



## Communications Department

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### **Gates to be installed at Neil Drive RR crossing**

Citing one of the state's worst safety ratings, the City of Jonesboro announced Thursday that gates will be installed at the railroad crossing on Neil Drive.

The crossing was rated the sixth-most hazardous of 2,456 in Arkansas, city Traffic Engineer Mark Nichols said. The Neil Drive crossing sees 1,100 vehicles and 34 trains on a daily basis.

Representatives of BNSF Railway and the Arkansas Highway Transportation Department met with city engineers this week and determined that crossing arms were the appropriate measure, replacing the cantilever lights that hang above the north side of the crossing and upgrading the crossing with concrete panels. The work will be paid entirely with federal funds and should be completed within a year.

"Railroad crossings are critical, but they can be dangerous when traffic volume gets too high," Jonesboro Mayor Harold Perrin said. "This intersection is a textbook example, and I'm pleased that AHTD, the railway and our engineers are doing something about it."

Another crossing in Jonesboro with a high hazard rating is at Henson Road just north of Dan Avenue. Nichols said a traffic signal will soon be installed at that crossing.

"It's in design right now, and I would expect construction to start this year or early next year," Nichols said. "It usually takes a year or so once they make a decision on the specific improvement."

Hazard ratings are determined by a set of factors that include vehicle traffic, number of trains per day, speed of trains, number of tracks and accident history.

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