



February 13, 2004

Subject File Code #AD8131

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Attention: Ahmer Nizam
1300 S.Evergreen Park Drive S.W.
Olympia, Washington 98504-7250

Subject: Grade Crossing Protective Fund

Dear Mr. Nizam:

Enclosed for your consideration is an application from Sound Transit for WUTC Grade Crossing Protective funds. The grant funding would provide grade crossing improvements along Sound Transit's Sounder Commuter Rail Tacoma-to-Lakewood rail corridor.

Sound Transit recently executed an agreement with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company that will transfer ownership of railroad right-of-way from Tacoma to Lakewood. Sound Transit plans to improve the right-of-way so it may implement commuter rail service along the corridor. This will include improvements at several grade crossings.

This package includes applications for the following five projects listed below. Sound Transit appreciates the Commission's consideration of these crossings in its 2004 Grade Crossing Protective Fund program.

Table with 4 columns: Project Title, Location, WSDOT No, Railroad. Rows include C Street, D Street, S. 35th Street, S. 56th Street, and S. 58th Street (Closure).

Please contact Melissa Parales Flores, Sounder Project Coordinator, at 206.689.4968 or Monica Overby, Grants Administrator, at 206.689.4979, if you have any questions concerning this grant application package.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Lisa Wolterink

Lisa Wolterink
Grants Manager

Enclosure

cc: Monica Overby, Grants Administrator
Melissa Parales Flores, Project Coordinator, Sounder Railroad Infrastructure
Mike Merrick, Program Manager, Sounder Lakewood/Tacoma Corridor

LW:mf:ps

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12:57

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Post Office Box 47250
Olympia, Washington 98504-7250
Toll-Free 1-888-606-9566 or 360-664-1222
Fax 360-586-1181 or 360-586-1118
TTY 360-586-8203 or 1-877-210-5963
Web: www.wutc.wa.gov

Grade Crossing Protection Fund
SOUND TRANSIT'S APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

Project: C Street Improvements (Tacoma)

Applicant Name: Sound Transit

Organization: Regional Transit Agency

Address: Sounder Commuter Rail Department
401 South Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104

Contacts:
Melissa Parales Flores, Project Coordinator – Sounder Commuter Rail
Monica Overby, Grants Administrator – Grants Division

Office Phone: 206.689.4968 – Melissa Parales Flores
206.689.4979 – Monica Overby

E-mail: Floresm@soundtransit.org
Overbym@soundtransit.org

Cell Phone: N/A

Fax Number: 206.398.5216

Type of Application: Miscellaneous
C Street – 396640U
Tacoma Railroad

Please list all of the other companies (e.g., railroad companies) organizations, or state or local agencies that may be involved in implementing this proposal and the name, address and phone number of each.

Sound Transit
Sounder Commuter Rail Department
401 So. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104
Melissa Parales Flores
206.689.4968

City of Tacoma
Tacoma Railroad
747 Market Street

Tacoma, WA 98402
Dennis Dean
253.502.8891

Note: Requests for public grade crossing safety projects will be continue to be processed through the Commission's regular petition process.

Project Information – Please attach additional information if needed.

- 1) *Provide a detailed summary of the hazard being addressed, including any accident/incident information or other supporting data. If filing this application electronically, photographs, drawings, or other optional materials that are not in electronic format may be sent to the mailing address specified in the “instructions” section and should be clearly identified as an attachment to your application:*

Please see attached photographs, drawings and other related materials of the crossing.

The existing C Street grade crossing (396640U) is located along the Tacoma Railroad mainline tracks in downtown Tacoma. The crossing is also directly east of the new Tacoma Dome Multi-modal Transit Center. Sound Transit’s Tacoma Link Light rail , Sounder commuter rail, and Regional Express bus service; and Pierce Transit service all operate out of the multi-modal facility. Additionally, Amtrak also provides service near this facility.

Over the past few years there has been a significant increase in traffic and pedestrian activity to and from the multi-modal center. The Tacoma Dome Station is one of the busiest transportation facilities in the Central Puget Sound Region. The Tacoma Dome Station serves 3,000 commuter rail passengers a day, thousands of regional express and local bus passengers a day and provides 2,400 parking spaces for commuters, shoppers, and visitors. Additionally, Amtrak operates intercity rail service for travelers several times a day near the multi-modal center. This activity has contributed to a considerable increase in the ADT count through the grade crossing at C Street. The current ADT count is approximately 1,405.

The C Street grade crossing is currently protected with a standard cross-buck sign and stop sign. If you look closely at the attached photo, there is also an existing sight distance issue approaching the crossing. The cross-bucks and stop sign are not clearly visible to a vehicle driver. The cross-bucks and stop sign need to be relocated and the tree removed. The project identified in this application would help fund significant signal improvements and upgrades needed at this crossing.

- Provide a detailed description of your proposed project and explain how its implementation will*
- 2) *eliminate or mitigate the hazard. If available, please attach any drawings or construction plans for your proposed project (see section 1 if filing electronically):*

Sound Transit is programmed to operate commuter rail service along the Tacoma-to-Lakewood rail corridor. Sounder Commuter Rail will build a new one-mile track segment from D Street to M Street in downtown Tacoma. A portion of this track will parallel the existing Tacoma Railroad mainline track and the new Sounder track segment will also connect to the former BNSF mainline track. Sounder trains will make station stops at the Tacoma Dome Station, South Tacoma Station, and the Lakewood Station.

In addition to track upgrades, Sound Transit will design and install a new central traffic control signal system along this corridor. The signal upgrades will also improve the existing railroad

signal protective equipment at each grade crossing, including C Street, on the Tacoma Railroad mainline track and former BNSF railroad tracks. (Please refer to attached page for additional information on the Sound Transit D-to-M Street Track Connector Project.)

The C Street project is located at the Tacoma Dome station, a regional multi-modal station with connections to commuter rail, express and local buses, Freighthouse Square retail shops, and the Tacoma Dome. This project will provide necessary improvements to the Tacoma-to-Seattle and Tacoma-to-Lakewood Commuter Rail segments for commuter rail passengers, motor vehicle occupants, non-motorized vehicle users, and pedestrians. The improvements will reduce or prevent train collisions with vehicles and pedestrians at this crossing and will also increase motorists' ability to see approaching trains and provide easier and safer accessibility to the Sounder station and downtown Tacoma.

3) *Provide cost estimates, including those related to long-term maintenance:*

Sound Transit has completed preliminary engineering and design (30%) for the track improvements. The railroad signal design will be incorporated in the final design package for the track and signal improvements. Sound Transit will begin final design later this year.

Based on the design and construction of the rail improvements completed for Sound Transit's Tacoma-to-Seattle commuter rail corridor, Sound Transit anticipates that the cost of this C Street project would cost approximately \$200,000.

4) *Estimated timeline of project, if approved:*

2004–2005	Final Design for track and signal improvements
2006	Construction of track and signal improvements
2007	Final inspection of track and signal construction

5) *If known, provide a description of how the project's success would be measured:*

Sound Transit's objective is to provide a safe and secure transportation system for its customers. Sound Transit works closely with partnering agencies in identifying safety and security issues including coordination with local police departments, Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Sound Transit also complies with all applicable railroad laws and regulations, and ensures that our projects continue to provide reliable and safe transportation services for the citizens of this region. The FRA will review and approve the testing of the Tacoma-to-Lakewood rail corridor's track and signals upgrade project after construction is complete.

Additionally, Sound Transit has developed extensive customer service and community outreach programs designed to inform and gather feedback from customers and the general public. Implementing these programs gives Sound Transit the ability to monitor and measure the success of our projects and services.

6) *Other comments:*

In 1996, voters in Central Puget Sound agreed to increase their taxes to pay for a transportation system plan that would enable people to move easily from one end of the region to another. The plan approved by voters is called *Sound Move* and it is the blueprint for Sound Transit's array of services. Sound Transit is a regional public transit agency delivering a mix of light rail and commuter rail, regional express bus routes and new transit facilities to the citizens of urban King, Pierce and Snohomish counties. Sound Transit's Sounder Commuter Rail provides a fast, dependable and easy-to-use commuter option linking major destinations in the region. Sounder provides two-way, rush-hour passenger train service using existing freight railroad tracks between Everett and Tacoma. Sounder is now currently serving Tacoma, Puyallup, Sumner, Auburn, Kent, Tukwila, Seattle, Edmonds and Everett. Future service is planned for Lakewood and Mukilteo.

The Sounder Tacoma-to-Seattle Commuter Rail segment is a 40-mile long BNSF railroad corridor and includes seven stations – King Street (Seattle), Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Sumner, Puyallup, and Tacoma Dome. Service operations began in September 2000 with four trains (two each peak period) and served over 50,000 riders in 2001. In September 2002, service increased from four to six trains daily. There are currently over 3,000 passengers each day that use this service. Sound Transit also offers special event service to Sunday Mariners and Seahawks games. This service is extremely popular with ridership at standing room only.

These track and signal improvements are required to operate the commuter rail service and will provide the speed and reliability necessary to offer attractive passenger service and build ridership in the corridor. These improvements will also improve the capacity, reliability and dependability of the state's intercity rail service, regular Amtrak interstate passenger service and freight train traffic.

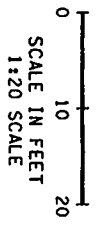
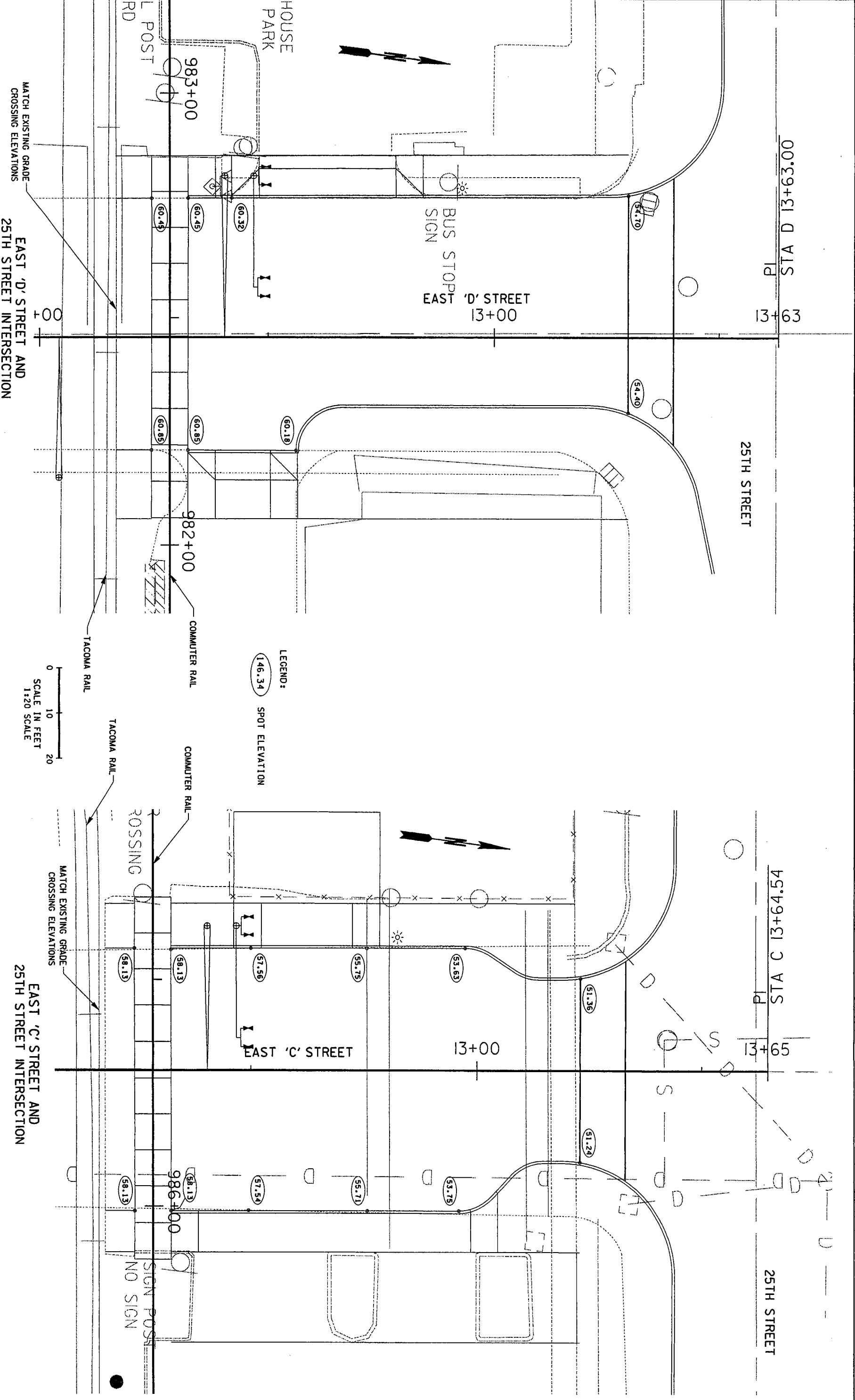


C Street Improvements (Tacoma)



**C Street – Tacoma Railroad
396640U**





LEGEND:
 146.34 SPOT ELEVATION

DESIGNED BY BAA	 DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES, INC. 3700 Pacific Hwy., East, Suite 311 Tacoma, Washington 98404 Phone: 252.923790	PRELIMINARY CONTENT SUBJECT TO CHANGE	CONTRACT NO. CR 98-99 DRAWING NO. P3CINDI REVISION SHEET NO. 61
DRAWN BY LCJ			
CHECKED BY RLM			
APPROVED BY	 SOUNDER COMMUTER RAIL LAKEWOOD CONNECTOR EAST 'D' STREET TO SOUTH 'M' STREET GRADE CROSSING ELEVATIONS - EAST 'D' AND 'C' STREET PHASE 3 - PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING		



C Street
Grade Crossing