



WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

City of Renton

Petitioner,

vs.

BNSF Railway Co.

Respondent

DOCKET NO. TR-

PETITION TO CONSTRUCT A
HIGHWAY-RAIL GRADE
CROSSING

USDOT CROSSING NO.:
979302J

By filing this petition with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC), the Petitioner alleges that public safety requires the construction of a highway-rail grade crossing under [RCW 81.53.060](#).

[RCW 81.53.020](#) requires that new highway-rail grade crossings be constructed either over or under grade, when practicable (see Section 7 below). Prior to submitting this petition to the UTC, the Petitioner must complete a feasibility analysis to determine whether a grade-separated crossing is practicable and attach a copy of the analysis with the petition.

In addition, prior to submitting this petition to the UTC, State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) requirements must be met. While the Commission’s actions are generally categorically exempt under SEPA, that categorical exemption does not apply to “authorization of the openings or closing or any highway/rail grade crossing.” Washington Administrative Code ([WAC](#)) [197-11-865\(2\)](#). The Petitioner therefore must attach sufficient documentation to demonstrate SEPA compliance. For additional information on SEPA requirements contact the Department of Ecology.

¹ If the petition to construct the crossing is approved, the railroad will assign a USDOT number. If the railroad is unable to assign a USDOT number, the parties can ask the UTC to assign one.

Section 1 – Petitioner’s Information

City of Renton

Petitioner



1055 S Grady Way

Street Address

Renton, WA 98057

City, State and Zip Code

Mailing Address, if different than the street address

Robert Hanson

Contact Person Name

bhanson@rentonwa.gov, (425) 430-7223

Contact Phone Number and Email

Section 2 – Respondent’s Information

BNSF Railway Co.

Respondent

2301 Lou Menk Dr

Street Address

Forth Worth, TX 76131

City, State and Zip Code

Mailing Address, if different than the street address

Kyle Leatham

Contact Person Name

(425) 210 8084 kyle.leatham@BNSF.com

Contact Phone Number and Email

Section 3 – Proposed Crossing Location

| | | | |
|--|---|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Existing highway/roadway: | <input type="text" value="Park Avenue N"/> | | |
| 2. Existing railroad: | <input type="text" value="BNSF"/> | | |
| 3. GPS location: | <input type="text" value="47.500146, -122.203316"/> | | |
| 4. Railroad mile post (nearest tenth): | <input type="text" value="3.70"/> | | |
| 5. City: | <input type="text" value="Renton"/> | County: | <input type="text" value="King"/> |

Section 4 – Current Highway Traffic Information

1. Name of roadway/highway:

2. Roadway classification:

3. Road authority:

4. Average annual daily traffic (AADT):

5. Number of lanes:

6. Roadway speed:

7. Is the road part of an established truck route? Yes No

8. If so, trucks are what percent of total daily traffic?

9. Is the road part of an established school bus route? Yes No

10. If so, how many school buses travel over the crossing each day?

11. Describe any changes to the information in 1 through 9, above, expected within ten years:

Once the new crossing is open for use, there is an anticipated gradual increase in traffic volume over the next ten years. As per calculation by the Project Engineer of the project, by the year 2040, the anticipated Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) is projected to reach 4,300 vehicles.

Calculating the change of AADT within 10 years of opening, based on the number provided by PE of 4,300 vehicles per day, the estimated AADT in 10 years would be 3,784 vehicles, marking a 136.5% increase

This projection is primarily driven by the ongoing Southport Development within the vicinity of the project. The development includes:

- Three, nine-story buildings with Class “A” office space, retail, and parking;
- A 347-room Hyatt Regency hotel with conference space, fine dining, and surface parking; and
- The 295-unit Bristol apartments with first-floor retail, underground parking, and surface parking

The comprehensive nature of the Southport Development, encompassing office spaces, hospitality services, and residential accommodations, is expected to significantly contribute to the rise in traffic volume in the area over the coming years.

Section 5 – Railroad Information

1. Railroad company:

2. Type of railroad at crossing: Common Carrier Logging Industrial
 Passenger Excursion

3. Type of tracks at crossing: Main Line Siding or Spur

4. Number of tracks at crossing:

5. Average daily train traffic, freight:
Authorized freight train speed: Operated freight train speed:

6. Average daily train traffic, passenger:
Authorized passenger train speed: Operated passenger train speed:

7. Will the proposed crossing eliminate the need for one or more existing crossings?
Yes No

8. If so, state the distance and direction from the proposed crossing:

9. Does the petitioner propose to close any existing crossings?
Yes No

Section 6 – Temporary Crossing

1. Is the crossing proposed to be temporary? Yes No

2. If so, describe the purpose of the crossing and the estimated time it will be needed:

3. Will the petitioner remove the crossing at completion of the activity requiring the temporary crossing? Yes No

Approximate date of removal:

Section 7 – Alternatives to the Proposal

1. Is it practicable or feasible to construct an over-crossing or under-crossing at the proposed location as an alternative to an at-grade crossing? (RCW 81.53.020)

Yes No

2. If constructing an over-crossing or under-crossing is **not practicable**, explain why and include a copy of the grade crossing feasibility study with petition. (Per RCW 81.53.020 - *In determining whether a separation of grades is practicable, the commission takes into consideration the amount and character of travel on the railroad and on the highway; the grade and alignment of the railroad and the highway; the cost of separating grades; the topography of the country, and all other circumstances and conditions involved.*)

The BNSF tracks run parallel to and 22 feet from an internal Boeing private street and 180 feet from Logan Avenue, a public street. An over or under crossing of the tracks would cause severe access problems to Boeing and several private businesses. An under-crossing would result in disposal problems of significant quantities of undesirable ground water, rich in iron. Regrading of the tracks would provide little relief because of the crossing's proximity to conditions of vertical constraint. An at-grade crossing poses little danger exposure to the public. The crossing is protected by gates, there is little train traffic, and the maximum train speed is 10 mph. The train will be stopping prior to crossing the street thus providing additional safety.

3. Does a safer location for a crossing exist within a reasonable distance of the proposed location?

Yes No

4. If a safer location exists, explain why the crossing should not be located at that site:

5. Does the railway line, at any point in the vicinity of the proposed crossing, pass over a fill area or trestle or through a cut where it is feasible to construct an over-crossing or an under-crossing, even though it may be necessary to relocate a portion of the roadway to reach that point?

Yes No

6. If such a location exists, state:

- ◆ The distance and direction from the proposed crossing.
- ◆ The approximate cost of construction.
- ◆ Any reasons that exist to prevent locating the crossing at this site.

7. Is there an existing public or private crossing in the vicinity of the proposed crossing?

Yes No

8. If a crossing exists, state:

- ◆ The distance and direction from the proposed crossing.
- ◆ Whether it is feasible to divert traffic from the proposed to the existing crossing.

There are five existing at-grade crossings in the vicinity of the proposed crossing. The first is a private street, approximately 570 feet to the southwest, within the Boeing manufacturing plant site, inside a security fence and gate, and not available to the public. The second lies approximately 1,200 feet to the northeast. It is the only existing point of access to a 295-unit apartment and commercial complex, a 347-room hotel, and 800,000 square feet of recently constructed office space. The local fire authority has declared the necessity for the secondary access point provided by the proposed crossing. The third existing crossing is at Lake Washington Boulevard. The track extends approximately 1,875 feet north of the second crossing and then backs down a diverging track, south southeast approximately 1,860 feet to the crossing of Lake Washington Boulevard, immediately to the east of the second crossing. The fourth crossing is at Houser Way, 215 feet south of the third crossing. The fifth existing at-grade crossing lies approximately 200 feet south of the fourth crossing. This crossing is an unnamed public street that provides access to a Lowe's store. The third, fourth, and fifth crossings do not provide access to the site served by the proposed crossing.

Section 8 – Sight Distance

1. Complete the following table, describing the sight distance for motorists when approaching the tracks from either direction.

a. Approaching the crossing from , the current approach provides an unobstructed view as follows: (North, South, East, West)

| Direction of sight (left or right) | Number of feet from proposed crossing | Provides an unobstructed view for how many feet |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Right | 300 | 300 |
| Right | 200 | 500 |
| Right | 100 | 500 |
| Right | 50 | 500 |
| Right | 25 | 500 |
| Left | 300 | 275 |
| Left | 200 | 500 |
| Left | 100 | 500 |
| Left | 50 | 500 |
| Left | 25 | 500 |

b. Approaching the crossing from , the current approach provides an unobstructed view as follows: (Opposite direction-North, South, East, West)

| Direction of sight (left or right) | Number of feet from proposed crossing | Provides an unobstructed view for how many feet |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Right | 300 | 60 |
| Right | 200 | 68 |
| Right | 100 | 96 |
| Right | 50 | 212 |
| Right | 25 | 300 |
| Left | 300 | 70 |
| Left | 200 | 126 |
| Left | 100 | 437 |
| Left | 50 | 500 |
| Left | 25 | 500 |

2. Will the new crossing provide a level approach measuring 25 feet from the center of the railway on both approaches to the crossing?

Yes No

3. If not, state in feet the length of level grade from the center of the railway on both approaches to the crossing.

4. Will the new crossing provide an approach grade of not more than five percent prior to the level grade?

Yes No

5. If not, state the percentage of grade prior to the level grade and explain why the grade exceeds five percent.

6. Are there any hillsides, embankments, buildings, trees, railroad loading platforms or other barriers in the vicinity which may obstruct a motorist's view of the crossing?

Yes No

7. If a barrier exists, describe:

- ◆ Whether petitioner can relocate the crossing to avoid the obstruction and if not, why not.
- ◆ How the barrier can be removed.
- ◆ How the petitioner or another party can mitigate the hazard caused by the barrier.

Section 9 – Illustration of Proposed Crossing Configuration

Attach a detailed design diagram, drawing, map, or other illustration showing the following:

- ◆ All elements of the proposed crossing (e.g., warning devices, crossing, sidewalks, etc.).
- ◆ Layout of the railway and highway 500 feet adjacent to the crossing in all directions.
- ◆ Percent of grade.
- ◆ Obstructions of view as described in Section 7 or identified in Section 8.
- ◆ Traffic control layout showing the location of the existing and proposed signage.

Section 10 – Proposed Warning Signals or Devices

Explain in detail the number and type of automatic signals or other warning devices planned at the proposed crossing, including a cost estimate for each. Include the type of train detection circuitry. ([RCW 81.53.261](#)) NOTE: If crossing signals will be interconnected to a highway traffic signal, contact commission staff as additional documentation will be required.

The proposed design for the new highway-rail grade crossing includes the following warning signals and devices:

• **Railroad Crossing Signals and Devices:**

- Installation of 2 new railroad entrance gates with flashers and backflashers in the northwest and southeast quadrants of the new grade crossing.
- Installation of 1 new railroad signal with flashers in the median north of the new grade crossing for southbound motorists.
- Installation of a new railroad signal house in the northeast quadrant of the grade crossing.
- Installation of new detectable warning surfaces in all quadrants of the new grade crossing.

□ **Traffic Signals and Interconnections:**

- Modification of the existing Logan Avenue/Park Avenue traffic signal to include the 757th Avenue/Park Avenue intersection and installation of a pre-signal for southbound traffic at the new grade crossing.
- Installation of a new interconnection from the railroad signal system to the Logan Avenue/Park Avenue traffic signal.

□ **Roadway and Pedestrian Safety Enhancements:**

- Installation of new sidewalk approaches along the east and west sides of Park Avenue approaching the new grade crossing, as well as between the 757th Avenue/Park Avenue and Logan Avenue/Park Avenue intersections.
- Installation of new raised medians on both sides of the new grade crossing.
- Installation of crosswalks on the east and west legs of the 757th Avenue/Park Avenue intersection.
- Reconfiguration of the eastbound approach to the 757th Avenue/Park Avenue intersection to have 1 left/thru/right lane and 1 right turn lane.
- Reconfiguration of the southbound approach to the Logan Avenue/Park Avenue intersection to include 1 left turn lane, 1 thru/left lane, and 1 thru/right lane.

□ **Pre-emption and Detection:**

- The type of train detection circuitry includes advanced pre-emption, requesting 25 seconds of advance preemption time (APT) for the signalized intersection of Logan Avenue/Park Avenue.

The overall budget for the Traffic Signal System, including the rail crossing signal components and related roadway changes, is **\$710,000**. Please refer to the attached plans for specific details regarding the signal system and other improvements.

Section 11 – Additional Information

Provide any additional information supporting the public safety need for the proposal, including project-specific information such as the public benefits that would be derived from constructing a new crossing as proposed.

The increased development at Southport has substantially heightened traffic in the vicinity due to the establishment of new apartment complexes and office buildings. Presently, the sole access point to Southport is via Lake Washington Blvd N, leading to congestion and potential safety concerns.

The proposed new crossing addresses this issue by providing a vital secondary access route, crucial for enhancing public safety and emergency response times. Without such infrastructure improvements, the current roadway network risks becoming overwhelmed, resulting in unacceptable levels of service and potential hazards for residents and occupants of Southport.

By addressing these traffic challenges, the new crossing not only facilitates improved vehicular and pedestrian access but also ensures the continued economic vitality of the Southport development by mitigating congestion, reducing delays, and enhancing overall safety for all stakeholders involved.

Section 12 – Cost Apportionment

If the commission approves the construction of the crossing requested in this petition, it will apportion costs in accordance with the applicable statutes. (RCW 81.53.130 and 81.53.271).

In the alternative, if the parties to this petition have reached an agreement related to apportionment of costs, please sign here to confirm:

Petitioner Signature:



Respondent Signature:



Section 13 – Respondent's Review

The undersigned represents the Respondent in the petition to construct a highway-railroad grade crossing.

USDOT Crossing No.: **979302J**

We have investigated the conditions at the proposed crossing site. We are satisfied the conditions are the same as described by the Petitioner. We consent to a decision by the commission based on a review of the documents filed in this docket.

Dated at , Washington, on the day of

Printed name of Respondent

Signature of Respondent's Representative

Title

Name of Company

Phone Number

Email Address

Mailing address

Checklist prior to submitting petition:

- ✓ Ensure all petition fields are completed.
- ✓ Ensure parties sign Section 12 regarding any Cost Apportionment agreement, if applicable.
- ✓ Obtain signature on Respondent's Review (Section 13). *If respondent fails to sign this section, advise UTC staff upon submission.*
- ✓ Attach copies of:
 - SEPA Determination of Non-Significance.
 - Grade separation feasibility study (described in Section 7).
 - Illustration of crossing (described in Section 9).
 - Any other relevant documents to support the petition, including but not limited to support of public need, project information, etc.

Submitting the petition: To officially file the petition, send the petition form and supporting documents via [E filing](#).

Questions: For questions, please contact:

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|---|---|
| <p>Mike Turcott Transportation Planning Specialist mike.turcott@utc.wa.gov (360) 764-0572</p> | <p>Tyler Whitcomb Transportation Planning Specialist tyler.whitcomb@utc.wa.gov (564) 669-0943</p> |
|---|---|