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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.

Applicant Name: Tiffin Goodman
Organization: City of Auburn
Address: 25 West Main Street Auburn, WA 98001
Office Phone: 253-804-5040
E-mail: tgoodman@auburnwa.gov
Cell Phone: _____
Fax Number: 253-931-3053

Type of Application: Median Barrier Installation

- 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.

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:*

There are numerous grade crossings in the City of Auburn, both with the Union Pacific Railroad and the BNSF Railway. Several times weekly, the protective crossing arms go down and the warning lights flash. Yet, it is often several minutes before a train passes. These occurrences frustrate drivers, whom often cross over the centerline in order to circumvent the crossing arms and travel across the tracks. Also, at double-track locations, occasionally drivers will wait for a train to pass and, assuming the tracks are clear, proceed around the crossing arms despite the possibility of a second train crossing. This is an extremely dangerous situation that the City would like to mitigate at its most active grade crossings.

The BNSF grade crossings with West Main Street, 3rd Street NW, and 37th Street NW are three very active intersections, both in terms of train travel and vehicle travel across the tracks. The BNSF north-south mainline carries Sounder commuter trains, Amtrak, and an average of 82 freight trains daily. The table below identifies the Average Daily Traffic in 2005, including weekends, for the three intersections. As evidenced by the ADT and frequency of trains passing through the crossings, there is a high potential for accidents at the three intersections.

<u>Crossing</u>	<u>Average Daily Traffic (2005)</u>
BNSF/West Main Street	6,900
BNSF/3 rd Street NW	6,100
BNSF/37 th Street NW	7,000
<i>Combined ADT</i>	20,000

In 1996, there was a double fatality at the BNSF/37th Street NW grade crossing due to a driver circumventing the lowered crossing arms. Despite the crossing arms and warning lights, the driver crossed the tracks after a northbound train passed. The driver and passenger were both killed when the vehicle was struck by a southbound train. This type of accident would be prevented by the Qwick Kurb installation.

The attached photographs show the grade crossings identified in this proposal. As evidenced by these photographs, there are currently no significant physical barriers preventing drivers from navigating around lowered crossing arms. The 37th Street crossing and eastbound West Main Street crossing do have rebounding Uprights to delineate the median. However, these are flexible installations, and vehicles often drive over them. There is a need to upgrade these barriers in order to strengthen the physical separation at the median. The other grade crossing points at West Main Street and 3rd Street NW have no physical barriers along the median, and likewise, need strong physical barriers to prevent vehicles from navigating around lowered crossing arms.

- 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 Auburn is proposing to install *Qwick Kurb* along the centerline to create a median barrier where the BNSF rail line intersects West Main Street, 3rd Street NW, and 37th Street NW. *Qwick Kurb* is a longitudinal channeling device, comprised of a hard, raised curb and upright road tubes. It will be installed to prevent vehicles, including cyclists, from crossing into the oncoming traffic lane and circumventing the railroad crossing arms.

The table below indicates the length of installation proposed at each grade crossing. The proposed installation lengths are sufficient to prevent vehicles from crossing the center median for the purpose of driving around lowered crossing arms.

Installation Length

<u>Street</u>	<u>West Side of BNSF Tracks</u>	<u>East Side of BNSF Tracks</u>
West Main Street	35 feet	64 feet
3 rd Street NW	60 feet	100 feet
37 th Street NW	50 feet	0 feet*

* *The City is not proposing an installation on the east side of the BNSF tracks at 37th Street NW because there is inadequate room for vehicles to queue in front of the crossing arms. The intersection of B Street NW and 37th Street NW is directly to the east of the grade crossing, and vehicles waiting to cross the railroad tracks queue at the intersection when the crossing arms are down.*

The attached map identifies the location of the proposed improvements.

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

Project Cost

<u>Crossing</u>	<u>Cost</u>
BNSF/West Main Street	\$7,700
BNSF/3 rd Street NW	\$9,800
BNSF/37 th Street NW	\$3,300
Total	\$20,800*

**The Qwick Kurb product does not require routine maintenance. Therefore, maintenance costs have not been identified in this funding request. The only foreseeable maintenance would be necessitated by a collision that damaged a piece of the installation. The product is very strong and designed to hold up during low-speed collisions. Hence, the City would only need to replace a portion of the installation if it is hit during a high-impact collision.*

Grant Request

Grade Crossing Protection Fund	\$20,000
City Cost Share	\$800
Total Project Cost	\$20,800

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

The improvement will be made within 6 months of receiving the grant funds.

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

It is difficult to measure the success of the project quantitatively as these types of traffic violations are seldom reported unless there is a resulting accident. Qualitatively, staff and members of the Auburn community frequently witness vehicles crossing the railroad tracks while the crossing arms are down. Given these observations, it is safe to assume that several incidents with high accident potential will be prevented each week.

6) *Other comments:*

For questions or assistance, please contact Mark Halliday at 360-664-1232 (e-mail mhallida@wutc.wa.gov) or Vicki Elliott at 360-664-1100 (e-mail velliott@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.

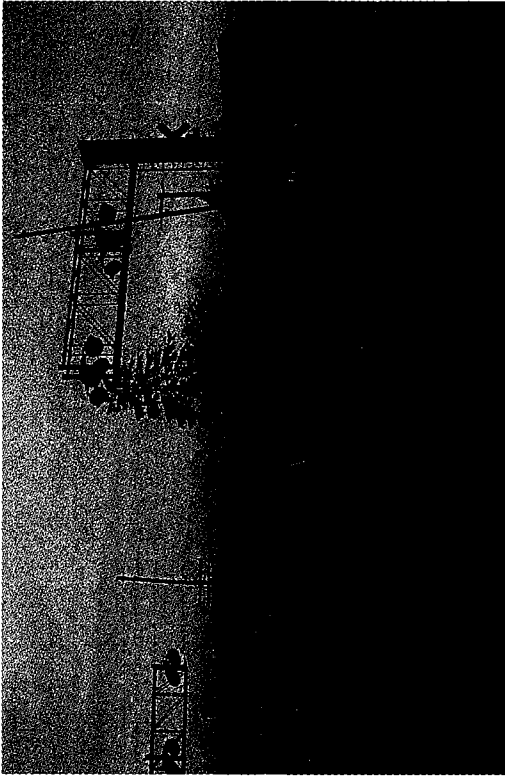
Selection of Projects

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 Mark Halliday at (360) 664-1232 or Vicki Elliott at (360) 664-1100.

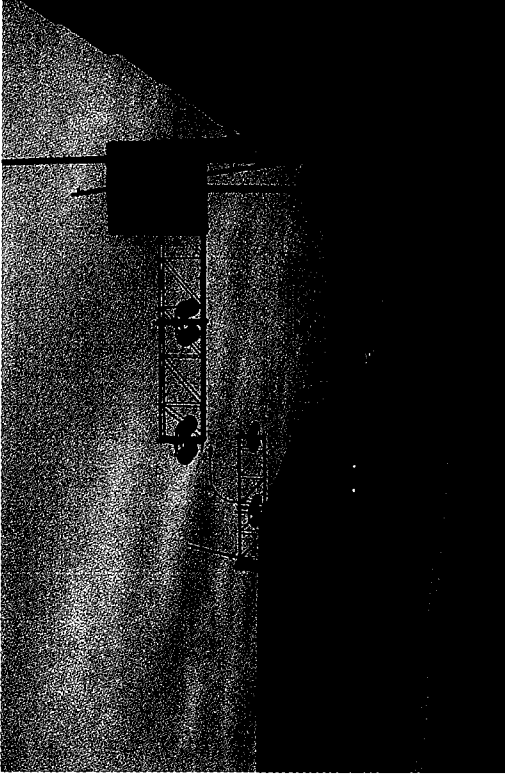
The Commission will review and select projects for funding based on the relative severity of the hazard being addressed, the safety benefits resulting from a project, the costs of implementing a project, and geographic diversity. For projects that require physical installations and are selected after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

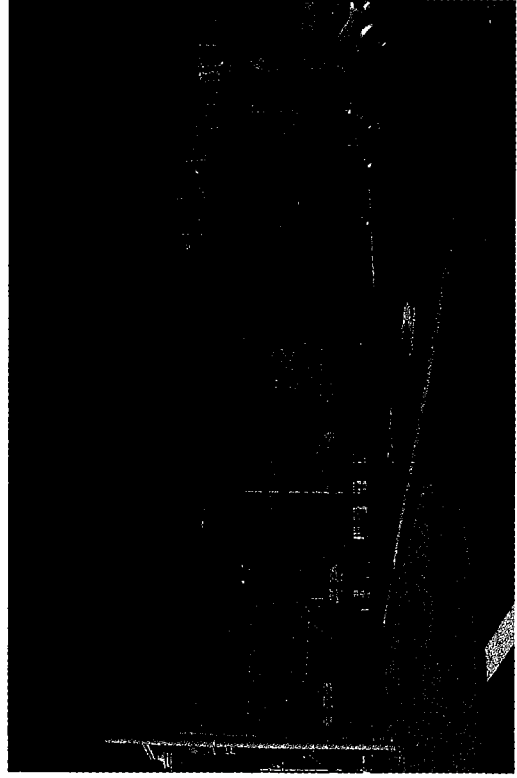
Auburn Grade Crossing Barrier Installation Sites



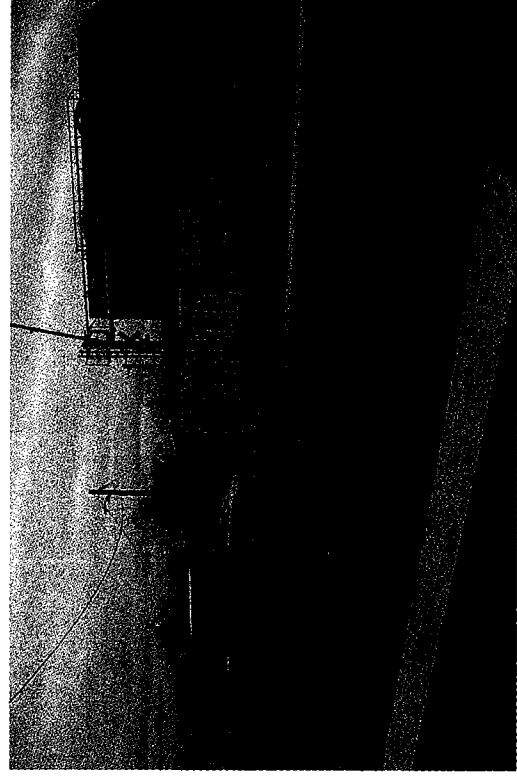
**3rd Street NW/BNSF Railway
Looking westbound**



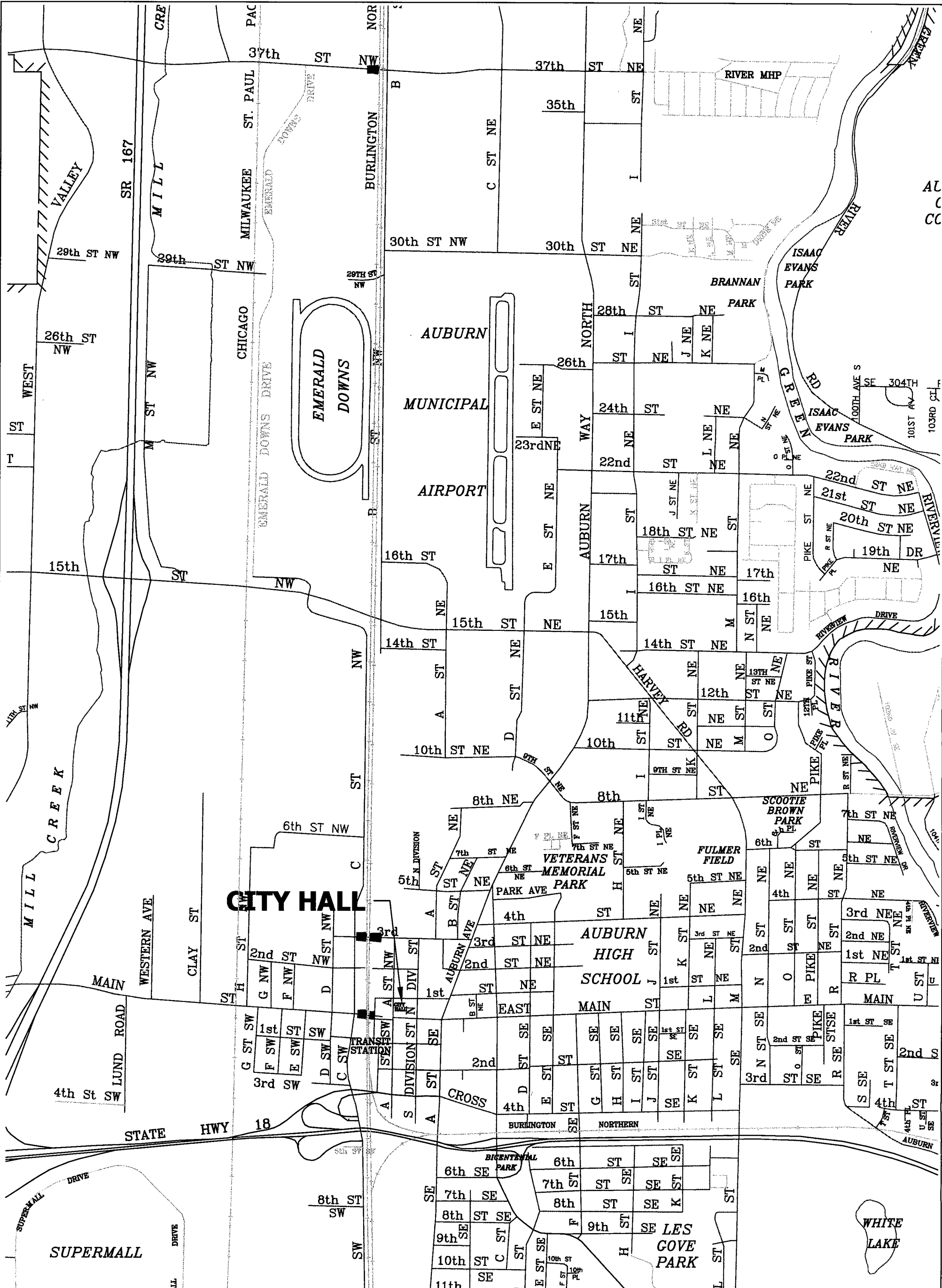
**3rd Street NW/BNSF Railway
Looking eastbound**



**West Main Street/BNSF Railway
Looking westbound**



**West Main Street/BNSF Railway
Looking eastbound**



MEDIAN BARRIER INSTALLATION PROJECT VICINITY MAP

LEGEND



NOT TO SCALE

MEDIAN BARRIER

CITY LIMITS

RIVERS

Note: Information shown is for general reference purposes only and does not necessarily represent exact geographic or cartographic data as mapped.

