Memorandum

To:	Mayor Johnstone & Members of Council	Date:	July 24, 2026
From:	Kwaku Agyare-Manu Acting Director, Engineering and Public Works	File No:	1860.40.05

Subject: Train Whistle Cessation Update – 2026 – Q2 Update

PURPOSE

To provide an update on the progress of train whistle cessation work in the City of New Westminster.

SUMMARY

This is the 2026 second quarter update on Citywide train whistle cessation progress.

BACKGROUND

Quarterly reports are provided to the public in response to a Motion of Council on December 12, 2022. The last report was the 2026 – Q1 update, which was provided on April 22, 2026. Staff have continued to advance projects that improve rail safety and upgrade crossings to meet the requirements for whistle cessation.

DISCUSSION

The City-led Railway Technical Committee (RTC) had its fourteenth meeting (2026-Q2) on June 9, 2026. The agenda topics included technical rail-related updates and ongoing and upcoming rail projects.

Staff have received 35 rail-related communications from the public since January 1, 2026. These communications have come via public delegations to Council,

website contact forms, email, Be Heard, SeeClickFix, Engineering counter walk-ups and phone calls.

These communications are categorized as follows:

2026 – Q1: 15 communications:
- 12 – whistle related
- 1 – rail safety
- 1 – vibrations
- 1 – wait times

2026 – Q2: 20 communications:
- 13 – whistle related
- 4 – operational noise / emissions
- 2 – rail safety
- 1 – vibrations

The updated At-Grade Public Crossing Whistle Cessation Summary is included in Attachment 1.

The estimated dates by which whistle cessation is proposed to be achieved (EWC) are shown below and in Attachment 1. The EWC relies on a variety of work, some of which is within the City's control and some that needs to be completed by third parties, including the rail companies. While we strive to remain connected and aligned, and collaborate on project management, the schedule for work completed by third parties is outside of the City's control. Elements of work, such as equipment procurement and installation, are typically more susceptible to delays or changes.

Short and Medium-Term Opportunities

Updates to the Short and Medium Term opportunities are as follows:

Sapperton Neighbourhood

1. Cumberland Street crossing EWC: 2026 – Q4
    a. City rail crossing upgrades have been completed. The City is waiting for the railways to install the warning system equipment for the new MUP East approach. Delays in installing this warning system stem from commercial and legal processes, but the City is working collaboratively with the railway to resolve final details.

2. Braid Street crossings (Brunette + Vulcan) EWC: 2026 – Q3
    a. Construction is complete, and we have received the engineer's letter outlining that the crossing is whistle cessation compliant. Council

passed a resolution on July 13, and the rail companies have until August 14 to confirm they have stopped whistling at the crossings.

3. Spruce Street crossing EWC: 2027 – Q4
    a. Staff have awarded the detailed design for the crossing upgrades, which is expected to take one year to complete. Staff continue to work with the rail companies and Translink to advance safety improvements at this crossing.

Long Term Projects

The following crossings will likely require extensive structural modifications or road/rail re-alignments, and significant capital investment to achieve whistle cessation:

West End Neighbourhood

1. Twentieth (20th) Street crossing EWC: TBD
    a. The City of New Westminster continues to engage stakeholders at this crossing to develop a plan to achieve GCR/GCS and whistle cessation compliance.

2. Fourth (4th) Avenue crossing EWC: TBD
    a. A survey was completed on June 12 and the conceptual design is advancing.

Queensborough Neighbourhood

1. Furness Street (@ Ewen Ave) EWC: 2028 – Q4
2. Mercer Street (@ Ewen Ave) EWC: 2028 – Q4
3. Ewen Avenue (@ Stanley St) EWC: 2028 – Q4

The City has reviewed the Whistle Cessation Options Assessment Study for the Ewen Avenue corridor (Furness, Mercer and Ewen) and is developing an implementation plan. The City is moving forward with detailed design in collaboration with Southern Railway.

4. Salter Street (@ Derwent Way) EWC: TBD

Additional information will be shared with Council, as it becomes available, and direction will be sought at that time.

NEXT STEPS

Staff resources continue to focus on advancing rail crossing improvements and city-wide whistle cessation initiatives.

Staff will continue working directly with stakeholders and through the RTC to better understand the costs and timelines for upgrading all public crossings in the City and implementing whistle cessation. This information will be used to update the At-Grade Public Crossing Whistle Cessation Summary, which will continue to be part of the quarterly update process.

Staff will continue to update the City's website quarterly with information on the progress of whistle cessation at individual crossings.

The City of New Westminster continues to work with external legal counsel to reduce risk and costs to the City and advance any necessary agreements with the railways.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2026-2030 Five Year Financial Plan includes $5.5M to support rail crossing upgrades and whistle cessation projects, of which $0.6M is allocated to assess the Queensborough crossings. The 2026 Capital Budget allocates $0.8M to safety upgrades and whistle cessation initiatives, which aim to advance stakeholder engagement, conceptual and detailed design, installations, and service and equipment procurement where appropriate. This work will identify the scope, risks, and constraints to advance safety works and provide information on total funding requirements.

Third-party grant funding opportunities for safety upgrades through Transport Canada's Railway Safety Improvement Program (RSIP) are currently available. The application submission deadline is September 4, 2026. Through RSIP, municipalities are eligible to receive up to an 80% financial contribution per eligible project.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Engineering and Public Works will continue working with the City's Finance and Legal Departments to minimize the financial impacts and risk exposure to the City. Additionally, staff will work with Communications to share information on major milestone progress or impactful phases of the work.

CONCLUSION

Whistle cessation is a complex, expensive and lengthy process. Implementing Citywide train whistle cessation in a timely manner will require dedicated staff resources, external consultant support, the continuation of collaborative stakeholder relationships and adequate capital funding from the City.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – At-Grade Public Crossing Whistle Cessation Summary

AT - GRADE PUBLIC CROSSING WHISTLE CESSATION SUMMARY

No.	Area	Crossing	Owner	Users	Required Work	Estimated City Cost	Status	EWC
1	QB	Salter Street @ Derwent Way	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required. Road or rail re-alignment may be required	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
2	QB	Ewen Avenue @ Stanley Street	SRY	SRY	Road re-alignment required and railway warning system equipment.	$18 M	Detailed Design	2028 – Q4
3	QB	Mercer Street @ Ewen Avenue	SRY	SRY	Road re-alignment required and railway warning system equipment.	Included in #2	Detailed Design	2028 – Q4
4	QB	Furness Street @ Ewen Avenue	SRY	SRY	Road re-alignment required and railway warning system equipment.	Included in #2	Detailed Design	2028 – Q4
5	QB	Boundary Road @ Boyd Street	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required.	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
6	QB	Gifford Street @ Boyd Street	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required.	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
7	QB	Queensborough Landing Pedestrian Crossing	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required.	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
8	QB	Wood Street @ Boyd Street	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required.	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
9	QB	Boyne Street @ Boyd Street	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required.	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
10	QB	Stanley Street @ Duncan Street	SRY	SRY	Further analysis required.	TBD	Reviewing Information	TBD
11	QB	Furness Street @ Duncan Street	SRY	SRY	None – whistle cessation has been implemented	N/A	Complete	Complete
12	QB	Pedestrian Crossing @ Brookes Street	SRY	SRY	None – whistle cessation has been implemented	N/A	Complete	Complete
13	ML	Twentieth Street @ River Drive	SRY, CP, CN	SRY, CP, CN	Maintain the crossing as public and review upgrade options.	TBD	Reviewing Next Steps	TBD
14	ML	Fourth Avenue @ Fourteenth Street	SRY, CP, CN	SRY, CP, CN	Survey completed. Advancing conceptual design.	TBD	Conceptual Design	TBD

QB = Queensborough / ML = Mainland
TBD = To Be Determined / N/A = Not Applicable
EWC = Estimated Date of Whistle Cessation

Updated to end of: 2026 – Q2
Costs do not consider grant funding
Yellow highlight – revised information

No.	Area	Crossing	Owner	Users	Required Work	Estimated City Cost	Status	EWC
15	ML	Quayside Drive @ Laguna Court	SRY	SRY	None – whistle cessation has been implemented	N/A	Complete	Complete
16	ML	Begbie Street @ Front Street	CN	SRY, CN, CP, BNSF	None – whistle cessation has been implemented	N/A	Complete	Complete
17	ML	Front Street @ Fourth Street	CN	SRY, CN, CP, BNSF	None – whistle cessation has been implemented	N/A	Complete	Complete
18	ML	Cumberland Street @ Columbia Street	CP, BNSF	CN, CP, BNSF	Waiting for the rail company to install new MUP East approach warning system equipment.	$1.4 M	Deficiencies	2026 – Q4
19	ML	Spruce Street @ Brunette Avenue	CP, BNSF	CN, CP, BNSF	Proceeding with detailed design. Pedestrian facilities and railway warning equipment required.	TBD	Detailed Design	2027 – Q4
20	ML	Capilano Way @ Edworthy Way	BNSF	BNSF	Due to low rail activity, whistle cessation is not being pursued at this crossing.	N/A	N/A	N/A
21	ML	Braid Street @ Brunette Avenue	CN	CN, BNSF	Construction deficiencies are being completed. Council has passed a resolution for non-emergent train whistles to cease. Rail companies have until August 14 to confirm.	$1.1 M	Deficiencies	2026 – Q3
22	ML	Braid Street @ Vulcan Street	CP	CP	Construction deficiencies are being completed. Council has passed a resolution for non-emergent train whistles to cease. Rail companies have until August 14 to confirm.	Included in #22	Deficiencies	2026 – Q3
23	ML	Braid Skytrain Station access road	CN	CN, BNSF	Due to low rail activity, whistle cessation is not being pursued at this crossing.	N/A	N/A	N/A