

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

In the Matter of the Petition of)	DOCKET TR-100041
)	
CITY OF PULLMAN,)	ORDER 01
)	
Petitioner,)	
)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION TO
)	CONSTRUCT A PEDESTRIAN-ONLY
)	AT-GRADE RAIL CROSSING AT THE
)	GREENWAY PATH IN PULLMAN
)	
To Construct a Pedestrian Only Public)	
Railroad Crossing)	USDOT: 923007X
.....)	

BACKGROUND

- 1 On January 4, 2010, City of Pullman (City or Petitioner) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition seeking approval to construct an at-grade crossing that will be used by pedestrians and bicyclists off North Grand Avenue at the Greenway Path in Pullman, Washington. The crossing is identified as USDOT# 923007X. The crossing will be located at milepost 75.3, at the intersection of the College Hill pedestrian/bicyclist path and the tracks of the Washington and Idaho Railway.
- 2 The decision to construct an at-grade pedestrian crossing at this location results from the City's desire to provide a pedestrian connection from the College Hill neighborhood and path system to the North Grand Avenue business district, the Military Hill neighborhood, and the Greenway Path system. Currently, pedestrians and bicyclists cross the tracks in this general area, although there is no legal crossing.
- 3 The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) owns the tracks and Washington and Idaho Railway operates on the line. WSDOT and Washington and Idaho Railway, Respondents, consented to entry of an Order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.
- 4 The crossing cannot be constructed below grade because the proposed location of the crossing is located within a floodplain which would result in flooding of the under-

crossing. Construction of an over-crossing not practicable because it would require constructing 937 lineal feet of elevated approach ramps which would result in inconvenient entry points for the users to the over-crossing. The estimated cost of such a structure would be \$1.2 million which is unsupportable given the train traffic and projected use of the crossing.

- 5 The pedestrian crossing will intersect the railroad tracks at-grade. The City does not propose to install active warning devices because of the infrequent, slow moving train traffic and unobstructed sight distance. The crossing will be protected by cross-bucks, stop signs and a stop line. The stop line will instruct users to stand behind the line if a train is nearby. The City will post an emergency contact number at the crossing and a sign that instructs pedestrians to look both ways before crossing the tracks. The crossing surface and the approaches leading up to the crossing will be paved. The City estimates that up to 75 pedestrians/bicyclists will use the crossing daily once it is constructed.
- 6 Less than one freight train per week travels the tracks at up to ten miles per hour. No passenger trains will travel the tracks at this location.
- 7 The City of Pullman, as State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) lead agency for the proposal, has issued a Determination of Non-significance thereby satisfying state environmental requirements for the opening of the grade crossing.
- 8 Examination of the petition and consideration of relevant facts support granting the City's petition subject to the following conditions:
 - In addition to installing cross-bucks, the City must install a standard "stop" sign on the same sign post.
 - The City must install a stop line on both approaches to instruct users where to stand when a train is approaching the crossing.
 - The City must install emergency notification sign I-13 to provide emergency contact information.
 - The City must install look sign R15-8 to provide a reminder to users to look both ways before entering the crossing.

- The Petitioner must notify the Commission upon completion of the construction. The crossing is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, to verify that it is in full compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.¹

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9 (1) The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission is an agency of the Washington having jurisdiction over public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington. *RCW 81.53*
- 10 (2) The proposed at-grade pedestrian crossing located on the Greenway Path, which will be identified as USDOT# 923007X, is a public railroad-highway at-grade crossing within the state of Washington.
- 11 (3) RCW 81.53.030 requires that the Commission grant approval prior to the construction of public railroad-highway grade crossings within the state of Washington.
- 12 (4) Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to the following conditions:
- In addition to installing cross-bucks, the City must install a standard “stop” sign on the same sign post.
 - The City must install a stop line on both approaches to instruct users where to stand when a train is approaching the crossing.
 - The City must install emergency notification sign I-13 to provide emergency contact information.
 - The City must install look sign R15-8 to provide a reminder to users to look both ways before entering the crossing.

¹ All signage must be in compliance with requirements in the 2009, U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), Part 8.

- The Petitioner must notify the Commission upon completion of the construction.
 - The crossing is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, to verify that it is in full compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
 - Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- 13 (5) After reviewing the petition filed on January 4, 2010, and giving due consideration to all relevant matters and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the petition.

O R D E R

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 14 City of Pullman’s petition to construct a pedestrian-only at-grade crossing located at the Greenway Path and over Washington and Idaho Railway tracks is granted.
- (1) In addition to installing cross-bucks, the City must install a standard “stop” sign on the same sign post.
 - (2) The City must install a stop line on both approaches to instruct users where to stand when a train is approaching the crossing.
 - (3) The City must install emergency notification sign I-13 to provide emergency contact information.
 - (4) The City must install look sign R15-8 to provide a reminder to users to look both ways before entering the crossing.
 - (5) Petitioner must notify the Commission upon completion of the construction. The crossing is subject to inspection by Commission Staff, to verify that it is in full compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

- (6) Traffic control devices must comply with all applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

The Commissioners have delegated authority to the Secretary to enter this Order pursuant to RCW 81.53.030 and WAC 480-07-904 (1)(a).

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective May 13, 2010.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAVID W. DANNER, Executive Director and Secretary