

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION,

Petitioner,

SNOHOMISH COUNTY PARKS AND  
RECREATION,

and

BALLARD TERMINAL RAILROAD  
COMPANY, LLC,

Respondents.

DOCKET TR-200147

ORDER 01

GRANTING PETITION TO  
RECONSTRUCT A PUBLIC  
HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE  
CROSSING AND INSTALL AN  
INTERTIE BETWEEN A HIGHWAY  
SIGNAL AND A RAILROAD  
CROSSING SIGNAL SYSTEM AT  
STATE ROUTE 524 NEAR MALTBY

USDOT: 091814T

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On March 3, 2020, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to reconstruct and install an intertie between a highway signal and a railroad crossing signal system at a railroad-highway grade crossing located at State Route 524 (SR-524) near Maltby, identified as USDOT 091814T. WSDOT filed corrected traffic signal preemption information on March 12, 2020.
- 2 Respondents Snohomish County Parks and Recreation, the track owner, and Ballard Terminal Railroad Company, LLC (Ballard Terminal), the railroad operator, consented to entry of a Commission order without further notice or hearing.
- 3 SR-524 is a two-lane roadway with a posted vehicle speed limit of 35 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 7,800 vehicles. SR-524 is part of an established school bus route with approximately six school buses traveling over the crossing daily. SR-524 is also part of an established truck route with approximately 12 percent commercial vehicle traffic.
- 4 Warning devices at the SR-524 crossing consist of advance warning signs and crossbucks. Ballard Terminal operates an average of one freight train per day over this

two-track crossing at less than 10 miles per hour. No passenger trains travel over the crossing.

5 As part of this project, WSDOT or the railroad will:

- Install mast-mounted flashing lights and gates.
- Install a bungalow.
- Install constant warning time train detection.
- Install an intertie between the railroad signals and a traffic signal on Yew Way with advance preemption time of 60 seconds. According to the Petition, this represents an additional 20 seconds of preemption time over what is required to avoid design vehicle interaction with crossing gates.
- Update signs and refresh pavement markings.

6 These improvements are funded by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration, Railway-Highway Crossings (Section 130) program.

7 Commission staff (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 and attached to the Petition, (2) traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the USDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and (3) WSDOT must notify the Commission within 60 days upon completion of the modifications authorized herein. Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

### **DISCUSSION**

8 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 modifications will improve overall safety for roadway users. Accordingly, the Commission grants the Petition subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

9 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.

- 10 (2) The SR-524 grade crossing, identified as USDOT 091814T, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 11 (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 480-62-150.
- 12 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 7, above.
- 13 (5) After examining the Petition filed by WSDOT on March 3, 2020, and the supplemental information filed on March 12, 2020, and giving consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 14 The Washington State Department of Transportation's Petition to reconstruct and install an inter-tie between a highway signal and a railroad crossing signal system a railroad-highway grade crossing located at SR-524 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 Washington State Department of Transportation must notify the Commission within 60 days upon completion of the modifications authorized herein. Acceptance of the changes is subject to inspection by Staff, verifying that the crossing is in full compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and the conditions specified herein.

- 15 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 March 20, 2020.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MARK L. JOHNSON,  
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.**