

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION,

Petitioner,

CHEHALIS-CENTRALIA RAILROAD &
MUSEUM,

Respondent.

DOCKET TR-220367

ORDER 01

GRANTING PETITION TO MODIFY
ACTIVE WARNING DEVICES AT A
PUBLIC HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE
CROSSING AT STATE ROUTE 6
NEAR ADNA, LEWIS COUNTY

USDOT: 848701J

BACKGROUND

- 1 On May 24, 2022, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) seeking approval to modify warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing located at State Route 6 (SR-6) near Adna, Lewis County, identified as USDOT 848701J. WSDOT supplemented its petition with additional information on May 26, 2022, at the request of Commission staff (Staff).
- 2 Respondent Chehalis-Centralia Railroad & Museum (Museum or Respondent) owns and operates the rail line through the crossing and consented to entry of a Commission order without further notice or hearing.
- 3 SR-6 is a two-lane state highway with a posted vehicle speed limit of 55 miles per hour. Average annual daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 6,500 vehicles. SR-6 is part of an established truck route with approximately six percent commercial vehicle traffic and is part of an established school bus route with six school buses using the crossing each school day.
- 4 Warning devices at the SR-6 crossing consist of pavement markings, advance warning signs, reflectorized crossbucks, Emergency Notification System (ENS) signs, and mast and cantilever-mounted flashing warning lights. The Museum operates seasonally with less than one passenger train per day over this crossing at up to 15 miles per hour.
- 5 The Petitioner proposes to add crossing gate arms, a warning bell, and a new signal bungalow, replace all existing incandescent warning lights with LED, upgrade train

detection circuitry to constant warning time, and replace existing warning signs, pavement markings, and guardrail.

- 6 These improvements, particularly the addition of gate arms, are intended to improve public safety over the crossing.
- 7 According to the Petition, WSDOT and the Museum confirmed that the parties have reached an agreement related to the apportionment of costs for the proposed upgrades.
- 8 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 U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, (3) WSDOT must complete the proposed modifications within three years, and (4) 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, who will verify that the crossing is in full compliance with the conditions specified herein.

DISCUSSION

- 9 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. When the Commission directs the installation of the active warning devices, it will apportion installation and maintenance costs in accordance with the applicable statutes.¹ 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 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

- 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 SR-6 grade crossing, identified as USDOT 848701J, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.

¹ See RCW 81.53.261–.295.

- 12 (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 WAC 480-62-150.
- 13 (4) Staff investigated the Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 8, above.
- 14 (5) After examining the Petition filed by WSDOT on May 24, 2022, the supplemental information submitted on May 26, 2022, and considering all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Petition.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 The Washington State Department of Transportation's Petition to modify warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing located at SR-6 is granted and the parties are directed to proceed with the modifications described in the Petition, 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) WSDOT must complete the modifications within three years of the effective date of this order.
 - (4) 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, who will verify that the crossing is in full compliance with the conditions specified herein.
- 16 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 June 14, 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.