

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA)	
FE RAILROAD COMPANY)	DOCKET NO. TR-020023
)	
Petitioner,)	ORDER GRANTING PETITION
)	TO RECONSTRUCT A GRADE
v.)	CROSSING AT 67 TH AVENUE NE
)	
ARLINGTON, WASHINGTON)	D.O.T. 092089J
)	
Respondent)	W.U.T.C. 1G 58.80
.....)	

BACKGROUND

1 On January 4, 2002, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company (BNSF) filed a petition with the Commission, seeking authority to reconstruct a highway-rail grade crossing. The crossing is located at the intersection of the petitioner's tracks and 67th Avenue NE, in the SE ¼ of the SE ¼ of Section 15, Township 13 N, Range 5 E., W.M., in Arlington, Washington. Funding for the reconstruction is pursuant to an agreement between the parties.

2 Respondent has consented to an entry of an order by the Commission without further notice or hearing.

DISCUSSION

3 67th Avenue NE, in the vicinity of the crossing, is classified as a minor arterial road. The roadway consists of one lane for each direction of traffic and a vehicle speed limit of 35 mph. Because 67th Avenue NE runs north-south, and the tracks run northeast-southwest, their intersection occurs at an obtuse angle. In addition to the skewed crossing angle, the south-bound approach to the crossing is curved to the extent that sight distance ahead to the crossing is limited to approximately 300 feet. 67th Avenue NE also intersects with 66th Avenue NE immediately to the west of the grade crossing. 66th Avenue NE runs parallel to the railroad tracks, abutting the railroad right-of-way. Average daily traffic through the crossing is estimated at 6,000 vehicles, including 600 trucks and 8 school bus trips. Average daily traffic is expected to increase to 9,000 vehicles by 2020.

4 BNSF maintains one branch-line track through the crossing. Daily train traffic includes 2 freight trains per day, operating at a maximum timetable speed of 10 MPH.

- 5 The proposed crossing reconstruction is associated with a roadway improvement project that will widen 67th Avenue NE from two to four lanes (two lanes for each direction), as well as replace the curved roadway approaches with tangent roadway approaches. The crossing surface will be reconstructed with concrete materials and will extend for the full width of the widened roadway. In addition to improvements on 67th Avenue NE, 66th Avenue NE will be eliminated, thereby removing the need to provide improved warning for that approach.
- 6 Warning devices at the crossing include shoulder-mounted flashing light signals. Petitioner seeks to upgrade the warning devices through the installation of new cantilever-mounted flashing light signals with gates. The upgrades are being proposed in the interest of improving safety for highway users.
- 7 Commission Staff investigated the petition and recommended that it be granted, subject to specified conditions.
- 8 This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open meeting on February 15, 2002. The Commissioners have reviewed the petition and have been advised in the matter. They believe that granting the petition, subject to the conditions set forth below, is in the public interest, and direct the Secretary to issue the Order.

ORDER

- 9 THE COMMISSION GRANTS the petition of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company to reconstruct a highway-rail grade crossing, designated as WUTC 1G 58.80 and located at the intersection of 67th Avenue NE and the petitioner's tracks in Arlington, Washington, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The upgrades must conform to the plans filed in this proceeding.
 - (2) The new crossing surface must extend the full width of the traveled roadway, including any shoulders or sidewalks.
 - (3) Traffic control devices must comply will applicable standards specified in the U.S. Department of Transportation *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
 - (4) Traffic control devices and instrument housing must be installed in such a manner as to provide required clearances for both rail and vehicular traffic.
 - (5) Upon completion of the installations authorized herein, petitioner must notify the Commission. Acceptance of the installations is subject to a compliance inspection by Commission Staff, verifying that the changes are in full compliance with law, regulation, and the conditions specified herein.

DATED at Olympia, Washington and effective this 15th of February, 2002.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

CAROLE J. WASHBURN
Secretary