



City of Norman, OK

Municipal Building
Council Chambers
201 West Gray
Norman, OK 73069

Master

File Number: K-1415-136 OPTION

File ID: K-1415-136 OPTION

Type: Contract

Status: Consent Item

Version: 1

Reference: Item 11

In Control: City Council

Department: Public Works
Department

Cost: \$12,500.00

File Created: 02/23/2016

File Name: Amendment to Contract with JWebb and Associates
to extend limits of railroad quiet zone

Final Action:

Title: CONSIDERATION OF THE INCLUSION OF FIVE (5) ADDITIONAL RAILROAD CROSSINGS ORIGINALLY INCLUDED AS AN OPTION IN CONTRACT K-1415-136 WITH JWEBB & ASSOCIATES, L.L.C., INCREASING THE CONTRACT BY \$12,500 FOR A REVISED CONTRACT AMOUNT OF \$54,281.25 EXTENDING THE RAILROAD QUIET ZONE FROM POST OAK ROAD TO THE NORTHERN CITY LIMIT.

Notes: ACTION NEEDED: Motion to approve or reject the inclusion of five (5) additional railroad crossings originally included as an option in Contract K-1415-136 with JWebb & Associates, L.L.C., increasing the contract by \$12,500 for a revised contract amount of \$54,281.25; and, if approved, authorize the execution thereof.

ACTION TAKEN: _____

Agenda Date: 03/08/2016

Agenda Number: 11

Attachments: Text File JWebb, Location map of Quiet Zone,
Contract K-1415-136, Cost Comparison - Original vs.
Extended, JWebb Requisition

Project Manager: Angelo Lombardo, Transportation Engineer

Entered by: jshelton@normanok.gov

Effective Date:

History of Legislative File

| Ver- sion: | Acting Body: | Date: | Action: | Sent To: | Due Date: | Return Date: | Result: |
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Text of Legislative File K-1415-136 OPTION

Body

BACKGROUND: The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) owns and operates one of the busier rail lines in the State of Oklahoma. The line, which bisects the City of Norman with sixteen at-grade crossings and two grade separations, extends from Temple, Texas, to Kansas City, Kansas. Along with an average of forty daily freight trains, the line is also used by Amtrak for daily passenger rail service between Oklahoma City and Fort Worth, Texas.

Historically, railroads have sounded locomotive horns or whistles in advance of grade crossings and under other circumstances as a universal safety precaution. Some states allowed local communities to create whistle bans where the train horn was not routinely sounded. In other states, communities created whistle bans through

informal agreements with railroads.

In the late 1980's, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) observed a significant increase in nighttime train-vehicle collisions at certain gated highway-rail grade crossings on the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) at which nighttime whistle bans had been established in accordance with State statute. In 1991, FRA issued Emergency Order #15 requiring trains on the FEC to sound their horns again. The number and rate of collisions at affected crossings returned to pre-whistle ban levels.

In 1994, Congress enacted a law that required FRA to issue a Federal regulation requiring the sounding of locomotive horns at public highway-rail grade crossings. It also gave FRA the ability to provide for exceptions to that requirement by allowing communities under some circumstances to establish "quiet zones."

The Train Horn Rule became effective on June 24, 2005. The rule sets nationwide standards for the sounding of train horns at public highway-rail grade crossings. This rule changed the criteria for sounding the horn from distance-based to time-based. It also set limits on the volume of a train horn. The rule also established a process for communities to obtain relief from the routine sounding of train horns by providing criteria for the establishment of quiet zones. Within these quiet zones, locomotive horns may still be used in the case of an emergency and to comply with Federal regulations or certain railroad rules.

The City of Norman currently has sixteen at-grade railroad crossings. These crossings were modernized in 2001 as part of a \$2 million railroad corridor safety project jointly funded by the City of Norman, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and BNSF. The result of this effort is a state of the art system of crossings that features active warning devices, gates and constant warning track circuitry at every crossing in the City of Norman. Combined with the recent construction of a grade separation at Robinson Street, these improvements simplify the process and minimize the cost of establishing a quiet zone through Norman.

In 2008, City staff made a preliminary assessment of the City's railroad corridor and developed a project scope and budget in January of 2009 (\$1,200,000 for construction) that establishes a quiet zone between Post Oak Road and Acres Street. Project funding was later on approved by City Council as part of the FYE 2015 Capital budget.

On May 26, 2015, City Council approved Contract K-1415-136 in the amount of \$41,781.25 with JWebb and Associates, L.L.C. for the design and coordination of railroad crossing improvements associated with the establishment of a quiet zone in Norman. The contract included language on a \$12,250 option to extend the project to the northern Norman City Limits if Council decides to do so. The design option is included in Attachment No. 1 of the contract.

DISCUSSION: During the August 27, 2015 Diagnostic Team Inspection conducted by City staff and representatives of BNSF and the FRA, it was determined that the supplemental safety measures anticipated at the Acres Street and Eufaula Street crossings were not necessary in order to qualify for the quiet zone (i.e., four-quadrant gate systems). The cost savings associated with the elimination of these systems makes the extension of the project a viable option within the project's current budgetary constraints. The limits of the extended project are presented as an attachment.

The inclusion of all of Norman's crossing in the proposed Quiet Zone will extend the benefit of the project to other residential areas north of Robinson Street, particularly the rapidly developing neighborhoods along the east side of the track, between Rock Creek Road and Tecumseh Road.

The findings of the August 27, 2015 Diagnostic Team Inspection were presented to the City Council Planning and Transportation Committee during their September 24, 2015 meeting. At that time, Committee members expressed their desire to extend the project to the northern Norman City limit and for City staff to prepare an agenda item for Council's approval of the contract option with JWebb and Associates that is necessary in order to provide the services needed for such project extension.

A comparison of the original and current estimate (with the extension) is included as an attachment.

Funding for this amendment is available in Railroad Safety Design (account 050-9161-431.62-01; project

TR0066). If approved by Council, JWebb & Associates, LLC will begin design work on the inclusion of the five additional railroad crossings north of Acres Street in the Quiet Zone project (i.e., Lexington Avenue, Rock Creek Road, Tecumseh Road, Franklin Road and Indian Hills Road) and complete the official Notice of Intent to establish the Quiet Zone in March of 2016.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the option to provide additional services for the design and coordination of improvements at five additional railroad crossings north of Acres Street as previously negotiated and as summarized in Attachment C of Contract K-1415-136 with JWebb & Associates, LLC, in the amount of \$12,250.