



## City of Rohnert Park PRESS RELEASE

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### **For Immediate Release**

## **Rohnert Park City Council Continues Progress Toward a Quiet Zone**

**Rohnert Park, CA (May 10, 2017)** – On Tuesday, May 9, 2017 the Rohnert Park City Council directed staff to continue efforts to establish a of quiet zone along the SMART system. The Federal government requires trains to sound their horns at intersections. Cities can request exemptions from these requirements and establish quiet zones. This often includes building safety measures at the intersections to reduce the risk of accidents since trains would not be sounding their horns as they approach. Measures include closing off nearby driveways and constructing additional medians.

In November, 2016 the City Council decided to proceed with quiet zones at the three intersections where the SMART tracks cross City streets – Southwest Boulevard, Rohnert Park Expressway, and Golf Course Drive. This is part of a larger regional effort to establish quiet zones throughout Sonoma County.

A variety of Federal, state, and City staff reviewed the crossings and agreed on safety measures to meet the quiet zone requirements. These are proceeding at Southwest Boulevard, Rohnert Park Expressway, and other intersections in the area.

However, additional safety measures were initially not proposed for Golf Course Drive because of difficulty to construct the measures normally used. In April the City Council directed staff to explore other options. At its May 9 meeting, the City Council approved those options and added others to keep Golf Course Drive in the proposed quiet zone. The safety measures include installing a median on the East side of the tracks, adding signs to restrict turns, painting the pavement near the tracks red, painting “keep clear” on the pavement, coordinating the timing of traffic lights to help drivers get off the tracks when trains are coming, possibly closing or relocating two driveways within 60 feet of the tracks, and approaching SMART about slowing the trains near that intersection.

Vice Mayor Pam Stafford said, “Quiet zones attempt to balance the noise from train horns with the safety of drivers. I’m glad we are making our intersections safer. But ultimately, drivers will need to be vigilant about a fast-moving train running through Rohnert Park.”

Even with quiet zones, the SMART trains will sound their horns as they approach and leave train stations, including the one near Rohnert Park Expressway. SMART is expected to start service in June. Given the need to build the safety measures, the earliest a quiet zone would be established in Rohnert Park is this coming fall.

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