

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of	DOCKET TR-220498
SPOKANE COUNTY,	ORDER 01
Petitioner,	GRANTING PETITION TO RECONSTRUCT A GRADE SEPARATION (OVERCROSSING)
BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY,	
Respondent.	USDOT: 058633D

BACKGROUND

- 1 On July 1, 2022, Spokane County (County or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to reconstruct an overcrossing at the intersection of Euclid Road and the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) tracks north of Airway Heights, Spokane County, identified as USDOT 058633D.
- 2 Respondent BNSF consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 Euclid Road is a two-lane roadway with a speed limit of 25 miles per hour. An average of 578 vehicles used the overcrossing daily prior to its closure in 2019. This traffic included nine percent commercial vehicle traffic and four school buses each school day.
- 4 On June 19, 2019, Spokane County closed the Euclid Road bridge over the BNSF tracks when engineers identified a critical failure in its supporting structure. This closure has forced local traffic to make extensive detours east or west via unpaved county roads, as depicted in Petition Exhibit "A."
- 5 The County proposes to replace the existing 1916 vintage wooden bridge with a new bridge of pre-stressed concrete construction. The roadway width will increase from 21 feet to 33 feet 7 inches. Roadway shoulders will be added in each direction. Vertical clearance from the top of the rail to bottom of the structure will increase from 21 feet to

23 feet 10 inches. The wooden bridge railings will be replaced by concrete barrier with chain link fencing.

6 In its petition, the County states that reconstruction of the overcrossing will restore emergency vehicle, military, school bus, and general traffic to previously existing paved routes, eliminate excessive traffic on the detour route and adjacent roads, significantly reduce emergency services response times, and restore access for maintenance activities.

7 Because the overcrossing does not intersect the railroad tracks at grade, no railroad warning signs or signals are necessary.

8 BNSF operates 14 freight trains daily on its single-track mainline in this area at up to 35 miles per hour. In addition, two passenger trains operate daily at up to 40 miles per hour.

9 According to the Petition, the parties have reached an agreement related to apportionment of maintenance costs.

10 Commission staff (Staff) has investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted subject to the following conditions: (1) the project must conform to the description in the Petition, (2) the County must complete the proposed modifications within three years, and (3) upon completion of the project authorized herein, the County must notify the Commission with 60 days. Acceptance is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the under crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

DISCUSSION

11 RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to reconstruction of a public overcrossing within the state of Washington. We find that the proposed overcrossing will improve overall public safety, mobility, and convenience for roadway users. Accordingly, the Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

12 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public overcrossings within the state of Washington.

- 13 (2) The Euclid Road overcrossing, identified as USDOT 058633D, is a public overcrossing within the state of Washington.
- 14 (3) RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to establishing a public overcrossing within the state of Washington. See also WAC 480-62-150.
- 15 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 10, above.
- 16 (5) After examination of the Petition filed by the County on July 1, 2022, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 17 Spokane County's Petition to reconstruct a public overcrossing located at the intersection of Euclid Road and BNSF's tracks is granted. Approval of the Petition is subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The project must conform to the description in the Petition.
 - (2) Spokane County must complete the proposed modifications within three years.
 - (3) Upon completion of the project authorized herein, Spokane County must notify the Commission within 60 days. Acceptance is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the overcrossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

The Secretary of the Commission has delegated authority over this matter pursuant to Order 01 in Docket A-180762. The Secretary finds this Order to be consistent with the public interest.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective July 11, 2022.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

**AMANDA MAXWELL,
Executive Director and Secretary**

NOTICE TO PARTIES: This is an order delegated to the Executive Secretary for decision. As authorized in WAC 480-07-904(3), you must file any request for Commission review of this order no later than 14 days after the date the decision is posted on the Commission's website.