

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of

CITY OF WENATCHEE,

Petitioner.

BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY,

Respondent.

DOCKET TR-240955

ORDER 01

GRANTING PETITION TO CLOSE A  
HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE CROSSING  
AT HAWLEY STREET IN  
WENATCHEE

USDOT: 065840P

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On December 18, 2024, the City of Wenatchee (City or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to close an at-grade highway-railroad grade crossing. The crossing is identified as USDOT 065840P and is located at the intersection of Hawley Street and the BNSF Railway Company’s (BNSF or Respondent) tracks in Wenatchee.
- 2 Respondent BNSF consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 3 Hawley Street is a two-lane minor urban arterial roadway with a posted vehicle speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Average annual daily vehicle traffic through the crossing is estimated at 2,900 vehicles. Hawley Street is not part of an established school bus route. Hawley Street is part of an established commercial vehicle route with approximately nine percent commercial vehicle traffic. There are two mainline tracks at this location. BNSF operates 14 freight trains daily on its two-track mainline in this area. Two Amtrak passenger trains operate daily in this area. Authorized speed for freight and passenger trains is 50 miles per hour.
- 4 The City’s Wenatchee Confluence Parkway Project will provide a second north-south multimodal crossing of the Wenatchee River. The project involves construction of a new

grade-separated crossing of the BNSF tracks at McKittrick Street<sup>1</sup> and replacement of the at-grade crossing at North Miller Street with a grade-separated crossing.<sup>2</sup>

- 5 Railroad warning devices at the Hawley Street crossing consist of advance warning signs, pavement markings, reflectorized crossbucks, Emergency Notification System signs, pedestrian warning bell, mast and cantilever-mounted warning lights, and gates. Once the crossing closes, BNSF will remove these devices. The Hawley Street crossing will be replaced with a cul-de-sac and traffic will be re-routed to the new McKittrick Street grade-separated crossing.
- 6 Pursuant to the procedure specified in RCW 81.53.060, Commission Staff (Staff) posted notice of the proposed crossing closure at the crossing and arranged for publication of a legal notice in the Wenatchee World, a newspaper of general circulation in the Wenatchee area. Both notices directed any person wishing to comment on the Petition to respond in writing to the Commission. The Commission did not receive comments or objections regarding the proposed crossing closure within the comment period.
- 7 The City, as State Environmental Policy Act lead agency for the proposal, has issued a Determination of Non-Significance for the proposal, thereby satisfying state environmental requirements for the project.
- 8 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 City must complete the project described in the Petition within five years of the effective date of this order, and (3) upon completion of the project, the City must notify the Commission with 60 days. Acceptance is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the project is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

## DISCUSSION

- 9 RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to closing a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington. We find that the proposed closure will improve overall safety for roadway users. Accordingly, the Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

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<sup>1</sup> TR-240956.

<sup>2</sup> TR-240957.

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 10 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 11 (2) The Hawley Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT 065840P, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 12 (3) RCW 81.53.060 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to closing a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington. See also WAC 480-62-150.
- 13 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommend that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 8, above.
- 14 (5) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open meeting on February 13, 2025.
- 15 (6) After examination of the Petition filed by the City of Wenatchee on December 18, 2024, and considering all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

**ORDER**

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

- 16 The City of Wenatchee's Petition to close a railroad-highway grade crossing at the intersection of Hawley Street and the BNSF Railway Co. 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) The City of Wenatchee must complete the project described in the Petition within five years of the effective date of this order.
- (3) Upon completion of the project authorized herein, the City of Wenatchee must notify the Commission within 60 days. Acceptance is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the project is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.060, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective February 13, 2025.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

JEFF KILLIP  
Executive Director and Secretary