



## Memorandum

**Memorandum No: 22-081**

**Date:** July 6, 2022

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Commissioners

**From:** Chris Lagerbloom, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**Subject:** Broward Quiet Zones Update

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The Federal Rail Administration (FRA) held a Town Hall meeting on June 23, 2022, hosted by the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), to discuss federal safety concerns along the Florida East Coast (FEC) corridor and the Broward County Quiet Zone.

Staff from the Transportation and Mobility Department and the Fort Lauderdale Police Department attended the meeting to share efforts that the Florida Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the FRA have made in Florida to help reduce the number of Grade Crossing and Trespass fatalities. These efforts included a recent police enforcement initiative focused on rail crossings along the FEC corridor.

James Payne, FRA Staff Director for Grade Crossing and Trespasser Outreach shared that due to the high South Florida fatality rates, he is recommending that the Broward County Quiet Zone be placed under administrative review. The corridor will be reviewed in the coming weeks and one of three recommendations will be made:

- 1) Do nothing (which is unlikely)
- 2) Suspend the quiet zone until a plan is developed to increase safety
- 3) Terminate the quiet zone entirely

Inspections have already begun at the crossings in the region and a list of recommended safety improvements will be provided which may include such things as quad gates, edge delineators, median hardening, elimination of crossing locations, and trespass mitigation. The FRA is moving expeditiously to address the growing concerns and once the direction is determined, notice will be provided in the Federal Register which provides a 30-day comment period. The MPO will serve as the lead agency for the local municipalities, and it will be imperative for the region to work together.

Attachment: June 23, 2022 Letter from the Broward MPO

- c: Tarlesha W. Smith, Esq., Assistant City Manager
- Greg Chavarria, Assistant City Manager
- Alain E. Boileau, City Attorney
- David R. Soloman, City Clerk
- Patrick Reilly, Interim City Auditor
- Department Directors
- CMO Managers



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June 23, 2022

Dear city managers:

This morning, the Broward MPO hosted a joint Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) town hall to discuss railroad safety. **It was brought to our attention that the Broward portion of the Florida East Coast quiet zone is under intense scrutiny due to the number of deaths along the corridor.** The FRA will review the corridor in the coming weeks, and make one of three recommendations: 1) do nothing, which is unlikely, 2) suspend the quiet zone until a plan is developed to increase safety, or 3) terminate the quiet zone entirely.

Once the FRA administrator issues a preliminary decision, there is a 30-day comment period, in which it is imperative for local and regional partners to come together as one voice, committing to a set of interventions to mitigate the tragic loss of life along the corridor while preserving the quiet zone. Strategies on the table include trespassing mitigation, elimination of grade crossings, increased safety equipment, such as quad gates and hardened medians, an improved public safety campaign, and enhanced enforcement of traffic laws.

The MPO is working with our partners at the FRA and Broward County government to review data and determine a preliminary plan of action. Then the MPO will host a joint workshop with all our municipal and county partners along the FEC corridor to finalize the action plan. Please make yourself and staff available to attend and commit time over the coming weeks to collaborate as a region. Time is of the essence, as the administration is moving quickly to address this issue. None of us want to see the end of the quiet zone, therefore we must work together to present short- and long-term solutions.

More information will follow once the preliminary decision is handed down. Do not hesitate to contact me [stuartg@browardmpo.org](mailto:stuartg@browardmpo.org) or (954) 876-0035 for further discussion.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Stuart". The signature is stylized and includes a long, sweeping flourish that extends upwards and to the right.

Greg Stuart  
Broward MPO, Executive Director

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