



# FUNDING AND PRIORITIES FOR RAIL

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VERONICA O. DAVIS, PE

TRANSPORTATION & DRAINAGE  
OPERATIONS



# PURPOSE

together we create a strong foundation  
for Houston to thrive

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# 5 TO THRIVE VALUES

integrity | teamwork | ownership | communication | respect

# **FORMULA VERSUS DISCRETIONARY**

## **FORMULA**

**Allocated to the State based on formula set by Congress**

**Funds flow through the State**

**Funding decision made by the State or Metropolitan Planning Organization (H-GAC)**

## **DISCRETIONARY**

**Competitive grants based on rules established by USDOT**

**Funds [typically] flow to applicants**

**Funding decision made by USDOT (Secretary or agencies)**

# SOURCES OF LOCAL MATCH - BUILD HOUSTON FORWARD FUNDING

**\*\*DDSR Fund\*\***



**THIRD-PARTY FUNDS**

## **METRO / TX DOT**

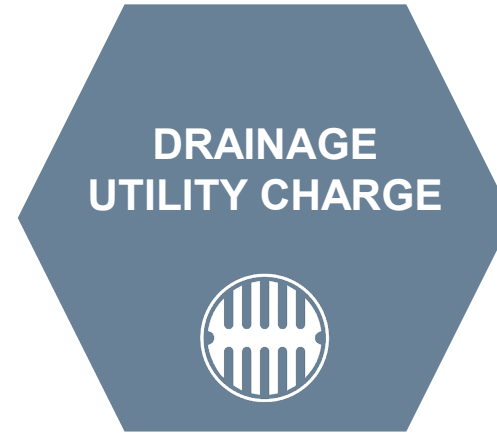
street & drainage projects  
traffic signals  
pedestrian & bike projects  
operations & maintenance



**AD VALOREM TAXES**

## **PROPERTY TAXES**

pay off old debt first\*  
street & drainage projects  
traffic signals  
sidewalk projects  
operations & maintenance  
*\*after paying pre-rebuild debt*



**DRAINAGE UTILITY CHARGE**

## **DRAINAGE CHARGE**

street & drainage projects  
(including property acquisition,  
planning, design, survey &  
construction)  
operations & maintenance  
(including personnel,  
equipment and facilities)



**DEVELOPER IMPACT FEE**

## **PERMIT PROCESS**

street & drainage for  
future development



# **INFRASTRUCTURE & INVESTMENT JOBS ACT: RAIL**

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## Key Rail Objectives

**Overall:** Invest in safe, clean, equitable, and efficient world-class passenger and freight rail where it is best positioned to connect people, communities, and markets.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is a robust investment into rail throughout the nation with dedicated funding for rail over the next 5 years that will:

- Enhance Community Safety and Reconnect Neighborhoods.
- Expand Travel Options for Communities across the Country.
- Modernize the Northeast Corridor.
- Provide new stakeholders with access to funding opportunities.
- Improve Rural Freight Connections.
- Alleviate Passenger-Freight Congestion.
- Boost Energy Efficiency and Strengthen Climate Resilience.
- Renew Passenger Equipment and Stations.



# FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION FUNDING

[ ADVANCED APPROPRIATIONS ]

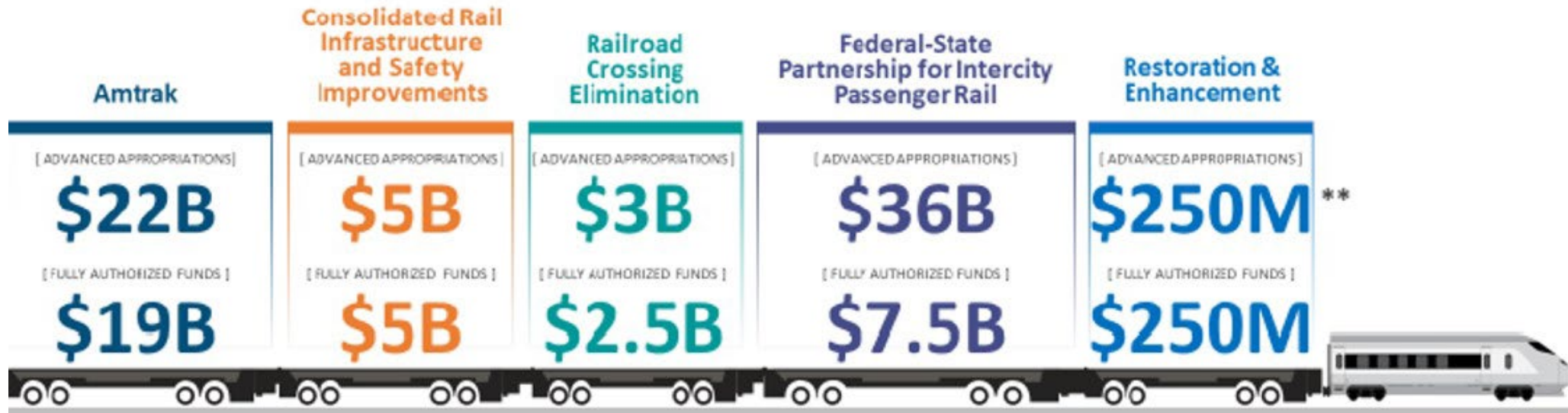
From FY22-FY26

**\$66B** in total funding

[ FULLY AUTHORIZED FUNDS ]

From FY22-FY26

**\$36B\*** in total funding



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration

\* \$34.5 billion for grant programs; additional \$1.5 billion is authorized for FRA operations and R&D – not included in this graphic.  
\*\* Grants for Restoration & Enhancement (advanced appropriations portion) are funded through “takedowns” from Amtrak NN account; not included in totals to avoid double-counting.

# Notice of Funding Opportunity: Expected June, 2022



## Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program Fact Sheet

ADVANCED APPROPRATIONS  
FY22-FY26 Funding: \$600 Million/Year

AUTHORIZED FUNDING (\* FULLY AUTHORIZED LEVELS)  
FY22-FY26 Funding: \$500 Million/Year\*

The Federal Railroad Administration supports the nation's rail network through a variety of competitive and dedicated grant programs designed to improve highway-rail grade crossing safety and improve the mobility of people and goods.

The Railroad Crossing Elimination grant program is a new grant program enacted in Section 22305 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

### Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program

#### Purpose of Grant Program

To fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods. (49 U.S.C. 22909)

#### Eligible Applicants

- States, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other United States territories and possessions.
- Political subdivision of a State.
- Federally recognized Indian Tribe.
- A unit of local government or a group of local governments.
- A public port authority.
- A metropolitan planning organization.
- A group of the entities described above.

#### Eligible Projects

- Grade separation or closure, including through the use of a bridge, embankment, tunnel, or combination thereof.
- Track relocation.
- Improvement or installation of protective devices, signals, signs, or other measures to improve safety related to a separation, closure, or track relocation project.
- Other means to improve the safety if related to the mobility of people and goods at highway-rail grade crossings (including technological solutions).
- The planning, environmental review, and design of an eligible project type.



# Notice of Funding Opportunity Expected August, 2022



## Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements Grant Program Fact Sheet

ADVANCED APPROPRIATIONS  
FY22-FY26 Funding: \$1 Billion/Year

AUTHORIZED FUNDING (\* FULLY AUTHORIZED LEVELS)  
FY22-FY26 Funding: \$1 Billion/Year\*

The Federal Railroad Administration supports the nation's rail network through a variety of competitive and dedicated grant programs designed to develop safety improvements, and encourages the expansion and upgrade of passenger and freight rail infrastructure and services.

The information below highlights the changes in the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements grant program that are enacted in Section 22303 of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

### Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Improvements Grant Program

#### Purpose of Grant Program

To fund projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of **intercity passenger and freight rail**. (49 U.S.C. 22907)

#### Eligible Applicants

- States, **NEW** including the District of Columbia.
- A group of States.
- An Interstate Compact.
- A public agency or publicly chartered authority established by 1 or more States.
- A political subdivision of a State.
- Amtrak & other Rail Carriers providing intercity rail passenger transportation.
- Class II/III Railroads and **NEW** Associations that represent a Class II/III Railroads.
- Rail Carriers & Equipment Manufacturers, in partnership with at least 1 of the first 5 entities shown above.
- **NEW** Federally recognized Indian Tribe.
- Transportation Research Board.
- University Transportation Centers engaged in rail-related research.
- Non-profit labor organizations representing rail employees.

#### Eligible Projects

- Wide range of capital projects – such as track, station and equipment improvements, congestion mitigation, grade crossings, and track relocation, and deployment of railroad safety technology.
- Regional rail and Corridor service development plans and corresponding environmental analyses.
- Safety programs and institutes, including workforce development and training activities.
- **NEW** Measures that prevent trespassing and injuries and fatalities associated with trespassing.
- **NEW** Research, development, and testing to advance innovative rail projects.
- **NEW** The preparation of emergency plans for communities through which hazardous materials are transported by rail.
- **NEW** Rehabilitating, remanufacturing, procuring, or overhauling locomotives, provided that such activities result in a significant reduction of emissions.

# OTHER FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

- **Highway Formula Allocation Funding (subject to Obligation Limitation)**
  - Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), ~\$300M/year statewide
  - National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), ~\$2.8B/year statewide
  - Surface Transportation Block Grants (STBG), ~\$140M/year regional
  - Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Grants (CMAQ), ~\$80M/year regional
- **Congressionally Directed Spending**
  - Community Project Funding, generally known as earmarks

# Davis-Bacon and Buy America Provisions

Program/topic	Provisions in the new law
Davis-Bacon (various sections)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Davis-Bacon wage requirements apply for most major highway programs</li></ul>
Buy America requirements for title 23 projects (§11513)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Buy America waivers for <u>title 23 projects</u> require public notice of proposed waivers, public comment, annual report to Congress</li></ul>
Buy America requirements for all infrastructure projects receiving Federal assistance (§§70911-70917)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New Buy America requirements apply to <u>all</u> infrastructure projects receiving Federal financial assistance<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Manufacturing processes for iron, steel, construction materials and manufactured products must occur in U.S.</li><li>○ Cost of components of manufactured products mined, produced, or manufactured in U.S. must be &gt;55% of the cost of all components</li><li>○ Waivers only if applying requirement is not in the public interest, materials are not available, or meeting requirement would increase overall project cost by &gt;25% (to be reviewed every 5 years)</li><li>○ Requires Federal agencies to identify “deficient programs” not meeting the new Federal government-wide Buy America requirement</li></ul></li></ul>

# The Lifecycle of Grants



## Key Activities

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NOFO Publication</li><li>• Technical Assistance/ Webinars</li><li>• Application Intake &amp; Evaluation</li><li>• Briefings</li><li>• Project Selection</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Notification</li><li>• Terms and Conditions</li><li>• Budget and SOW Development</li><li>• Environmental Clearances *</li><li>• Engineering Review *</li><li>• Performance Measures *</li><li>• Stakeholder Agreements *</li><li>• Creating Grant Award in Grant Solutions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grant Administration</li><li>• Annual Monitoring</li><li>• Project Management</li><li>• Review Project Deliverables</li><li>• Provide Technical Assistance</li><li>• Enforcement and Compliance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grantee Notification</li><li>• Final Invoice</li><li>• Final Performance Report</li><li>• Tracking Project Benefit Agreements</li></ul>
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<https://railroads.dot.gov/BIL>

# 2023-2026 CALL FOR PROJECTS

H-GAC / TIP FUNDING OPTION

# ***Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)***

- Federal and State mandated program of transportation projects
- Contains projects funded with local, State, and/or federal funding sources
- Covers four years of available funding
- Amended on a monthly basis and submitted to the State quarterly
- Adopted and extended every two years
- The TIP must be consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan and the latest Air Quality Conformity Determination



# Call for Projects – Overview

- Call for projects for
  - Short-range: Begin construction within next 5 years (up to FY 2027)
  - Medium-range: Begin construction within next 6-10 years (2028-2032)
  - Predevelopment for RTP (long-range projects)
- Application process in two phases
  - Phase 1 (Pre-application online) (30 days submission period)
    - Screening criteria for consistency with regional vision (RTP)
    - Project information & readiness (project development) criteria
    - Budget
  - Phase 2 (Application online) (45 days submission period)
    - Benefits calculation templates
    - Planning factors



# QUIET ZONES

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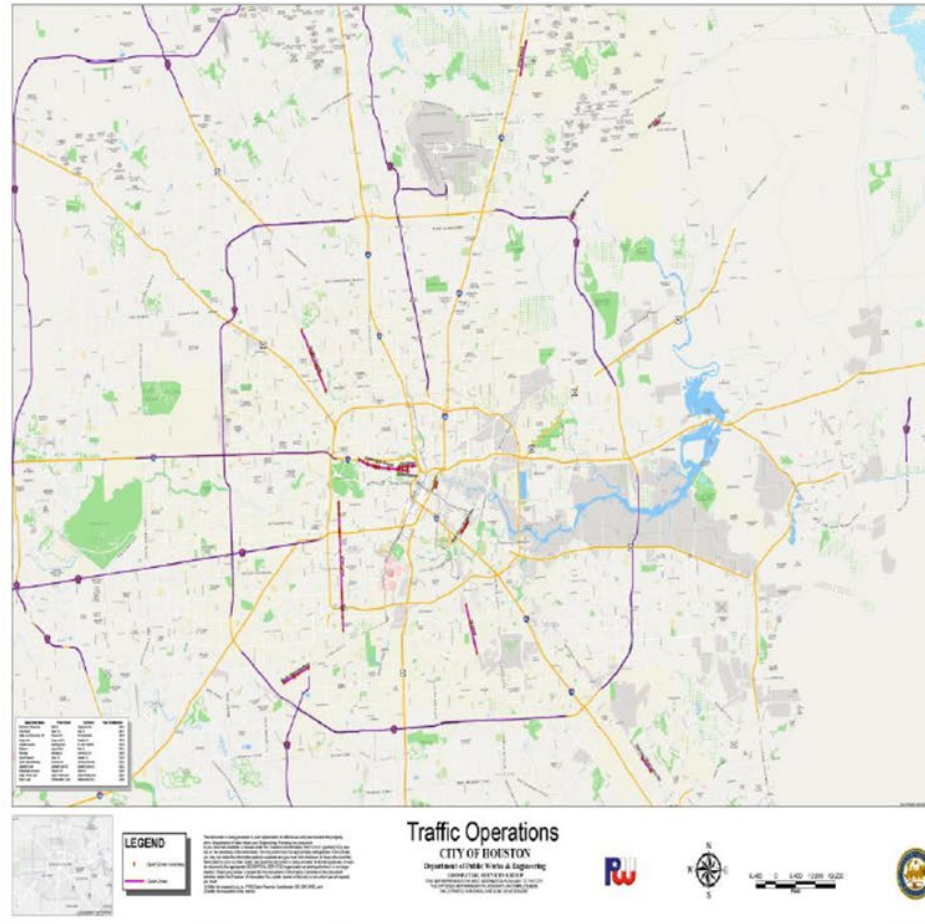


# QUIET ZONES



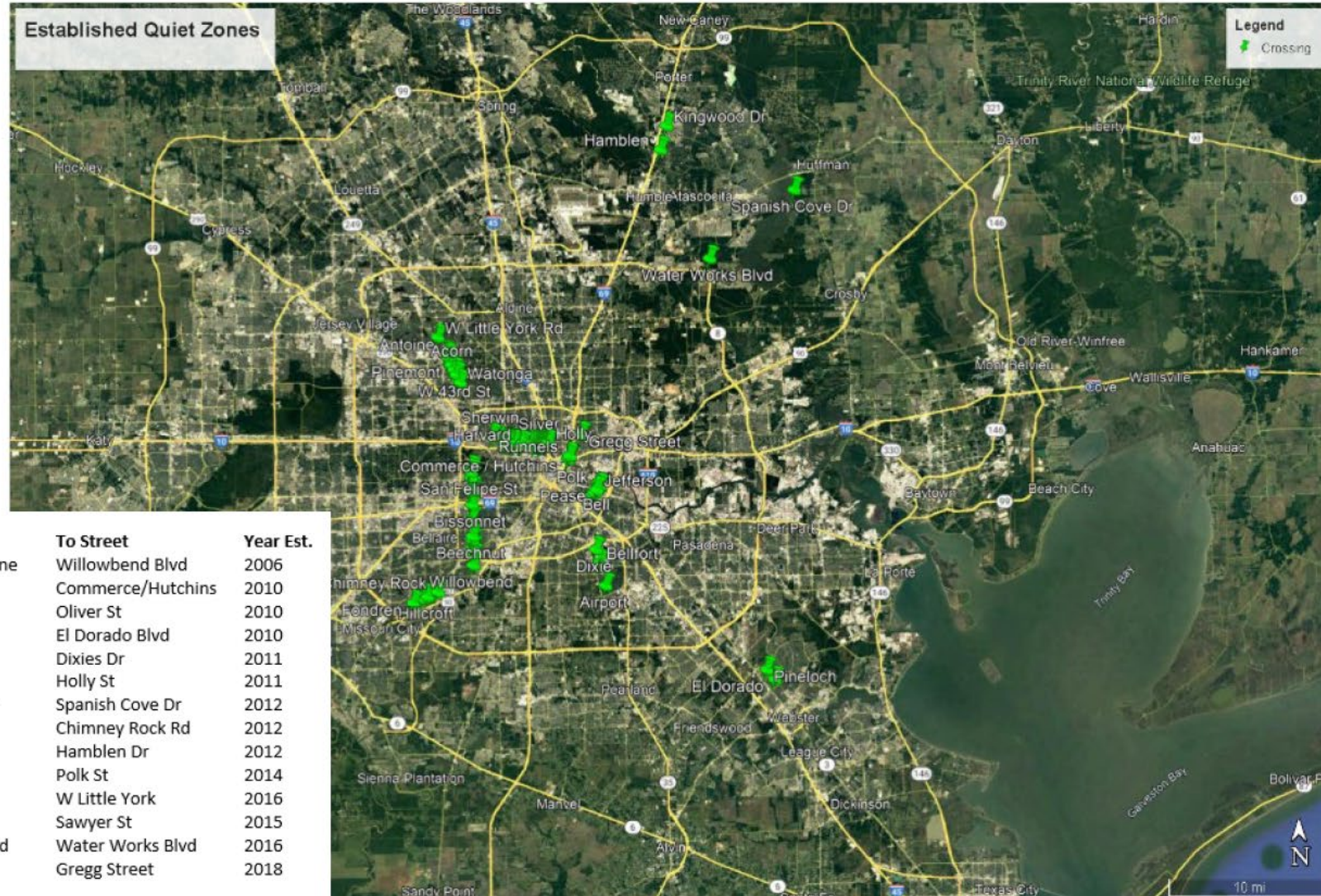
## DEFINITION:

*A quiet zone is a section of a rail line at least one-half mile in length that contains one or more consecutive public highway-rail grade crossings at which locomotive horns are not routinely sounded when trains are approaching the crossings.*



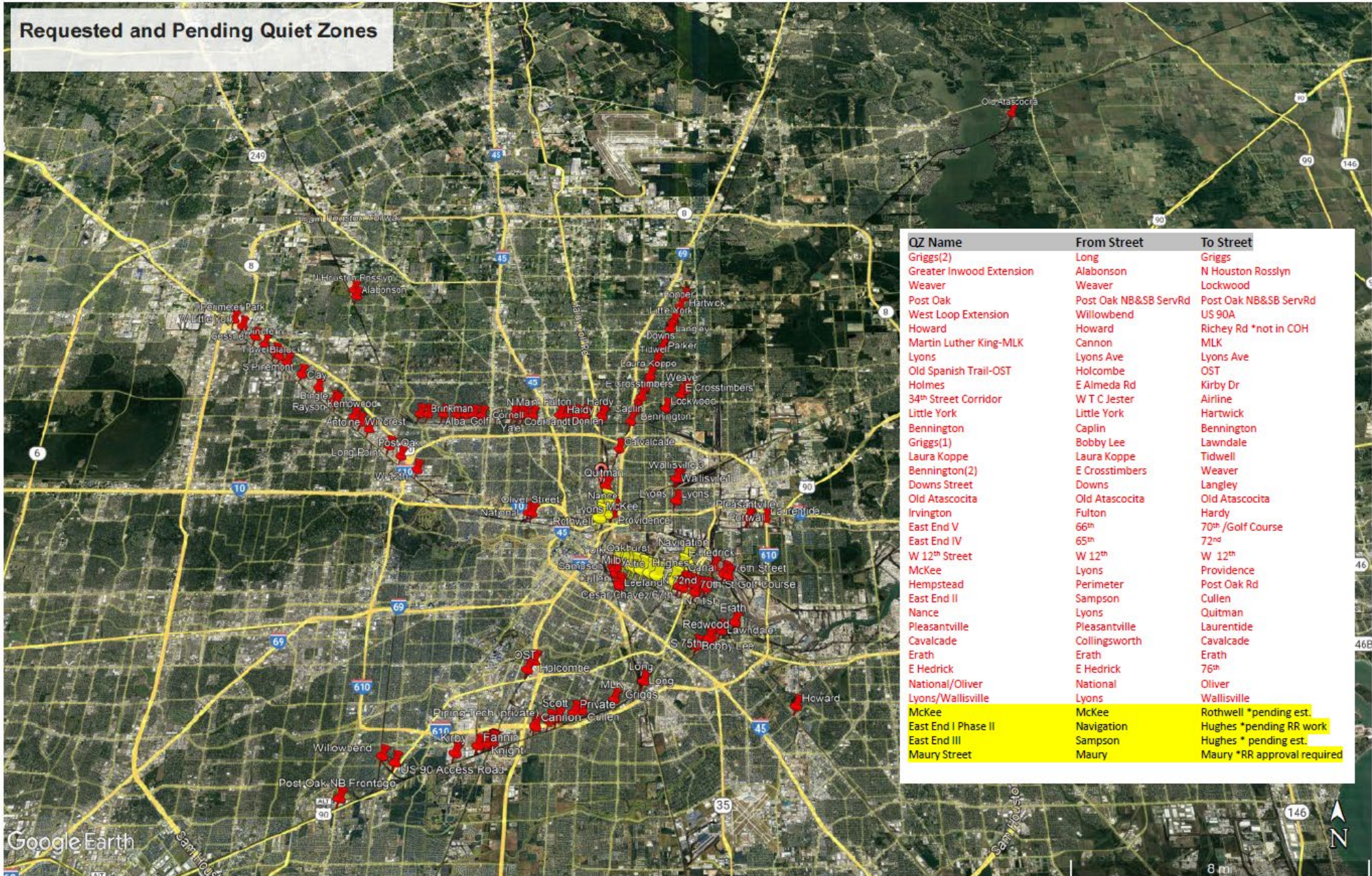
- The prohibited use of train horns at quiet zones only applies to trains when approaching and entering crossings and does not include train horn use within passenger stations or rail yards.
- Train horns may be sounded in emergency situations or to comply with other railroad or FRA rules even within a quiet zone. Quiet zone regulations also do not eliminate the use of locomotive bells at crossings.
- Realistically it's a “reduced train horn area.”
- There is no Federal funding for QZs. Municipalities work to fund and partner with others to establish QZs.

# MAP OF CURRENT QUIET ZONES



QZ Name	From Street	To Street	Year Est.
West Loop	E. Briarhollow Lane	Willowbend Blvd	2006
Runnels	Runnels	Commerce/Hutchins	2010
Washington Corridor	Sherwin St	Oliver St	2010
Hwy 3/Old Galveston	Pineloch	El Dorado Blvd	2010
Mykawa	Airport Blvd	Dixies Dr	2011
First Ward	Oliver St	Holly St	2011
Spanish Cove	Spanish Cove Dr	Spanish Cove Dr	2012
South Main/Westbury	Fondren Rd	Chimney Rock Rd	2012
Kingwood-Hamblen	Kingwood Dr	Hamblen Dr	2012
East End I Phase I	Telephone Rd	Polk St	2014
Greater Inwood	Watonga Blvd	W Little York	2016
Silver/Sawyer	Silver St	Sawyer St	2015
Water Works Blvd	Water Works Blvd	Water Works Blvd	2016
Gregg Street	Gregg Street	Gregg Street	2018

# LIST OF REQUESTED/PENDING QUIET ZONES





# GRADE SEPARATION PRIORITIES

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# **PROJECT READINESS FACTORS:**

- a) Planned construction projects**
- b) Street classification**
- c) Traffic volumes**
- d) Number of reported blocked crossings**
- e) Number of trains on the intersecting roadways**
- f) Proximity to public destinations**
- g) Historically underserved areas**
- h) Access and connectivity**

# GCRD GRADE SEPARATION

## West Belt-Sealed Corridor



- Phase I**  
(H-GAC 2017-2020 TIP)
- Close
- Hutchins Street
  - McKinney Street
  - Milby Street
  - Sampson Street (2)
- Underpass
- Commerce Street
  - York Street (2)



- Phase II**  
(FASTLANE)
- Close
- West (3)
- Grade Separate
- Lyons

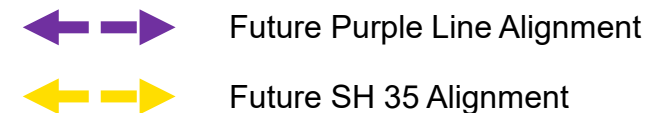
- TxDOT NHHIP**
- Close
- Runnels
- Grade Separate
- Nance

- Leeland / Cullen
- Upgrade to quad gates

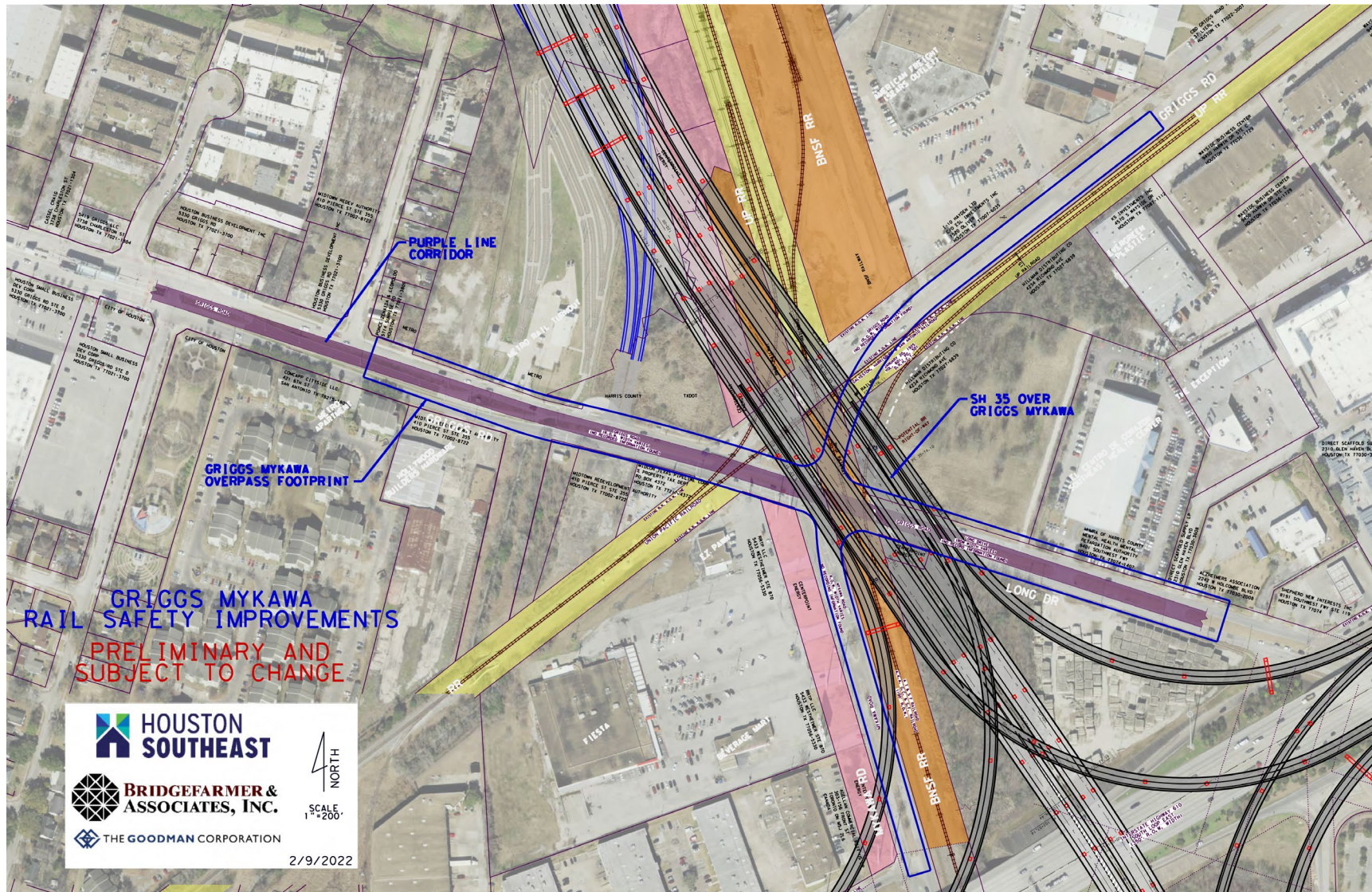
# PROJECT BACKGROUND



- Metro Purple Line coming through intersection, towards Hobby Airport on Long Dr
- TxDOT SH 35 coming through, overhead on Mykawa alignment
- Elevated grade-separated intersection proposed for Griggs/Long /Mykawa



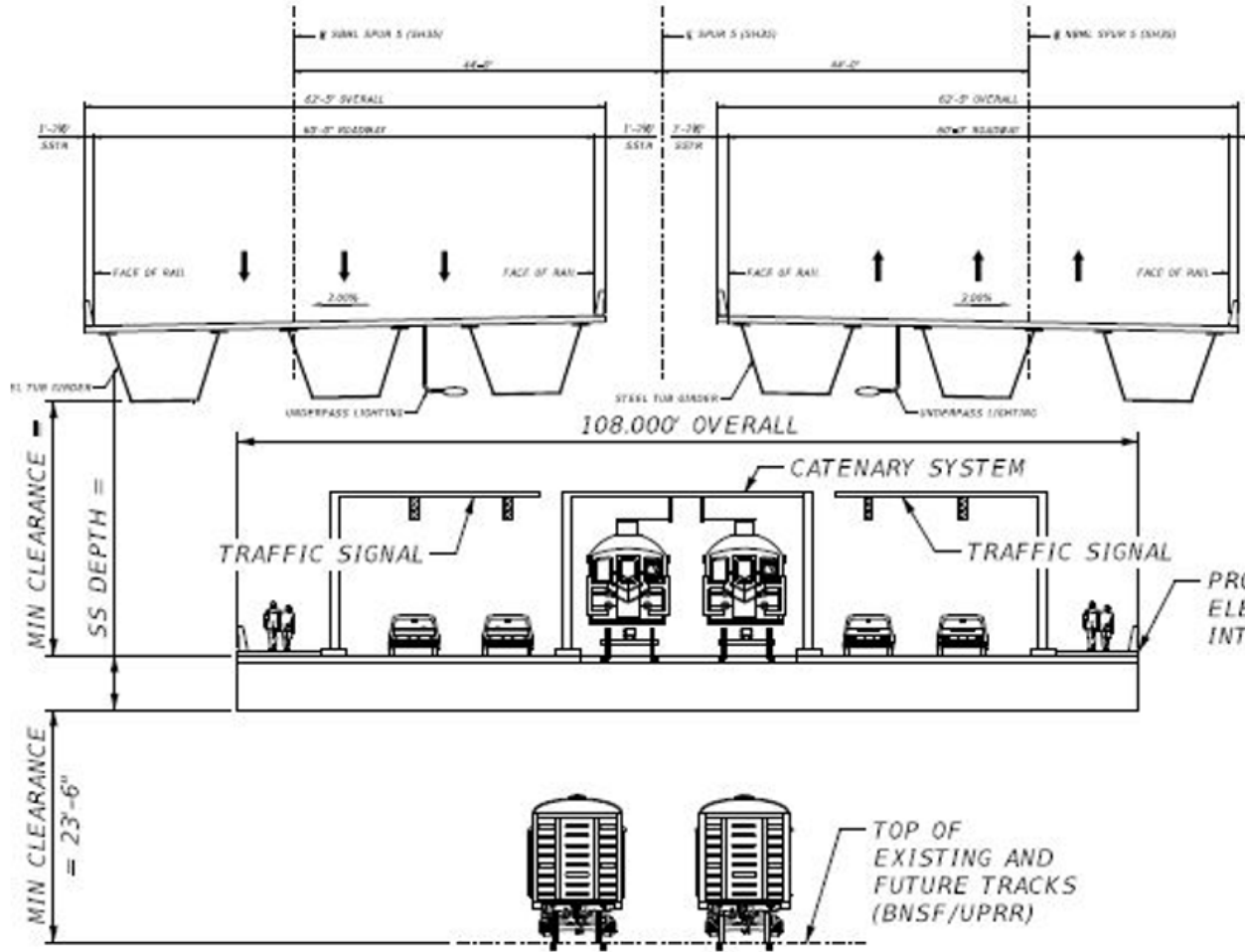
# PROPOSED CONCEPT



- Three-Tiered Intersection
- At Grade: Freight Rail (UPRR & BNSF)
- Level 2: Griggs, Long Mykawa elevated intersection; Metro Purple Line; Pedestrian & bike access
- Level 3: SH 35 Main Lanes

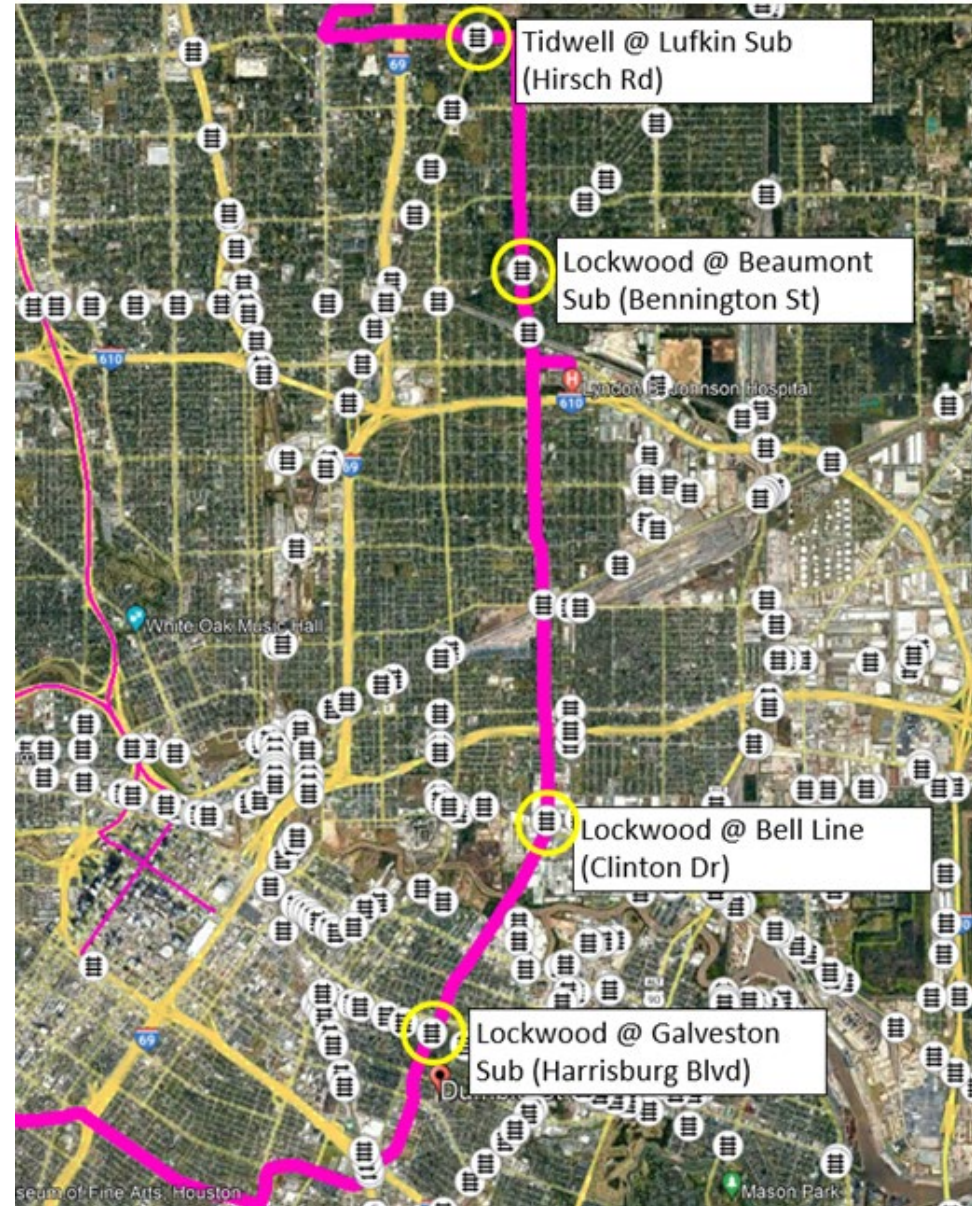


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# RAIL CROSSINGS ALONG METRO'S BRT CORRIDOR



# thank you!



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