INTRO 2-10-25

25R-03

Sponsor: Thomas M. McDermott, Jr.
Mayor, City of Hammond

RESOLUTION NO. R03

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF HAMMOND COMMON COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF THE GOVERNORS PARKWAY RAILROAD OVERPASS PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Hammond acknowledges the valuable role railroads play in our nation's supply chain while also recognizing the need to address the long-standing issue of numerous and lengthy train delays and accidents near any of the 53 at-grade railroad crossings throughout the city, which are particularly prevalent in the Hessville neighborhood of our city; and

WHEREAS, over the last 100 years railroad infrastructure has created hazards due to frequent crossings of railroad tracks by vehicles and pedestrians, increasing the risk of accidents, delays, and loss of life and impacting the quality of life in our city; and

WHEREAS, trains stopped within at-grade railroad crossings, including for prolonged periods of multiple hours, inhibit travel not only for residents and visitors, but decrease rapid response times for emergency professionals including EMS, fire, and police; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Railroad Administration created the Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program to provide funding for highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods; and

WHEREAS, the RCE program awarded the City of Hammond $7,029,392 to eliminate two at-grade crossings where Parrish Avenue and Arizona Avenue intersect with Norfolk Southern's rail line and to build a grade-separated road overpass and new road to be named Governor's Parkway; and

WHEREAS, the State of Indiana also created the Local Trax Rail Overpass Program aimed at improving safety and quality of life for residents through large-scale related transportation projects, in which the City of Hammond was awarded $5,460,070 to further fund the Governor's Parkway project; and

WHEREAS, Common Council passed Ordinance No. 9516 on September 27, 2021, to appropriate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for specified uses under ARPA Section 603, including $3,570,000 for the Governor's Parkway Railway Overpass Project conveying this Council's prior and ongoing support of this project; and

WHEREAS the amount of ARPA funds appropriated to the project was later *reduced* to $2,500,000 by Ordinance No. 9623 (ARPA 3.0) passed by the Common Council on January 8, 2024 because the amount of the city's match was lessened due to an increase in state and federal funds made available to the city for the project; and

WHEREAS, the Indiana Department of Transportation provided legal notice of a public hearing to be held on April 26, 2023, for the purpose of offering all interested persons an opportunity to comment on current design plans for the project in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations, Title 23, Section 771; and

WHEREAS, local feedback was requested through community surveys targeted at those areas where Governor's Parkway would be utilized by residents and to identify issues and mitigate impacts, while enhancing transparency and building trust with Hammond constituents; and

WHEREAS, over 600 responses were received via survey in which approximately 60% of respondents indicated they were impacted by stopped trains at least once per day, 83% of respondents somewhat strongly or very strongly felt that the City of Hammond needed to address

this issue, 75% of respondents were somewhat or strongly in favor of a new bridge, and 63% of respondents were somewhat or strongly in favor of a new bridge at the preferred location; and

WHEREAS, environmental studies and engineering analyses were conducted which indicated the proposed location of the Governor's Parkway project would not have negative impacts on wetlands and streams, floodways, historical properties, or noise increases; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to mitigate any disruption to the Briar East Woods, INDOT and Hammond will fund the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to replant approximately 24 acres of trees, double the number of trees impacted by this construction; and

WHEREAS, for the above stated reasons, the City of Hammond Common Council shall resolve to continue to support and endorse the implementation of the Governors Parkway Railroad Overpass Project, which shall improve safety and quality of life of Hammond residents and visitors alike.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Hammond hereby formally supports the Governors Parkway Railroad Overpass Project and intends to commence construction of said project upon procurement of the awarded funds from Indiana Local Trax Rail Overpass Program and the Federal Railroad Administration Railroad Crossing Elimination Program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Hammond that this Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Common Council, signing by the President thereof and approval by the Mayor.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED BY the Common Council of the City of Hammond, Indiana, this 10th day of February, 2025.

Dave Woerpel, President
Hammond Common Council

ATTEST:

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk
City of Hammond, Indiana

PRESENTED BY ME, the undersigned City Clerk of the City of Hammond, Indiana, to the Mayor, for approval and signature, this 11th day of February, 2025.

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk
City of Hammond, Indiana

The foregoing Resolution No. R03 consisting of four (4) typewritten pages, including this page, was APPROVED AND SIGNED BY ME, the undersigned Mayor of the City of Hammond, Indiana, this 12th day of February, 2025.

Thomas M. McDermott, Jr., Mayor
City of Hammond, Indiana

PASSED by the Common Council on the 10th day of February, 2025 and Approved by the Mayor on the 12th day of February, 2025.

Robert J. Golec, City Clerk,
Hammond, Indiana