

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

CITY OF LAKEWOOD,

Petitioner,

CENTRAL PUGET SOUND  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION  
AUTHORITY (SOUND TRANSIT),  
BNSF RAILWAY CO.,  
TACOMA RAIL,  
WASHINGTON STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION,

Respondents.

DOCKET TR-143846

ORDER 02

ORDER GRANTING REVISED  
PETITION TO RECONSTRUCT AND  
INTERCONNECT THE RAILROAD  
WARNING AND HIGHWAY  
TRAFFIC SIGNALS AT A PUBLIC  
RAILROAD HIGHWAY-GRADE  
CROSSING AT BERKELEY STREET  
SOUTHWEST IN LAKEWOOD

USDOT: #085829U

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On November 10, 2014, the City of Lakewood (City or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission), a petition seeking approval to modify a railroad highway-grade crossing and interconnect the railroad signals with an existing traffic signal. The crossing is identified as USDOT #085829U and is located at the intersection of Berkeley Street Southwest and the Respondents' railroad tracks in Lakewood. The Commission issued an Order granting the petition on December 30, 2014.
- 2 On July 21, 2016, the City notified Commission staff of the completion of the reconstruction of the Berkeley Street Southwest crossing. On August 3, 2016, Commission staff inspected the crossing for compliance with the Commission's Order. The results of the inspection indicated several areas of deficiency. The City had not installed delineators on the median barriers on the southeast-bound approach to the crossing and several signs blocked the view of railroad signal equipment. Upon notification from Commission staff, the City installed the delineators and relocated the signs. However, there were additional deficiencies noted in the inspection that required the filing of a revised petition and approval from the Commission.
- 3 On April 14, 2017, the City filed the revised petition, which adds an automated wayside horn system already implemented at the crossing and proposes to remove a redundant set of flashing lights and signage on the southeast-bound approach that may be distracting to

drivers. Also, a new ramp meter system was installed with an intertie with the railroad signals, to preempt ramp meter clearing prior to any back-up over the railroad crossing.

4 Tacoma Rail and BNSF Railway Co. (BNSF) operate freight trains on this corridor of track which is owned by the Central Puget Sound Regional Transportation Authority (Sound Transit). The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) is responsible for maintaining the traffic signals and ramp meter located near the crossing which is currently interconnected with the existing railroad warning devices. All Respondents have consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.

5 The automated wayside horn system was installed at the crossing to provide auditory warning of an approaching train to vehicles and pedestrians. The wayside horns, which are mounted on each approach to the crossing and directed at vehicle traffic, will take the place of the engineer sounding the train horn when approaching the crossing.

6 Redundant crossbuck signs and LED lights are currently installed for both pedestrian and vehicle traffic on the southeast-bound approach to the crossing, which may cause confusion for oncoming vehicular traffic. The City proposes to remove the vehicle LED light set and crossbuck sign, leaving the pedestrian lights and crossbuck in place. Crossing signage would still meet all required standards but would appear less cluttered and eliminate confusion.

7 WSDOT installed a ramp meter on the nearby southbound highway entry ramp, which is interconnected with the railroad signals. When the railroad signals are activated, the ramp meter will change to a steady green to prevent the traffic on the freeway ramp from backing up over the crossing.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

8 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *Chapter 81.53 RCW*.

9 (2) The Berkeley Street Southwest grade crossing, identified as USDOT #085829U, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.

10 (3) RCW 81.53.261 and WAC 480-62-150 require that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing or

upgrading active crossing warning signals or devices within the state of Washington.

- 11 (4) Commission Staff investigated the revised petition and recommended that it be granted with conditions.
- 12 (5) After examination of the revised petition filed by the City of Lakewood on April 14, 2017, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

13 The revised petition of the City of Lakewood to modify a railroad-highway grade crossing at the intersection of Berkeley Street Southwest and the Respondents' tracks in the city of Lakewood, is granted. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:

- (1) The modifications must conform to those described in the petition.
- (2) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- (3) Upon completion of the proposed modifications, the Petitioner must notify the Commission within 30 days. Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions set forth in this order

The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 01 in Docket A-151775. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective April 21, 2017.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



STEVEN V. KING, Executive Director and Secretary

**NOTICE:** This is an order delegated to the Secretary for decision. In addition to serving you a copy of the decision, the Commission will post on its website for at least fourteen (14) days a listing of all matters delegated to the Secretary for decision. You may seek Commission review of this decision. You must file a request for Commission review of this order no later than fourteen (14) days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's website. The Commission will schedule your request for review for consideration at a regularly scheduled open meeting. The Commission will notify you of the time and place of the open meeting at which the Commission will review the order.

The Commission will grant a late-filed request for review only on a showing of good cause, including a satisfactory explanation of why the person did not timely file the request. A form for late-filed requests is available on the Commission's website.

This notice and review process is pursuant to the provisions of RCW 80.01.030 and WAC 480-07-904(2) and (3).