



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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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: South 35th 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
South 35th Street grade crossing – 085385D

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
401 So. Jackson Street
Seattle, WA 98104
Melissa Parales Flores
206.689.4968

City of Tacoma
Public Works Department
747 Market Street
Tacoma, WA 98402
253.591.5000

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 South 35th Street grade crossing project is located along the former BNSF mainline track in Tacoma. South 35th Street also intersects with South Tacoma Way, a major arterial that serves as a large commercial and retail area generating high traffic volumes and activity in the area. The project is also adjacent to the Nalley Valley industrial area, which is surrounded by branch lines of the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe that run through the area, facilitating a significant amount of freight and goods movement. Additionally, there is a mainline track and two siding tracks that extend through the crossing.

The ADT count through the crossing is 4,600. Seven percent of the ADT counts are truck vehicles that travel to and from the Nalley Foods distribution center in the vicinity of tracks.

Currently, South 35th Street grade crossing is only protected by standard cross-buck signs, flashers and cantilever equipment. With the vehicular traffic from South Tacoma Way and freight traffic from Nalley Valley crossing the same railroad tracks that will also carry commuter rail passengers, upgrades are needed to keep all of these modes moving safely. This project would help fund significant signal improvements and upgrades needed at this crossing.

- 2) *Provide a detailed description of your proposed project and explain how its implementation will 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 upgrade eight miles of the former Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway’s mainline track between Bridgeport Way in Lakewood and west of “M” Street in Tacoma. 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 improve the existing railroad signal protective equipment at each grade crossing, including South 35th Street, on the Tacoma Railroad mainline track and former BNSF railroad tracks. This project will provide necessary improvements to the rail segments for commuter rail passengers, motor vehicle occupants, non-motorized vehicle users and pedestrians. The improvements are designed to reduce and prevent

train collisions with freight and motor vehicle traffic and will also increase motorists' ability to see approaching trains.

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

Sound Transit has completed preliminary engineering and design (30%) for the track improvements (designs were actually completed by BNSF prior to the Sound Transit and BNSF Lakeview Sub-division Purchase Agreement, 12/17/2003). 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 the South 35th 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.

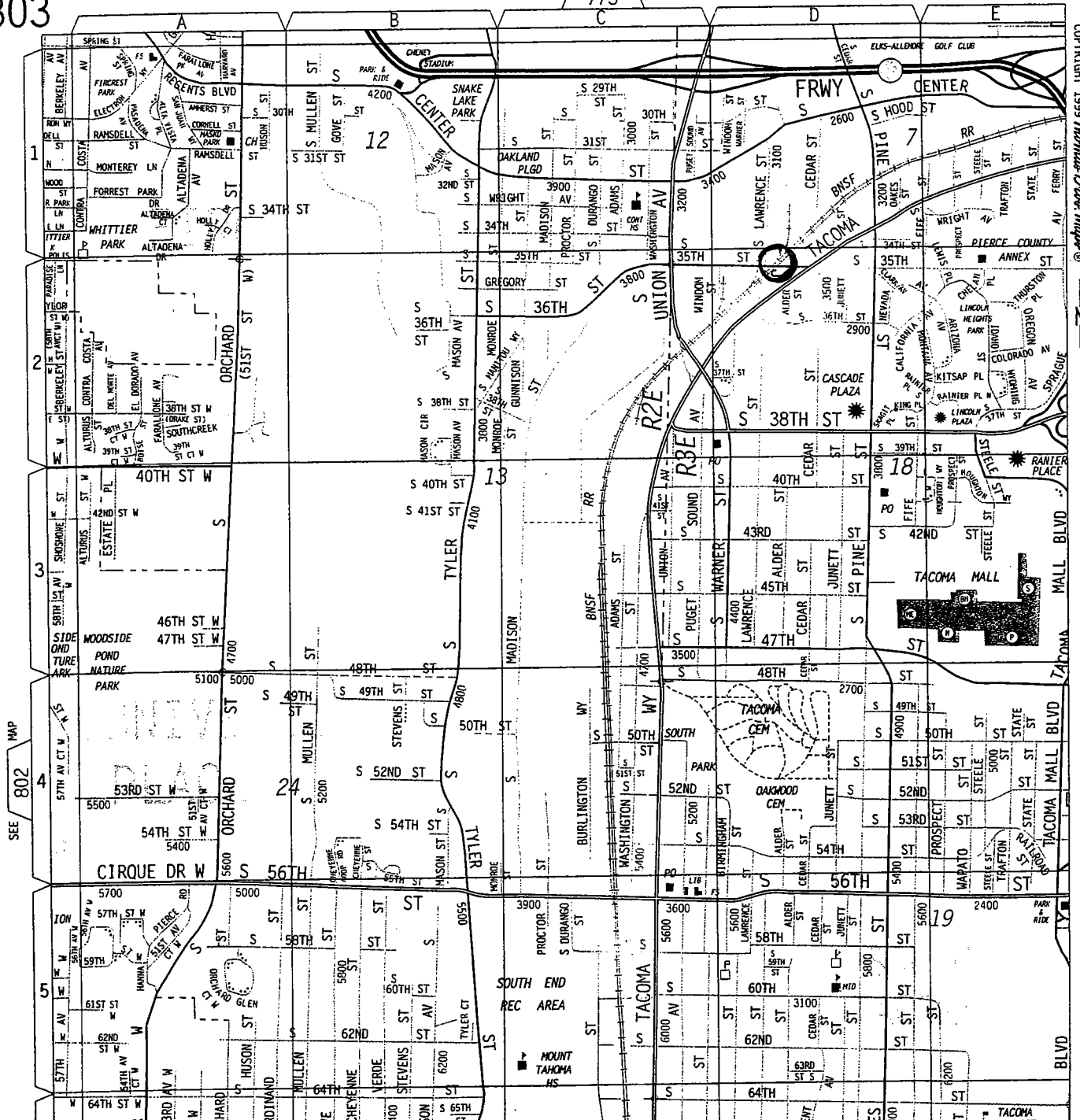
The Sounder Tacoma-to-Seattle Commuter Rail segment is a 40-mile long BNSF railroad corridor and includes seven stations – King Street (Seattle), Tukwila, Kent, Auburn, Sumner, Puyallup, and Tacoma Dome. Service operations began in September 2000 with four trains (two each peak period) and served over 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 commuter rail passenger service and freight train traffic.

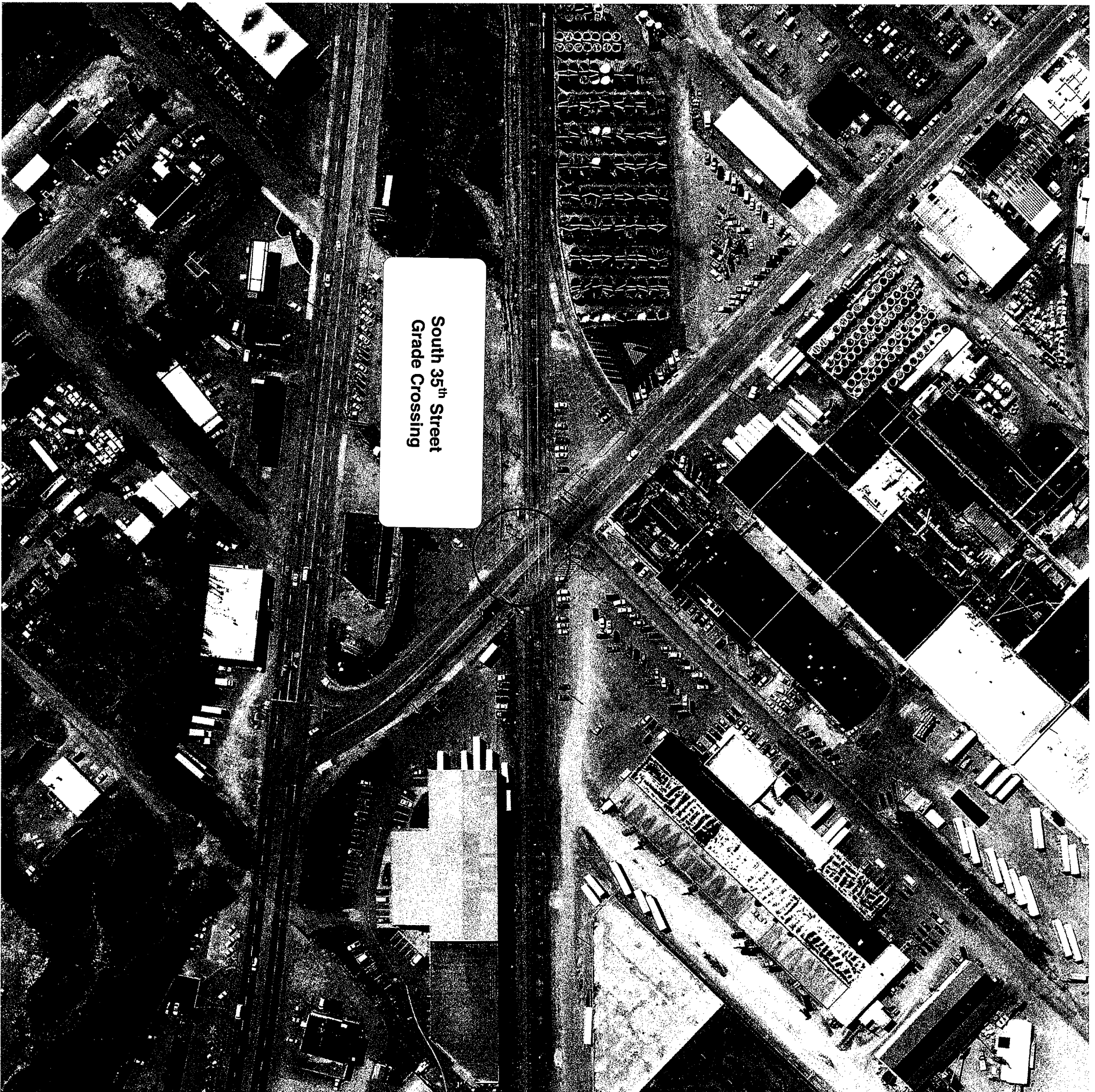
South 35th Street Improvements (Tacoma)

803

SEE 773 MAP



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South 35th Street
Grade Crossing