

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

YAKIMA COUNTY,

Petitioner,

Seeking Approval to Upgrade Signals  
at a Railroad-Highway Grade Crossing

DOCKET TR-171060

ORDER 01

ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO  
MODIFY HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE  
CROSSING ACTIVE WARNING  
DEVICES AT LATERAL A ROAD  
AND AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE  
FROM THE GRADE CROSSING  
PROTECTIVE FUND

USDOT: 099216G

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On October 10, 2017, Yakima County (County or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission), a petition seeking approval to modify active warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is identified as USDOT 099216G and is located at the intersection of Lateral A Road and the White Swan Branch Line's tracks in Yakima county. The Petitioner further requested the Commission authorize an expenditure of \$2,840 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) to pay for the cost of the upgrades.
- 2 Yakima County owns the White Swan Branch Line and Yakima Central Railroad operates on the line under contract.
- 3 Lateral A Road is a two-lane roadway with a posted speed limit of 50 miles per hour. Average annual daily vehicle traffic through the crossing is estimated at 1,800 vehicles. Lateral A Road is part of an established school bus route with nine buses traveling over the crossing daily. Lateral A Road is also part of an established truck route with approximately nine percent commercial vehicle traffic. Four freight trains operate at 20 miles per hour over this single mainline track crossing each week. No passenger trains operate over the crossing.
- 4 Railroad warning devices at the Lateral A Road crossing consist of shoulder-mounted flashing lights, gates, crossbucks, a pedestrian warning bell, advance warning signs, and motion sensor train detection. The Petitioner proposes to upgrade the existing incandescent flashing lights to LEDs.

- 5 Commission Staff reviewed the proposed upgrades and recommends approval of the project. The upgrades to LED flashing lights will improve the overall safety at the crossing by providing greater visibility for the motoring public and pedestrians.
- 6 The total approximate cost of the project is \$2,840. The Petitioner is contributing labor toward the cost of the upgrades and is responsible for any additional project costs. An expenditure of \$2,840 from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund is available to help fund the improvements.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7 (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, and authority to approve and administer disbursements from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. RCW 81.53; RCW 81.53.271; RCW 81.53.281.
- 8 (2) The grade crossing at Lateral A Road, identified as USDOT 099216G, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 9 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires the Commission grant approval prior to any changes to public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *See also* WAC 480-62-150.
- 10 (4) RCW 81.53.271 allows the Commission to disburse funds from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund to pay for the installation of a grade crossing protective device, without requiring the Petitioner to share the cost.
- 11 (5) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 12 (6) After reviewing the County's petition filed on October 10, 2017, and giving due consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition and request for disbursement of funds.

**ORDER**

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

- 13 Yakima County's petition to upgrade warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing, located at Lateral A Road, is granted. The cost of this upgrade shall be paid from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund. Approval of the petition is subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Expenditure from the Grade Crossing Protective Fund must not exceed \$2,840.
  - (2) Payment will be made upon presentation of claim for reimbursement for materials and labor, and verification by Commission Staff that the work has been satisfactorily completed.
  - (3) Yakima County must sign and return the attached project agreement.
  - (4) The project must be completed no later than June 15, 2018.
  - (5) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
  - (6) The County must notify the Commission on completion of the upgrades authorized in this Order. Acceptance of the upgrades is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, and verification that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified 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 November 2, 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 Internet 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 Web site. 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).