking other crossings. Excluding Lawndale, there are five other crossings between Lawndale and the BNSF South Yard.
- The Lawndale/Griggs crossing has a number of operational complexities related to BNSF train movements which can lead to the crossing being occupied twice by a single train.
- Finally, regarding Central Street, the standard process is for crews to contact the dispatcher prior to entering the crossing. In interviewing two dispatchers, both told us that crews operating in this area will not go by the crossing unless they know they will keep moving.

The Honorable Robert Gallegos
July 19, 2019
Page 2

Regarding the status of East End I and III quiet zones, we are scheduled to replace gates, flashers, signal house, and circuitry in the Fall of 2019. Once construction has started it will take a minimum of one month to install the equipment at each location. The City of Houston will then need to repair/replace/refresh the pavement markings and install quick curb per the plans submitted in the quiet zone application. The city will need to install/re-install all of the required signage per MUTCD and CFR 49 Part 222.

When all of the railroad and city work has been completed, the Notice of Establishment (NOE) can be filed with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Upon notice of approval from the FRA, the City of Houston will send a letter detailing the effective date and Union Pacific will put out the General Orders prior to activation and will place appropriate signage the day of activation notifying train crews the quiet zone is active.

I hope you and your team find this information helpful. Our conversations with our dispatch and operations team members remain ongoing. Please let me know if you have any questions or need clarification on any of the listed items. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Zientek

copy: Brenda Mainwaring - AVP-Public Affairs, Union Pacific Railroad, Spring
Daniel Santamaria – Office of Council Member Robert Gallegos
Joaquin Martinez – Office of Council Member Robert Gallegos