

ENTERED
Office of Chief Counsel
August 5, 2026
Part of
Public Record

August 5, 2026

Chief of Case Administration, Office of Chief Counsel
Surface Transportation Board
395 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20423-0001

Re: Docket No. FD 36873 — Comment Transmitting Resident Statements Submitted on Behalf of Houston East End Community Members

To the Surface Transportation Board,

I am Lindsay Williams, President of Super Neighborhoods 64 and 88 (Eastwood, Lawndale, and Wayside) in Houston's East End, and President of the Eastwood Civic Association. I write to place into the record statements from residents of the neighborhoods most directly affected by this proposed transaction. Each statement was voluntarily shared with me by community members.

I. Why These Residents Are Not Filing Individually

The Board should understand that the absence of a resident's name from this docket does not mean the absence of an opinion, an experience, or a stake in the outcome. Residents in my community have told me directly why they will not file on their own behalf, and their reasons fall into several categories.

First, the filing process itself has proven hostile to unrepresented residents. Earlier in this proceeding, approximately 20 resident letters raising blocked-crossing concerns were removed from the public docket on a technical objection to the certificate-of-service language, while letters supporting the Applicants that lacked any certificate of service remained posted. Those letters were reinstated only after sustained follow-up. Separately, other commenters, including a Houston City Council office, found that their timely submissions had not been posted publicly and that they had to contact the Board with proof of submission before their comments appeared. Residents watched this happen. The lesson many of them drew is that a working person who writes a letter in good faith can have it silently discarded on a technicality, and that participation requires a level of procedural vigilance they cannot sustain.

Second, residents have been encouraged to retain transportation counsel. Whatever the intent of that suggestion, its effect on ordinary residents is chilling. The families who live beside these rail lines cannot afford specialized counsel, and they should not need lawyers to tell the federal government what happens on their own streets. A public docket that functions, in practice, as accessible only to represented parties is not a public docket.

Third, some residents fear consequences for attaching their names and home addresses to public criticism of a railroad that operates within feet of their homes, workplaces, and children's schools. Others face practical barriers: limited English proficiency, limited internet access,

unfamiliarity with federal e-filing systems, and work schedules that leave no time to navigate them.

As I have shared with staff before, the process for filing a comment on the Surface Transportation Board docket is difficult for an average citizen to participate in. I had to learn, often by fire and through trial and error, the process and am only now comfortable submitting comments, but regular citizens living with the trains are not. As mentioned before, I am able to maintain procedural vigilance out of obligation because of the magnitude of the situation in our neighborhoods.

None of these reasons diminishes the truth of what these residents experience. I therefore ask the Board to accept these statements, to treat them as substantive evidence of existing conditions and anticipated impacts in the East Houston area, and to recognize that the barriers described above have suppressed, not measured, the true volume of community concern in this docket.

II. The Context These Statements Arrive In

These are not isolated anecdotes. They arise from the most severely burdened rail community in the United States. Federal Railroad Administration blocked-crossing data consistently show that Houston reports more blockage incidents than any other American city, with the vast majority occurring in the East End on Union Pacific lines. Houston Fire Department records document hundreds of incidents per year in which first responders were delayed or rerouted by trains occupying critical crossings, and East End emergency response times run roughly double the national average. Children walking to school in these neighborhoods are regularly documented climbing under and between stopped trains because Houston ISD does not bus students living within two miles of their school.

The statements below assign names, or, where residents requested, descriptions, to those numbers.

III. Resident Statements

Statements are presented as lightly edited to correct misspellings, as residents were often submitting on their phones, but nothing else. Most of the time, residents asked not to be named, so I have identified them by neighborhood or nearby cross streets.

A. Emergency access and medical emergencies statements involving delayed ambulances, fire response, inability to reach hospitals, medical transport for vulnerable residents.

I have lived in this community for over 20 years, and the trains have been a constant problem. They regularly block intersections for long periods, making it difficult to get to work, school, medical appointments, and home. Emergency vehicles can also be delayed, creating serious safety concerns. The noise and traffic have affected our quality of life for years. Our community deserves a solution that improves safety, reduces delays, and allows residents to travel without

being held up by trains every day. I hope local leaders will take action to address this long-standing issue.

- *Houston East End Resident*

I've witnessed, on multiple occasions, emergency services sirens coming from afar at full speed, only to stop completely at the railroad tracks because of stalled train cars. I can't imagine my baby or anyone in our family ever having a medical emergency because the odds of an ambulance dealing with a stalled railroad car are high. We intentionally have first aid kits and fire extinguishers throughout our property, as well as tasers, to protect ourselves, knowing that police, ambulance, or firefighters would likely struggle to arrive in time if a train were stalled.

- *Houston East End Resident*

My wife works at East Early College High School (Milby at Navigation) and frequently runs into issues where her route to work is completely blocked. It feels like I run into a stopped train almost every day going to/from Eastwood. I wanted to include this specific picture/date because I noticed an ambulance trying to get past the stopped train, and they had to weave through the neighborhood to find where the train ended.



- *East End Houston Resident located near Walker and Lockwood*

B. Children and schools — statements about crossing stopped trains to reach school, tardiness discipline, missed testing, safety fears.

As a former teacher in the area, I've noticed time and time again how trains affect student attendance and, in turn, their performance. It is upsetting to see the effects of blocked crossings affecting people not just in that moment but for years to come.

- *Houston East End Resident*

My child goes to Kipp; the traffic it causes is ridiculous, and we constantly have to reroute to get her to school. If we don't leave extra early, we risk her being late.



- *Houston East End Resident located near Lawndale*

I am a teacher who needs to get to work. I frequently cross this train intersection and constantly have to reroute. This intersection also concerns me because students attend the KIPP school there. I have seen students crossing the intersection, going over and under the train, which is very unsafe. I'm concerned for my community and for the safety of these kids. It is absolutely absurd that these trains frequently park themselves on these train tracks for days

- *East End Houston Resident located near Lockwood and Rusk*

I have to get my child from daycare by a certain time, and the trains being slow and stopping delays me from getting to daycare on time.

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Jenson and I-10*

My daily life is affected because my son attends KIPP and walks home. Most mornings and afternoons, there is a train, and he has to wait since crossing somewhere else isn't possible. On several occasions like this, he has had to climb onto the train to reach the other side. Both the

danger of physically climbing onto the train and/or having to wait in the street are stresses that any child shouldn't have to endure.

- *East End Houston Resident near Telephone and Lawndale*

I drive a school bus, and this train prevented me from picking up students on that street. Every day this week, a train passed around 6:30 am. It seems these train conductors do this on purpose, and the worst part is that the yard is empty.

- *East End Houston Resident near Jefferson and the East Belt*

They always pass around this time. It makes us get to school late to pick up our children. We have to find an alternative route and waste gas.

- *East End Houston Resident near Leeland and Cullen*

C. Work, income, and daily life — missed shifts, lost wages, unpredictable commutes, being trapped inside or outside the neighborhood.

I've witnessed citizens regularly pass under rail cars: teenagers, elderly people, bikers who toss their bikes under the cars, and even parents with children who just need to finish their walk. Personally, I've had to call a neighbor to pick up my child, stroller, and me, and drive us around a stalled train to get us home to the other side of the tracks if the train arrives while we are on a walk and stays completely stalled for more than 30 minutes.

- *Houston East End Resident*

Train crossings are often occupied, though most irritating is when they are parked on a crossing. This is a 10-15 minute detour on the way to school. I get stopped regularly while doing daily activities.

- *Houston East End Resident*

Trains delay residents, traffic, and businesses. They create dangerous conditions for pedestrians.

- *Houston East End Resident*

Personally, trains make daily life unpredictable and inconvenient. Going to work, running errands, and getting around my own neighborhood are always conditioned upon trains

- *Houston East End Resident*

I often have to wait up to 20 minutes for trains that stop or slow down on tracks along my commute.

- *Houston East End Resident*

I have to drive/ride/bike around them, occasionally walk THROUGH them. I suck in their fumes. I am agitated by their constant horns. I am endangered by their potential and eventual derailments and chemical spills. And so on.

- *Houston East End Resident*

I have lived here for over 20 years, and the trains have always been a problem. They cause long traffic delays, make it difficult to get around the area, and create a lot of noise. They have had a negative impact on our daily lives for many years.

- *Houston East End Resident*

I have lived in the neighborhood for over a decade. I have seen multiple 24-hour-plus train stoppages and innumerable trains parked for greater than an hour.

- *Houston East End Resident*

The most pressing issue facing the SN is coexistence with freight trains traversing the area. The FRA announced that the East End is the most congested freight rail complex in the United States, yet the region has just two more crossings than a two-mile stretch of Washington Avenue, which has four crossings. When trains park in the neighborhood, they block many at-grade intersections simultaneously. People can't get to school, work, and home. This impacts commerce and daily life for residents.

- *Houston East End Resident*

Finally, all private builders are now required to include a sidewalk for pedestrians on their properties. However, the active railroad crossings near my property regularly have so many hazards that I've seen wheelchair riders and people with strollers move to the street and prefer crossing there, rather than continuing to the cutoff due to the lack of sidewalk or proper paving for pedestrians at the railroad crossings.

- *Houston East End Resident*

The malfunctioning of railroad arms is at least a weekly occurrence, causing traffic backups for a multitude of cars and wreaking havoc when people try to lift them to go underneath or zig-zag between them. There is NO active response when calling the hotline for railroad issues, and it can take more than 24 hours for them to address a malfunctioning railroad arm.

- *Houston East End Resident*

I cannot pass at Cullen. The only way out is Polk Street. Many cars are stopping and turning around, making dangerous traffic maneuvers. Almost was hit at the intersection by a truck making an illegal U-turn to speed around the train. This is happening at 5:30 p.m. during the evening rush hour.

- *Houston East End Resident located near Cullen and Leeland*

I have to make an illegal and dangerous left turn onto Navigation from Bastrop to get around the train

- *East End Houston Resident located near Commerce St. and N. Bastrop St.*

Absolutely impacts my commute daily, whether AM or PM. Seems to stop especially between 7-8 AM/PM, which can be the heart of rush hours

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Jenson and I-10*

Delaying my arrival to important appointments.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Lockwood and Harrisburg*

The stopped trains prevented me from frequenting a business.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Eastwood and Rusk*

I was taking the Metro Bus Route #50 home from Hobby Airport. Since there was a blocked crossing, the Bus Operator detoured south down Hughes Street. All intersections south of Polk were blocked by the stopped train (Polk, Leeland, Jefferson, Lawndale, and Telephone), so the Operator had to detour to the i45 Feeder until they reached the Eastwood Transit Center to resume their route. This meant that 10 bus stops were not served on that route, leaving passengers waiting for their bus or existing passengers walking farther than they would have if they had gotten off at their stop. For me, it meant a 23-minute walk from the Transit Center instead of a 5-minute walk from my closest bus stop.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Hughes and Polk*

It's making it so I can't reach locations north of the crossing in a reasonable amount of time.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Dumble and Capitol*

I can no longer get to or from anywhere without major disruption to my life. I must drive many miles out of the way, wasting precious time, money, and gasoline, trying to find an alternate route around a very long train that is blocking pretty much all roads. I am constantly late dropping off and picking up a child at school, and I am also late for appointments.

- *Houston Resident located near Wayside and Telephone*

For the past several years, all streets are being blocked in the East End by stopped trains for very long periods of time; sometimes 2-6 hours at a time. This is a DAILY occurring event in the East End!! I've lived in the East End for 55 years, and it has NEVER been this bad.

There were always long trains stopped, but they were also being decoupled to avoid blocking thoroughfares for several hours at a time. I can no longer get to or from anywhere without a major disruption to my life. I must drive many miles out of the way, wasting precious money and gasoline trying to find an alternate route around a very long train blocking ALL roads. I am constantly late dropping off and picking up a child at school, as well as for appointments.

We have been complaining to Union Pacific for at least two solid years. UP's public relations rep keeps telling us they are working on a solution, promising a solution, and nothing happens. UP is asking community members to do UP's job of monitoring blocked streets by using a website to report when one of its trains blocks a street. I try to do it as often as I can.

However, the website is inadequate as it REQUIRES an entry for the time the train stopped AND a time it restarted. That needs to be changed so that the only required inputs are the time and location where a stopped train was encountered. I don't have time to sit at the railroad track for several hours to enter the required start/stop information on their website, and, honestly, UP should be monitoring its own disruption of traffic. Up until several years ago, UP used to decouple trains that were blocking main thoroughfares such as Lawndale. They stopped doing that. It must be less expensive to grease a few palms of the worthless politicians who allow them to turn a blind eye to street-blocking than to hire personnel to decouple trains.

Another temporary idea that UP promised to "look into" but has never done so is developing a phone app that shows where trains are stopped. Developing an app would take just a few weeks at minimal cost and would be a good-faith effort on their part to show the community that they are listening to the community's concerns and trying to be a good corporate citizen. We've asked them to do that several times, and each time they say they will but then nothing happens.

There is no excuse for these blockages, other than Union Pacific's poor management and blatant disregard for the citizens who use the PUBLIC streets that they block. These streets belong to all of us, and they should not be allowed to block them for several hours with no consequences. It seems that Union Pacific is more concerned with making donations to useless politicians who allow this travesty to continue.

UNION PACIFIC KNOWS THAT THEIR TRAINS ARE BLOCKING MAJOR THOROUGHFARES and disrupting lives, but refuses to do anything to relieve the negative impact they are causing.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Wayside and Lawndale*

It has made me late for work multiple times.

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Hirsch and Clinton*

5:50 pm: Trying to reach Bellaire for a 6:30 basketball game (27 min trip in existing traffic), and this train delays me by over 25 minutes due to it being slow-moving, and the traffic back up both at the tracks and then eventual increase in congestion on the road

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Jenson and Lyons*

Trying to get downtown for early workout at YMCA and a train was stopped. Took an extra 8-10 min to turn around and find an alternate route, setting my morning schedule back by 30 minutes. Probably increasing my heart rate to concerning levels out of rage.

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Jenson and Lyons*

Rush hour of 6-9 am and 5-9 pm for drivers in central Houston also seems to be a time for trains to carry their largest/longest loads and/or stop on tracks. The return-to-office edicts have worsened the impact as more cars are on the road both at these intersections and on the freeways/downtown surface streets

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Jenson and Lyons*

It makes us lose time and gas. We have to go farther out to look for another route. At times, we try to go down Altic and find another stalled train.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Leeland and Ernestine*

I have to travel 1 mile when I'm just about 2 blocks from my house.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Lawndale and Henninger*

It affects both personal and work. On this particular day, since it blocked at 6:35, it interrupted my bus route. I drive a school bus, and when a train blocks the tracks, I'm unable to stop to pick up students.

- *East End Houston Resident near 69th and Ave B*

These train conductors seem to do this on purpose right when kids are going to school or getting out. They choose to block around 6:30 am and 2:00 pm. They mentioned, while speaking to Congresswoman Sylvia Garcia, that they are adding technology to help them.

What they need to do is use cell phones and call ahead to make sure the yard has enough space for them. It is a hassle and a waste of time, not to mention the gas used going around, but they forget that some of our neighbors do not have vehicles, or only have one, and used to go to work, leaving kids to walk to and from school. These poor kids cannot go from street to street to see if the train is not blocking. I have seen many go back home and miss an instructional day. I have also witnessed kids jumping over the trains to get to school.

- *East End Houston Resident near Leeland and Cullen*

Because cars cannot cross from the East End to Harrisburg, they are driving down the side streets. These cars are unfamiliar with the area and will run stop signs, speed because they're in a hurry, and drive erratically. The increase in the number of cars has gotten exponentially worse, and I worry about the kids who are playing in the area or cars that are always parked on the streets getting hit.

- *East End Houston Resident near Eastwood and Harrisburg*

The east downtown area should be more liveable. Who is responsible for the area's growth, and is the point of contact? Who holds meetings for this area? Who is in charge of legislation to pass projects for a new crossing/no blow zone that we can reach out to? Please share that information.

- *East End Houston Resident near Polk and Milby*

12:15 am, 1:23 am, 1:30 am... Multiple trains (or perhaps the same one in the group after 1:20 am) with loud and extended horns again coming from the east side. Absolutely zero need for this kind of behavior, and it is the 5th time in as many days after midnight that we've had to endure ones that can wake a person up from deep sleep.

Either the crossings work, or they don't, but the city and UP need to decide because horns at these hours of the night are absolutely ridiculous and unnecessary. Certain conductors seem to enjoy having loud horns and holding them for as long as they'd like... Feels diabolical.

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Waco and Clinton*

Thankfully, this train did not stop. But I do want to let everyone know that these train conductors seem to pass at specific times on purpose. I live a block away, so I am always aware when a train passes. Nearly every day a train passes by at 6:30 am and then again between 2:00 and 3:00 pm. It happened this morning and yesterday, both in the morning and afternoon. This affects our kids trying to get to and from school.

- *East End Houston Resident near Lawndale and Jefferson*

I have recordings of these events with dates and times. Train stops delay my route when I am traveling to community meetings in Manchester, where I have to reroute and take the J-connector entrance. When I go on my walks in the morning, I have to take dangerous detours because I cannot access the trails, and rerouting takes me down the wayside along narrow, broken sidewalks with no railings. I have seen kids and other people walk under the trains. Depending on the train, they can bring chemical smells or other odors into the community

- *East End Houston Resident located near 66th and Capitol*

Simple tasks like going to work or taking the kids to school are always interrupted by these trains. They cause us to waste time and gas by forcing us to look for an alternative route. It impacts my daily commute. A simple run to the grocery store can take hours with these stalled trains.

- *East End Houston Resident near 66th and the Galveston Subdivision*

This train conductor moved the train and blocked 3 intersections instead of going all the way. The yard was empty. They do this on purpose, and it has to stop. We need help on Telephone Rd.

- *East End Houston Resident near Telephone and Lawndale*

Everyday tasks get interrupted constantly. We are always having to drive around all the streets to see if we find an opening. It makes us waste time and gas.

This exact situation happened yesterday and today. Around the same time, the train blocked Polk, Leeland, and Jefferson. Left Lawndale and Telephone opened. The yard was completely clear, but the train decided to block our streets. Around 4:20 pm, a second train passed the opposite way. It makes no sense for these trains to get on the tracks if they are not going to go into the yard.

- *East End Houston Resident near Leeland and the East Belt Subdivision*

It interrupts our daily lives constantly. Simple tasks that normally take minutes can turn into hours due to stalled trains.

- *East End Houston Resident near Jefferson and the East Belt Subdivision*

I went to walk my dog as soon as the train stopped, and when I returned an hour later, it was still stopped. As I was walking, drivers were trying to get around the train by carelessly doing U-turns in the street as I was trying to cross, by carelessly swinging around corners that they were unfamiliar with, and by just driving recklessly. There is no reason for a train to be stopped blocking this many major streets during rush hour.



- *East End Houston Resident near Dumble and Capitol*

Sometimes it is 2 trains. We were cornered in. There's no way out.

- *East End Houston Resident near Dumble and Capitol.*

We are triangulated inside the Lockwood, Lawndale, Telephone, and Cullen crossings. Every day, we must find an alternative route to one of these crossings in order to come and go from our home. The likelihood that trains will stop at one or more of these crossings makes it nearly impossible to commute through the neighborhood daily. We're also next to both an elementary and a middle school and have watched students cross these tracks many times because they are unable to cross by car.

- *Eastwood Resident*

There have been multiple occasions when I could not get to work on time because a train was delayed. The back ways are inconvenient and would take longer, even if I left earlier.

- *East End Houston Resident*

My neighborhood bears more of the burden of rail crossing blockages than the entire rest of the United States combined. The noise from train horns is 24 hours every day and UP is unwilling to create a quiet zone even though the industries served by rail are far away. UP is perpetuating a decades-long history of racial discrimination because it does not operate this way in other parts of the city. Further, the operating plan publicized by UP will 1) increase shippers' rates not lower them, 2) increase grade crossing blockages, 3) do nothing for operating efficiencies, 4) will increase truck traffic beyond already unsafe levels. UP has not been an honest partner with either the industries it serves nor the community. Our neighborhood suffers daily from lack of connectivity for autos and pedestrians, noise pollution, increased air pollution from stopped trains, encounters with hazardous chemicals, and risk of derailments and hazardous chemical spills.

I am a former shipper who has used rail transportation for steel, chemicals and multimodal containers. The Gulf Coast industrial complex relies very heavily on rail service. UP's acquisition of Southern Pacific has been a disaster for industry. The promoted benefits of that acquisition never materialized, quite to the contrary, rates went up as service deteriorated. The NS acquisition will be more of the same.

UP is dishonest with regulators, its customers and with the community. UP doesn't care, and it doesn't care that it doesn't care.

- *Second Ward, Houston Resident*

I have crawled under a train twice. I hate to admit it but I was on foot and the train was stopped. It was a blazing hot day and I couldn't fathom standing there waiting for the train. I had already waited 10 minutes. I encountered a neighbor who was in the same situation and we did it together. It was really scary.

- *East End Houston Resident*

I live on Lockwood Dr, two streets over from the railroad tracks. Union Pacific trains pass several times a day or more, some miles long, some stopping on the tracks and idling there for 20-30 minutes at a time. During these idles, cars are stalled in the street waiting to cross the tracks, usually stuck in a gridlock. My apartment parking spot is regularly blocked, preventing me from leaving in these instances. There have been multiple occasions that emergency vehicles have been stuck in these gridlocks. I listen to train horns all night, as none of the neighborhoods in the East End are given the courtesy of Quiet Zones. I take the MetroRail on Harrisburg to work every weekday and am now very used to climbing over stalled train cars. I recognize the dangers of doing so and am aware that school children are also doing the same and losing their lives in the process.

- *Eastwood Resident*

Living by an active Union Pacific Railroad crossing has made me realize how little the East End community is respected by UP. If not daily, at least multiple times per week we witness stopped train cars on crossings far surpassing 45 minutes. We've had the sad opportunity to see multiple vehicles attempt to go the wrong way to get around trains after waiting for more than an hour to get through.

- *East End Houston Resident*

I lived together with my wife next to one of the lines in Eastwood for about 5 years. We ended up having our first child while living in the house. We loved our neighborhood but ultimately moved away due to the many hazards and inconveniences caused by the train. Whether it was sleepless nights from constant running trains, stopped trains causing daily delays, and health hazards to our family. We unfortunately had to move away. The neighborhood would have been perfect if it wasn't for those trains.

- *Former Eastwood Resident*

D. Health, noise, and environment — idling locomotives, horn noise, vibration, air quality concerns.

Major industry and commercial vehicles sit idle, with loads of material and employee hours wasted at these stopped train crossings. Not to mention, families and individuals simply trying to get home are held up without recourse because many other cars sit behind them, trapped with no way around a stalled train.

- *Houston East End Resident*

The noise pollution from honking horns is also excessive. While we understand that safety is a major concern and that this is not a quiet zone, it is incredible to see that drivers often violate the rules and honk for more than 5 consecutive times, holding the honk for more than 10 seconds at a time, far more than the stipulated requirement.

- *Houston East End Resident*

Constantly waking up from sleep. Especially aggravating when horns are unnecessary. Many other neighborhoods have found solutions for this.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Oakhurst and Capitol*

Two nights in a row, a train was stopped in the neighborhood and blew the horn all night long, starting at 9 pm and continuing through 6 am. This is ridiculous. I don't understand why the horn needs to be blown all night in a no-blow zone.

- *East End Houston Resident located near Jefferson and Hughes*

Trains are constantly blowing horns like this every 15-30 min, from 7 pm to 7 am; frequent locations of loud horns are the bridges over I-10 at Waco and at Jensen. The Jensen one disrupts people at St Arnold's and others playing in a public park.

- *Fifth Ward Houston Resident, located near Jensen and Lyons*

Train horns don't let me get rest some nights, with almost-hourly horn blasts. (I live at East End Apartments. I am unable to rest or concentrate during the day. I am irritated, and my hearing becomes temp impaired if I am outside or I get ringing in my ears. The walls in my bedroom, at the corners of the windows, are stressed and cracked, and the condition worsens with passing trains.

The train horns were blown 5+ times today, with the latest at 9 pm. I wouldn't be so bothered if this wasn't a no-blow zone, but they also consistently wake up my infant, and as soon as I get him back to sleep, the train horn blows again. Sometimes in the middle of the night as well. I'm at my wits' end.

- *East End Houston Resident near Lawndale and the East Belt Subdivision*

I have counted 3 trains in the last 8 hours that have blown their horns multiple times each in a no-horn zone.

- *East End Houston Resident near Lawndale and Telephone Rd.*

Recent video documentation of blocked crossings in Houston's East End

The collection of stories below is intended to demonstrate the ongoing blocked-crossing incidents we face daily, even while the merger is being evaluated. To remind the board, this is pre-merger, to which the applicant has already said there “might be more blocked crossings” post-merger.

Monday, August 2, 2026 - A freight train blocked many Galveston Subdivision rail line grade crossings from 5:27 to 5:59 a.m. Video shows a person throwing objects under a tank car stopped at Eastwood Street. They then crawled under with a bicycle.



Saturday, August 1, 2026 - A freight train blocked many East Belt rail line grade crossings for about one hour starting at 4:13 a.m. Video shows a person climbing through two tank cars idled at Polk Street.



Wednesday, July 29, 2026 - A freight train blocked the West Belt's Sampson to Cullen grade crossings from 10:35 to 11:07 a.m. Video shows a bicycle lock and cable being tossed through a rail car stopped across Sampson Street. Moments later, a person and bicycle emerge from under the same car.



Sunday, July 26, 2026 - A freight train blocked multiple East Belt rail line grade crossings from 6:58 to 7:57 a.m. Video from the Polk Street crossing shows personal belongings being thrown through rail cars as they lurch forward. A person then climbs between the moving rail cars.



Important note: the above was also featured on the news, where Union Pacific was quoted as “anyone who does this is trespassing, and it’s dangerous.” which is tone-deaf considering that we face these blockages every day and have no alternatives.



Saturday, July 25, 2026 - The West Belt rail line’s Cullen Street grade crossing gates were activated for several hours, despite no train being present. Video shows multiple motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians bypassing the lowered gate arms to continue through the crossing.

The exact start time is unknown, but the malfunction was first documented at approximately 6 a.m. Per the FRA, the rail line’s owner railroad is responsible for regularly inspecting grade crossing warning systems and ensuring they remain fully functional. With repeated and prolonged false gate activations occurring at East End grade crossings, the public may be becoming desensitized to the warning signals. One day, the gate arms will come down as intended. People conditioned by repeated false alarms may cross as a train approaches.



Tuesday, July 21, 2026 - A freight train blocked multiple East Belt rail line grade crossings from 7:19 to 10:38 p.m. Video captured a cyclist dismounting at the Polk Street crossing and pulling the bicycle beneath rail cars that remained stopped across the roadway. Not shown are the many minutes the cyclist spent waiting and weighing their options.



Wednesday, July 15, 2026 - A freight train stopped across the West Belt rail line's Sampson to Cullen grade crossings from 12:19 to 1:26 p.m. Video shows a person climbing through a rail car idled near Sampson Street.

Note the first comment: "When I'm on deliveries, I have to climb through the train. Otherwise I'll get a bad rating and then be forced into homelessness"



Tuesday, June 16, 2026 - A freight train partially blocked the East Belt rail crossing at Polk Street beginning at 2:34 p.m. A rail car obstructed the eastbound lane of Polk Street. The westbound lane remained physically clear, although the crossing gate arms were lowered. Video shows multiple vehicles maneuvering around the lowered gate arms and the trailing rail car to pass through the crossing.



Sunday, June 7, 2026 - A freight train stopped across multiple East Belt rail line grade crossings from approximately 7:20 p.m. to 8:22 p.m. At 7:43 p.m., a person carried a bicycle through rail cars blocking Polk Street. Approximately 11 seconds after the individual exited the area between the rail cars, the train began moving forward.



Thursday, June 4, 2026 - A freight train blocked many West Belt railroad line grade crossings for more than one hour starting at 12:02 p.m. A person is shown climbing through a railcar stopped across Sampson Street at 12:27 p.m.



Tuesday, June 2, 2026 - A freight train stopped across many Galveston Subdivision grade crossings for about one hour starting at 5:32 a.m. A person is shown dragging their bicycle under a tank car idled at Sampson Street to continue their journey.



Friday, May 29, 2026 - A freight train blocked many East Belt rail line grade crossings starting at 6:37 a.m. A young person is shown dragging their bicycle under a rail car stopped at Polk Street to continue their journey.



Tuesday, May 26, 2026 - A freight train stopped across the East Belt's Polk Street grade crossing from 4:56 to 5:32 p.m. Video shows a pedestrian going under a tank car stopped across Polk Street at approximately 5:17 p.m.



Tuesday, May 12, 2026 - A freight train blocked the Galveston Subdivision's Sampson Street to Lockwood Drive grade crossings from 4:43 to 6:53 p.m. A person climbed through an idling tank car at Eastwood Street to continue their journey.



Monday, May 11, 2026 - The West Belt's Milby Street crossing gate arms were down with no train present for most of the weekend. Video shows a vehicle going around the gate arms to continue. Between stopped trains and malfunctioning signals, residents are conditioned to drive around the safety gates to mitigate their impact



Tuesday, April 28, 2026 - A freight train stopped across the West Belt's Sampson to Cullen grade crossings from 4:25 to 5:34 p.m. With no way around, a pedestrian and a cyclist were filmed climbing through hopper cars idled at Sampson Street.



IV. Requests to the Board

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request that the Board:

1. Accept the attached resident statements into the record of this proceeding and afford them substantive weight in the public-interest review under 49 U.S.C. § 11324 and in the environmental review of this transaction;
2. Recognize that documented barriers to individual participation, including the removal of resident letters on procedural technicalities and suggestions that residents retain counsel, have suppressed the volume of community comment, and weigh the record accordingly;
3. Direct the Office of Environmental Analysis to treat lived-experience evidence of blocked crossings, emergency-response delay, and pedestrian exposure as relevant to its analysis of the Houston terminal area, including its environmental-justice analysis;
4. Hold a public hearing in Houston, in the affected community, with evening hours and Spanish-language interpretation, so that residents who cannot navigate written federal

filings can be heard directly, as was done for affected communities in Docket No. FD 36500;

The people whose words appear in this filing are not parties with counsel, consultants, or communications teams. They are the people, neighbors, friends, and families who will live with whatever the Board decides. I ask only that their experiences be accorded the same place in this record as the Applicants' projections.

Respectfully submitted,

Lindsay Williams

President, Super Neighborhood 64 & 88, Greater Eastwood, Lawndale & Wayside

President, Eastwood Civic Association

Member, Houston Area Rail Transformative Community Advisory Board

Member, East End District Rail Safety Task Force

Member, Harris County Precinct 2 Community Advisory Board

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 5th day of August, 2026, the foregoing document was served on all parties of record to this proceeding.

/s/ Lindsay Williams