

WASHINGTON



UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

RECEIVED
RECORDS MANAGEMENT

04 FEB 17 11:21 AM '90

STATE OF WASHINGTON
UTIL. AND TRANSP.
COMMISSION

1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW

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 APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

The Commission's objectives in distributing monies from its Grade Crossing Protective Fund (GCPF) are as follows: To reduce accident/incident frequency and severity at both public and private railroad crossings; and to reduce pedestrian trespassing and the frequency of trespass-related deaths and injuries along railroad rights-of-way. Any public, private, or nonprofit entity may submit an application to the Commission for GCPF monies.

The focus of the GCPF program is to fund projects that demonstrate a need for improved public safety related to one of the following four categories:

- **Grade crossing safety projects** (the Commission's original GCPF program).
- **Trespass prevention projects.** Examples of projects in this category include fencing or other physical barriers that prevent trespassing on railroad rights-of-way; pedestrian warning devices; establishing new public grade crossings; installing channeling devices; media/public relations campaigns; and enforcement-related activities.
- **Private crossing safety improvements.** Examples of projects in this category include private crossing closures; installation of private crossing-specific warning devices; installation of nighttime/off-hours locked gates; and improvements to reflectorization/conspicuousness of existing warning devices.
- **Miscellaneous safety projects.** Examples of projects in this category include improvements to motorists' ability to see approaching trains, including the removal of physical obstructions; participation in roadway improvements at or approaching grade crossings; and mitigation of crossing closures.

All projects that fall within any of these four general categories are eligible for funding consideration.

February 16, 2004

Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Attention: Grade Crossing Protective Fund
1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

RE: Grade Crossing Protective Fund
For City of Stevenson

Dear Reader:

The City of Stevenson in cooperation with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad are pleased to submit an application for funding assistance with a project proposing to upgrade BNSF Crossing No. 901 48C on Russell Avenue. The project will focus on reconstructing the rail and road intersection including the installation of concrete slabs, rebuilding the ballast base, reconstructing the road surface and replacing rail line at this intersection. A WUTC staff person notified the City that the crossing's road condition was unsafe and needed repair in 2003.

BNSF is prepared to complete the project in 2004 if the City can provide the matching funds. Due to a significant monetary commitment to a road project on SR14 the City in 2003/4 the City does not have sufficient resources to meet the match. We appreciate the opportunity to apply for assistance and we are eager to meet with your staff to review our project.

Please note, drawings and one hard copy of this application are being forwarded by mail.

Respectfully,

Mary Ann Duncan- Cole
City Administrator

Applicant Name: Mary Ann Duncan-Cole (City Administrator) or Lane Stettler (Public Works Director)

Organization: City of Stevenson

Address: PO Box 371 Stevenson, WA 98648

Office Phone: (509) 427-5970

E-mail: maryann@ci.stevenson.wa.us

Cell Phone: _____

Fax Number: (509) 427-8202

Type of Application: Road/Rail Crossing improvements to correct pedestrian & vehicle safety hazards in Miscellaneous Category.

- Private crossing safety improvement
- Trespass prevention
- Miscellaneous**

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.

Mike Cowles, Manager
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad
2454 Occidental Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134
(206) 625-6146

John McSherry, Special Projects Coordinator
Port of Skamania County
PO Box 1099
Stevenson, WA 98648
(509) 427-5484

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:*

The City of Stevenson and its primary partner, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) have identified several safety hazards needing to be addressed at a major crossing within the City of Stevenson. The public crossing lies where Russell Avenue crosses the BNSF mainline at RR milepost 53.89, Line Segment 47 (BNSF Crossing No. 901 48C). During winter months there are more than 40 freight trains plus two passenger trains per day using the crossing. There are three tracks at the crossing, BNSF frequently uses the second track to store trains and the third track to load and offload maintenance equipment. Russell Avenue is equally busy providing the primary access between the downtown core and the waterfront. Tour boats dock just to the south of the crossing with 20,000 to 30,000 disembarking passengers annually. There are three parks, a tourist inn, a boat launch and bicycle/pedestrian pathway serving tourists along the waterfront that generate a significant amount of both pedestrian and vehicle traffic at the crossing. This is the only public access to the Columbia River between North Bonneville and Home Valley. The Port of Skamania County owns major facilities with twelve businesses that generate significant truck traffic as well as daily business traffic flow that all use the crossing.

The project would address the following hazards:

A) The rails on all three tracks have settled unevenly. BNSF has had to close both the road and rail lines to complete minor repairs to realign track height at increasingly frequent intervals. BNSF has a concern for rail traffic safety due to the consistent need to realign the tracks. During the maintenance work both the rail and roadway closures interfere with the local and regional economy and create safety concerns. WUTC staff have notified both the City and BNSF that the uneven road and irregular vertical track clearance is a hazard.

B) During winter months the BNSF maintenance staff is stationed in Vancouver, WA (45 miles to the west) and they are not able to perform snow removal. In 1998 several cars were stranded on the tracks and emergency calls were made to stop train traffic until the cars could be removed. City staff has assumed snow removal responsibilities but are concerned that the uneven track heights present a risk of damaging rail line integrity during snow removal. The City has only one plow that can safely remove snow at the crossing due to irregular track heights. If that plow were removed due to mechanical problems the crossing would present a major hazard.

C) Pavement condition is poor at the crossing. There are multiple asphalt patches that have been applied to level road grade to rail height. The road surface is rough and uneven due to settling from rail and vehicle traffic. Vehicle travel across the three tracks is rough requiring the driver to exercise care. The rubber-matting surface is badly deteriorated. State inspectors with TIB have rated the pavement condition as extremely poor. The uneven road surface is particularly hazardous to the large number of multiple hitch vehicles towing boat and jet-ski trailers and

multiple hitch trucks hauling freight to the Port facilities. The road surface is sufficiently rough to raise a concern that the hitches could snag a rail line.

D) There is a significant amount of pedestrian traffic (school children, tourists, and local residents) also using the crossing. Inconsistent, irregular and rough flange widths create trip and fall hazards. There are flange widths exceeding five inches and rail lines more than two inches above the walking surface. The surface does not meet ADA maximums for vertical surface differences.

Note! Drawings have been forwarded to WUTC by mail.

- 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):*

The City of Stevenson and BNSF are proposing to reconstruct all three crossings (mainline, siding and spur track) at BNSF Crossing No. 901 48C on Russell Avenue in the City of Stevenson. The City recently upgraded drainage facilities directing storm water 340 feet through an open bioswale crossing under the three tracks in a 24" diameter culvert, and continuing through a second bioswale before discharging into the Columbia River. At the immediate crossing the stormwater naturally recharges into the surrounding river terrace sands and gravels. The crossing is equipped with automatic gates and audio signals with appropriate signing and road markings. The City and Port are signing a long-term lease agreement with BNSF to landscape railway frontage along Cascade Avenue to enhance roadway appearance, allow for a tour bus storage area, and discourage rail trespass activity.

The only remaining need is to reconstruct the railroad crossing. This project is proposing to reconstruct one sidewalk on the east side of Russell Avenue and to replace deteriorated rubber matting with pre-formed concrete slabs, re-leveling the crossing, replacing the asphalt between the three rails and rebuilding road/rail base where needed. BNSF engineering has proposed installing 300 ton of new ballast; installing new concrete road panels; replacing significant sections of worn rail line; and rebuilding the roadway with more than 100 ton of asphalt. BNSF maintenance crews would complete all work.

The project would correct the uneven roadway surface and upgrade the rail line at the crossing to address safety concerns.

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

All costs were provided by BNSF engineering staff for the replacement of existing crossing with 40 ft concrete on the main, siding and house track. The improvements are expected to significantly reduce long-term maintenance costs; and, telephone surveys of others cities with this kind of crossing improvement substantiate this expectation.

REPLACEMENT COSTS FOR PUBLIC CROSSING (3 TRACKS) AT RUSSELL AVENUE
 DOT # 90148C, MP 53.89, LINE SEBMENT 47 IN STEVENSON, WASHINGTON.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Quantity U/M</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>TOTALS</i>
LABOR			
Replace Field Welds – cap	176.00 per MH	\$3,519	
Replace Public Crossing	240.00 per MH	4,344	
Signal Field Labor	39.00 per MH	806	
Surface Track Replacement	72.00 per MH	1,415	
Unload Ballast	18.00 per MH	326	
Unload Crossing Materials	60.00 per MH	1,086	
Work Train – Ballast	108.00 per MH	3,190	
Payroll		8,846	
Equipment Expenses		5,178	
DA Labor OH		8,409	
Per diem		450	
Insurance expenses		2,198	
TOTAL LABOR			39,767
MATERIALS			
Asphalt in place	75.00 per TN	7,957	
Ballast	300.00 per NT	1,155	
Joint, Compromise LH	2.00 per PR	437	
Joint, Compromise RH	2.00 per PR	295	
Track Panel 136, PNDRL	6.00 EA	21,164	
Rail, Transn, LH	4.00 EA	3,140	
Rail Transn, RH	4.00 EA	3,140	
Weldkit	22.00 per KT	1,166	
Conc 136 08 Sec	120.00 per FT	18,353	
Signal Material	5.10 per DA	765	
Handling/Tax/Trans		8,726	
TOTAL MATERIALS			66,298
OTHER			
Leased equipment		7,905	
Contingencies/bill prep		11,848	
TOTAL OTHER			19,753
TOTAL			*125,818

*BNSF to pay 50% or a maximum of \$62,913 of the costs listed above.

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

Both BNSF and the City of Stevenson are prepared to proceed during the spring through late summer of 2004. Timing would be somewhat dependent on the location of the BNSF construction team and similar projects within this rail corridor. Construction would be constrained by the length of time both BNSF and the City could coordinate traffic flow needs of both parties. Maximum length of project would not exceed four weeks given intermittent down time to allow for traffic flows along the rail and road.

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

Potential measures that could be applied would be as follows:

1 -- Apply engineering standards to measure roadway and rail way surface conditions at crossing. Current conditions for both have been rated at poor.

2 -- Compare time spent repairing road surface and rail line prior to and after completion of project. Evaluate down time for freight transportation due to crossing repairs.

3 -- Apply ADA standards to pedestrian walkway.

4 -- Evaluate snow removal capacity prior to and after crossing repair.

5 -- Log public comments. Monitor reports of accidents.

6) *Other comments:*

BNSF has committed to providing 50% of the funding for the project. The City of Stevenson is in the process of completing a major road project on SR14 that has exhausted all of its reserves in the Capital Improvement Fund and Current Expense Fund. The Street Fund does not generate sufficient reserves to address major road projects. Funding assistance is needed for the match, or **\$62,905**.

The City of Stevenson's total population is 1210. The crossing at Russell Avenue carries a unique traffic load that far exceeds expected loads for such a small community. Located in the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area the City hosts hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. Within 45 miles of the Vancouver/Portland metropolitan area many of these visitors are day visitors that drive up for a day of wind surfing, jet-skiing, or fishing along our waterfront. In addition there are thousands disembarking from the tour boats traveling up and down the

Columbia River. Most of these visitors are not accustomed to train traffic and are often attracted to the crossing area when a train is in the vicinity. Consequently, the Port and City have committed to adding landscaping barriers to help control trespass. However, there were insufficient funds to address the road surface conditions.

For questions or assistance, please contact Ahmer Nizam at 360-664-1345 (e-mail anizam@wutc.wa.gov) or Sally Turnbull at 360-664-1230 (e-mail Sturnbul@wutc.wa.gov)

Instructions

After completing the Grade Crossing Protective Fund application, please send the original and two copies to:

**Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
Attention: Grade Crossing Protective Fund
1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98504-7250**

Applications are available at www.wutc.wa.gov/GCPFgrants, and may be filed electronically at railinfo@wutc.wa.gov. When filing electronically, please specify "Grade Crossing Protective Fund" in the subject line.

Please ensure that the names and addresses of representatives from the relevant railroad company and local jurisdiction are correct and listed in the application.

Funding

RCW 81.53.271 allows the Commission to grant up to twenty thousand dollars for selected projects without requiring a monetary match. The Commission, however, may limit the amount of funding per project to a lesser amount so that an optimal number of projects may be funded with regard to relative safety benefits and project costs. The Commission may also consider funding for larger safety projects for which the GCPF grant would constitute some portion of the total cost.

Selection of Projects

The Commission will initiate a "call for projects," soliciting applications within a specific timeframe. After the specified submittal deadline, all applications will be reviewed simultaneously. Further information about the Grade Crossing Protective Fund may be obtained on the Commission's website at www.wutc.wa.gov/GCPFgrants, or by contacting Ahmer Nizam at (360) 664-1345 or Sally Turnbull at (360) 664-1230.

The Commission will review and select projects for funding based on the relative severity of the hazard being addressed, the safety benefits resulting from a project, the costs of implementing a project, and geographic diversity. For projects that require physical installations and are selected after an initial

prioritization of applications,* Commission Staff will organize an on-site meeting with representatives of the railroad, local agency, the applicant (if different from the railroad or local agency), and other entities if appropriate. The purpose of the meeting is to verify information included in the application, gain first-hand knowledge of the hazard and proposal, and give all relevant parties an opportunity to recommend alternatives or additional safety needs. The Commission will approve at an open meeting all projects that receive GCPF funds, as well as the amount of any GCPF funding, if any, to be awarded to each project. Final award of GCPF grants will be contingent upon the recipient signing an agreement specifying the terms of the grant.

* Since funding is limited, an initial prioritization will reduce the number of eligible applicants to a number consistent with the amount of funding available.