

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of

CITY OF SNOQUALMIE,

Petitioner,

THE NORTHWEST RAILWAY  
MUSEUM,

Respondent.

DOCKET TR-250682

ORDER 01

GRANTING PETITION TO MODIFY  
WARNING DEVICES AT A PUBLIC  
HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE  
CROSSING AT SNOQUALMIE  
PARKWAY, SNOQUALMIE

USDOT: 917624C

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On September 3, 2025, the City of Snoqualmie (City or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to modify warning devices at a highway-rail grade crossing at Snoqualmie Parkway and tracks of the Northwest Railway Museum’s (Museum or Respondent) Snoqualmie Valley Railroad in Snoqualmie, identified as USDOT 917624C.
- 2 Respondent, the Museum, consented to entry of a Commission order without hearing.
- 3 Snoqualmie Parkway is a four-lane urban minor arterial roadway with a posted vehicle speed limit of 40 miles per hour. The average annual daily traffic at this location is estimated at 14,700 vehicles. Snoqualmie Parkway is part of an established truck route with approximately 10 percent daily commercial traffic and is part of an established school bus route with 77 buses using the crossing on school days. No freight trains operate over this line. Approximately two passenger trains operate over the crossing daily at up to 10 miles per hour.
- 4 According to the Petition, average daily passenger train traffic is expected to increase to six trains per day, and vehicle traffic is likely to increase as Snoqualmie develops within the next 10 years.
- 5 Warning devices at the crossing consist of advance warning signs, R8-8 “Do Not Stop on Tracks” and “Stop Here on Red” signs, pavement markings, reflectorized cross bucks, Emergency Notification System signs, shoulder and center island mast-mounted LED flashing warning lights, gates, and bells.

- 6 In its Petition, the City describes the changes proposed at the crossing to include installing cantilevers to allow elimination of the center island mast-mounted signals, replacing underground wiring, upgrading the advance traffic preemption to a four-wire system, upgrading train detection to constant warning time, installing a new solid state crossing controller and data recorder, relocating the instrument house, and installing new gates between the cantilever masts and the track. Additional proposed changes include extending the crossing length to accommodate wider sidewalks rerouted behind the cantilever signal masts and installing four R15-8 “Look” signs.
- 7 In describing the public safety need for the crossing modifications, the City states that the crossing’s train detection and control electronics are 30 years old and at the end-of-life. Multiple accidents have occurred at the crossing involving trucks knocking over signal masts in the center island, including one near fatality accident. The City also states that moving the instrument house to the opposite quadrant of the crossing will improve visibility of approaching trains.
- 8 These improvements are funded by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration, Railway-Highway Crossings (Section 130) program. According to the Petition, the City and the Museum have reached an agreement related to the apportionment of costs for the upgrades.
- 9 Staff has investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted 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 USDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, (3) the City must complete the proposed modifications within three years, (4) the City must notify the Commission within 60 days upon completion of the modifications authorized herein, and (5) acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Staff, who will verify that the crossing is in full compliance with the conditions specified herein.

## DISCUSSION

- 10 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington. We find that the proposed modification will improve overall safety for crossing users. When the Commission directs the installation of warning devices, it will apportion installation and maintenance costs in accordance with the applicable statutes.<sup>1</sup> RCW 81.53.261 provides that the parties may enter into an agreement providing for the installation of signals or other warning devices or for the apportionment of the cost of

---

<sup>1</sup> See RCW 81.53.261–.295.

installation and maintenance. The parties to this Petition confirmed that they have reached an agreement related to cost apportionment. Accordingly, the Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 11 (1) The Commission is an agency of the state of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 12 (2) The Snoqualmie Parkway grade crossing, identified as USDOT 917624C, is a public highway-rail grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 13 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to modifying a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington. *See also* Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-62-150.
- 14 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 9 above.
- 15 (5) After examining the Petition filed by the City of Snoqualmie on September 3, 2025, and considering all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 16 The City of Snoqualmie's Petition to modify warning devices at a highway-rail grade crossing located at Snoqualmie Parkway is granted, subject to the following conditions:
  - (1) The modifications must conform to those described in and attached to 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) The City of Snoqualmie must complete the proposed modifications within three years.
  - (4) The City of Snoqualmie must notify the Commission within 60 days upon completion of the modifications authorized herein.

(5) Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Staff, who will verify that the crossing is in full compliance with the conditions specified herein.

17 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 September 15, 2025.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION



JEFF KILLIP

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.**