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August 20, 2019

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The Honorable Michael J. Carrozzo  
Presiding Judge  
Santa Barbara Superior Court  
1100 Anacapa Street  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**SUBJECT: Responses to 2019 Santa Barbara County Civil Grand Jury Report "Railway Fatalities in Santa Barbara County."**

Dear Hon. Judge Carrozzo:

The City of Goleta is pleased to provide the following requested responses to the above referenced report as requested, for Findings 1,2,3,4,5,6 and Recommendations 1,2,3,4,5,6a, 6b. Please note the following responses:

**Finding 1: Eighty five percent of railroad - related deaths occurring in Santa Barbara County were pedestrian trespasser incidents that occurred in the High Fatality Zone One from Ortega Hill in Summerland to Milpas Street in Santa Barbara and High Fatality Zone Two from Patterson Avenue to Glen Annie Road in Goleta.**

**Response to Finding 1: The City of Goleta partially disagrees with this finding. Two of the fatalities attributed to Goleta (W. Main Street and 500 Ninos Drive) are not located in the Goleta area. There is no Main Street in or near the City of Goleta, and 500 Ninos Drive is located in the City of Santa Barbara.**

**Recommendation 1: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments meet regularly with Union Pacific Railroad to create a safety plan to reduce trespasser deaths in High Fatality Zones.**

**Response to Recommendation 1: Will Be Implemented. The City of Goleta has established a Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force in 2018 to regularly meet with the UPRR and regional agencies like CalTrans, California Highway Patrol,**

County of Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office, County of Santa Barbara Fire Dept., City of Santa Barbara, County of Santa Barbara District Attorney's Office, County of Santa Barbara Department of Behavioral Wellness and other agencies to discuss issues and concerns related to homelessness in and around the UPRR Right of Way (ROW). Invitations to future meetings of the Task Force will include SBCAG and other agencies in the region to join the City of Goleta's existing Task Force to facilitate the creation of the Safety Plan and other SB County Civil Grand Jury Railway Report action items and recommendations.

The creation of the Safety Plan will be discussed at the next UPRR Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force meeting to be scheduled by September 2019. Completion of said Safety Plan will be in coordination with participating agencies of the Task Force and is expected to occur by June 30, 2020.

**Finding 2: A sealed corridor has been used effectively to enhance railroad safety.**

**Response to Finding 2: The City of Goleta agrees with this finding.**

**Recommendation 2: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments collaborate with Union Pacific Railroad to develop a sealed corridor from Ortega Hill in Summerland to Glen Annie Road in Goleta.**

**Response to Recommendation 2: Will be Implemented.** The City of Goleta's Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force will discuss the development of a sealed corridor from Ortega Hill in Summerland to Glen Annie Road in Goleta, at the next UPRR Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force meeting to be scheduled by September 2019. Completion of said sealed corridor will be the primary responsibility of the UPRR as they are the property owner. The City of Goleta would request that the UPRR complete the work to develop a sealed corridor by June 30, 2020.

**Finding 3: There is a need for increased security presence to reduce trespassing within the High Fatality Zones, and in other communities this has been achieved through Memoranda of Understanding between Union Pacific Railroad and local law enforcement.**

**Response to Finding 3: The City of Goleta agrees with this finding.**

**Recommendation 3: That the Santa Barbara County Sheriff and City of Santa Barbara Police Department negotiate Memoranda of Understanding with Union Pacific Railroad to provide enhanced security within their respective High Fatality Zones.**

**Response to Recommendation 3: Has been implemented.** The City of Goleta contracts with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services.

We have been informed by the Sheriff's Office that an MOU/Authority Letter has been approved by the UPRR, dated March 26, 2019 to allow the Sheriff's Office to provide enhanced enforcement and security within the UPRR Corridor.

**Finding 4: Fencing along the railroad right-of-way in the High Fatality Zones is inadequate or nonexistent.**

**Response to Finding 4: The City of Goleta partially agrees with this finding.** There are areas within the UPRR ROW where fencing is adequate.

**Recommendation 4: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments collaborate with Union Pacific Railroad to repair and install fencing, to prevent easy access to the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way in the High Fatality Zones.**

**Response to Recommendation 4: Will be implemented.** The City of Goleta's Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force will discuss the repair and installation of fencing to prevent easy access to the UPRR ROW in the High Fatality Zones in collaboration with the UPRR at the next Task Force meeting scheduled by September 2019. Completion of said repairs and installation of fencing will be the primary responsibility of the UPRR as they are the property owner. The City of Goleta will request that the UPRR complete the work to repair existing fencing by December 31, 2019, and install new fencing where needed, by June 30, 2020.

**Finding 5: Overgrown foliage and trees provide a natural shelter for homeless encampments.**

**Response to Finding 5: The City of Goleta agrees with this finding.**

**Recommendation 5: That the County of Santa Barbara and the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta encourage Union Pacific Railroad to cut back or remove overgrown trees and foliage within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way in the High Fatality Zones.**

**Response to Recommendation 5: Has Been Implemented.** The City of Goleta's Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force previously discussed the cutting back and removal of overgrown trees and foliage within the UPRR ROW in the High Fatality Zones. City staff has also contacted UPRR staff on several occasions to discuss needed foliage removal and homeless encampment cleanups. CalTrans, as part of this effort, has also previously cut back and removed overgrown trees and foliage in the areas between Highway 101 and the UPRR ROW, reducing fire hazards. The City will continue to request UPRR to cut back and remove overgrown vegetation in their ROW in the High Fatality Zones and ask that this work be completed by December 31, 2019.

**Finding 6: Video surveillance cameras provide increased observation of activity by pedestrian trespassers and homeless encampments within the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way.**

**Response to Finding 6: The City of Goleta agrees with this finding.**

**Recommendation 6a: That the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, the County of Santa Barbara, and Santa Barbara County Association of Governments encourage Union Pacific Railroad to install and monitor video surveillance cameras on poles every mile within the High Fatality Zone.**

**Response to Recommendation 6a: Will be implemented.** The City of Goleta's Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force will encourage UPRR to install and monitor video surveillance cameras on poles every mile within High Fatality Zones at the next meeting scheduled for September 2019. The City of Goleta will request that the UPRR complete work to install and monitor video surveillance cameras by June 30, 2020.

**Recommendation 6b: That County of Santa Barbara and the Cities of Santa Barbara and Goleta, together with Union Pacific Railroad, establish a schedule to monitor the video surveillance cameras between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.**

**Response to Recommendation 6b: Will be implemented.** The City of Goleta's Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) Rail/Highway 101 Corridor Safety Task Force will encourage UPRR to establish a schedule to monitor the video surveillance cameras between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. at the next Task Force meeting scheduled by September 2019.

The City of Goleta will request that the UPRR provide a monitoring schedule by December 31, 2019.

The City of Goleta shares the Grand Jury's concern over the number of pedestrian-related railroad fatalities in Santa Barbara County. City staff have already been working with UPRR, the Sheriff's Office, and other agencies to cooperatively and proactively address many of the findings and recommendations of the Grand Jury's report.

This concludes our responses to the Grand Jury's Report. For any additional assistance we can provide on this, please feel free to contact Vyto Adomaitis, Director of Neighborhood Services & Public Safety at [vadomaitis@cityofgoleta.org](mailto:vadomaitis@cityofgoleta.org) or by phone at 805-961-7555.

Sincerely,



Michelle Greene  
City Manager

CC: Vyto Adomaitis, Director, NS & Public Safety Dept.  
Charlie Ebeling, Director, Public Works Dept.  
Lt. Brian Thielst, Chief of Police Services