

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

<p>In the Matter of the Petition of</p> <p>CITY OF MABTON,</p> <p>Petitioner,</p> <p>BNSF RAILWAY CO.,</p> <p>Respondent.</p>	<p>DOCKET TR-230196</p> <p>ORDER 02</p> <p>AMENDING ORDER 01</p> <p>USDOT: 104535N</p>
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**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On March 23, 2023, the City of Mabton (City 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 Main Street in Mabton, Yakima County, identified as USDOT 104535N. The crossing modifications included reducing the width of the traffic lanes, installing curbing, sidewalks, signage, and crossing pavement markings, upgrading and lengthening crossing surfaces, and relocating the existing cantilever-mounted warning lights and gates to match the new roadway alignment.
- 2 On April 3, 2023, the Commission issued Order 01 granting the Petition. As a condition of the Commission’s approval, the Order required the City to notify the Commission within 60 days of completion of the modifications. Acceptance of the changes was subject to inspection by Staff.
- 3 On May 29, 2024, BNSF Railway Co. (BNSF) notified Commission staff (Staff) that BNSF and the City had determined that the existing cantilever-mounted warning lights at the crossing were no longer necessary. Staff advised the parties that the City would need to submit an amended petition to reflect this change at the crossing.
- 4 In August 2025, Staff conducted a crossing inspection and observed that the City and BNSF had proceeded with the crossing modifications, including removal of the cantilever-mounted warning lights and gates and installation of mast-mounted warning lights and gates, without submitting an amended petition to the Commission. Staff reached out to the City and BNSF and reminded the parties of the requirement to file an amended petition.

5 On January 16, 2026, the City filed an amended petition (Amended Petition), explaining that the excessive width of the previous roadway alignment, as well as adjacent signage and power poles, obstructed the view of crossing warning lights. The relocation of the warning lights and gates to match the new roadway alignment provided optimal visibility of the crossing warning devices for roadway users and eliminated the need for cantilever-mounted warning lights. All other project details described in the original Petition were completed as approved by the Commission in Order 01.

6 Although the public service laws require the Commission's approval prior to a petitioner making crossing modifications,<sup>1</sup> Staff recommends the belated authorization of the City and BNSF's efforts to improve safety at the crossing and to keep the public highway safe for traveling.

7 Staff reviewed the Amended Petition and recommends that it be granted, and that the Commission amend Order 01 to include the removal of the cantilever-mounted warning lights and installation of mast-mounted warning lights, subject to the following conditions:

- (a) The modifications must conform to those described in and attached to the Amended Petition. 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.
- (b) All other conditions in Order 01 should remain in effect.

## DISCUSSION

8 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. Although the City and BNSF did not seek approval before modifying the cantilever-mounted warning lights at this crossing, we find that the modifications will improve overall safety for roadway users.

9 The Commission determines that amending Order 01 and approving the City's Amended Petition are consistent with the public interest and the purposes of RCW 81.53.261, subject to the conditions that Staff recommends.

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<sup>1</sup> RCW 81.53.060, .261.

### 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 Main Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT 104535N, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 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 Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-62-150.
- 13 (4) Staff investigated the Amended Petition and recommends that it be granted with the conditions set out in paragraph 7, above.
- 14 (5) After examining the Amended Petition filed by the City on January 16, 2026, and considering all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the Amended Petition and the amendment to Order 01.

### ORDER

#### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 The City of Mabton's Amended Petition to modify warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing located at Main Street is granted and Order 01 in this docket is amended, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The modifications must conform to those described in and attached to the Amended Petition. 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.
  - (2) All other conditions in Order 01 should remain in effect.
- 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 February 3, 2026.

**WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

**JEFF KILLIP**

Executive Director and Secretary  
Evan Gaffey - Delegated Authority  
Director, Operations

**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.**