

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

|                        |   |                              |
|------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| TACOMA RAIL,           | ) | DOCKET NO. TR-040299         |
|                        | ) |                              |
| Petitioner,            | ) | ORDER NO. 02                 |
|                        | ) |                              |
| v.                     | ) | ORDER AMENDING ORIGINAL      |
|                        | ) | ORDER TO REFLECT CHANGES TO  |
| CENTRALIA, WASHINGTON, | ) | THE TYPE OF WARNING DEVICES  |
|                        | ) | TO BE INSTALLED AT THE ALDER |
| Respondent.            | ) | STREET RAILROAD-HIGHWAY      |
| .                      | ) | GRADE CROSSING               |
| .....                  | ) |                              |

**BACKGROUND**

- 1     On March 12, 2004, the Commission entered an order approving a petition, filed by Tacoma Rail, seeking approval to upgrade warning devices at a railroad-highway grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of Alder Street and petitioner’s tracks in Centralia, Washington, and is identified as USDOT crossing 396776G. On January 5, 2005, the City of Tacoma, as owner of Tacoma Rail, filed a written request to amend the order in Docket TR-040299 to reflect a change to the type of warning devices to be installed at the grade crossing.
- 2     On January 7, 2005, the City of Centralia filed a letter consenting to the change, provided that Tacoma Rail reconstruct the sidewalks in the northeast and southwest quadrants of the crossing. As proposed, both foundations for the new warning signals would encroach into the existing sidewalks on either side of the roadway. The reconstruction sought by the city would widen the sidewalk sections affected by the signal installation so as to provide adequate sidewalk width for pedestrians. The petition, order, amendment request, and Centralia’s statement of consent are all filed under Docket TR-040299.
- 3     The proposal approved in the original Commission order involved replacing the existing warning devices at the Alder Street grade crossing with new cantilever-

mounted signals with gates. Upon preparing the site for installation of the signals, Tacoma Rail discovered that an underground gas line running through the crossing's northeast quadrant prevented the proper installation of the cantilever signal base in that quadrant. Subsequently, Tacoma Rail, the City of Centralia, and Commission Staff met at the crossing on January 4, 2005, to address the matter. At that meeting, it was determined that installing shoulder-mounted signals in lieu of the originally proposed cantilever-mounted signals in the northeast quadrant was an acceptable solution for two reasons: the smaller foundation associated with the shoulder-mounted signal allowed for the proper signal clearances from the gas line, the roadway, and the railroad tracks; and because the eastbound roadway approach to the grade crossing consists of one lane, the shoulder-mounted signal and gate is appropriate for that approach. No change from the original order in TR-040299 is proposed for the cantilever-mounted signal in the crossing's southwest quadrant.

- 4 After investigation and review of Tacoma Rail's request and the City of Centralia's position regarding the proposed change, Commission Staff agrees that installation of a shoulder-mounted warning signal in the northeast quadrant of the Alder Street grade crossing, in lieu of the originally proposed cantilever-mounted signal, will provide motorists with the appropriate level of warning, while sufficiently addressing the clearance difficulties at the crossing presented by the underground gas line.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the State of Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *Chapter 81.53 RCW.*
- 6 (2) The Alder Street grade crossing, identified as USDOT crossing 396776G, is a public railroad-highway grade crossing within the state of Washington.

- 7 (3) RCW 81.53.261 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to any changes to warning devices at public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 8 (4) Commission Staff investigated Tacoma Rail's request to amend the Order in TR-040299 and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 9 (5) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 26, 2005.
- 10 (6) After examination of the request filed by Tacoma Rail on January 5, 2005, giving consideration to all relevant matters, and for the reasons stated in paragraph four, the Commission grants the request.

## O R D E R

### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 11 The order filed in TR-040299 on March 12, 2004, approving the petition of Tacoma Rail to install cantilever-mounted warning signals at the Alder Street railroad-highway grade crossing, located in Centralia, Washington, is hereby amended to reflect that shoulder-mounted signals with gates will be installed in the northeast quadrant of the grade crossing, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Tacoma Rail must reconstruct portions of the sidewalk adjacent to the signal foundations in both the northeast and southwest quadrants of the Alder Street grade crossing to the end that the City of Centralia's requirements for pedestrian facilities are met.
  - (2) All requirements and conditions from the original order in TR-040299, except those related to the installation of active

warning devices in the crossing's northeast quadrant, remain applicable.

The Commissioners, having determined that this filing complies with the requirements of RCW 81.53.261, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2005.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN, Secretary