



NEWS RELEASE

Date: December 22, 2011

Michelle Ganon
619-533-7120
ganon@ccdc.com

Downtown Quiet Zone Construction Activity Continues *Completion now anticipated in late spring 2012*

SAN DIEGO — Construction activity continues on one of the largest urban “Quiet Zones” in the United States. The safety enhancements, including new gates, medians, traffic signals and warning lights, are currently being installed and tested at all downtown San Diego grade crossings from Fifth Avenue to Laurel Street. Future Quiet Zone expansion will include the intersection at Park Boulevard and Harbor Drive. Bringing the Quiet Zone on-line includes transitioning or “cutting over” from the old system to the new signaling system, conducting numerous tests with moving trains to ensure accurate timing, and testing all new safety equipment. Due to these complexities the project is now targeted for late spring versus early March.

“We absolutely recognize the importance of this project to downtown residents, as well as the economic impact it has on our region when our hotels and businesses are adversely affected,” said Kim Kilkenny, Centre City Development Corporation Chairman. “We remain committed to delivering the project safely and within the approved budget and we will continue to keep the public apprised of the progress.”

Equipment delivery delays and the complexity of planning, scheduling and performing the “cut-overs” contributed to the revised schedule. Two of seven required tests have been completed with the next scheduled for early January and subsequent dates now being established. The project remains within the Redevelopment Agency approved budget of \$20.9 million. Under the current schedule, safety enhancements are expected to be certified by late spring 2012. Once the improvements are certified, the railway between Laurel Street and Fifth Avenue will qualify as a “Quiet Zone” as authorized by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

As required by the FRA, train horns must be sounded when approaching each at-grade crossing. The volume and duration of the horns has become the primary complaint for residents, businesses and hotels located along the downtown waterfront. This designation will exempt that section of the rail corridor from federal regulations requiring that train horns be sounded for 15-20 seconds before entering all public grade crossings, except in emergency situations as determined by the train engineer. The Quiet Zone will not eliminate the sound of warning bells or lights associated with the San Diego Trolley.

Background

The San Diego Quiet Zone project includes 13 public right-of-way railroad crossings, from Park Boulevard at Harbor Drive north to Fifth and First avenues, Front Street, Market Street, Kettner Boulevard and G streets, Broadway, Ash, Beech, Cedar, Grape, Hawthorn, and Laurel streets are included in the San Diego Quiet Zone. Park Boulevard will be constructed as a separate project.

As one of the nation's longest and most complex Quiet Zones to be planned within a shared rail corridor, many organizations are involved in the design, construction, functionality and long-term maintenance including: BNSF Railway, Metropolitan Transit System (MTS), San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), AMTRAK, San Diego Imperial Valley Railway, North County Transit District, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and the FRA.

For more information about the Quiet Zone, visit www.CCDC.com, or San Diego Quiet Zone, <http://www.quietzonesd.info/>. For specific information about traffic impacts on this or other downtown construction projects or special events, visit Paradise in Progress www.paradiseinprogress.org.

###

CCDC is a public, nonprofit corporation established in 1975 by the City of San Diego to plan and facilitate the redevelopment of the 1,500-acre downtown area.